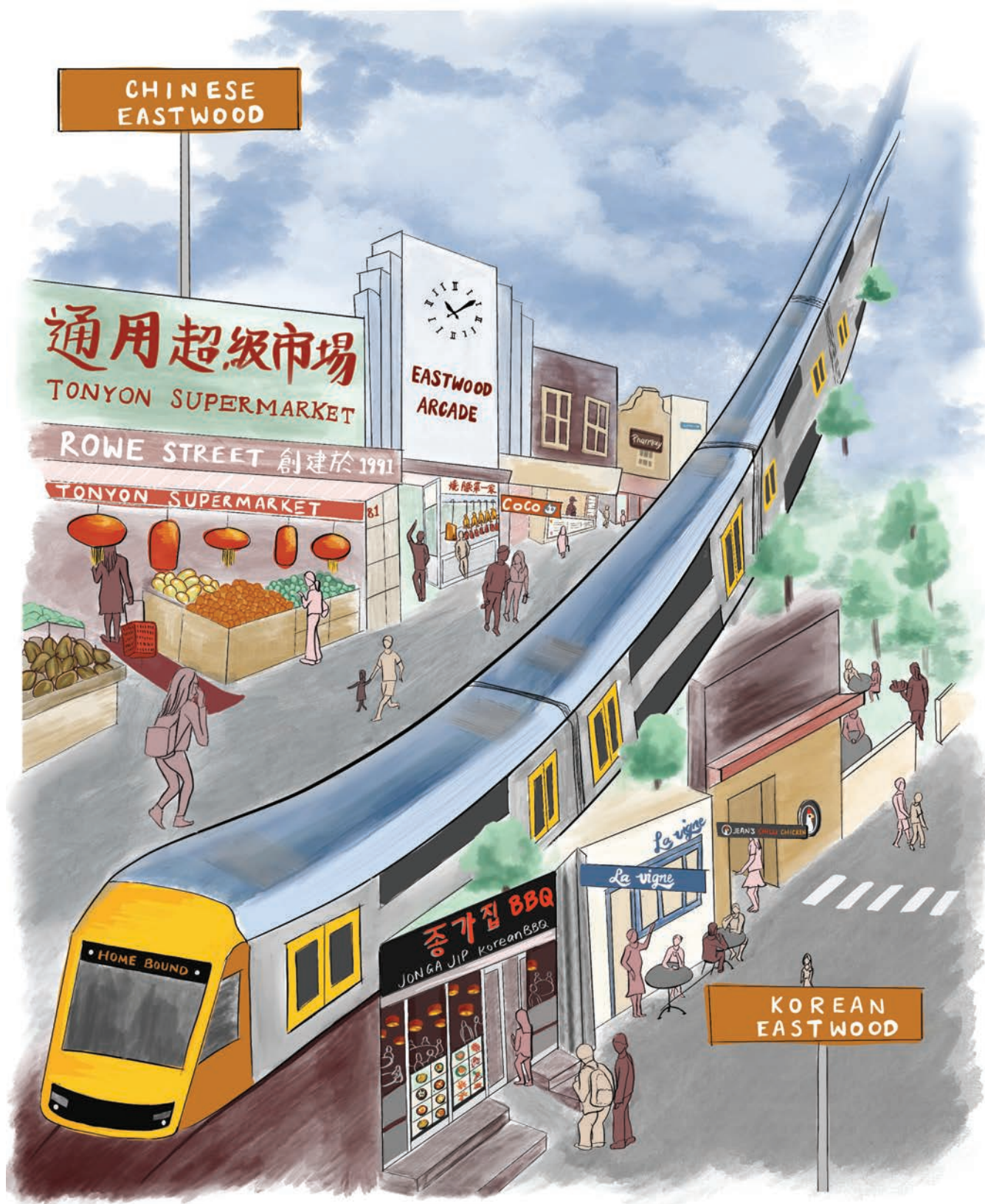


Honi Soit

WEEK 12, SEMESTER 2, 2021

FIRST PRINTED 1929



IN THIS EDITION

St Paul's admits undergraduate women

MAX SHANAHAN / P.3

Students oppose FASS cuts at SGM

ROISIN MURPHY / P.3

A day with the Quadrangle swallows

SAMUEL GARRETT / P.7

A small and feathered family has lived in the Quadrangle for decades. Less vindictive than magpies and far more endearing than ibises, welcome swallows are some of the University's less heralded residents.

Cultural remedies to get you through exams

NANDINI DHIR / P.12

Eastwood: a unique slice of suburbia

JEFFREY KHOO / P.12

When I say I live in Eastwood, most people aren't quite sure where it is. "Is that near Epping or Macquarie University?" they ask, always in relation to other suburbs, but rarely in its own right. This makes me slightly disheartened, as I've grown to love Eastwood's distinctive charms, and how it has anchored the lives of migrant families like my own.

Located in Sydney's leafy Northern Suburbs, Eastwood's Chinese and Korean neighbourhoods are split down the middle by the train line. (Justin Li, admin of popular Facebook page Humans of Eastwood Daily, tells me that locals affectionately compare it to the DMZ separating North and South Korea, though without any

hint of geopolitical animosity.) When Eastwood Station opened in 1886, the town centre naturally grew around it, making Eastwood one of Sydney's most train-accessible suburbs.

On the station's 'Chinese side,' an array of regional Chinese cuisines line the street: spicy mouth-numbing hotpot from Chongqing, crispy roast goose from Shunde, or indulgent *xiao long bao* from Shanghai (make sure to carefully poke a hole in the dumpling to slurp the hot soup, which is rich and meaty and coats your mouth). The Superfresh greengrocer displays rows of fresh watermelons, pomelos and mangoes out in the open air, while vendors shout prices to customers jostling for the

best deals. And under the plaza's tree-lined archway, you'll find a local attraction: elderly Chinese residents practicing tai chi, steadfast and resolute against the bustling shops around them.

Meanwhile, on the 'Korean side,' Korean BBQ joints serve platters of sizzling meats and *banchan* (side dishes like crunchy pickled radish or sour-spicy mounds of kimchi); well-dressed ladies catch up over coffee; and schoolkids dig into spicy Korean fried chicken or chewy *tteokbokki* rice cakes. It's a lovely, cosy small-town feeling, unlike most suburban shopping strips with overly-commercialised megamalls.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Honi Soit is published on the sovereign land of the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation, who were amongst the first to resist against and survive the violence of colonisation. This land was taken without consent and sovereignty was never ceded. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and extend that respect to all Indigenous students and staff at the University.

As a team of settlers occupying the lands of the Gadigal, Dharug, Wangal, Bidjegal, Kuringgai and Wallumedegal

people, we are the beneficiaries of ongoing colonial dispossession. The settler-colonial project of ‘Australia’ and all its institutions, including the University, are built on the exclusion of First Nations peoples and the devaluation of Indigenous knowledge systems. Beneath the sandstone buildings of USyd lie thousands of years of Aboriginal history.

Colonialism is not a one-time event that occurred in the distant past; it is an ongoing structure. The genocide

of First Nations people is perpetuated and enabled by the government, who push ahead with the forced removals of Aboriginal children from their families, their Country, and their cultures. Aboriginal peoples are the most incarcerated on earth, and there have been over 474 documented Indigenous deaths in custody since the 1991 Royal Commision.

We pledge to actively stand in solidarity with First Nations movements towards decolonisation through our

editorial decisions, and to be reflective when we fail to do so. We commit to being a counterpoint to mainstream media’s silencing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We remain cognisant that *Honi’s* writers and readership are predominantly made up of settlers, and aim to platform Indigenous voices in our paper.

There is no justice without Indigenous justice.

Always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

IN THIS EDITION

- 3 News
- 6 University
- 10 Sydney
- 12 Food
- 15 Culture
- 16 Creative
- 18 Fashion
- 20 SRC
- 22 Puzzles
- 23 Letters
- 23 Columns
- 24 Comedy

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Scan the QR code to use our **anonymous tip form**.

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EDITORIAL

JEFFREY KHOO

I used to be scared that Honi would change me. I knew it would be inevitable to some degree, of course - it’s a challenging commitment, where you’re always aware of its history, and of the procession of editors that came before you. Because of that, I was worried that I’d be overwhelmed by it. Like a tidal wave, I thought that the experience would sweep me away and change some core part of me or what I believe, and I’d have no say in it.

But as I sit in the office on Halloween night, watching Hocus Pocus with the lights off, I’m glad to report that the reality isn’t as scary as I thought.

Honi has allowed me to be privy to major issues in higher education. This week, you’ll hear from Roisin Murphy on Arts students fighting against education cuts (p. 3), Claire Ollivain on job cuts at Macquarie Uni (p. 4), Amelia Koen on gender diversity in STEM student societies (p. 6), and Shani Patel and Reham Zughair on the lack of care for psychology students (p. 7).

Alongside hard-hitting pieces, Honi has also taught me (a wizened fifth-year) to appreciate the spaces I inhabit in a more magical light. With Marlow Hurst on USyd’s fanfiction (p. 7), Samuel Garrett on the adorable swallows of the Quad (p. 9), Alice Trenoweth-Creswell and Shania O’Brien on Wendy Whiteley’s vibrant secret garden (p. 10), Andy Park on Sydney’s vexed flag (p. 11), Robert Hoang on the closing of Rewind Photo Lab (p. 15) and a Halloween special

on spooky happenings around campus (p. 8), I hope this edition encourages you to look up at the wonders around you.

Finally, Honi has allowed me to share my passions with you. I love writing and reading about food as a way to connect with culture, history and memory, which is why I love pieces like Nandini Dhir on cultural remedies for exams (p. 12) and Rhea Thomas on her experience of Indian food (p. 13). I want to massively thank Vivienne Davies, who designed this week’s gorgeous cover of Eastwood, where I grew up. It means the world to have this little corner of home on the front cover.

So how has Honi changed me? I think it’s been for the better. I do wish I was bolder, and didn’t spend so much of my term feeling scared of people’s perceptions. Our primary responsibility is not to the past, because that can be interpreted however you like. It’s also not to political interests who would use this paper as their pulpit. It’s to the student body today, to keep them informed and be relevant to their passions.

As editors, we don’t own the paper, we merely take care of it for a year. Nevertheless, I feel proud of us for fostering one of the largest, most active Honi communities. I think Honi is now more accessible and approachable for more people; above all, as the saying goes, it’s nice to be important, but it’s more important to be nice. That is something which will never change.



Student General Meeting passes motion to oppose course cuts

ROISIN MURPHY

On 27 October, the SRC’s Education Action Group (EAG) held a Student General Meeting (SGM) to pass a motion against the University’s planned cuts in Arts, Dentistry and Business.

The SGM was only the second held since 2007, and saw over 270 staff and students in attendance over Zoom.

The motion passed with an overwhelming majority, despite some attendees questioning the relevance of the inclusion of a point opposing the AUKUS alliance in the motion. Education Officer Maddie Clark described the meeting as a huge success.

“The huge number of students who came to the meeting shows how unified students are against these cuts. There is mass student resistance against these attacks to our education, and students are prepared to continue this fight into next year.”

The meeting was opened by SRC

President Swapnik Sanagavarapu. He noted that the University’s moves to undermine education also undermine their very own traditions, and that the basis which they do so holds little logic.

Sanagavarapu also made reference to an Australia Institute report which found that 30,000 higher education jobs could have been saved if public universities had been granted JobKeeper in 2020.

Eddie Stephenson, an education activist, took a jab at management’s use of buzzwords, saying they mean nothing while courses are cut and schools merged. Stephenson made clear that students should be tackling management head on.

Lia Perkins, SRC Welfare Officer and incoming Education Officer, then provided a background on the education campaign and the lead up to the SGM, speaking on last year’s anti-fee hikes campaign and the police repression faced by student protestors.

Perkins noted that the fight faced by students now is a continuation of last

year’s, and that both of them are because of management’s views of education.

“Senior management are being paid better than business execs and politicians, while they have millions of dollars in reserve...If they don’t need to make these cuts, then why are they?”

Alice Stafford, President of the Sydney University Dramatic Society, spoke on the way the current cuts attack the arts, both directly and indirectly, saying “if creative arts education does not survive, then the creative arts will falter – by killing one, the uni is simultaneously killing the other.”

Hamish Wood, a casual tutor and PhD candidate at USyd, spoke on the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Draft Change Proposal, countering the former Dean Annamarie Jagose’s idea that less choice is a better educational ideal. Wood noted “an attack on courses is not an attack on the few, but the many. Fewer students taking risks early in their degree, or learning things they otherwise wouldn’t...Options got me where I am. This feels like a privilege,

but it shouldn’t.”

Business school staff academic and unionist Catherine Sutton-Brady also spoke on the attacks faced by professional staff in the business school. Sutton-Brady said that this is because the University knows they can’t use the same arguments to back the same actions – “they can’t use the same logic as FASS, such as small classes, so instead they’re targeting other staff”.

The last speaker was Deaglan Godwin, one of the 2022 Education Officers. Godwin spoke on how students should not rely on management listening to the pleas of students, saying “our intelligent, well-reasoned arguments will fall on deaf ears in comparison to the millions of dollars they can save... we need to disrupt the normal running of the University and expose the nature of the corporate university”.

There will be another speakout against the cuts next Wednesday, November 3rd.

St Paul’s College to admit undergraduate women

MAXIM SHANAHAN

St Paul’s College will admit undergraduate women from 2023, Warden Ed Loane announced on the morning of 26 October. The college has a history of “dangerous and demeaning” sexist traditions, and current students and alumni of the college were largely against the proposal to become co-residential.

In a position paper justifying the

move, the college said that “relating across genders in a normalised (non-sexualised) manner...will accelerate the formation that college provides” and that “it is hoped that a more representative student body will provide a natural curb to anti-social behaviour and mindsets.”

The college further said that “St Paul’s suffers from a perception of being anachronistic and chauvinistic.”

In response to the 2018 Broderick Review, which found a deep-seated

culture of sexism and ritualised hazing, St Paul’s pledged to diversify its student body.

St Paul’s has suffered from declining enrolments in recent years, with empty rooms placing financial pressure on the college. In recent years, St Paul’s has taken an emergency loan from its foundation, admitted non-USyd undergraduates, and opened the co-residential Graduate House for postgraduate students.

The college said that admitting

women would open up numerous “operational efficiencies” for the college.

Some St Paul’s students have criticised the consultation process for being rushed, and say that the primary motivation for the change was financial.

The college’s Senior Student, Matt Moran, said in a statement that “The student body is grateful for the consultation process that has been undertaken by St Paul’s College Council over the course of the year.”

“No bigotry, no way!”: Snap action for queer rights protests Premier Perrottet

ELLIE STEPHENSON

Around 100 members and supporters of Sydney’s queer community gathered at Town Hall at noon on 31 October for a snap action for LGBTI rights and to protest the new NSW Premier Dominic Perrottet. The rally called attention to Perrottet’s hard-right religious views and troubling track record on queer rights issues.

The rally was chaired by Community Action for Rainbow Rights convenors April Holcombe and Patrick Wright. They reflected on the role CARR has played in campaigning for queer rights in Sydney over the last 20 years, pointing to the organisation’s centrality in the campaign for marriage equality and emphasising the need to defend the LGBTI community against ongoing

political attacks.

Speakers at the rally discussed the harm that would be caused by Perrottet’s queerphobic politics. The speaking list noticeably lacked representation of queer people of colour.

Sylvie Ellsmore, a Greens candidate for Sydney City Council, expressed relief that activists can once again protest in person. She said it was “hard to watch” increasing conservatism in positions of power while “stuck at home” during lockdown. On the ascent of Perrottet to Premiership, she suggested NSW is seeing “the escalation of someone from the religious right into a position that’s meant to represent all of us.” Ellsmore also stressed the need for the LGBTI movement to “hold the line” to prevent conservatives from eroding hard won rights for the community.

Wright reflected on the political significance of Perrottet, drawing

parallels with the “crank, deranged... social conservative agenda” of Tony Abbott. Wright pointed to Perrottet’s long-term membership of the hard-right faction of the Liberal Party as reflecting his deep social conservatism, arguing that attempts to portray Perrottet as moderate make him a “wolf in sheep’s clothing.”

Alex King, an activist at Macquarie University, drew connections between the homophobic rhetoric of Perrottet and the silencing of queer activists by the Macquarie University SRC, which has banned discussion of a motion against religious discrimination. The Young Liberals “subscribe to the same politics as Perrottet,” she said.

April Holcombe closed the speeches by emphasising the need to fight legislation to allow religious discrimination against people on the basis of gender and sexuality. She

pointed to the potential of the religious discrimination bill to result in denial of medical care to queer individuals and the sacking of queer teachers from schools.

The rally, surrounded by a disproportionate police presence, marched to Martin Place with chants of “No bigotry, no way, we’re going to fight you Perrottet” and “We will fight, we will win, chuck the bigots in the bin.” At Martin Place, Holcombe and Wright reinforced the need to keep the pressure up on politicians to protect LGBTI rights.



RepsElect 2021: Your new SRC Exec and Office Bearers

DEAUNDRE ESPEJO & JEFFREY KHOO

Thumb wars and heckling aplenty, RepsElect 2021 has finally wrapped up. Here's Honi's rundown of what happened at the six and a half-hour meeting.

What is RepsElect?

RepsElect is the first meeting of the newly-elected SRC Council, where Councillors vote on the people who will hold Executive, Officer Bearer (OB) and other positions. Many of these positions attract a considerable stipend, which comes out of students' SSAF fees.

The Executive oversees the day-to-day functioning of the SRC. It includes two paid roles – the President (\$42,921 this year) and General Secretaries (\$28,614 between two people), as well as five unpaid General Executive members. Since 2019, the Vice-Presidents have been paid (\$28,614 between two people), as a result of a discretionary decision by each year's Executive.

OBs are elected to various portfolios within the SRC, with some convening the SRC's activist collectives. Only two OB positions are paid – Education Officers (\$28,614 between two people) and Women's Officers (\$28,614 between two people).

Most of these positions are negotiated between factions prior to RepsElect, while others are pre-selected by the collectives (normally respected by left-wing factions during voting). While this may seem straightforward enough, these negotiations generally involve political tugs-of-war, particularly amongst the left.

Supermajority strikes again!

Save for a few Zoom hiccups, RepsElect 2021 was relatively smooth-

sailing, a stark contrast to past meetings which have involved flooded meeting rooms, locked-out observers, and rolled Women's Officers. There were 39 Councillors voting at this year's meeting (while you don't need to be a Councillor to run for most positions, only Councillors can decide who is elected).

During the early stages of negotiations, a simple majority voting bloc formed between left-wing factions Grassroots and Switch (Switchroots), Socialist Alternative (SALT), NLS (Labor Left), Penta and Engineers. For some time, Labor Right faction Unity's alignment was up in the air – they were backed by the Moderate Liberals and Colleges during the presidential election – but they eventually joined the coalition.

This led to a left-wing supermajority for the third year in a row. As a result, left-wing factions were free to decide all the positions amongst themselves prior to RepsElect.

At RepsElect 2021, the following positions were elected:

Vice-Presidents: Mikaela Pappou (NLS) and Emily Storey (Engineers)

General Secretaries: Grace Lagan (Unity) and Alana Ramshaw (Switchroots)

General Executive: Daniel Bowron (Unity), Yunshu Chen (Penta), Tiger Perkins (Switchroots), Celestia Wang (Penta), and Nicole Yang (Penta)

Education Officers: Deaglan Godwin (SALT) and Lia Perkins (Switchroots)

Women's Officers: Madeleine Clark (Independent) and Monica McNaught-Lee (Independent)

Environment Officers: Angus Dermody (Solidarity), Ishbel Dunsmore (Switchroots), and Tiger Perkins (Grassroots)

Welfare Officers: Yasmine Johnson (SALT), Eamonn Murphy (Switchroots), Grace Wallman (Switchroots), and Jason Zhang (Penta)

Ethno-Cultural Officers: Misbah Ansari (Switchroots), and Ashrika Paruthi

(Switchroots)

Queer Officers: Yasmin Andrews, Ira Patole, and Will Stano (Switch)

Disabilities Officers: Sarah Korte, Ira Patole, and Holly Haoyi Zhang

Global Solidarity: Tengfei Pan (Penta), Julia Tran (Unity), and Yang Tu (Penta)

Indigenous Officers: None (held over until the February SRC meeting)

International Student Officers: Alice (BoAo) Guo (Penta), Cony (MeiLin) Jin (Penta), Ashrika Paruthi (Switchroots), and Jenna (Xufie) Wu (Penta)

Intercampus Officers: Brigitte Holden (Ignite), Jie Lu (Penta), Franklin Pan (Penta), and Alexander Poirer (Ignite)

Interfaith Officers: Maria Ge (Penta), Hanwen (Hanna) Xing, Yilin (Elaine) Xu, and Shiyue (Stephanie) Zhang

Mature-Aged Officers: None (held over until the February SRC meeting)

Refugee-Rights Officers: Lydia Elias (SALT), Ki Joo (Andy) Park (Switchroots), Annabel Pettit (SALT), and Danielle Tweedale (Switchroots)

Residential Colleges Officers: Charlotte Ainsworth (Unity), Alexis Bundy (Unity), Jiawen Li (Penta), and Nancy Qiao (Penta)

Sexual Harassment Officers: Rose Donnelly (NLS), Yuan (Esther) Ren (Penta), Jayfel Tulabing-Lee (Switchroots), and Xiaojie (Janice) Zhao (Penta)

Social Justice Officers: Martin O'Flynn (Ignite), Simon Upitis (SALT), and Yifan Zhang (Penta)

Student Housing Officers: Shiyun (Max) Cheng (Penta), Henri Collyer (NLS), Ricky Rangra (Unity), and Silei (Victoria) Wen (Penta)

Directors of Student Publications: Mahmoud Al Rifai (Switchroots), Cooper Gannon (Liberal), Michael Grenier (Wave), Sara Kie (Unity), Jinhui Lu (Penta), Emily Mackay (Engineers), and Lily Wei (Penta)

Intercampus Committee: James Burgess (Ignite), Maddie Maronese (Unity)

Standing Legal Committee

Chairperson: Felix Wood (Switchroots);

Cooper Gannon (Liberal) and Hanwen (Hanna) Xing (Penta)

This year marks the first year in recent memory where all five senior executive positions (President, Vice-Presidents and General Secretaries) are women.

An Engineers Vice-President is a major step forward for the recently-established faction, which holds three seats. By contrast, an NLS Vice-President is perhaps a surprise, considering they only managed to land 1 seat on Council, even though Unity and Penta won six and five seats respectively. International student faction Phoenix, with two seats, was locked out of negotiations.

The night was beset by procedural delays from nominees filling out forms incorrectly. Cooper Gannon (Liberals) and Owen Marsden-Readford (SALT) had invalid nominations for General Executive as they were not Councillors, while factions incorrectly understanding affirmative action requirements threatened to derail multiple elections.

Similar to previous years, SALT employed a strategy of nominating for each position to get a two-minute speech, then withdrawing, drawing out the meeting. The left all Zoomed in from a central location, delaying elections by migrating across campus before settling down outside PNR.

Notably, in the coveted Education Officer election, Rory Larkins (Solidarity) was beaten out by the joint ticket of Lia Perkins (Switchroots) and Deaglan Godwin (SALT), after ongoing tensions between SALT and Solidarity. In an interesting turn, Cooper Gannon (Liberal) was elected to the prized Standing Legal Committee, which is primarily responsible for interpreting the SRC Constitution and Regulations.

Not everyone got what they wanted during this year's RepsElect, but overall, the night went smoothly for the left. The 94th SRC Council will next convene at the start of February.

Senate Committee slaps down unis over casualisation, wage theft

MAXIM SHANAHAN

The Senate Select Committee on Job Security has criticised 'corporatised' universities for their 'unacceptable' failure to address rampant casualisation in the higher education sector. The comments were made in an Interim Report delivered on Wednesday, which called for better pathways to permanent conversion, improved reporting practices and recommended that government funding be tied to commitments to reduce casualisation.

The committee, chaired by Labor Senator Tony Sheldon, heard that casualisation had negative impacts on academic freedom, the student experience, and the wellbeing of casual employees.

The committee's comprehensive criticism of universities over their employment practices comes less than a fortnight after universities were given a severe slap down by the Fair Work Ombudsman over underpayment, wage theft and their embrace of insecure work.

The committee was presented with data which demonstrated that rates of casualisation had increased exponentially compared to permanent positions, which had remained relatively stagnant over the past two decades.

The committee found that this disparity could be attributed to a decline in public funding, and an unwillingness from university to provide 'high-risk' employee protections.

"From a university management perspective, greater employee protections that apply to permanent academic staff means that a high-risk cost applies to any appointment made on a continuing basis," the committee found.

By contrast, ... "casual staff are quick and easy to engage and terminate when compared with fixed-term or permanent staff." Casual academic staff told the committee that their employment conditions "means insecurity – of employment, income and lifestyle." Instances of casual staff working while severely sick were raised, while others testified that precarity pervaded all aspects of life, impeding "the ability to take opportunities such as marriage, family and, increasingly, retirement planning."

Academics also raised concerns over the impact of insecure work on career development, with the committee noting that casual academics were denied the opportunity to research and publish work while on hourly teaching-only contracts, thereby limiting their future ability to progress in academia.

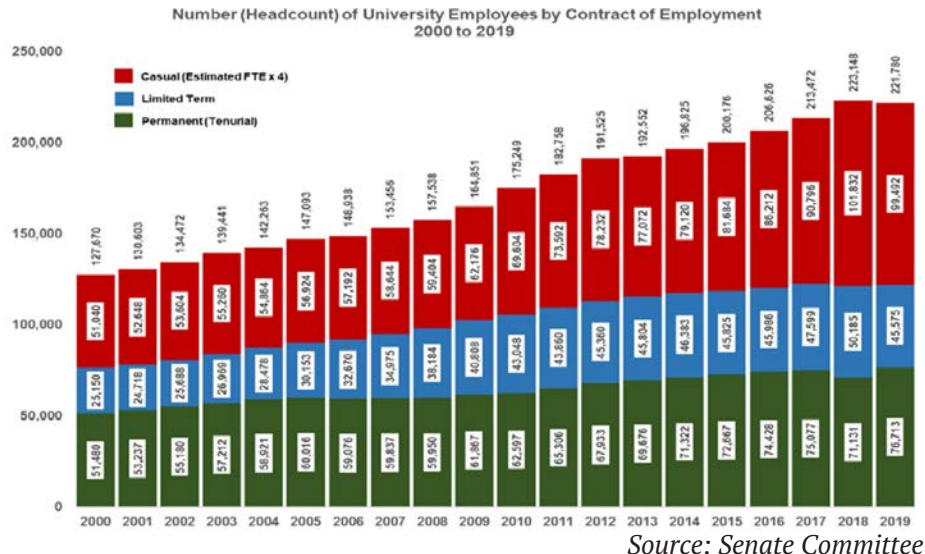
The committee also expressed concerns over insecure work's impact on academic freedom: "Academic freedom is weakened by insecure work as casual employees, who are not afforded

employment protections, may feel speaking up on controversial topics will compromise their employment."

Notably, the committee recognised that "piece rates commonly grossly underestimate the time required to complete marking work, which has resulted in rampant underpayments," as the University of Sydney recently asserted that time spent doing administrative tasks and marking papers outside of set piece-rate allocations did not constitute underpayment.

Such a view leaves USyd increasingly isolated, with both the Senate Committee and the Fair Work Ombudsman criticising the wage theft inherent in unrealistic piece-rate time allocations.

The committee recommended that the government provide temporary additional funding to reverse the damage caused by COVID-19, that funding be linked to permanent employment targets, and that government develop uniform reporting practices for universities so that true levels of staffing and casualisation can be properly understood and reported.



Macquarie Uni to disestablish 300 jobs in ‘spill and fill’

CLAIRE OLLIVAIN

After already having slashed hundreds of jobs since the onset of the pandemic, Macquarie University has this week notified over 300 professional staff that their positions will be disestablished in a major 'spill and fill' exercise, which will leave staff having to fight for newly created, lower paid positions.

The latest round of job cuts at Macquarie comes in addition to the 239 professional and over 150 academic staff jobs already lost since March 2020, despite there being no evidence that the University's finances are in crisis. Meanwhile, the senior executive at Macquarie hasn't faced a pay cut, remaining untouched from relentless staffing cuts.

The University is looking to save up to \$8.1 million in costs by disestablishing 300 full time equivalent jobs across student services and all four faculties, restructuring approximately 25% of its

ongoing professional staff workforce.

Macquarie is also proposing to close Faculty Student Centres altogether in favour of a centralised model, meaning that students will lose tailored support services.

As part of the 'spill and fill', hundreds of staff will have to choose between expressing interest in downgraded positions where they may be doing the same work for less pay or being sacked and taking their organisational knowledge with them.

The University is telling staff that the changes will promote "better career pathways," yet there is no guarantee that staff whose jobs are being disestablished will be rehired.

NTEU Macquarie Branch President Nikki Balnave described the latest restructuring as "a sequel to last year's Hunger Games style academic staff cuts."

"Professional staff, who have worked tirelessly to support staff and students over the most turbulent period of the University's history will now be required to fight between themselves for positions,

many of which have been downgraded."

"Management claim this initiative is about putting 'students first', but are ignoring the fundamental role that professional staff play in enabling the optimal student experience both directly and through their role in supporting the wider University community."

Cathy Rytmeister, a professional staff employee, observed that the 'spill and fill' would disproportionately affect women who have faced the brunt of job losses in the university sector and society as a whole since the pandemic:

"They are leveraging staff anxiety over an uncertain job market to squeeze even more work out of staff, often for less pay...The job cuts will mean more administrative work for academic staff too – work that is often picked up by women and casual staff."

Rytmeister said that the proposal was "incredibly damaging" and "will have long-term negative impacts on the University's capacity to meet student administration and support needs."

It is feared the cuts will further decline

the student experience. Macquarie's staff and student ratio more than doubled since 2019 to 69:1, the worst in Australia.

A final year Bachelor of Commerce student, Emily Freeman, praised the work of staff at the Macquarie Business School whose positions are on the chopping block: "Without their round the clock support and passion to enhance the experience of students I don't believe Macquarie University can offer the same value to students."

The NTEU has vowed to fight back against the proposal which is believed to be the largest assault on staff jobs in Macquarie University's history.

“They are leveraging staff anxiety over an uncertain job market to squeeze even more work out of staff, often for less pay.”

Ben Hines elected SULS President

THOMAS SARGEANT

The incoming executive of the Sydney University Law Society (SULS) has been provisionally elected yesterday in the first uncontested election in two years. This follows protracted negotiations between two originally competing tickets led by Ben Hines (LLB III) and Thrishank Chintamaneni (JD II) that has seen Hines elected President with Chintamaneni as Vice President (Careers).

Whilst previous tickets have boasted of their political independence, this year's executive marks a departure from this trend, with incoming President Ben Hines currently holding the position of Honorary Treasurer of the USU. Hines was also formerly Vice President of the Sydney University Liberal Club. Incoming Vice President (Education) Irene Ma also has a connection to Hines, as she currently sits on USU Board as Immediate Past President, and is a former member of Advance.

As a condition of the merger, there is somewhat greater representation of Juris Doctor students, with Vice-President (Education) and Vice-President (Careers) both going to JD students.

With Hines and Chintamaneni previously running on Vibe and Splash respectively, students can likely expect a balance of the events-focused offerings of the former, and the mental health and social justice-focused policies of the latter.

This result breaks a two-year streak of contested elections, and is the first to be uncontested since electoral reforms in 2018. These reforms introduced non-binding expressions of interest for the executive, as well as a shortened campaigning period. The reforms aimed to increase the inclusivity and experiential breadth of the executive, as well as ensuring a transparent ticket formation process.

Many members of the incoming senior executive did not submit non-binding EOIs. This result indicates ongoing problems with the SULS election system and the persistence of a shoulder-

tap culture within the executive.

The impacts of the pandemic have been felt across campus life, and likely extend to this election. Two years of on-and-off online learning has resulted in decreased engagement with SULS, leaving a smaller pool of engaged voters or candidates to draw from.

The full list of the provisionally elected executive is as follows:

President: Benjamin Hines
Vice President (Education): Irene Ma
Vice President (Careers): Thrishank Chintamaneni
Vice President (Social Justice): Naz Sharifi
Secretary: Eden McSheffrey
Treasurer: Julia Tran
Sponsorship Director: Kelly Ma
Social Directors: Grace Wong & Vivienne Davies
Competition Directors: Harriet Walker & Maja Vasic
Sports Director: Adam Schaffer
Campus Director: Onor Nottle
Publications Director: Ariana Haghighi
International Officer: Michelle Chim (JDI)

Fisher Library trees removed

SHANIA O'BRIEN & ALICE TRENOWETH-CRESWELL

Three Port Jackson Fig trees outside

Fisher Library are to be removed on Saturday 30 October due to poor health. Despite the best efforts of the Open Spaces team, the Port Jackson Figs have been in decline for several years. The trees have been deemed a serious risk to the safety of staff and students, as they are likely to fall. After intensive inquiries into the condition of the trees, the University has found that recovery is not possible and they are in their last stages of life. The figs were planted in the mid-1850s as part of the original avenue plantings that stretch from Victoria Park to University Place, and were raised in a nursery where the Veterinary precinct now stands. Endemic to Eastern Australia, the Port Jackson Fig typically grows in rock crevices. Unlike most other trees, their flower grows inside the fruit, and is pollinated by native wasps. The trees lived a happy and healthy life, living well past the typical expectancy of a century. Yet grief has bled into the community like roots that take to native soil. "They did everything they could, but I will still dearly miss such a beautiful tree, as I'm sure all Sydney Uni students will," said student Leah Bruce. A specialist grower has hand-selected three replacement fig trees which will be planted in the coming weeks.

In-person grads resume

JEFFREY KHOO & SHANIA O'BRIEN

Graduates will again be able to celebrate their graduation with an in-person ceremony in December, the University of Sydney (USyd) announced today. USyd had previously cancelled in-person graduation ceremonies for the rest of 2021 due to "NSW health advice," which sparked outcry amongst disgruntled graduands.

However, USyd emailed students and updated its website earlier today, saying that they are "delighted to confirm we plan to recommence on campus ceremonies in December for all students who were scheduled to graduate in Semester 2 2021, subject to public health orders." USyd made this decision "[i]n light of the relaxing NSW public health orders, and after extensive consultation with students." Student Sarah Cutter-Russell started a petition to reinstate in-person graduations, which garnered 947 signatures. "I'm relieved that the University has listened to student feedback on this issue," said Cutter-Russell. "A huge thank you to student leaders and the USyd community for supporting the petition and spreading the word. Bring on graduation season in December!" USyd will email graduates shortly with more detailed information about their ceremony. Students who are unable to attend an in-person graduation ceremony can watch a live stream, or attend a potential event in 2022.

USyd STEM societies take actions to recognise gender diversity

AMELIA KOEN

“Giving non-cis men the confidence to enter those courses is really important”

On October 13, the Women and Diverse Genders in Maths Society (WAMSOC) was officially founded and their first executive elected at their inaugural general meeting, closing with 53 members and 10 executives.

This comes as the first academic society to expressly include gender diversity in its name. WAMSOC Vice President, Anna-Sophia Zahar, told *Honi* that this was an “always non-negotiable” aspect of the society’s formation.

The founding members of WAMSOC: Jennifer Chen, Mai Nielsen, Sophie Doherty and Zahar, were inspired to create the society after participating in the Women and Diverse Genders in Advanced Maths & Statistics Mentoring Program provided by the Faculty of Mathematics, directed by Dr Zsuzsanna Dancso and supported by Dr Emma Carberry.

Reflecting on her own experiences, Zahar explains that as a result of

frequently being one of the only non-cis male students in the class, “you immediately feel some level of imposter syndrome.” She continued, saying that “to the extent that I can sometimes feel like an outsider as a cis-woman in maths, I’m sure that for someone who is non-binary ... that would be just as, if not more, scary and hard.”

Zahar told *Honi* that there is a significant gender disparity in advanced mathematics classes, even compared to the disparity within standard mathematics classes. “Giving non-cis men the confidence to enter those courses is really important ... it’s really hard to do your absolute best when you’re not feeling confident.”

Citing the main goal of WAMSOC as growing an inclusive, safe space for members to ask questions, seek advice, and make friends. Grace Lee, an executive member who grew up in Hong Kong, also has a passion for supporting international students in this intersection of the USyd Mathematics cohort.

Shortly after, amongst the regular slew of Annual General Meetings in October, the Women in Science Society (WISSOC) voted to amend their constitution in several places. Amongst the slate of changes was an update to

the language of “female identifying students” to “female identifying and/or gender non conforming students” to expand inclusivity.

The motion passed without dissent and is awaiting approval from the University of Sydney Union (USU) before it can officially be written into the WISSOC constitution.

2022 President and 2021 Treasurer Jayfel Tulabing told *Honi* that WISSOC has always been a diverse society and that “although we had this informal process of accepting anyone into our society, we wanted to formalise it... and that’s very exciting because just within our own executive, many of us are queer and use they/them pronouns.”

Competing with large faculty societies, such as Sydney University Science Society (SCISOC) and Sydney University Mathematics Society (SUMS), I asked Zahar and Tulabing how their respective societies operate within the larger USyd STEM society landscape. Zahar emphasised that there was still a need for a safe social space for non-cis men in maths, stating that “WAMSOC was not started because of a deficiency in SUMMS... but because it provides a different service as being a unique place that is a safe space just for women and

gender minorities.”

Similarly, Tulabing said that although SCISOC is a phenomenal society, “It’s more important now than ever to establish a really cemented WISSOC as the inclusive female and gender non-confirming space for science on campus.” Some STEM societies, like the Sydney University Queer STEM Society (QUEST) have taken this sentiment to heart. QUEST had their AGM last Thursday, October 28, and voted to officially change their name with the USU.

Looking to solidify itself as the overarching science society for queer students, formerly known as Sydney University Queer Engineers, the society has been informally going by QUEST since their AGM last year, after problems confirming the change with the Clubs and Societies Office in 2020.

2021 QUEST President, Sophia Costantino, told *Honi* that “It’s important to provide a safe community for LGBTQIA+ students in STEM, because often we face barriers within our academic and corporate fields.”

“We simultaneously act as a safe community and a way to advocate for cultural improvements within STEM.”

LUKE MESTEROVIC

A Swiftian approach to ending the suffering of staff and students amidst a proposed education cuts.

Dear Ms Jagose,

It truly is a sad sign of the times when students, who are passionate about and committed to their studies, are forced to abandon their posts and protest, because you – who claim to care about their future – threaten their departments with extinction. I am of course referring to your disastrous proposal that will endanger many undergraduate and postgraduate FASS subjects. Let me be clear that despite our obvious disagreement, I have the utmost respect for you and your position. However, I am afraid that I can remain silent no longer. I have been forced to act.

It is my firm belief that by not announcing your decision on the proposed cuts, you are torturing the staff and students in these departments.

Fanfictions of USyd

MARLOW HURST

Delving into the university campus fandom.

If you want to get a really good idea of what a fandom’s about, it’s always best to start with the fanfiction. Fics reflect the desires, obsessions, ambitions, and preoccupations of the many minds that make up a fan community; it’s no different for USyd. On Archive of our Own (the biggest fanfiction archive on the net), there are a handful of fanfictions set at Camperdown Campus with alternate reality narratives of characters from pop culture. From DC’s *Legends of Tomorrow*, to *Yuri!!! On Ice*, all the way to the band 5 Seconds of Summer. In them, they capture the oeuvre of the campus imaginary, and present to the reader a curious vision which doesn’t always make sense.

In *sidere mens eadem mutato*, a three part series about Mick Rory and Leonard Snart, Heatwave and Captain Cold from DC’s *Legends of Tomorrow* respectively, as professors at USyd. Written and set in 2017, the trilogy sees Mick and Rory married and teaching in the University’s history department.

You have spent the past year dangling this sword of Damocles above their heads, leaving the future of their jobs and studies in the balance. This sadistic ordeal must come to an end. That is why I have devised a humble proposition that you – if you truly care about your staff and students – will implement at the earliest convenience. The time has come to tear off this decrepit band-aid and finally dismantle the entire Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

Let me be blunt. FASS has become a stain on this institution, providing meaningless degrees for students who do not deserve them. From the pamphlet-passing punks on Eastern Avenue to the showy champagne socialists of the SRC (another group that ought to be shut down), FASS students have made a mockery of this university. We grant these sub-standard students the opportunity to ‘study’ in these hallowed halls, yet this ‘studying’ is little more than a charade. Look into a FASS classroom and what do you see – students laughing, enjoying themselves and debating one another. I was under the impression that this was an academic institution, but it is

clear that FASS sees it as a four-year bludgefest for these students to engage in “meaningful debates” and “critical thinking.”

These practices have no place in our university, Ms Jagose. FASS classes encourage people to question and reflect on what shapes and influences society. These students often emerge as “critical thinkers” who believe they ought to “hold power to account” – whether it be corporations, our Liberal government or the university Senate. Tell me, FASS students: if this thinking is so “critical,” why don’t you have a job? I rest my case.

I have a confession to make to you, Ms Jagose – I have zero understanding about how money works. For all intents and purposes, I am economically illiterate. Given that you are proposing to make sweeping cuts to a faculty that is expected to deliver a surplus of \$135 million this year, I would say that this is something we have in common. I know that you have been criticised for this, especially since the government dramatically raised FASS student fees last year, but I do not hold it against you. Rather, I admire you all the more

for it.

It is clear that you, like me, are a dreamer. When we set our sights on something, we do it – regardless of the facts laid out before us. No matter how horrible the consequences may be for those in our wake, we understand that sometimes sacrifices need to be made in the name of our personal ambition. I understand that you are being promoted from Dean of FASS to Provost. Congratulations. That means that you will still have a job once this proposal is implemented, unlike all the casual staff who are currently saying their prayers beneath the guillotine.

But I am getting ahead of myself. These eggs have yet to hatch. As each day passes, FASS continues to fester, its students more outspoken than ever before. But I have faith in you, and I have faith that you will implement my humble proposition. Because I believe that critical thinking has no place on this campus. And given the way that you have acted in the past year, it is clear that you agree.

Yours sincerely,
A concerned student.

Unlearning care: how the Psychology Department is failing its students

SHANI PATEL & REHAM ZUGHAIIR

It is evident that the USyd Psychology department remains consistent in its over-expectation and under-preparation of students.

who are impacted firsthand by the department mustn’t be overlooked in favour of scientific rigour.

DISCUSSION

Our analysis is framed by the particularly astute observation of one respondent: “the focus appears to be on filtering students down from hundreds in the first year.” Indeed, the department only accepts around 85 students for the yearly honours cohort, which at USyd replaces the typical 4th year of study required for a Masters degree and psychologist registration, fostering an inherent sense of competition.

It begins early. In first and second year, each unit involves three weekly hours of lecture content on separate days (plus tutorials) – a study load that is unfeasible for many, particularly during research report season. Lectures and tutorials surrounding memory often reiterate that learning is enhanced through immediate feedback and practise. It remains questionable then, how helpful the department is in aiding student success, with research report marks generally released late, and final examinations having no past papers or practise in preparation.

The department also doesn’t offer simple extensions – a blanket ban that is not permitted within USyd’s Coursework Policy. Of our respondents, 12 noted never having applied (despite some needing to) because they were explicitly told that attempts would not be accepted, which was the case for the 2 that had. Thus, students must submit sub-par work, or go through USyd’s

infamously rigid special considerations process. Those struggling with their mental health (or general stressors such as juggling jobs, family responsibilities, sexual violence, large courseloads, extracurriculars, maintenance of a work-life balance) without access to a psychologist to provide the required proof are left in the lurch.

USyd is an institution that prides itself in the process of ‘unlearning’, and yet the way that psychology is taught remains conventional. The only unlearning is evident in announcements from lecturers instructing the cohort to “forget what you were taught last year, as this is how [topic/theory at hand] is actually supposed to be.” While it can be expected that an ever-growing discipline would constantly require one to update their knowledge, this isn’t always the case. Outdated theories and practises (e.g. eugenics, IQ tests, and BMI) are taught with minimal critique, mental health is framed around productivity under capitalism, and police violence and racism are approached liberally.

Being an elitist institution, USyd prides itself on maintaining its academic reputation, bolstered by the consistent promotion of the QS World University Rankings. However this has influenced the prioritization of research in psychology. In fact, one respondent said: “it seems like this entire degree... only equips you to do research, and not practice.” Indeed, we can attest to the disappointment of feeling unequipped to help handle the under-funded and under-staffed mental health crises which surround us

despite years of study.

The event that motivated the writing of this article was during a subject which covers topics such as sexual and domestic violence. The content warnings given were insufficient: general, in terms of content type and location during class, requiring students to risk distress, or skip the entire class (as though survivors don’t already have to skip classes to manage trauma and avoid perpetrators). The coordinator, notified of this, dismissed the recommendations given because “the literature on the efficacy of content warnings is a bit dubious.” Psychology students must grapple with distressing content but the impact it may have is overlooked. This over-focus on research does more harm than good for students who deserve for their educators to care for them.

CONCLUSION

It is unsurprising that the result of these failures is a diminished sense of wellbeing among many students. As one respondent put it: “it is ironic that in order to help people with their mental health, you need to sacrifice aspects of your own”. Of course, not all psychology students feel this way – our survey demonstrated some are satisfied with the psychology department. However, large proportions of students remain dissatisfied, hurt, and let down – any number feeling this way is too many.

Like good Psychology students, we did proper scientific research on our cohorts – i.e. we made a Google survey of questions surrounding topics important to us (scientific research red flag #1): simple extensions, assessment types, critical thinking, mental health, and care. Our interpretation of these 21 responses is riddled with researcher, selection and publication bias. We can feel Caleb Owens shaking his head, but the personal experiences of those



SPOOKY CAMPUS STORIES



DEAUNDRE ESPEJO, SAMUEL GARRETT, VIVIENNE GUO, MARLOW HURST, JEFFREY KHOO, JULIETTE MARCHANT, SHANIA O'BRIEN, CLAIRE OLLIVAIN, MAXIM SHANAHAN, AND ALICE TRENOWETH-CRESWELL

Read if you dare...

What follows is a collection of campus’ spookiest tales told by those who were there (or not)....

Pyjama Girl

In the height of depression-era Australia, a mystery arose. The body of a young woman — forehead battered, a bullet wound in her neck, and legs charred to a black ash — was found in a roadside pipe in Albury. Her defining feature: she was dressed in a pair of delicate, yellow silk pyjamas. She was christened ‘the pyjama girl.’ Placed in an ice bath at Albury morgue, crowds gathered in an attempt to identify this woman, but to no avail. The body was shipped off to the University of Sydney — a ghoulish spectacle for the masses to gawk at in the Anderson Stuart building. The deceased body sat in a bath-tub coffin filled with formaldehyde for nearly a decade, but still, no one recognised the elusive pyjama girl.

The Anderson Stuart building has since become a site of haunting and horror. Rumour has it that her ghost lurks its halls, turning off the Wi-Fi, spooking PhD students studying late into the night — one student has even spoken of the echoing sound of a woman sobbing leaking from the walls of the building between the hours of 11pm and 2am. At irregular intervals, three times a year, the light pitter-patter of a woman’s feet can be heard. Wrapped up in sleep, the woman traipses around the building, the smell of burning flesh and silk following in her path.

Pyjama party at Anderson Stuart, anyone?

When One Door Closes

I can no longer walk down Science Road without memories of that evening locked alone in the Holme Building. Setting up camp in the SURG studio, with only a bag of chips and a bean bag keeping me company, I found it hard to fall asleep. In the hours past midnight, I suddenly heard banging noises from the floor above me, like all the doors were opening and slamming shut simultaneously. Those were soon followed by heavy footsteps and heels clicking against marble. When silence fell, I went to investigate; there was nothing but locked doors atop dusty carpet.

Class Dismissed

Perched where Cadigal Green meets PNR is the Old Darlington Public School. Now largely unused, the building once saw children filing in daily in two straight lines. In the late 19th century, however, just a few decades after the school’s initial construction, students and staff began to vanish. First it was the Kindergarten teacher who never showed up to work on Monday morning. Then it was a gaggle of young girls that had ventured past the school gates during recess, who ran towards City Road and never returned. Finally, on the last day of term, when the summer heat set in and crowds of parents turned up to pick up their kids, they arrived to an empty classroom. The typical chorus of young voices were never heard again, yet their school bags still sat patiently under their wooden desks.

Today, visitors report violent gusts of wind blowing open the ornate windows, and the sounds of children’s shrieks wafting through the old classrooms, following them at every turn. Students sneak around the building in the middle of the night, looking for adventure or shelter from an unexpected storm, but while many enter, few stay long.

Elevator Safety

Outside the Chemistry Building off Eastern Avenue lies a mysterious, towering gas tank, emblazoned with red lettering and surrounded by tall, metal bars. The tank is used to supply nitrogen gas for chemical experiments inside the building, but very few students would dare forget the warning in first-year chemistry: do not transport liquid nitrogen in enclosed spaces. Whispers say that years ago, a lab assistant discovered a professor’s lifeless body in a lift, having suffocated on the gas.

Gosper Puker

I have seen many inexplicable things in the late hours at the Honi office, but one peculiar night outdoes them all. We were about to finish a long day’s work, and I went to check on a fellow editor who had disappeared behind the Gosper Room’s Stygian doors. When I stepped into the room, a putrid stench permeated my nose — it was rotten

and intensely sour, like spoiled parmesan cheese. “My god, what is that smell?” I asked, looking around for any traces of bile or undigested food. “I don’t smell anything,” the other editor said without looking up. I called in the others, who couldn’t smell anything either. Intense disbelief sent chills down my spine. What on earth was that rancid scent? To this day, only one other person says they smelled puke in the Gosper Room that night. When they made an incident report, no one believed them.

Lost in the Lab

I had always been enticed by the Molecular Bioscience building, but I couldn’t have known I would come to haunt it as much as it did me. In the beginning, its dark windows were inscrutable; its brutalist character oddly inviting. Curiosity eventually drew me inside and I wandered through each level, bright and bustling labs filling each floor. Finding a fire stairwell in a far corner of Level 8, I descended to what I hoped to be the main lobby.

Instead, darkness flooded my surroundings — a shadowed lab with dozens of identical benches standing in silent rows. In the corner stood an old vending machine, still stocked with a lone green chip packet. The expiry date read ‘June 2006.’ Perturbed, I turned to leave and found myself in surroundings that were mirrored, dozens more benches offering no clue as to where the exit lay. No matter, I thought, clearly I had descended one floor too many. I returned to the stairwell and climbed to what must surely be the main lobby, but I found myself in an identical abandoned lab once more.

I remember running, bursting through door after door, only to emerge into yet more deadends of this laboratory labyrinth. As time went on and no escape appeared, I resigned to my fate. The benches weren’t so bad to sleep on if I tucked my legs in right. For the first few months, I would scream and wave at students on Cadigal Green far below, desperate for someone to see and release me. But empty pleas fell on unhearing ears. Now I just stand, and watch.

Green Thumb

Hidden from the campus onlooker through ancient panes of frosted glass, the Tropical Greenhouse on Parramatta Road is obscured by a large green shrub. The greenhouse was once a thriving biosphere filled with many things green and vining, until a brilliant scientist who studied consciousness in plants mysteriously vanished in 1928. On the date of his disappearance, passersby reported hearing groans of rusty hinges and a strong slithering sound from within, echoing in the empty afternoon air. The next day, the greenhouse was cordoned off and staff and students were warned to stay away.

Rumour has it the scientist was working on an experimental fertiliser that would imbue plants with sentience, unbeknownst to the University. Shredded remnants of a white lab coat are believed to have been found in a corner of the greenhouse, spattered with red stains and human teeth. The Greenhouse has since been abandoned, though in the dying flickers of light you can spot silhouettes of overgrown plants, monstrously betoothed.

Haswell the Friendly Ghost

If you’re ever in the Heydon Laurence Building on Science Road, you might be visited by the ghost of William Haswell. After arriving in Australia in 1878 under doctors’ orders, Haswell worked in a marine laboratory and surveyed the Great Barrier Reef, eventually becoming the first Challis Professor of Zoology at the University. Haswell died in 1925, survived by his wife and daughter, but his friendly ghost still checks up on the building from time to time, especially on his beloved crustaceans. If you happen to encounter Haswell’s ghost, don’t be alarmed at his ghostly glow behind kind eyes slowly fading.

Gargoyles of the Quad

In the middle of the Quadrangle, there is a portal. It is only visible at certain hours of the night when the wind stills enough for the stone gargoyles to come alive. They break free from their perches and soar through the skies on wings of liquid fire, leaving whispers of smoke in their wake. The heavens respond in kind, echoing violent shrills of delight at their covey.

Our story began on such a night. I sat by the roots of the flame tree and glanced at the portal. A veil of shimmering light emanated from it, slightly obscuring the other side. Inside, I saw what appeared to be a setting sun, contrasted starkly with the inky night above me. I was careful not to look at it directly or for too long, because I could only guess at what would become of me. The gargoyles shrieked in chorus, a warning in their eldritch babble.

The grass gained inches under my gaze, growing until

each blade was long enough to wrap around my thigh. My legs were now stretched out in front of me, and I suddenly wish I was afforded the company of another. A gargoyle jetted towards me and settled on the archway behind me, squawking until I turned around.

I raise an eyebrow, but it beats me to conversation. “Are you flying us this time, or shall I?”

The Magpies

I was nipping bugs out of my pristine feathers while patrolling my target area around Fisher Library on Saturday after dark when I saw some pesky humans beneath where I keep my beloved newborn chicks. I hopped down a branch to get a closer look at these high-vis-wearing vermin and saw that they were armed with chainsaws!

As my paternal instincts kicked in and I prepared to launch a counter-attack, my pea-sized brain jogged a memory of an article in Honi Soit that I’d recently read about the University wanting to chop down the Port Jackson figs. Remembering my pro-worker beliefs and membership in the Union of Campus Beasts, I re-assessed the situation and redirected my flight path towards the source of the peril to my precious eggs: F23.

Gathering together fifty of my feathered friends in the Union, we caucused a decision to swoop the Vice-Chancellor. Our army made a bee-line through Eastern Avenue and past the F23 security bastards into the foyer, straight to the top floors. We zoomed straight for the eyeballs of the pesky humans cowering and crying in their steam-ironed suits, defenceless against us without any PR team for cover. By the time we were done, the Boardroom was raining down with feathers and bespeckled with the blood of University management. We perched, proudly, on the balcony as the new leaders of the University.

A Night at the (Chau Chak) Museum

I was doing my rounds of Chau Chak one evening, keeping watch over the University’s treasures and trinkets. But that night I had noticed that birds, butterflies and beasts had vanished from their cabinets and displays. It must have been removed for restoration, I thought. I continued my rounds. Down a floor, the anonymous statue that sat amongst the Roman spectres exhibit had disappeared as well — chunks of marble dusted the plinth. Could have been loaned to another museum. Disturbed but not deterred, I continued my rounds again. But the next exhibit I couldn’t excuse. Egyptian Galleries, shreds of rotted cotton and preserved flesh littered the polished floor. Missing from his glass cage was the boy Horus. As the hairs rose on my neck, something in me told me to run. With a cautious step and a stumble backwards, I turned and ran. Through the unusually barren halls of Chau Chak, I fled, my feet pounding against the polished concrete as I ducked and wove between empty display cases. My eyes stung with sweat as I pushed my body to sliding doors I would never reach. With a stern hand of fissured marble, the carved Roman artefact stopped me in my tracks.

“Welcome to the exhibit.”

The Phantom Pianist

One misty night in March, I was walking back down Eastern Avenue at an ungodly hour after studying at PNR. As I passed Carslaw, I heard a heart-wrenching melody drift down the windswept boulevard. As I approached Fisher Coffee Cart, I saw a striking blonde woman tickling the ivories of the rotten, water-damaged USU novelty piano. I was shocked to hear such a majestic sonata emanating from the decayed and sorrowful instrument.

Something about the pianist didn’t seem quite right. Her appearance was otherworldly. Her blemish-free skin, almost wax-like, shone luminously in the dim moonlight. I ambled toward her and stared at her red lips, a perfectly plump cupid’s bow. I could have stayed there twenty seconds, or twenty years. “Excuse me,” I said. But the pianist remained mute, a blank space where our pleasantries should be.

Summoning all my courage, I walked round to the front of the piano, determined to introduce myself. She had a million-mile stare — a deep sorrow sat within. She seemed like the maddest woman this town had ever seen. A single tear dripped from her crystal blue eyes. Concerned and curious, I reached out to comfort the figure.

As my hand touched her shoulder, the figure melted, instantly, into a pool of wax. The piano slammed shut and two deep notes rang out over the empty campus. I screamed, and sprinted all the way home to my gothic Glebe terrace.

The next morning the piano was gone, and I received a bill for \$250,000 from the USU in the mail.

**Some stories may have been edited for extra SPOOOOOK!*

A day with the Quadrangle swallows

SAMUEL GARRETT

Springtime means nesting season.

A small and feathered family has lived in the Quadrangle for decades. Less vindictive than magpies and far more endearing than ibises, welcome swallows are some of the University’s less heralded residents.

Over the course of a warm day, I watch a group of a half-dozen swallows swoop above the Quad, regularly returning every few minutes to tend to their nest, before departing on another frenetic sortie around the spires of MacLaurin Hall.

The swallows are tiny but extremely agile, with dark wings and orange faces. Despite constant close passes to the ground, the swallows rarely land. Their acrobatic flying helps to catch insects midair while eating their own body weight in food each day, a feat made easier by their all of 10 grams.

According to Professor Dieter Hochuli of the School of Life and Environmental Sciences, “they have probably been on the site longer than we have. I’ve been

here for 26 years and they’ve always been around.” The Yeoman Bedell beneath the clocktower agrees, telling me that the birds have been here “a very long time.”



The birds take up residence in the Quad during the breeding season between August and February each year, before moving north for the winter and returning to the same nesting place ahead of spring.

According to Professor Hochuli, “these birds often breed close to human

structures, making cup-shaped nests of mud and grass, lined with feathers and even fur. They attach their nests to suitable structures, such as buildings



or bridges in urban ecosystems, or to vertical rock walls.”

Wikipedia cheerfully relates that “in swallows’ excreta, there are various kinds of bacteria and parasites. The nests tend to breed all kinds of bacteria and parasites causing very severe diseases, for example: histoplasmosis, encephalitis,

Review: Love and Virtue

JULIETTE MARCHANT

A campus novel about friendship, love and morality.

Wounded by the growing sense of distance that we currently feel from a so-called ‘normal’ campus experience, we flock to fiction to get our quick fix. We chuckle at the familiar awkwardness in Elif Batuman’s *The Idiot*, lament in the melancholy of John William’s *Stoner*, are frustrated by the tumult of Sally Rooney’s *Normal People* and are perplexed by the mystery of Donna Tartt’s *The Secret History*. But despite more people going to university in Australia than ever before, the national contribution to campus fiction is surprisingly paltry. Recent University of Sydney Philosophy and Law graduate, Diana Reid’s debut novel, *Love and Virtue*, intends to fill this gap, taking readers into the elite world of residential colleges at a fictionalised Sydney university.

Protagonist Michaela is a high-achieving scholarship student from Canberra, who is a resident at the fictional women’s-only ‘Fairfax College’. Arriving during O-Week, her welcome to Sydney is fuelled by copious amounts of alcohol, ending in a non-consensual sexual encounter that becomes a thematic centerpiece in the text. Her best friend and college neighbour Eve is the picture of perfection – almost too smart and too beautiful to be human. However, their relationship exudes a Ferrate-esque competitive streak that manifests in various instances of toxicity and betrayal.

Whilst in conversation with *Honi*, Reid acknowledged that such a portrayal may not be particularly good for the ‘sisterhood’, she believes that it is vitally important to depict characters that are real. But more than this, incumbent in

the persistent competition is a sense of self-respect. Both Michaela and Eve are characters who are powerfully driven, their competition grounded in a will to be independent and seek academic validation, rather than a spat over a man. In this way, their rivalry is an empowering expression of female ambition, and a show of respect for their opponent’s talent and intelligence.

University stories tend to be dipped in a familiar slew of clichés, their characters serving as exemplars of recognisable stereotypes. *Love and Virtue* embraces this trend quite plainly, but not always to a fault. Reid often toys with these tropes to build up readers’ expectations, developing the archetype only to slowly dismantle it as the text unfolds. This is most clearly the case in the portrayal of Professor Paul Rosen, Michaela’s first year philosophy professor.

Professor (‘call me Paul’) Rosen is deemed immensely likeable, despite his visual portrayal being rather unflattering. But still, the expectations surrounding his character are firmly grounded in the social narrative concerning his position as a professor – grounding him in the pomp and status of the institution, and accentuating his personal authority derived from being both male and white. Nonetheless, when the spark between Professor Rosen and Michaela finally develops, the result appears inconsequential – their romance fleeting, reciprocal, and in many ways, quite normal.

The anti-climactic nature of the relationship would prompt many to ask: What was the point? When reading the text, I honestly thought the same. However, in conversation with *Honi*, Reid proposed that this relationship serves as a parallel to that between Michaela and Eve. Although the same age and gender as the protagonist, Eve is

highly manipulative, often to Michaela’s detriment. However, the manipulation reveals a prominent grey area in the realm of moral decision making, as it lies outside of the principally grounded power dynamics within the social imaginary, such as that between a man and woman, student and teacher. This reflects the ultimate aim of Reid’s text: to compel the reader to go beyond the assumption that there is always a black and white answer, and realise that things are so much more confusing than they seem.

But the most morally troubling part of the text arises from a tension in Michaela and Eve’s relationship, as Eve takes Michaela’s story of being raped during O-Week as her own. Spreading the story at social events, in the student newspaper, and ultimately, writing a book about the event, Eve gets to be the martyr without any of the suffering.

In the shadow of Chanel Contos’ online publication of sexual assault victim testimonies, Reid’s book is particularly salient. However, in my view, *Love and Virtue* takes the conversation a step further. By paying close attention to the optics of sexual assault rather than the instance itself, Reid highlights some of the moral and emotional troubles that victims face when coming forward with their stories. But perhaps more importantly, she leaves the reader asking, why, when there are so many people suffering, must we always make the story about ourselves?

I started this review by proposing that campus fiction fills the void left behind by the lack of a ‘normal’ student experience. With this thought, I am drawn to the words of Iris Murdoch:

“We live in a fantasy world, a world of illusion. The great task in life is to find reality. But given the state of the world, is it wise?”

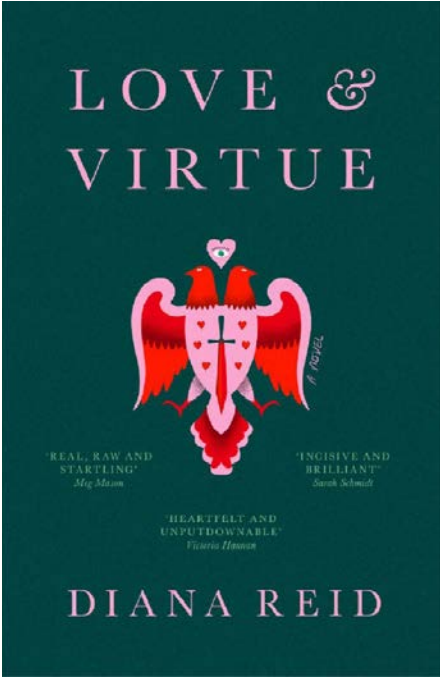
salmonella, meningitis, toxoplasmosis, etc.”

Indeed, the nest I find near the jacaranda in the Quadrangle’s southeast corner is not a sight to behold, though tiny chirps of new hatchlings come from within.

Yet despite their apparently septic abodes, watching the swallows flit around the Quad and weaving through its columns is a soothing experience.

Given the shutdown of campus, the swallows and I are the Quadrangle’s only occupants for hours. They pay me little heed, seemingly both uninterested and unperturbed by my presence. A light breeze and the swallows’ calls are the only sounds. Like their movements, the call of a welcome swallow is energetic but light, and almost constant.

Within a structure noted for its cold sandstone and imposing features, the swallows are a delightful burst of levity as cloisters and turrets become an entertaining obstacle course. It is only once the sun sets that they are finally still, returning to the nest as silence descends for the night on the Quadrangle lawns.



Alice and Shania go to a secret garden

SHANIA O'BRIEN & ALICE TRENOWETH-CRESWELL
ART BY SHANIA O'BRIEN

An alternative history of Wendy Whiteley's garden.

"And we shall walk and talk in gardens all misty and wet with rain. And we shall never never grow so old again."

Wendy Whiteley's secret garden is arranged in a swirling whirlpool of hidden pathways and cluttered gardens, and is settled over multiple levels of greenery. Bangalow palms shoot up from the sandstone rockface, bright orange nasturtiums pop out from walls, and potted flowers hang from drooping trees. Groups of children run rampant through the never ending pathways, kicking soccer balls and searching for fairies hidden amongst the flowerbeds. Statues of cherubs pluck away at mandolins, trees are etched with the names of long-lost lovers, and a single marble lion stands guard over the garden path.

The blustering wind and sun's wanton rays met us at the top of Milsons Point Station. It's the first stiflingly hot day Sydney has seen this spring, and yet as we took our first steps into Whiteley's secret garden, the gust came to a standstill. Sounds of the city were drowned out by avian trills and the soft lull of a lyre in the distance. Gossamer-winged butterflies hastily approached us as we walked through the garden, encircling us and leading us down into the heart of the garden. Following our winged friends had us feeling like Shirley Barber's Sarah Jane, dreaming of enchanted woods and spellbound by the emerald canopies that protected us from the scorching 36°C heat.

Wendy Whiteley's secret garden has long been imagined to be home to mystical creatures and local folklore. Hidden away behind the T1 train tracks, the garden offers respite from the concrete jungle of its surrounds. At the little fountain towards the west, parrots, kookaburras, and tiny wagtails take to the water for sustenance. But in the dark of night, as the twinkling lights of the city fade to nothing and shadows envelop Lavender Bay, it is said that the water is a meeting place for the little people who live in the miniature houses scattered around the space. The little cottages, with their pastel facades, sit along the walkway, watching the passers-by filter down. The little people chatter away, weaving tales around the lives of visitors and befriending a lucky few who frequent the garden enough.

On days the full moon obscures the garish stars, phantoms of will-o'-the-wisps are visible dancing through the celestial light in thistledown skirts —

their swift bodies spinning around and around, wishes waiting to be granted. They materialised on the night we spent trawling through the shrubbery in wait for a miracle. Angel's trumpets bloom under the Broddingnagian Port Jackson Fig tree, its sprawling roots sectioning off flower beds. If local town folklore is to be believed, a version of every person who stands below the fig tree at sundown is stored within its rootstock, and their apparitions haunt the harbourside from dusk 'till dawn.

Wendy Whiteley came upon the garden in the years following the death of her late-husband, avant-garde artist Brett Whiteley. The pair had lived at 1 Walker Street in Lavender Bay from the



1970s, and the suburb inspired much of his work. The electric blue harbour gleams across Whiteley's depictions of Sydney by night in artworks like The balcony 2, and Self portrait in the studio in his Archibald-prize winning self-portrait. The couple raised their daughter Arkie beneath the Walker Street tower, crawling across canvases and watching the sun set on the Lavender Bay Jetty.

Brett infamously died in a motel down the south coast in 1992, and in the weeks that followed Wendy was stricken with grief. She returned to the lower North Shore in search of

"It is not always easy to build something beautiful out of pain and grief, but this space is a testament to the reality that things grow where they belong, whether or not they were planted."

control and closure, and found herself in the garden underneath her home. She cleared away old piles of rubbish, did away with the neglected train carriages, and hacked at the overgrown

gang of locals maintained the garden — pruning the paper mulberry tree, trimming the geraniums, and picking the sugar plum tree. It was only in 2015 that NSW Transport passed on the land to North Sydney Council, and the garden solidified its place on the foreshore.

In Hinduism, there is a folktale called, 'How Night Came Into Being.' It tells the story of a brother and sister who, for years, roamed the earth under the warm comfort of the sun. Upon the death of her brother, her grief caused floods, fires, destruction across the world. The gods, concerned for the fate of the universe, enveloped her in their comfort and gave her the gift of tomorrow. They painted the sunset upon the sky and conjured a twinkling blanket of stars to lull the sister in her sleep, for when she awoke the sun would shine brighter than ever, and she would be another day further from her grief. As day turns to night in Wendy Whiteley's secret garden, we think of the privilege of planning for another day under the sun, another evening where we can sit and watch as the wind moves the clouds.

We came to the garden in search of inspiration, with the hope of writing about its history and legacy. It was difficult for us to articulate the sequence of events that brought us here, the very ones we aimed to pen down. It is not always easy to build something beautiful out of pain and grief, but this space is testament to the reality that things grow where they belong, whether or not they were planted.

As the sun rises over the harbour, we climb up the jagged steps toward the rows of houses that rest atop the rocks. They glow with a sense of promise that burdens the likes of storytellers, each brick chosen with the intention to create. We think of Wendy with every tread, her grief bleeding into one of the most magical places we have visited. Ladybugs crawl out of creeks and take flight across the light-kissed daisies. The garden is something of a haven for all life, big or very, very small.

"And I will stroll the merry way, and jump the hedges first. And I will drink the clear, clean water for to quench my thirst. And I shall watch the ferry-boats, and they'll get high. On a bluer ocean against tomorrow's sky." — Van Morrison, 'Sweet Thing'

Vexing vexillogy: Sydney's botched banner

ANDY PARK

The Sydney flag isn't just ugly, it's an explicit recount of the city's colonial history.

"[The flag] doesn't mean we owe allegiance, To a forgotten imperial dream, We've the stars to show where we're going, And the old flag to show where we've been."
— Our Flag by Robin Northover (1986)

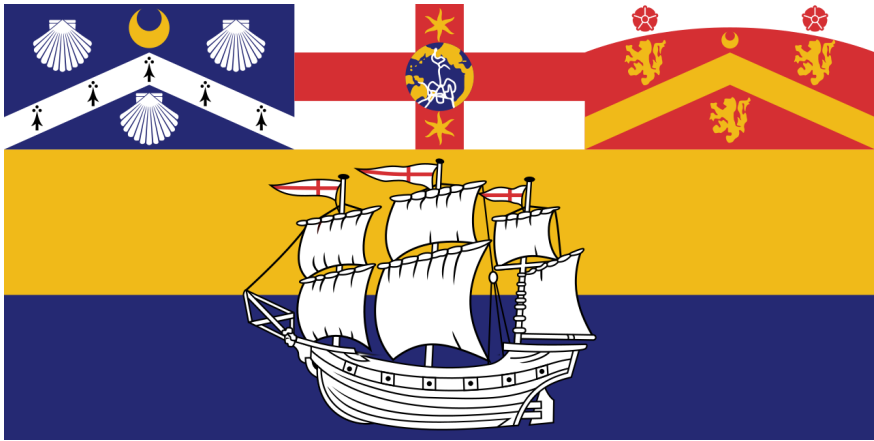
In 1989, vexillographer John Vaughan digitised a flag (originally designed by others in 1908) that commits all the cardinal sins of flag design. There is a clear lack of a colour scheme and the imagery is wildly cluttered; reminiscent of a primary school Photoshop project. And yet, it is proudly the official flag of our very own City of Sydney. While we don't see it very often, the flag is flown atop Sydney Town Hall and the Supreme Court and is used in ceremonial occasions.

Flags serve an important representative function. Lying at the curious intersection of materiality and abstraction, flags construct meaning in both the communication of symbolic meaning and the physical context in which they are used. These layers coalesce to represent a collective sense of identity, whether that be for a nation

or a broader social movement. Vaughan himself recognised this function. He said, "A flag, to me, represented a history book; it told the story of a country or a place...everything about this was in that flag and its constituent devices."

So what is the story of Sydney that is being told in its flag?

Vaughan certainly puts his money where his mouth is — the flag is an explicit recount of the city's colonial history. In the top left, there are the arms of Thomas Townshend (Lord Sydney) after whom the city is named. Townshend was a British politician who sat in the House of Commons in the 18th Century. In the centre is the posthumous arms of James Cook superimposed on the English Naval Flag. Finally, in the top right are the arms of the first Lord Mayor of Sydney, Sir Thomas Hughes. The ship — a focal point — is said to represent Sydney's



Urn spotting: the ghosts of Sydney's skyline

GRACE LAGAN

Looking for little ornaments.

I spent those first few days out of lockdown just drinking at home. It felt less like coming back from a trip away and more like waking from a nightmare, stirring in lukewarm sheets in an uneasy and overwhelming relief because it's all okay, everything is still where it belongs.

I giddily watched the stray threads of suburbia unravel outside the carriage window on my first trip on the T2 line in five months. I have always loved this view of the inner west, of its streets crammed with a hodgepodge of architectural styles: the complex

Queen Anne roofs, the eclectic pseudo-industrial condominiums. Rising above them all were my beloved Victorian terraces, stately and coquettish all at once.

Only this time, I noticed a feature on many of them I hadn't caught before: small, rotund ornaments squatted like little demons on the corners of their roofs. Long after I disembarked that train I kept noticing them, dotted across the inner west and east. I finally found the answer on the Vanishing Sydney blog: I was looking at urns, a very strange little remnant of 1880s architectural tastes.

The use of urns as home decor stems from the Victorian fascination with dying, an interest that can be traced to the high visibility of death in 19th century England. Victorians

of all classes died in their homes rather than hospitals. Death was also hardly uncommon especially for large, working class homes highly susceptible to disease. Finally, the death of the Queen's beloved husband, Prince Albert, in 1861 cemented mourning in the public consciousness.

In other words, death was not dealt with at an institutional arm's length as is commonplace across contemporary Western societies. It played out in private and public, on a personal and national level, encouraging lavish investment in the spectacle of death on the part of the wealthiest Victorians. This, combined with a coveting of classical antiquity, manifested in the use of urns as ornaments. Urns as an architectural feature are most commonly found in Australia on buildings completed in the 1880s.

Nonetheless, these strange little ornaments adorned in unwilling flowers and bird shit seemed ludicrously out of place in the Sydney skyline: ghosts caught in the burning light of the southern sun. They needed to be dramatically imposed against a dreary, rainy sky, not suspended in the fluttering leaves of Moreton bay figs, abruptly awoken from their eerie slumber by the screeching of cockatoos and meandering antipodean accents.

These urns began to spook me.

Most perniciously, the flag actively celebrates the British invasion of the continent which instigated the genocide and continual oppression of Indigenous people. The English Naval Flag in the centre is said to acknowledge Arthur Phillip's role in Australia's foundation, commemorating the moment when the Union Jack was placed on First Nations land and claimed for the British Empire.

For us, It's important to notice how normalised this colonial ideology has become. As perverse as the flag is upon reflection, the imagery does feel rather apt despite its poor execution. Hence, we mustn't stop at having the flag changed but also envision a world where such a flag would be unnatural and peculiar, not merely unattractive. In a country where Cathy Freeman flying the Indigenous flag at the Olympics was met with conservative furor, such a world can seem idealistic and unattainable — but that is exactly the post-colonial world we ultimately fight for.

Perhaps, it begins with the flag of the Eora nation rippling in the wind of a Sydney breeze.

Spotting them felt like being in a graveyard on a summer's day I could only escape from by turning my gaze firmly to the ground. This grandiose, melodramatic allusion to the art of mourning rather than the dead themselves seemed particularly absurd when imposed on a violent and ongoing colonial project. The bitter irony of erecting fake memorials on a land where there is so much to be mourned and confronted would hardly be lost on anyone who stopped to ponder it. We as white Australians yet again marvel at the bloodless, macabre beauty of our quaint monuments, all the while continuing to deny, suppress, and erase the truth.

I can only imagine urn spotting gets weirder as the weather warms up, the bounce of the heat waves breathing unsettling life into these morbid little ornaments. Occasionally you see the stump where one has been removed in an overzealous renovation or unceremoniously rolled off in a shrieking summer storm. This does indeed spark joy. But the ones that remain have become a strange and apt record not of this nation's past, but white Australia's preference for imposing foreign, constructed histories in lieu of grappling with the real tragedy.

Eastwood: a unique slice of suburbia

JEFFREY KHOO

Eastwood has anchored the lives of migrant families like my own.

When I say I live in Eastwood, most people aren’t quite sure where it is. “Is that near Epping or Macquarie University?” they ask, always in relation to other suburbs, but rarely in its own right. This makes me slightly disheartened, as I’ve grown to love Eastwood’s distinctive charms. Located in Sydney’s leafy Northern Suburbs, Eastwood’s Chinese and Korean neighbourhoods are split down the middle by the train line. (Justin Li, admin of Facebook page Humans of Eastwood Daily, says that locals affectionately compare it to the DMZ separating North and South Korea, but without any hint of geopolitical animosity.) When Eastwood Station opened in 1886, the town centre naturally grew around it, making Eastwood one of Sydney’s most train-accessible suburbs. On the station’s ‘Chinese side,’ an array of regional Chinese cuisines line the street: spicy mouth-numbing hotpot from Chongqing, crispy roast goose from Shunde, or indulgent *xiao long bao* from Shanghai (make sure to carefully poke a hole in the dumpling to slurp the hot soup, which is rich and meaty and coats your mouth). The Superfresh greengrocer displays rows of fresh watermelons, pomelos and mangoes out in the open air, while vendors shout prices to customers jostling for the best deals. And under the plaza’s tree-lined archway, you’ll find elderly Chinese residents practicing tai chi, their movements steadfast and resolute in contrast to the bustling shops around them. Meanwhile, on the ‘Korean side,’

Korean BBQ joints serve platters of sizzling meats and *banchan* (side dishes like crunchy pickled radish or sour-spicy mounds of kimchi); well-dressed ladies catch up over coffee; and schoolkids dig into spicy Korean fried chicken or chewy *tteokbokki* rice cakes. Unlike most suburban shopping strips with overly-commercialised megamalls, Eastwood is “a really vibrant town centre with many migrant-owned businesses,” Jerome Laxale, the Mayor of Ryde, tells me. “It’s got its own unique character that is hard to replicate in other areas of Sydney.” My memories of Eastwood are intimately tied to food. On the way home from school, Mum would drive me and my brother to grab pork floss buns from a Chinese bakery. Compared to Western bakeries, their breads are soft, pillowy and super cheap. The egg tarts - a buttery crust encasing a wobbly custard filling - were always a highlight. After studying at the library, I’d visit the Tonyon Asian supermarket to hunt for snacks, or I’d peer at the glistening *siu aap* (roast duck) hanging in the window of the Cantonese BBQ stores, which are amusingly located right next to each other. No-nonsense chefs would chop up *char siu* (roast pork) for my family’s dinner, skilfully operating cleavers as if they’re part of their hands, and I’d note the charred bits to steal for myself. Eastwood’s status as an ethnic enclave is relatively new. The suburb sits on the land of the Wallumedegal people, bounded by the Lane Cove and Parramatta Rivers. After colonisation, Eastwood became known for its orchards; in the 1860s, Mary Ann Smith accidentally created a sour, crunchy green apple, and now Granny Smith apples are sold all over the world. Local history books describe Eastwood as a “sleepy rural outpost,” with frogs living

in swamps where the oval now is, and the towering Eastwood Brickworks supplied the nation’s post-war building boom. Parking spots are rare in Eastwood, and drivers and pedestrians alike have a reputation for being belligerent; there’s one particular zebra crossing that’s infamous for being a free-for-all. But that stretch of shops down Rowe Street is my spiritual home. Every Saturday morning, my mum and I braved the crowds shopping for groceries, trying to squeeze past grandmas and their shopping trolley bags in the vegetable aisle at Superfresh. I’d grab a bubble tea while kids would play in the fountain (which ran out of water years ago). Eastwood is also where I had long chats with Baopu and Alan when I decided to run for *Honi*, and I’m eternally grateful for their advice. Sadly, not all the places I revered as a child are still standing (although the Yogurberry near the station did survive the 2013 fro-yo craze). In 2015, Humans of Eastwood Daily was flooded with despairing comments when the Red Rooster of Eastwood (not affiliated with the national chain) closed down, due to a greedy landlord hiking up rents. It was legendary amongst kids before tutoring classes for its moreish crinkle-cut chips doused with chicken salt and gravy, so hot that you could only eat it with a fork. Residents of Eastwood love its sense of community. The annual Granny Smith Festival, which attracts 90,000 people, allows local organisations and cultural groups to come together, says Laxale. To me, Eastwood counteracts a sad trend in suburbia, where people become isolated from their community and lose touch with their neighbours. Eastwood has anchored the lives of countless migrant families like my own. My parents moved here in the 1990s, when Pauline Hanson thundered about ethnic “ghettos” and Australia

being “swamped by Asians” on the national news. At a time when much of white Australia wouldn’t welcome them, Eastwood offered comfort and the promise of a new life for Asian migrants. Just hearing Korean or Chinese spoken on the street, or seeing signs in their language, made a difference. In the 1950s, Italian and Greek migrants also made their homes here; while before them, industrious Chinese market gardeners sold vegetables in the 1920s. I’ve always been acutely aware that Eastwood is not a “normal” or representative suburb. As a teenager, I almost resented it for its “Asian-ness,” feeling like I was living in a sheltered neighbourhood plucked out of another era. But now that I’m older, I’ve realised that living in Eastwood has made me - a second-generation migrant who can only speak English - feel proud of my cultural heritage. It’s helped me find things in common with my parents’ upbringing in Malaysia, and it’s never shamed my family for having our roots elsewhere in the world. Across Eastwood station, next to the croquet club (which I must explore one day), is Eastwood Oval. It’s a place for everyone; kids play soccer on Sunday mornings; highschoolers sneak bottles of cheap soju from Korean supermarkets and drink late at night; and parents and grandparents bring paddles to play table tennis in the day. As I consider moving out of home next year, I find myself actively looking for a neighbourhood with that same sense of cultural diversity (and of course, fantastic Asian supermarkets). The suburbs are often decried as dull and boring, and there’s truth to that. But Eastwood shows the power of a community bonded by shared cultural experiences. Eastwood is a unique slice of suburbia, and I’ll always return home.

Cultural remedies to get you through this assessment period

NANDINI DHIR

Tried and tested remedies from cultures around the world.

When the exam season dawns upon students, late nights turn into early mornings and the dreaded fear that cramming will not be enough to scrape a pass becomes all too real. Alongside the ordinary exam habits of getting enough sleep and eating well, trying out a cultural remedy or two can’t hurt. **Baadaam: Blanched Almonds** This Indian tradition encapsulates every weekday morning in school when my grandma would give us skinned almonds to chew during the car ride. “Chew on them until it becomes like toothpaste and swallow it; it’ll make you smarter,” is what my dad told me. To remove the skin of almonds, pour warm water over a handful of almonds in a bowl and soak them overnight. The following morning, peel the skin off and drain out the water. As this tradition goes, eat seven almonds a day and you

will become intelligent! **Puasa Mutih: White Fasting** Travelling to Indonesia, *puasa mutih* will repel evil spirits and awaken your inner spirit to strengthen your mind for the exam block. Translating literally to *white fasting*, this diet consists of only white food and liquid prior to an exam, so you best stock up on rice, boiled eggs, white bread and milk. Its origins trace back to spiritual *Kejawèn* beliefs in Java, where fasting cleanses the soul and wards off evil. This concept of fasting to cleanse and purify the body has been taken into modern context as a way of preparing for exams. **Miyeokguk: Seaweed Soup** In Korea, students avoid seaweed soup, *miyeokguk*, before an exam because it is believed that its slippery consistency lets knowledge slip from your mind. However, seaweed has minerals that support cognitive functions and are great because of its nutritional value. It has become common for mothers across Malaysia to feed seaweed soup to their children before sitting for exams. So you may need to take your chances with this one.

Ward off the Devil If the devil on your shoulder is telling you to binge-watch a TV show the night that an assessment is due, you might want to spit over your left shoulder three times and knock on wood. The idea of spitting on the devil is prevalent across many cultures and religions, namely Russians, Jews, Islamics and Greeks. **Za’atar: Spice Mix** For centuries across the Middle East, parents have fed their children *za’atar*, dried herb spice mix, before exams because it was believed to make you more intelligent. This belief has been proven to have some accuracy. The nutrients, oils and antioxidants in za’atar are effective for improving memory retention, energy levels and your overall mood. Mix za’atar with olive oil, spread onto some warm flatbread, and you can sit your exam in a good mood! **Cooked Barley** In Sri Lanka, barley is believed to have a number of benefits, from soothing sore throats to warding off the evil. Cooked barley is not only believed to make you smarter, but is also said to give your face a natural glow. Prepare the barley

just like rice, bringing it to a boil before reducing heat and simmering with a lid for 20 to 40 minutes (depending on the type of barley you use). **Buddhi Vardhak: Yoghurt and Sugar** Just before you sit for an exam, eat a spoonful of yogurt with sugar. *Ayurveda* (a medicinal system in India) suggests that foods with sweetness help long term memory and cognitive capabilities, also referred to as *Buddhi Vardhak*. So, if you are taking a spoonful of yoghurt, do not skip out on the sugar! If these remedies have worked for hundreds of years across the world, I think we can all benefit from a bit of za’atar, cooked barley and boiled egg. But, just before you write an absurd grocery list to get ready for this exam season, I will share my grandfather’s advice; *study thoroughly*.

Eating Indian

RHEA THOMAS

In India, food is a love language.

Paiye thinnal, panayaum thinnam. This Malayalam idiom was one frequently said to me by my mother when I was younger, often when I would be downing a meal at a rate usually reserved for fast-food. It roughly translates to “if you eat slowly, you can eat a palm tree.” While this idiom isn’t ordinarily used in the case of eating or even food – rather, in a context similar to “slow and steady wins the race” – food and eating seeps into every aspect of growing up Indian. Turmeric fluorescence, dollops of creamed coconut, and the indulgent inhalation of freshly fried mustard seeds in an explosive pool of ghee are all common features of a South Indian household – if the smell doesn’t make you salivate, you need only to take a few more steps forward. The cuisines of Kerala, Tamil Nadu,

Karnataka, and other regions of South India are known for its tight preservation of ancient delicacies, undoubtedly due to its peninsular location. However, for every traditional dish, I feel as though I could list an equal interaction that has made me roll my eyes at the Western standard held for the execution of Indian cuisine, and vice versa. On one occasion (during a bizarre retelling of how once, as a child, I *nearly* ate a cockroach shell thinking it was fried fish), someone cleared their throat to point out that if a fish is that brown, it is simply burnt – missed the point, if you ask me. In second year, I arrived at my lecture theatre half-an-hour early and took a seat at the back, far from the persecuting noses of two other students to eat a delicious lunch of ghee rice and coconut fish curry, only to be documented on the Instagram story of a student who felt it was their duty to share the mysterious stench gripping their nostrils with their barely-existent followers. Other common questions include, “Why does your pizza taste Indian?” and “Do you eat with the same

Speaking about Starbucking: Winter’s White Whale

AIDAN POLLOCK

Visiting every single Starbucks in the world.

Aidan Pollock: How are you? Winter: Oh I’m doing great. I’m all sweaty because I, uh, walked from the airport to the Starbucks for the first time. In my six trips to Hawaii, this is the first time I’ve walked to the Starbucks. My conversation with Winter was punctuated by the demands of his life-project of Starbucking. Beginning in 1997, Winter has visited 16,532 Starbucks at the time of writing. This call was undertaken in three parts, the first while he was waiting for a plane to take him to Honolulu from Kahalui in order to visit five Starbucks stores, photograph them, and consume a caffeinated beverage at each. As he waited for his plane to board I spoke to him about his current Hawaiian “blitz”. *AP: Where do you decide to go to next? Obviously Hawaii is beautiful, does that come into your exploration of certain areas?* W: Oh, no. This was not actually a decision that I made. This is just following the logical path... Once I was in Canada due to the entry requirements, I was forced into a route that took me all across the country... It’s not just the time and logistical issues, it’s also an environmental issue... If you’re involved in a project that, by nature, has a large carbon footprint because it involves travel, but you are also environmentally conscious, then the compromise is to do it in the most environmentally friendly way possible. Throughout the conversation, a deep sense of pragmatism came through in the way Winter spoke of the project. While Starbucking may be read as a critique of the endless growth of capitalist culture (a Sisyphean chasing of the stop button on the hedonic treadmill), Winter’s caffeinated pursuit leans less ‘art-school

project’, instead mostly existing for its own sake, a project that was birthed as a ‘why not?’, while affirming Winter’s goal-oriented mindset and willingly nomadic lifestyle. It’s what surrounds Starbucking, the exploration inherent in the constraints of his journey, that form the pleasures and blood-cells of Starbucking. The brand of Starbucks, its corporate cult-of-personality, is secondary to its sheer number of stores. It is the number that Winter collects, his preference for coffee aligned more with indie coffee houses than the individual nodes of Starbucks’ sprawling retail network. *AP: I notice you focus a lot on Colombian beans. How much of a bean-aficionado are you?* W: I’m not sure what you mean by bean-aficionado but I will say the Colombian coffees are some of my favourite. I have two countries that I would consider some of my favourites, Kenya and Colombia, with Ethiopia coming in a close second. Starbucking is not simply number-keeping nor a mechanical process. In its significance in Winter’s life, the story and methodology of it flow out from each individual store, it becomes the hours between stores, the breaths between sips – downtime is taken in consideration with the next store’s location. With ever-present commitment to a goal comes its everlasting presence. The story of Starbucking is the story of Winter. W: I think there’s something definitely performative about what I’m doing. If the goal were just to document the Starbucks, then I would crowdsource it and have people send me pictures. But that’s not the primary goal, and any time you’re trying to do something unique... if you’re just an athlete trying to break a record, there’s still a performative element to that. *AP: There’s still a human in the analytical.* W: Yes. The second call with Winter began after his flight to Kalahui, as he was waiting for his rental car.

hand you wipe with?” There are, however, things that should be recognised about South Asian cuisine that often go unnoticed, or are unfortunately homogenised in the single presumptive and virtue signalling phrase: “Oh! I had a fantastic butter chicken last weekend!” During a brief period of homesickness last year, my mum attempted to guide me through the process of making a staple chicken curry over a FaceTime call. “Add a bit of turmeric, and maybe a bit of the fenugreek...” she said. If it weren’t for the fact she forgot to tell me – or maybe it is common sense to know – to add the potatoes, perhaps the curry would have been a success. Recipes are one of the best examples of Indian oral tradition, one that rejects the rigidity of jotting down tablespoons and cup measurements, rather, taking an ‘a bit of this, and a bit of that’ approach, where salting is an implication not worth the inclusion of “salt to taste.” Indian cooking has always felt like a system of mass-feeding and hospitality, cemented in the instinct to

bring out platters spilling with snacks at a gathering of any size. Maybe this can be observed in that if you were to ask me for the name of a famous Keralan chef, I’d correct you to say ‘caterer’. The notion that food only exists for physical nourishment is a severe misunderstanding of an entire love language. I’m reminded of this when flicking through pages of near-identical, staged cake-feeding photos from past birthdays, or when my mother overfeeds my boyfriend when he’s too polite to decline. In 2019, when my grandfather passed away, my entire family was vegetarian for weeks. My grandmother would make pots of kanji and payar – rice soup with mung beans – accompanied by whatever achar we had at the time, or lentil soups like sambar and rasam to drench our rice. Indian food lives and breathes through waves of grief and celebration; the nucleus of a household in a way so maternal, and so humble that is frequently taken for granted.

you only liked guys, then I would have said: ‘so, can you picture yourself being with a woman?’ *AP: Right, yeah, I understand.* W: Yeah, yeah, have answered no, and I would have said, it’s kind of the same thing with me and a normal settled-down life, regular life, job, house, and all that. It’s just something that I have zero interest in. What I have interest in is a life where I’m constantly accomplishing things... Improving myself as a person, and then external accomplishments, or things that other people can appreciate, like Starbucking. As Howard Schultz named his store after the first mate of the Pequod, Starbuck, in the book *Moby Dick*, so too does Starbucks, the brand, seem to embody Winter’s White Whale. Journeying across the globe, camera in hand, he seeks the elusive whip of its tail, the flank under the waves. As Ahab becomes consumed with the chase, he follows it to his desire-wrought demise. Winter describes doing Starbucking until physically unable, or, presumably, until Starbucks ceases to exist. Next year, Winter will reach 25 years of Starbucking, and his 50th birthday. Our third call took place as Winter was grabbing dinner, having collected a keyless car that he could not figure out how to turn off. As his bento was going cold he told me of his plans to visit a new country next year, secure a publisher, and publish his book. As we said goodbye and ended the call, the lengths to which Winter goes in his Starbucking surfaced again. I saw a post on his Instagram an hour later of the interior of his car, the car-light on. It was going to be a sleepless night, it seemed. One might wonder what Winter would do were his goal achieved, were it achievable. But then, maybe the impossibility is what makes Starbucking possible. W: It’s one of those things I’m going to do once to get through it, but I don’t feel the need to read *Moby Dick* again.

The Sparks Between Us: Diary of a Tag and Test Officer

HARRY GAY
ART BY KRITIKA RATHORE

Clamping up for safety.

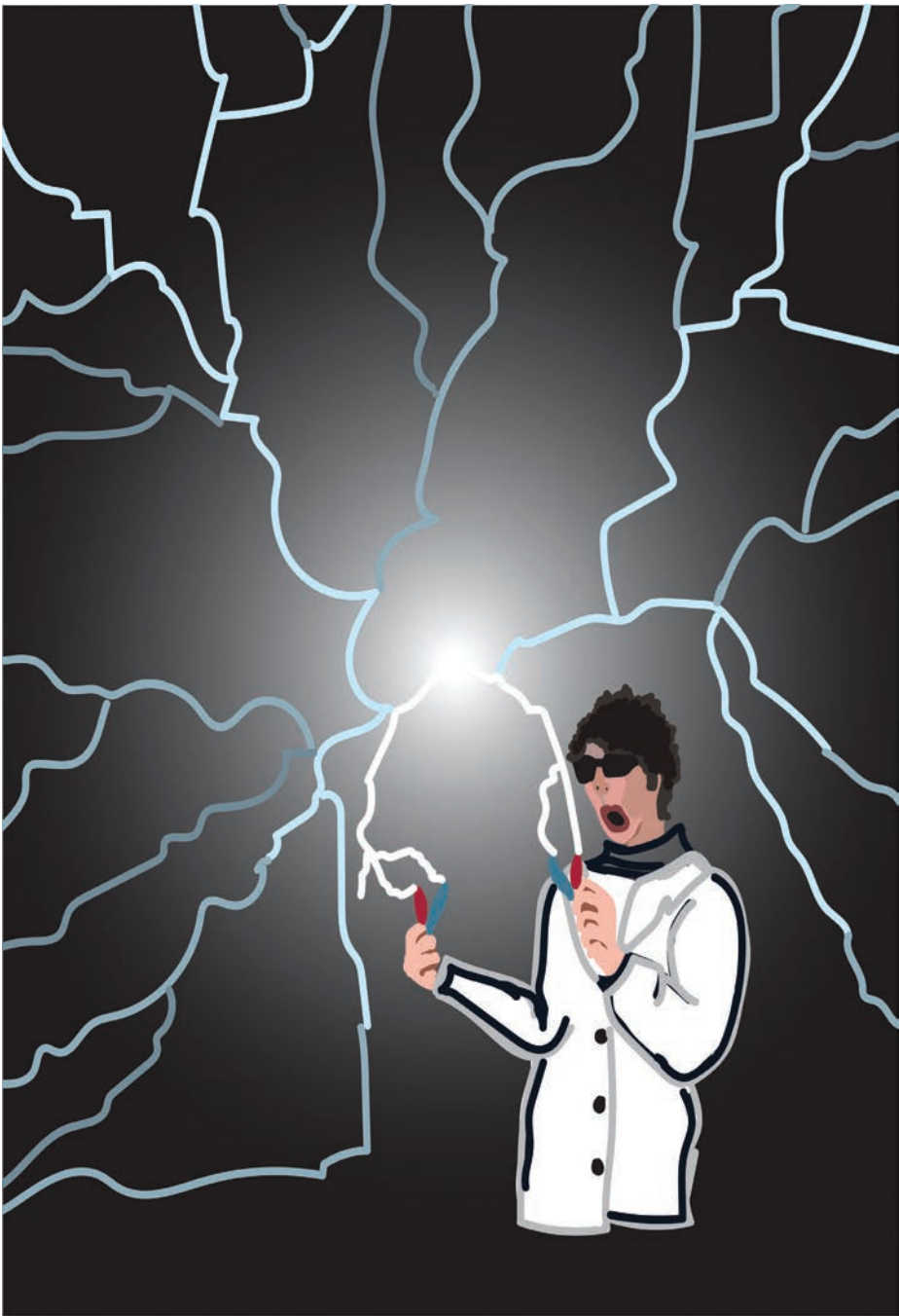
It’s 2018, and I’m in my first year at uni. I enter the bathrooms below the Carslaw building, and after doing my business, this wide eyed first year spots something amiss. Stuck on the electrical cable of the hand dryer was a small white tag. On the tag, you can find two dates, a testing date and a re-test date, along with the TTC (Tag Test Certificate) number of the person who tested the hand dryer. The date on the tag determines the safety of the apparatus in question. It had been a year since the dryer had been tested, and I was shaken to my core.

Tossing and turning in my bed and waking up in a cold sweat, the thought of someone using that hand dryer without realising the risk was enough to keep me up at night. Thankfully, the next time I checked, the machine had been re-tested. Perhaps some other concerned citizen had the guts to alert management of this danger or maybe some vigilante electrician crept in during the dead of night. Whatever the case, tag and test officers are often what stand between the ordinary person and certain doom.

I work at an op shop, and one of my duties is checking whether the electrical equipment donated by the public is safe to sell. The job required that I train for a day in the local RSL in a course where we learnt electrical safety, how to operate the tag and test machine, and how to coil a cable (it’s more complicated than you might think!).

The inspection at my job involves a few basic steps. First, you check for any visible signs of damage or danger, i.e. frayed or damaged wires, cracks in the exterior, twisted cords, broken black plastic on the prongs of the plug, etc. Then, you check which class it is. There’s Class A, Class B or lead, which are just extension cords. The technicals are not important, rather what separates them is that Class B items will often have a small square symbol on it, with a smaller square inside that one. We then create a circuit between our tag and test machine and the object, plugging it in and then hooking an alligator clamp to an open bit of metal. Firing up the machine and selecting the relevant class, a circuitous flow of electricity determines

if it is safe for use. If this flow is disrupted in any way within the object, then it’s no good. The officer then writes up a tag providing the testing date, along with their certificate number so they are held liable for any issues, and then they test the object exactly one year later to make sure it is still up to scratch.



The life of a tag and test officer is one of repetition and monotony. Sometimes you can get lulled into a state of tiredness and boredom at the hands of routine.

Many times I’ve shocked myself through little slip ups and ignorant mishaps. I don’t have enough fingers to count the times I’ve been electrocuted by the plugs on washing machines. Just recently, I was distracted by the chaotic environment of the back donation room, and simple-mindedly cut the cord of an item that was still plugged into the wall — setting

can be a game of heads or tails. I can recall one instance in which I was sitting down and testing a Nintendo 64 in my lap. Everything seemed fine with the machine, but once plugged into the wall, a miniscule buzzing sound could be heard. Suddenly, a loud bang and a puff of black fiery smoke erupted from the console. I leapt up quickly, dropping the 64 onto the ground and smashing it to bits, simultaneously dampening out the fire. I wasn’t injured, but if I had not been as careful, and simply went off what the machine told me and put it out into the shop, the next person who plugged it in might not have been so lucky.

While I’d like to say my idiocy is purely my own doing, high stakes and stressful environments can have anyone making mistakes. We work within larger apparatuses and systems, ones where the individual is forced to test numerous items as quickly as possible, with others lacking an understanding of the finer nuances of the process. The life of a tag and test worker should be relaxing and patient, one where you have all the time in the world to properly secure a safe working environment. Sadly, as with all workers, we are pushed to the limit, and often forced to rush what we do, leading to lethargy, mistakes and the boundary between life and death growing ever thinner. With all the items that pass through my hands, an immense pressure weighs on me that one day I might make a mistake that could spell the end of someone’s life, letting an item out into the shop and into the world that is wired wrong enough or isn’t protected quite right, and setting off a deadly kind of spark.

So yes, I can recognise why the hand dryer at USyd might not have been re-tested after a year. The job of the tag and test officer is misunderstood and rarely ever acknowledged. Most managers don’t consider it a necessity, but rather something that has to be done, something to be ticked off a checklist of workplace safety hazards rather than an art inofitself. If no one notices or notifies that an item has not been re-tested, managers will often try to put off hiring a tag and test officer for as long as they can. I hope that the USyd tag and test officer is doing okay, and isn’t being pushed too hard by those above trying to rush what is a delicate process requiring patience and understanding.

off a sudden spark and shutting down the store’s power.

Sometimes danger is unavoidable, a mere part of the process. Testing items

An excerpt from the ‘Managing Electrical Risks In the Workplace Code of Practice’

Electrical risks are risks of death, shock or other injury caused directly or indirectly by electricity. The most common electrical risks and causes of injury are:

- electric shock causing injury or death. The electric shock may be received by direct or indirect contact, tracking through or across a medium, or by arcing. For example, electric shock may result from indirect

contact where a conductive part that is not normally energised (such as a metal toaster body or a fence) becomes energised due to a fault

- fire (such as fire resulting from an electrical fault), arcing or explosion causing burns. These injuries are often suffered because arcing or explosion or both occur when high fault currents are present
- electric shock from ‘step-and-touch’ potentials, and
- toxic gases causing illness or death.

Burning and arcing associated with electrical equipment may release various gases and contaminants.

Even the briefest contact with electricity at 50 volts for alternating current (V a.c.) or 120 volts for direct current (V d.c.) can have serious consequences for a person’s health and safety. High voltage shocks (involving more than 1000 V a.c. or 1500 V d.c.) can cause contact burns and damage to internal organs.

Electric shocks may also lead to other injuries, including falls from ladders, scaffolds or other elevated work platforms. Other injuries or illnesses may include muscle spasms, palpitations, nausea, vomiting, collapse and unconsciousness. Workers using electricity may not be the only ones at risk—faulty electrical equipment and poor electrical installations can lead to fires that may also cause death or injury to others.

Along the yellow-block’s road

LUKE CASS

Tracking the sandstone of Sydney.

A city’s architecture is so often what gives it a unique character. The poppy pastels of Miami or the renaissance symmetry of Florence come to mind. In Sydney, the gold-hues of sandstone have come to dominate the inner-city’s architectural landscape since invasion. As the needs of Sydneysiders have changed, and as our understanding and attachment to architectural heritage has waned, so has our use of the unique sandstone that characterises the natural makeup of the Sydney basin. Architecture is completely interlinked with history and a region’s environment. Tracing the history of sandstone can offer a glimpse of the changes of Sydney’s history in a way that is often overlooked.

200 million years ago, fine silica sand from Broken Hill washed into the Sydney Basin, and accumulated into a bed that was 200 metres thick. The currents of ancient rivers washed through this sand, leaving the rock with gentle ripples flowing to the south. During the formation of the Great Dividing Range, the now solid rock was folded and lifted up to the surface, albeit unevenly, resulting in the six kilometres of shale and sandstone that currently lie underneath Sydney.

First Nations’ people mined sandstone across the country prior to invasion. In making various stone tools, including those for food preparation, sandstone was crafted into millstones and grinding instruments. Emu Plains, Long Bay, and Maroubra were sites where quartz and sandstone from open cut mines and quarries were used. Sandstone was also the canvas for the engravings of the Eora people, its softness being conducive to the process of carving and ongoing maintenance.

In 1778, settlers began to use sandstone, which was colloquially known as “yellow block” in construction. Yellow block was quickly deemed a high quality building material, as it is highly durable and a good insulator — qualities crucial in a fledgling colonial outpost with a harsh climate. The ubiquity of yellow brick in Sydney’s earliest post-invasion years meant that it lacked its association with inequality that it later attained. The Sydney Morning Herald reported in 1915 that “in the early days ... Sydney sandstone was so plentiful and so easily worked that no one thought of going afield” in search of it. Both government elites’ and convicts’ quarters were built of it, as were pubs and storehouses.

Following the gold rushes, and the associated material prosperity, sandstone exploded in popularity. As demand increased, extensive quarries

were established in Pyrmont, and on the lower north shore. They were used in the construction of significant government buildings, including the Art Gallery of New South Wales and Sydney Hospital. At the University of Sydney, the Quadrangle, original Fisher library and residential colleges amongst other buildings were built from Pyrmont Sandstone.

Aside from its use emulating colonial architectural styles, the destruction of Pyrmont in the pursuit of sandstone is an early example of the rock’s growing association with inequality. Quarries in Pyrmont were named ‘Purgatory’ and ‘Hell Hole’ by the quarriers, in reference to the horrible conditions they endured.

Eventually the sandstone ran out in Pyrmont, and new building materials became more fashionable. The expansion of residential boundaries following this change largely accounts for the concentration of sandstone in affluent, inner-city suburbs. The anti-sandstone revolution of the 20th century was so severe that governments considered tearing down existing buildings. Plans to tear down the QVB and replace it with a car park were seriously considered as part of a broader post-war affinity with the destruction of nice things and useful infrastructure. In The Rocks, only a union green ban prevented the demolition of sandstone buildings.

While sandstone is still abundant

beneath Sydney, little excavated rock is kept intact to be used in maintenance work. The State Government’s Centenary Stonework Program’s leader Ron Powell claims “there is nothing stopping developers at all from just trashing it.” The stonemasons who preserve sandstone are highly specialised, and their numbers are decreasing as young people neglect the pursuit of this ancient trade. As finance minister, Dominic Perrottet planned to outsource this work, in a move that could further accelerate the loss of the skills needed to maintain Sydney’s heritage.

Urban Political Ecology considers society and the environment as ontologically inseparable. As one spots the exposed peaks of the Blue Mountains, peers over the cliffs at The Gap or even attempts to grow something in the back garden, they see how sandstone pervades Sydney’s landscape. While sandstone has been harnessed for millennia and has nestled itself into society, quarrying has historically led to the systematic destruction of the environment in the service of the economy, as the Pyrmont quarriers could attest. It would be great to see more sandstone used in buildings around Sydney, but regardless, in our buildings and in our landscape, yellow block reminds us of the tenuousness of our relationship with nature, in a way that is unique to Sydney and its history.

Goodbye, Neighbour — An ode to Rewind Photo Lab

ROBERT HOANG
ART BY CLAIRE OLLIVAIN

Mourning Rewind’s move.

It’s a beautiful day in the neighbourhood. The sun shines on the Quadrangle once more, and nearby the University, just opposite Victoria Park, magic is happening behind closed doors.

Since 2016, Rewind Photo Lab has been an icon of analog photography in Sydney.

Proponents of both film and digital alike have drifted past its display of discarded film canisters, drawn in by the promise of quality film processing, scanning and photographic printing. To many, the process of chemically etching memories and portraits onto light-sensitive silver halide crystals sounds nothing short of magic. For co-founders Paul Trujillo and Stephen Frizza however, it’s all part of the job.

At their storefront in nearby Glebe, black walls and tiled floors enclosed a small space with shelves of developing chemicals, photography zines, vintage cameras and rolls of film. A small gallery of work showcased Sydney talent to look out for. You could find all the good stuff here — Kodak, Fujifilm, Ilford and Cinestill alongside Olympus, Nikon, Canon and a camera disguised as a Coca-Cola can. Their countertop was a light table. Every living room should have one.

But the Lab hasn’t always looked like this. Its first location was a less sleek workspace with white walls and timber flooring. Gone are the backlit table and photographer showcase, replaced largely by a cream countertop and vintage Ilford posters. Picture a ‘photo lab’ in your head, and you’ve got it. It wasn’t much to look at, but it was home.

Having Rewind close by to the University was like having a cool neighbour you could hang out with from time to time. Students often made their

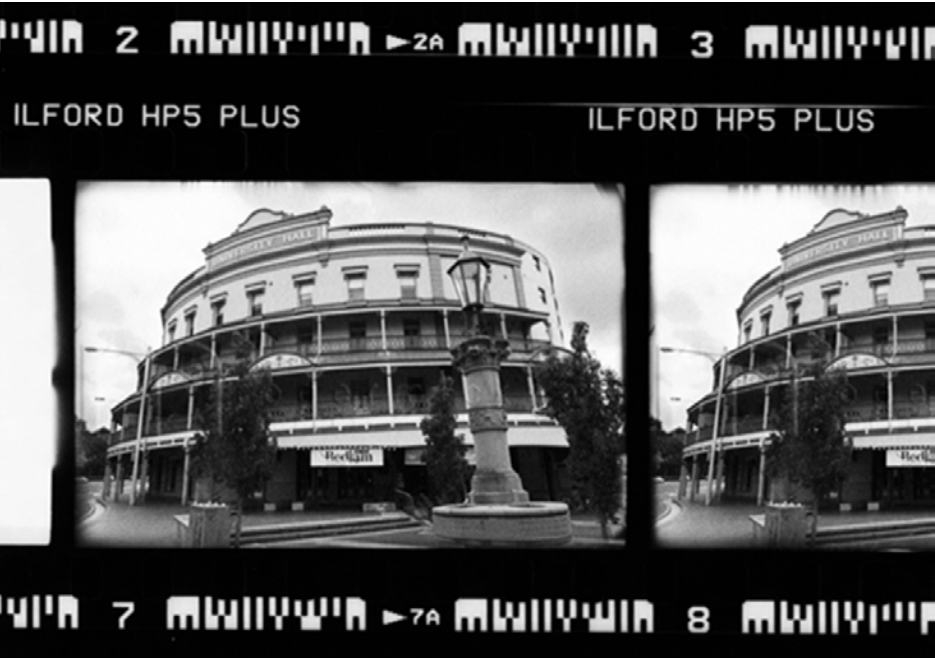
“Students often made their pilgrimage there between classes with rolls of undeveloped film, walking out shortly after with a large white folder full of negatives.”

pilgrimage there between classes with rolls of undeveloped film, walking out shortly after with a large white folder full of negatives. It wouldn’t be hard to imagine how many photographs of the Quadrangle have been developed there. I’ve taken a couple myself, having dropped into the lab every so often for the past four years. They didn’t have a rack full of Rewind merch back then, and they still had those ‘every-tenth-roll-free’ cards which were always awesome to have fully punched out.

As a business, it feels like Rewind has always been at the forefront of evolution. As its services expanded, so did its ambitions. Its co-founders — wizards really — have lived through the bankruptcy of Polaroid as well as the death of Kodachrome, but that hasn’t

stopped them from carrying on the spirit of film photography. They’ve helped out our very own Sydney Uni PhotoSoc run a few events, sponsoring an exhibition here and there. Rewind provided all of the prints for PhotoSoc’s 2019 ‘Retro’ exhibition.

The Lab has recently announced plans to shutter its doors opposite the road for good, moving elsewhere in 2022 to continue its mission of keeping vintage camera lovers close to a film development service. They’ll be offering more services than ever for photographers to choose from, and hopefully students at the University won’t have to go too far for their analog fix. The sun shines on over the neighbourhood once more.



All of my bad art friends

ARIANA HAGHIGHI & PATRICK MCKENZIE
ART BY BONNIE HUANG

The thrill of thievery.

You subscribe to lots of email newsletters, write morning pages, label drafts, back them up, plan scenes, delete trite metaphors, diligently network, attend a weekly reading group, a quarterly writing circle, and a semi-annual symposium. You meditate frequently on your artistic practice, receive a poorly paid fellowship for something, and are unequivocally a cat person.

You know so many interesting people and consider every one of them a source of inspiration. You either guffaw, cackle, or snigger at the thought of how they would react to the grievous act of you writing about them. You think about all the ways your monastic repetition of servile rituals might one day elevate you to the status of small-time thought leader. You sit above the keyboard, quivering under the imaginary weight of the moralising public discourse you aspire to one day evoke.

A fun science activity that explores the graceful interplay between gravity and air resistance.

He'd been pretty into folding them, paper helicopters, since he was five. The coolest thing was to stand along the balcony of his childhood home and drop one down, seeing if he could win the race against the object of his creation, catching it before it hit the ground.

The first one was an accident, but in a way they all are. He was driving home after a work function and saw a figure standing very still along the bridge's pedestrian walkway. His sociable self thought "Why not?" and pulled over. They chatted for a *really* long time until the person called a taxi for themselves and left. He spent a while thinking about it, realising his power, the unintentional lifeline, the secret satisfaction of it all. He journaled about it and told no one.

Eventually, he would spend weekends there, folding chair and esky stocked with beverages on hand. Like going on a fishing trip except very much not going on a fishing trip. Other supplies included a bucket hat, SPF 50+ sunscreen, portable phone charger, book, and bluetooth speaker. The best streak was three in one day (Blue Monday), the worst: none for a



month. Often, he learned it was people's birthdays and wondered why this was how they chose to celebrate. He told a friend about how he might phrase this interest on his online dating profile, but thought better of it later.

His father, the youngest chessmaster in the district. His mother, an astronomer. No wonder he was drawn to the black and white; he possessed a natal bent that determined he sit and play, play, play. His hands were a pair of spindly daddy-long-legs, stretching and embracing and fighting over the keys. He never rose from his work. He stitched a web more and more ornate, building a row of pews to proselytise and trap prostrate flies. If a thought with wings emerged from his mind, a morose memory, a raw recollection, it would stick and be stuck. Strangled by the silky thread, he could bid it farewell as it sang cries of the wounded. Farewell to his checkered past. Farewell to the accidentals that jarred scores of the past.

He never rose from his work. But his fame did, the fanfare did; it rose to a forte so deafening it reverberated in his emptying mind. It was once full and buzzing, but the cells lost energy, and abandoned him. All the while, he played, played, played. With every note, he was one semi-quaver further away from what he sought to escape. Semi-quaver, quaver, the source of his pain, crochet, minim, his wounding vice, semibreve. 8-bar rest. Slow the pace.

Life was once a suffocating allegro. *Legerdemain* faster than sound itself. Feet tiptoeing into the store. Lowered eyes, silent shuffling. Light lifting, his lean fingers his instruments. First a note, then a stave, then a score. He rehearsed the same overture: eyes meeting the employee's, fumbling small talk, a tight-lipped smile. Then for the refrain: the arched hand, the thieving clench. And the coda: the stuffed bag, the swift exit.

Fermata.

He applied to maintain and monitor the traffic light (the only one in town) because he had a desperate, primal urge to know how it all worked. While waiting at it for the umpteenth time, motivation struck. 4am, car idle, engine humming, street empty. The beaming red ignited a seething impatience and he

visualised a myopic attendant in a little booth somewhere, blank-faced, watching him through a CCTV feed, seated behind a panel with scattered buttons, switches, and something that you have to twist to activate. He didn't run the light – there was indeed a camera – but he'd played the long game and it was him behind the panel now.

He studied semiotics to develop the sensibility of signs, symbols, and signification. He would debate it constantly, but couldn't quite decide whether the yellow or red light was his favourite. He considered that pedestrians, albeit few, essentially pressed the button to ask, nay, beg to cross the road when they really needn't – and was suitably aroused. One day, he went on an unscheduled inspection to note down the model number etched on the base of the little control box on the nearby telegraph pole. With it, he located the maintenance manual in the old filing cabinet at work and took some scans of it which he transferred to his eReader. His superior, watching a camera while seated behind a slightly larger panel in a slightly larger booth elsewhere, rattled off an email to him asking about the inspection. He replied that it was to apply an industrial lubricant to the button mechanism.

On a night shift when he knew he wasn't being watched, he pressed, switched, and twisted the requisite instruments that would turn the light off of autopilot. Two cars approached in the distance, he decided to make them wait.

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual
5 of the following criteria must be fulfilled:

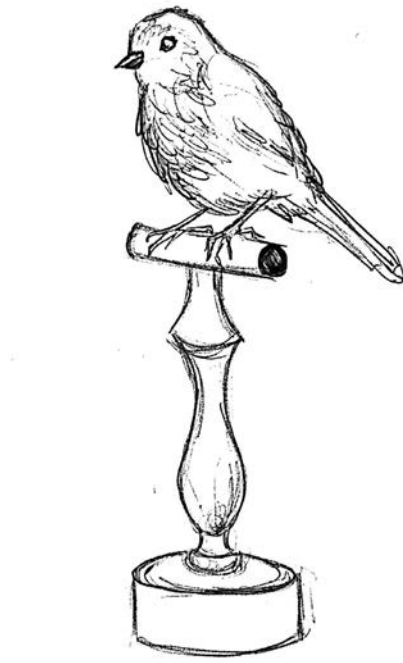
1. An active interest in the patient. In some cases, a hyper-fixation. The patient is the center of your solar system, and you are a revolving planet. They are the sun; you edge closer in awe, but without warning, the flares reach out and torch your arm. It is a dangerous game. You have to advance stealthily, as you do towards frightened wildlife shrouded in a bush. You have to be imperceptible. It's not hard – you know them better than anyone else.
2. Feelings of love and/or affection for a patient. Or the idea of a patient. In some cases, limerence, emotional co-dependency. There are more words to describe it than you require. No one warned you. Your second-year professor scoffed at the concept of "limerence." "If you're stuck in someone else's orbit," he'd say, "that's a choice."
3. Feelings of disconnection from the world around you. Like walking through fog. The world turns chiaroscuro, but her heart is beating and screaming colour.
4. Maladaptive daydreaming. Nothing is restrained in the dream.
5. A significant impairment in one's functioning.

Everything you've experienced is in your possession. Convey yourself accordingly. Were they seeking your praise, the people would have made themselves worthy of it."

You're told this, or something like it, by someone giving you advice. They gently, dryly, didactically hold one of your hands, placing their other arm a little further up, bringing it around your elbow as if not just to communicate – but to commune. Completely without delusion, they look you dead in the eyes and utter it like it is what gives their life meaning.

You know then that the adulation of your learned contemporaries is yours at last. Your brazen new voice and the prose that heralded it will surely be the subject of, at minimum, one third of the circlejerkery at the next writing retreat. You relish the infamy and question nothing.

Every year as the sultry stupor set in, the rising temperatures were a sign to start packing her bags. A wash of sweetness came over her every time the plane landed. The air was more crisp, and the wind lashed her as a reminder that it



missed her. She always nestled in the back garden once she'd arrive at her second home. The pigeons donned colours she'd never otherwise see. The pecking order was a vibrant clothing store, with spots, pale yellows and purple streaks. Her grandfather's chest would swell like a rock dove's breast when she affirmed his work.

As her cousins flocked to the mall with her grandmother, she opted to listen to her grandfather recall the scientific names of his beloved doves. If she could remember the name of a clade, her reward was a small red lollipop he kept in an old cookie tin. She would suck the cherry-medicine sweetness as the birds circled her, and claimed her as their own.

One summer, she didn't board a plane. She never tasted the crisp air again, her skin was never lashed. Instead: cross-legged in her room, eyes shut, she recited the names of birds. With each name chanted, she was joined by another colourful spectre at the feast of memory.

As she grew older, she couldn't shake the habit. She attended university and completed a perfunctory course in zoology, but only watched ornithology lectures. Barely scraping by with her knowledge of primates, she excelled in classes on bird anatomy, flying back to the place she once loved most. The taste of cherry formed in her mouth with every achievement, every honour.

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Musings on Layli and Majnun, and a soul in love

EAMONN MURPHY

Layli and Majnun is an allegory of mystical love.

Who can describe my being, since I've none;
Only my friend exists — all else is gone.

My love will last, secure and unbetrayed,
Until the glittering stars in heaven fade.

(Nezami Ganjavi, 1188)

When I was little, my mamani would read me a poem.

Once upon a time, a girl and a boy, Layli and Qais, met, and fell helplessly for each other. Layli's beauty was a miracle praised far and wide; her rose-like face and plump ruby lips glimmered in the Persian moonlight. Qais was entranced. He crafted poetry in her honour, professed his adoration time and again, wept iridescent tears for her, and in his flood of passion, he became Majnun — the madman.

As all love stories go, fate ripped our protagonists apart. Layli, of course, was forbidden from marrying a madman; and as one does, Majnun took to the desert. He roamed the sands yearning for her, singing, a nomad shunned from society. When she became overwrought with lovesickness, her soul destroyed, Layli died. Finding her grave, and cradling her forever sleeping body, Majnun followed her into eternity.

It is the story of our people. Though mamani and babayi are now far from Tehran, separated from the cherry blossoms and the emerald gardens and the barberry trees that stain white linen with scarlet welts, we have stories to take us there. Whenever mamani brought out her well-loved copy of Nezami Ganjavi's 1188 poem, *Layli and Majnun*, I saw a little bit of her world — the mosaic ceilings of rich

turquoise in mamani's ancestral home, the cypress forests that babayi would explore as a boy, the glittering sunlight as mum dipped her feet into the Caspian. Iran has since become a different world: even when mum was a child, amidst an Islamic Revolution, the country had begun to transform. She tells me about air strikes, about the police separating her from her father and brother in public, and about being forced to cover up, coming of age in a place of hate. Through *Layli and Majnun*, we see a better, beautiful Iran, and a cultural artefact to cherish.

Layli and Majnun is a story of young love, but growing up, I was largely enthralled by the poem's exotic animals. When I heard the tale of Majnun befriending lions, deer, wolves, a King Solomon speaking to all creation, I grinned. Back then, we had a VHS player, and my favourite tape was Disney's *Aladdin*, a hand-me-down from an older cousin; listening to the poem always reminded me of the film's palm trees and palaces, the monkeys and parrots and tigers, and the opulence of that ancient world.

Over time, my understanding of the poem evolved. As the Italian author, Italo Calvino, wrote, "At every rereading I seem to be reading a new book, for the first time ... I experience different and unexpected emotions, and do not find again those of before." Now, when I read Layli and Majnun, I cannot help but think of love. Ganjavi writes:

Look at how wrong you were to think of you,
Your self, so that this "you" was all you knew!

In love, we lose ourselves. When Layli and Majnun meet, their souls become entwined; any notion of individual being melts away. Here, the poem reflects a distinctly Sufi tenet — to reach a spiritual

apex, the self must be destroyed. In the *Sufi Journal*, Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee writes that *Layli and Majnun* is an allegory of mystical love: when we unite our soul with that of our "Beloved," we find truth, and flourish.

As I read this, I wonder how we love. Shouldn't we all be as mad as Ganjavi's Majnun? I think of how my dad loves my mum, how he calls her *joonam*, my beloved, how he draws a lopsided heart in her morning skinny cap, how they hold hands when he drives, how even after twenty years they have oh so much to say to each other, and as I watch them I realise that they have found spiritual truth. They are Layli and Majnun, and they are beautiful.

I think of my own heart, of the depths I haven't explored yet. When I read *Layli and Majnun*, I wonder what is to come. Ganjavi writes:

Love gave them its new wine, which worked within
These two so innocent of guile and sin
(The first time that we're drunk's the worst of all,
No fall hurts like the first time that we fall.)

that final line pierces me.
once upon a time, two lovers met,
and fell helplessly for each other.
did they, though? really?
what's to say that he felt helpless, entranced,
mad in yearning?
who ever really knows the experience of another?
i ask myself this as he says he doesn't think this is working
and i wonder why i ever felt helpless, entranced,
mad in yearning,
when all it led to was
a broken self.
no fall hurts like the first time that we fall.

Last week, mamani and babayi visited for the first time in months; our first family dinner since bleak June. My cousins came over, and babayi poured me a beer. Mamani had called a few days earlier, and asked what we would like her to make. I suggested my favourite *khoresh gheymeh*, a lamb stew with tart preserved limes, served with buttery tahdig. As always, it was perfect; mamani wouldn't have it any other way.

At the dinner table, mamani and I sat next to each other, and we spoke of *Layli and Majnun*. We marvelled at Ganjavi's depiction of place, the cherry blossoms and the emerald gardens and the barberry trees. We thought of Layli, with her rose-like face and plump ruby lips, and her soulmate, singing for his love across the desert sands. We mused on true love. *Layli and Majnun* is our favourite poem.



Vilette and the Moon

TASIA KUZNICHENKO

On how nighttime unleashes us.

In Amsterdam, the moon is unpredictable. Humans may have attempted to govern and explore it, and dictate its wax and wane, but as Winter subdued into Spring, I found myself searching for the moon later and later at night. Sometimes, it would rear its haloed head, anchored against an often starless sky. Other nights I missed its presence completely. Maybe I forgot to look for it, too distracted by life in a foreign city, but I preferred to believe the celestial being had a mind of its own, and maybe it just didn't feel like showing up.

The moon's place in literature dates back as early as the 10th Century, where a Japanese folktale called the *Tale of the Bamboo Cutter* first depicted the moon as an inhabited planet -- not quite Earth but an early science fiction interpretation of an alternative existence. The moon was popularised by the Romantics. Shelley, Coleridge, Yeats and Wordsworth were all fascinated with this "silent moon", a symbol easily manipulated in their prose to represent everything from the measurement of time, to love, virginity and metamorphosis.

You know then that the adulation of your learned contemporaries is yours at last. Your brazen new voice and the prose that heralded it will surely be the subject of, at minimum, one third of the circlejerkery at the next writing retreat. You relish the infamy and question nothing.

When you don't yet know the city you are living in well, night brings with it a new challenge. Navigating cobbled, narrow streets once familiar in the day, become disorienting but leave space

during my studies in the city of bicycles, I read Charlotte Brontë's lesser-known work, *Vilette*. The Gothic novel centres around a young governess Lucy Snow, and her life in the fictional town of Vilette (likely based on Belgium where the author spent time teaching).

For Brontë, the moon shone a light on the tension between feminine moral righteousness and expression, passion and emotional freedom. It was used to explore the social repression that the Brontë sisters were familiar with, whereby women were forced to restrict imagination and feeling. No example is more demonstrative than the fact the sisters could not publish their work under their own names.

In *Vilette*, the moon links to all that is irrational, conjuring up childhood tendencies of expressiveness and reflecting Lucy Snowe's inner conflict as she chooses logic over the self-fulfilment of her own inner desires. "A moon was in the sky, not a full moon, but a young crescent... she and the stars... my childhood knew them... Oh, my childhood! I had feelings". Anything less of mind is attributed to 'female hysteria', which she is countlessly diagnosed with by her love interest Dr John throughout the novel.

The moon has long been linked to femininity. In history, Homer associated

the moon with Greek and Roman goddesses such as Artemis, and in etymological patterns the Greek root of "Selene" and Latin root "luna" both have feminine endings. Brontë uses this classical tradition to her advantage, the pronouns 'she' and 'her' describe the natural figure throughout the work, "Rosy or fiery, she mounted now above a not distant bank; even while we watched her flushed ascent, she cleared to gold".

The novel's first-person narration allows meaning to be read into Lucy's own observations and descriptions. In fact, Kathrine Gillman wrote that "much of the natural symbolism evident in the text is a product of Lucy's... attempt to give inner form and expression to the emotions she tries so hard to suppress outwardly."

Although the novel mainly keeps to its critique of Victorian social norms, one particular human trait transcends its pages. Brontë brilliantly captured the tendency for nighttime to unleash a transformation of the self, injected by recklessness and the adventure that lies behind the shadowy darkness.

When you don't yet know the city you are living in well, night brings with it a new challenge. Navigating cobbled, narrow streets once familiar in the day, become disorienting but leave space

for the unexpected. Exposure to new substances probably didn't help; Jäger, anonymity, new friends and you can guess what else, created a cocktail of uncertainty, yet the unknown made it invigorating. A hidden canal glittering with reflections of neon signage, away from tourists or a tawdry rock n' roll themed bar with an interesting clientele would never be stumbled upon in sunlight.

I'll never know how rowdy Bronte got herself after a couple glasses of sherry, but under a "dubious light," her protagonist experiences a similar nighttime epiphany to one's I've had myself, she demands that "this night I will have my will". In a drugged-state, Lucy ventures out to a fete and follows the "ebb" of the crowd. Once lost and "outshone" by other lights, her pivotal turning point towards inner peace is now clear, "the rival lamps were dying. She held her course" under a "calm and stainless" moon.

As I read *Vilette*, I realised the moon metaphorically guides not only Lucy's way, but also my journey as a reader. It made me grateful for the 'irrational' women on the pages, and perhaps, it helped me justify my reckless, emotionally driven decisions on a night out, at least just a little.

STAY WIRED. STAY HUMBLE. STAY FOOLISH.

TYLER DANE WINGCO

Wired earphones are cool again.

I remember watching the old iPod ads in my early childhood, with their infectious rhythm; the colourful backgrounds, the silhouettes of dancers filled with *joie de vivre* in every step, and the harmony that tied (or tangled, rather) them all together, the swaying white wired headphones that cut through the silhouettes. It was an age of innocence and simplicity of youth, without the sense of headphone snobbery that permeates today.

Nearly two decades on, we’ve experienced listening to our music in vastly different ways as the accessory has evolved, from the chokehold that was Beats headphones and their obnoxious bulkiness, to the immersiveness of noise-cancelling devices, and now to the ubiquity and convenience of wireless headphones in their array of variants, notably the AirPods. But in this year of our Lorde, the wired headphones are having an apparent Renaissance, at least in the Gen Z TikTok community.

TikToker @thedigifairy trend-forecasted the resurgence in popularity of wired headphones as a “vintage”

accessory, comparing its equivalence to vinyl collecting in the 2010s. Visually, being wired-in “assures the aesthetic of listening to music,” as listening wirelessly makes for an innate disconnect with music. They also cite photos of celebrities (mostly nepotism babies and A-listers’ children) sporting the wired look. From Lily-Rose Depp to Bella Hadid, they give a nonchalant cool when wired-in - the it girl factor.

With other users confessing to swapping their AirPods for their wired predecessor to give a “Lily-Rose Depp look” or for a touch of Y2K, or simply to say they’re too unbothered to keep up with the latest gadgetry, it’s solidified the it girl as an aspirational aesthetic to emulate amongst the Gen Z TikTok community. One other trope Gen Z has aestheticised is old money: think east-coast Americana, Blair Waldorf, polo clubs, and country estates. Aestheticising old money “timeless staples” seems to provide a safe haven of longevity and stability for Gen Z, to retreat into the traditions of generational wealth at a time when constant uncertainty looms at the powers that be. It also makes for an interesting case in consumer behaviour, emulating old money through neutrals and natural fibres may signify a growing repulsion for micro-trends and an appreciation for slow-fashion. However,

one TikTok I came across had even aestheticised “reading” as an old money hobby - the lunacy.

But in defence of wired headphones, they never went out of use. As for myself, I’m always a little mortified to speak on the phone in public, and cupping my mouth so that my AirPods can pick up my voice doesn’t help, nor does it make me look any less like a finance bro moving markets on a lunch break. So wires it is. Sure, the unspoken cliqueness of AirPods users may have peer-pressured some, and no matter how hard Apple tried to accelerate the obsolescence of wired headphones, wires are still swaying off of ears (for most of whom I can assume are not raging aesthetes). However, lauding the it girl for using wired headphones demonstrates an interesting trend; they’re obviously able to afford the option of AirPods, yet by choosing to toss them aside for their older counterpart, they’re adored as a “trendsetter.” It reinforces how “being broke is an aesthetic.”

This touches on discussions of class appropriation - nothing new in fashion and dress. From Carhartt’s gentrification of blue-collar wear to the skater-boy urbanite, or middle-class high school boys’ eyebrow-furrowing fascination with high vis shirts in muck-up photos, seemingly to supplement

their masculinity with a deliberately donned layer of “labour” and ruggedness - this makes for appropriation to add some character they think they lack. Whilst posing arms flexed, stretching the polyester of their tapered high vis sleeves to its seams, their hands tell of a life that has never done a day of work.

Yet assigning the supposed “outdated” use of wired headphones to a class is inherently offensive - so why is it a trend? Lauding the it factor for the wired headphones’ Renaissance reminds me of the adage “is it fashion or is it just skinny?”. Where ubiquitous and mundane objects are being used by a certain archetype of person (usually privileged), is adored as ‘trendsetting’ and aspirational, yet on anyone else, it wouldn’t be as *aesthetic*.

Although Apple wouldn’t subject their wired headphones to marked-up prices, a consequence of class-appropriated objects, it turns subscribers to this fad as hedonistic chasers in a consumerist culture. But will this fad circulate in the fashion system long enough? Accessorised for the layered autumnal look, and with Australia being the backwater for all seasonal trends in the Anglosphere, I wonder if wired headphones will reach our shores upon our return to campus next March.

A WILD MESS – WHEN REVISIONIST WESTERNS GO WRONG

NAFEESA RAHMAN

Are all Revisionist Westerns just a waste of time?

There’s a reason why you haven’t heard about Westerns in a while. I’m talking the gun slinging, horse-riding, cowboys-and-outlaws-type Western. Stories of the sweeping, untamed deserts of the American frontier have long been a defining genre of the Hollywood film industry, pivoting on the iconic tropes of the white, male protagonist battling with the ‘savage’ native peoples and restoring morality in a lawless country. But these glorified themes that popularised the Western genre for decades are the very things that knock it down for a modern audience. Frankly, we’re no longer able to look past the racist undertones, blatant misogyny, and toxic masculinity which the classic Western film reeks of. Given the fact that the last Western to gross more than \$100 million at the box office was back in 1992 (Clint Eastwood’s ‘Unforgiven’), it does seem that the Western genre is truly dying out.

Or is it changing? Cue the rise of the Revisionist Western — a post-classic subgenre that departs from the original Western by lassooing it away from novelty-niche territory. Hailing from the same rebellious family as Spaghetti Westerns and the

Red Western, Revisionist Westerns use film techniques like subversion, appropriation, and parody to comment on some of the problematic tropes of the original genre.

But sometimes Revisionist Westerns do more harm than good. While the rest of the world was tuning into ‘Squid Game’, I made the unorthodox (and regrettable) decision to watch ‘Godless’, a 2017 Netflix miniseries that falsely advertises itself as a Revisionist Western to trap its victims into watching the show. As one of their poor victims, I was lured in by the trailer, posters, and Netflix plot synopsis which promotes the show as a ‘Western saga’ starring a predominantly female cast. The first couple of episodes did have me convinced. The story chronicles the events around La Belle, a dusty town populated by a clan of widowed women after a catastrophic mining accident took all of their husbands. The gritty girls have since had to stand up, dust themselves off, and regroup to defend their town against malevolent outsiders. But that’s pretty much all that is revisionist about this Western. After a while the story descends into a petty cat and mouse chase between two male outlaws, pushing the female heroines to the periphery and forcing them to don the cliché damsel-in-distress cloak. A Vox review of the show puts it perfectly: while ‘Godless’ had a lot of potential, it ultimately feels like “a missed opportunity” at something greater.

So are all Revisionist Westerns just a waste of time? Certainly not. According to my esteemed opinion, we can judge the success of a Revisionist Western by two criteria: firstly, it should be identifiably Western, and secondly, it should feature some contemporary revisionist themes that turn the tropes of the older genre on its head.

Take the case of ‘Django Unchained’ (2012), Quentin Tarantino’s sensational box office hit that ticks both of these boxes. While the film features the unmistakably rugged Western landscape packed with blazing gun fights and sordid outlaws, at the same time it hands the mic to a black protagonist — something radically unconventional for the classic Western. The protagonist, Django, is a former slave who joins forces with a bounty hunter to free his enslaved wife. It’s everything that a contemporary audience would want to see — a wildly unpredictable storyline, insanely badass fight sequences, and a strong anti-slavery message. And oh, Leonardo Di Caprio. What makes this film so successfully revisionist is that it does not take itself seriously at all. It takes the original Western genre by the horns and messes around with it to the point where it becomes absurdly historically inaccurate, but still identifiably Western.

The same could be said for Ang Lee’s ‘Brokeback Mountain’ (2005). This film is distinctively Western, and it’s not just the cowboy hats that give it away. Everything from the costuming,

horse-riding, and moral questioning makes you want to whistle an old tune and ride off into the sunset. Yet what sets it apart as a Revisionist Western is the defiant gay love story that forms the film’s main premise — a striking departure from the hyper masculine, heteronormative tropes that pepper the classic genre. You also won’t find any glamorised shootouts, overt heroes, or prototypical cowboy characters. Like ‘Django Unchained’, ‘Brokeback Mountain’ overtly goes against the grain without ever losing its integrity to the traditional Western.

So what of ‘Godless’? Next to these revisionist masterpieces, ‘Godless’ almost seems to cower, but not necessarily because it’s a bad Western. Rather, it’s a bad Revisionist Western. Essentially, the show makes a poor attempt to walk the precarious tightrope of honouring the classic Western genre, while also trying to be ‘woke’ enough for a modern audience. What results is a show that strives to comment on a stereotype through the performance of that same stereotype. Perhaps if ‘Godless’ quit trying to be historically accurate and just focused on the feminist aspect of the plotline, it would be less of a frustrating watch. But ultimately, ‘Godless’ fails at revising the racial and sexual misrepresentation with which the classic Western genre is rife. It’s just another nail in the coffin for Hollywood’s ailing Western genre.

LUXURY FASHION WILL SURVIVE CHINA S COMMON PROSPERITY LEGISLATIONS WITH A BASIC FACELIFT

ANQI TENG

Recent developments in China have ramifications for the luxury fashion industry.

I recently bought a \$70 AUD white t-shirt. It’s 100% cotton and finished impeccably. The shirt was crew necked and plain and sat long enough to be tucked in and short enough to look stylish when left out. Simply put, I don’t think there was anything more I would like from a t-shirt; at the seventy dollar price tag, this was going to be my forever t-shirt.

So what exactly is Gucci putting into their t-shirts to warrant a \$690 AUD price tag?

That’s not comparable, you might say. What you’re paying for is the design, the pattern, the novelty. Or, if you were a little more candid, you would tell me that I was paying \$600 extra for the Gucci logo.

Luxury logos are a form of currency. It broadcasts, to certain groups, prestige, refinement and status. China’s recent ‘shared prosperity’ legislation has threatened the survival of this currency, but luxury brands will undoubtedly find new and inventive ways to maintain the façade of prestige, so they can continue to sell to their second largest consumer market: China.

Under Deng Xiaoping’s economic reforms over forty years ago, Chinese citizens were able to create and hold onto

wealth for the first time since the start of the Cultural Revolution. This new-born wealth, coupled with the fact that Chinese culture equates appearances to status, heralded an era of flashy fashion in China. The tu-hao (loosely translated as the nouveau-riche) used their excess earnings to indulge in luxury fashion – slathering themselves with Louis Vuitton and Gucci monograms as an ostentatious reaction to the extended period of poverty that the country had overcome.

China’s appetite for luxury consumption further developed as single-child Chinese millennials, products of China’s one-child policy, grew into adults with lucrative allowances from their four grandparents and two parents. They view luxury fashion as powerful social capital that proves their sophistication and status.

This September, President Xi Jinping declared that the Chinese Communist Party will prioritise the pursuit of “gong tong fu yu”, meaning “shared prosperity”, as a way to combat income disparity in China. His speech outlined his expectations for the wealthy, one part of which is to refrain from ostentatious displays of wealth. Stricter tax evasion enforcement on the rich and famous has also been set in place. Notably, actress and ex-Prada brand ambassador Zheng Shuang was fined an impressive \$46 million USD for her tax violations.

In the days following President Xi’s speech, the reinvigorated animosity towards foreign investment and displays of wealth saw an approximate \$70 billion USD drop in European luxury

brand market value. The investors are afraid. Is this the end of luxury fashion consumption in China?

I think not. The anti-corruption legislation put in place in 2013 also saw an initial drop in luxury market value. At the time, ‘gifts’ bought on state money made up 25% of all luxury spending in China. Luxury fashion proved flexible and promptly changed its marketing angle to target personal shoppers rather than gift givers, facilitating the recovery of China’s luxury spending habits.

If logos, an overt display of wealth, are now a hesitant purchase because it places individuals under the vigilant eye of the government, there is no doubt new ways of adding inflated prestige to a garment will be invented.

It is helpful to first observe how luxury brands have reinvented themselves so far to capture the money of Chinese consumers. Couture fashion excluded, many luxury collections have mutated into logo-heavy shadows of their former selves.

While many luxury brands found a market in China, Gucci achieved perhaps the most notable success. Interestingly, Gucci used to be defined by craftsmanship and innovation. Its patented bamboo handle was a piece of engineering fashion magic designed to overcome leather shortages in 1947 which combined sturdy quality and whimsical creativity. This ethos has been engulfed by the torrent of monogram and logo driven pieces released in the 21st century to satiate the thirst of consumers who treat fashion as social capital. In its

quest for more sales, the designer brand is now much better known for its double G buckle rather than Guccio Gucci’s legacy of Italian craftsmanship.

It’s not just Gucci who has shifted in their design ethos and brand values for the sake of Chinese consumers: Celine, which was previously known for its understated, minimalist designs, has also undergone an identity change and committed its recent collections to heavily branded ready-to-wear clothing and handbags to appeal itself to the Chinese market.

Luxury fashion has thus demonstrated it can and will change to follow the money - and it will undoubtedly find new ways to add vacuous value to their products and retain its hold over Chinese consumers despite President Xi’s new rules.

If logomania is no longer the vibe, what Hermes did with the Birkin could definitely work – make it out of an albino Nile crocodile and sell it for \$300,000 USD. Or, create a wait list so exclusive that it becomes an elusive urban legend. The lucky consumer who manages to wait for long enough can then buy the same product, marked up by a few hundred (or thousand) dollars.

There is always a way to value-add no real value. This crackdown on wealth in China will, at best, do nothing, or at worst, show us exactly how far fashion houses will go to retain their high prices and semblance of prestige.

DISCO ELYSIUM: GHOSTS OF A LOST FUTURE

DEVJEET MATTÀ

Boogying down with capitalist realism.

As someone who isn’t really interested in point and click adventures, Robert Kurvitz’s role-playing/mystery hybrid game Disco Elysium was strangely alluring at a first glance.

Even before you can make sense of your surroundings, the game instantly plunges you into a murky black screen, complemented by a jarring monologue. Two voices nag at you, reminding you of your unconsciousness before you wake up hungover and in an unfamiliar room. As you limp forth, clothed in whatever discarded items you can find, you hear from one of the apartment residents about the remnants of a lost disco culture, virtually analogous to our high-flying 70s metropolis. Citizens of the post-revolutionary city Revachol speak reverently of the vibrant, hyperreal disco days of the past. To them, it is a point of fleeting nostalgia. Your character, however, is permanently trapped in the disco days of your youth, face temporarily frozen in a sickly-looking “Expression”.

Kurvitz and the development team at ZA/UM explore an untapped niche of rich dialogue, vivid storytelling and gritty worldbuilding. The ‘disco’ of Disco

Elysium doesn’t just connote music and dance but extends to something so much more. Boundless possibilities of lost futures and ecstatic youth have the potential to materialise through the inner workings of your mind. Different pieces of thought provoke choices of dialogue: choices which matter and create thoughts in your mind which you can choose to ‘internalise’ and influence dialogue later on. “Mazovian socio-economics” and “Inexplicable Feminist Agenda” are just some that harken to (and satirise) the fragmented politics of the 21st century, following the collapse of ‘Actually Existing Socialist’ states and a new global world order headed by explicitly moralist global institutions.

Eventually you encounter a government bureaucrat who speaks only in catchwords – it is as if he is not really listening to you but reaffirming the righteousness of the international moralist project, synonymous to the “practical” and “reasonable” ideologues of the United Nations:

“It’s pragmatic, realistic and level-headed, an ideology for ‘doers.’”

And in another, strikingly ironic line, the bureaucrat asserts:

“Because moralists believe in a normal, stable world governed by democratic values.”

On the other hand, the young street artist Cindy the Skull is fiercely antagonistic towards the Revachol Citizen’s Militia (the local police force)

and derides them as piggies. Meanwhile, Cuno is a foul-mouthed ten-year-old and a victim of domestic violence who regularly ingests speed and magnesium to elude his morbid reality.

Rather than optimism for socially responsible governance and economic sensibility maintained by the Coalition, there is a somewhat dispirited air in Revachol. Streets are lined with bottles and bags, while the youth find an escape in graffiti and substance abuse. The ambient, sometimes eerie diegetic music in hotels and shops betrays the clear indifference that citizens hold to yourself or their own environment. In other words, Disco Elysium captures the essence of Mark Fisher’s capitalist realism perfectly. The failure of the Revolution has rendered the possibility of any viable alternative to the existing hegemony null.

Fisher writes of the ‘reflexive impotence’ experienced by British students in acknowledging that “things are bad, but, more than that, they know they can’t do anything about it.” The atomisation of mental health and privatisation of these issues within individual neurology rules out any systemic, socially induced cause of depression or mental illness. His statement poses eerie parallels with the neoliberal unipolarity of Disco Elysium. Youth like Cuno and Cindy are on the streets because they have been rejected by a status quo that inculcates and

consistently reaffirms the lack of any political alternative. Rather, they are shunned as outcasts, delinquents who are part of the distasteful scenery.

Much of the symbolic value in Disco Elysium is acutely captured by Jacques Derrida’s concept of hauntology - roughly defined as the persistence of elements returning from the past, reminding of a future that failed to happen. Derrida outlines that the hauntological presence of the “spectres of our past” are manifestations of figures that are neither present nor absent, and neither dead nor alive. The protagonist is constantly plagued by this almost bipolar sense of reality – on one hand, he is the optimistic, charismatic disco star of the Golden Age and on the other he is a depressed, alcoholic cop who remembers little about his murky past or police work.

At its core, Disco Elysium doesn’t simply lament the death of the future and the ghosts of the present. It raises a sort of *psychedelic consciousness* – not just the type of consciousness induced by hallucinogens but an awareness of the liberatory faculties of art, music and theatre as psychedelic experiences that change how we think about our place in the world, outside the confines of hegemony and repression.

For all that we mourn it, Disco isn’t dead – at least not in the realm of the creative.

President

SWAPNIK SANAGAVARAPU

Coming up on the final week of the semester, I want to wish everyone best of luck with their exams and assessments. It's been a stressful and difficult semester for many and it hasn't been made easier by the University's decision not to re-implement the CWAM. If you're in need of assistance with Special Considerations or need to appeal one of your mid-semester grades, contact the SRC caseworkers at help@src.usyd.edu.au.

To begin, the SRC's Student General

Meeting was a rousing success this week. Over 200 students were in attendance and the motion put before them passed with a huge majority. As I said in my introduction to the SGM, it is a really heartening sight to see so many students actively opposed to the cuts and willing to show up to the SGM. Congratulations to the organisers of the SGM - your hard work paid off in dividends. If you are interested in being a part of the fight against the cuts to FASS, join the Education Action Group and come

to the protest this Wednesday at midday on campus.

We also heard some troubling news this week that the University is planning on reintroducing Cadmus, the anti-plagiarism software that was trialled at the University in 2017 before being scrapped. Cadmus has previously been described as "creepy", "invasive" and "impractical" by student representatives and staff. The software requires that students complete and submit their assessments within

an inbuilt word-processing software that disallows copying and pasting, uses keystroke analytics to monitor for academic dishonesty and tracks the location of students. It's safe to say that this software is as invasive and unethical as ProctorU, if not moreso and I will be making enquiries about its use this week.

Yours truly,
Swapnik

Vice Presidents

ROISIN MURPHY AND MARIA GE

For our last report of the year, it makes us proud to reflect on the work we've been able to do. Whether it was the fight to stop 12 week sems or the day-to-day admin, like organising for the SRC to reopen, it's been a greatly rewarding year, despite the challenges.

The last report is a nice opportunity

to reflect on the importance of having leftwing people on the Executive of our union. Oftentimes, it can seem like these non-campaigning roles should be the lowest priority for activists. But, the day-to-day decision making of where money goes and who goes to which meetings have huge, if unseen, unseen impacts. Most

of the work you do as a Vice President or General Secretary is not particularly visible, but we're both extremely grateful to have been a part of running our organisation.

We look forward to wrapping up our terms and wish the incoming executive a powerful year.

In Solidarity

Maria and Roisin

General Secretaries

PRIYA GUPTA AND ANNE ZHAO

The Education Actions Group's Student General Meeting was a raging success! With well over 200 students in attendance and voting to oppose all course and staff cuts, it was an impressive display of student power. Get involved in the newly launched No USyd Cuts campaign, and come along to the speakout this Wednesday outside Fisher library.

Next up, we have been working on the next round of SSAF Applications with the new exec, and have been considering

what projects the SRC wants to prioritise in 2022. If you have any thoughts on the matter please write in!

On a similar note, we have been preparing for the handover of Exec, General Secretary, and other OB positions to the incoming office bearers to ensure that the transition is as smooth as possible and all new OBs are armed with the necessary knowledge and support from the beginning of their terms.

Lastly, Rad Ed week is finishing up

soon! We have three events to go - The Fight for Disability Justice (Tues W12), Beyond Tokenistic Inclusion: The History, Ethics and Law of Disability in Australia (Thurs W12), and Creative Abolition in Practice (Tues W13). These will be online as per usual so hop on and get involved before our semester of radical education is over!

Until next time,
Priya and Anne

Welfare Officers

LIA PERKINS, SHREYAA SUNDARARAGHAVAN, KATHERINE (HAIMINGYUE) XU AND OWEN MARSDEN-READFORD

This year has been an important year to fight for the rights of students, the unemployed and everyone else discriminated against in the welfare system. With the revival of the USyd Welfare Action Group I'd like to congratulate Grace and Eamonn on their election as convenors and Welfare OBs.

Education activism

The Education Action Group held a student general meeting on Wednesday 27th Oct. I (Lia) have been involved in building the SGM and co-chaired the meeting. Over 270 people zoomed in and passed the motion. Students made it

clear we are entirely opposed to any cuts, mergers or restructures in FASS, business and dentistry. Get involved with the EAG and 'No USyd Cuts' campaign. Gender and Cultural studies students also held an excellent action which I attended.

Actions and statements

We wrote a statement in support of the CWAM and in opposition to management's decision to punish students during the lockdown. It's great to have in person protests again and the Justice for JC rally on Thursday was an important rally for the family of a First Nations woman who died in custody.

Housing

Hands off Glebe held their first event in a few months, an online rally, which we will continue to support. I spoke at the Rad Ed series panel on housing, alongside housing activists, and you can watch the recording on the SRC youtube page.

Community Action for Rainbow Rights (CARR) Activism

CARR has organised a protest against the new NSW premier and arch-bigot Dominic Perrottet. It will be 12pm, Sunday 31st at Town Hall. He is a hard conservative, Trump supporter, who has opposed marriage equality, abortion

rights and campaigned against student unions.

When Perrottet was NSW treasurer, his worker's compensation scheme iCare: had underpaid injured workers by up to \$80 million, had awarded millions of dollars of unregistered contracts to friends and ex-colleagues of executives, and was on the verge of financial collapse. It's important to continue to build opposition to this reactionary warrior for the ruling class so encourage people to come along and look out for future protests!

Don't miss the SRC's Essential Student Guide to Living on Little Money!

Available on the SRC website:
srcusyd.net.au/src-help/money/guide-to-living-on-little-money/

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* this service is available to USYD undergraduate students and cases that meet eligible criteria

Are you struggling to pay your bills?

If you have a debt with your phone provider, or bank, contact them and tell them that you're currently experiencing financial hardship. They should put you through to a hardship team to renegotiate your repayments. If you have trouble paying your electricity or gas bill get an energy account payment assistance voucher (ewon.com.au/page/customer-resources/help-paying-bills/eapa-vouchers). This might reduce your debt or delay the deadline for payment.

Consider what you need the loan for and if there are better alternatives. **TALK TO THE PEOPLE YOU OWE MONEY TO**

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

INTEREST FREE LOAN

You might qualify for an interest free loan from the University. Contact Financial Assistance Office to ask for details. Similarly some community organisations offer interest free loans for essentials, e.g whitegood replacements, if you meet certain criteria. You will still have to repay this money, but no interest is charged, meaning you only pay back the amount you were loaned. The

Ask Abe

SRC caseworker help Q&A

FARES ALLOWANCE

Hi Abe,

I'm originally from Broken Hill but I'm living in Sydney to do my degree. I haven't been home to see my parents in over a year because I'm living on Youth Allowance and the price of a flight is too expensive. Covid didn't make that easy either. I really want to see my family, but I don't want to have to borrow money to get home. Is there something else I can do?

Homesick

Dear Homesick,

If you're receiving Youth Allowance and living away from home to

University's Financial Assistance Office also offers bursaries (money you don't have to repay) to current students. Ask them for details.

CENTRELINK PAYMENT ADVANCE

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

PREPAY BILLS

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

Check out moneysmart.gov.au/managing-your-money This website has some really practical budgeting advice and tools.

study, you may be eligible for 'Fares Allowance'. This payment helps with travel costs between your permanent home and Uni.

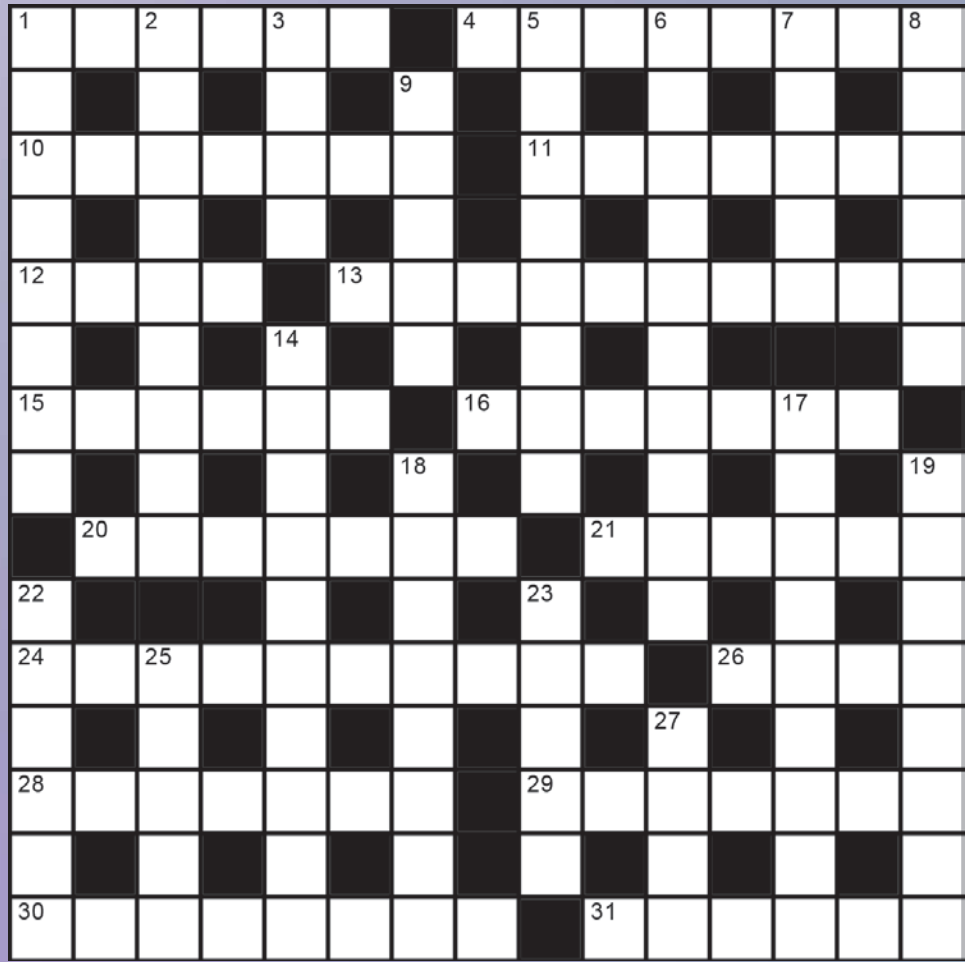
Fares Allowance can cover the cost of a coach, train or plane ticket between your permanent home and place of study up to two times per year, depending on your personal circumstances. Have a look at Centrelink's information here: servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/fares-allowance or book an appointment with a caseworker on 9660 5222 to talk about your situation.

Abe

Crosswords by Tournesol

Searching for answers? Go to honisoit.com

Cryptic Crossword?



across

- 1 Trivia grandmaster conceals performance-enhancing drug (6)
- 4 Saint and queen boot the French in skirmish (8)
- 10 Portion of doo-doo terribly sour and smelly (7)
- 11 Relaxes on some soulless rendezvous (7)
- 12 Consumes spoilt steam endlessly (4)
- 13 Organised pear assortment around mid-April (10)
- 15 Sin on a peninsula (6)
- 16 Secretly count it a nice ship (7)
- 20 Devil, why make Spanish, say? (7)
- 21 Men follow Kanye West and I from the Middle East (6)
- 24 Peter Pan, for example, is a piece of cake (6,4)
- 26 Bath has an instrument (4)
- 28 Plant hugs around Lear’s daughter (7)
- 29 Cover for ignorant alien (7)
- 30 Doily has unravelled on vacations (8)
- 31 Flip mint with skill (6)

down

- 1 Harm string instrument with regular redneck energy (8)
- 2 Concerning herb report, finally (5,4)
- 3 Bird in castle (4)
- 5 State of obsession with D&T (8)
- 6 Ponder, should Spooner make submarine? (10)
- 7 Was friendly with cross-hugging idiot (3,2)
- 8 Religious festival further towards the Pacific (6)
- 9 Stars assemble for emperors (5)
- 14 Used the letter A? (6,4)
- 17 Spooner yells ‘See ya! Screw you!’ for a challenge (3,6)
- 18 Start selling your music to fake orchestra (8)
- 19 Colossal concert caper (8)
- 22 Shifts genitals (6)
- 23 I am getting artificial feet (5)
- 25 I lead counterintuitively to reach perfection (5)
- 27 Mongol says goodbye (2-2)

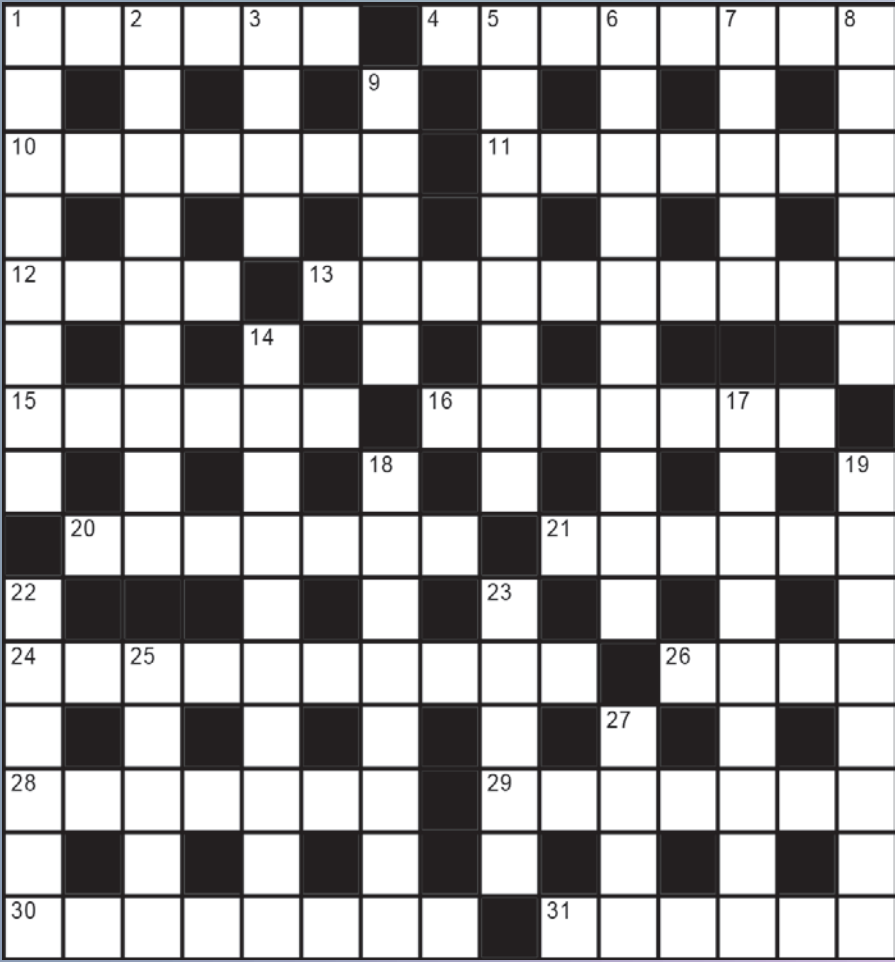
Quick! Crossword

across

- 1 A set of stumps and bails (6)
- 4 Stress, attention (8)
- 10 Hangs about, with or without intent (7)
- 11 Organic (7)
- 12 Medieval string instrument (4)
- 13 Fearful of strangers, racist (10)
- 15 Relating to poo (6)
- 16 Randy scandis (7)
- 20 Thief (7)
- 21 A piece of music’s main tune (6)
- 24 Expected outcome of an experiment (10)
- 26 Relating to the mouth (4)
- 28 Hide (7)
- 29 Greek mofo (7)
- 30 One of the mathematical operations (8)
- 31 Human-animal hybrid creatures (6)

down

- 1 Flora and fauna (8)
- 2 Orange liqueur (9)
- 3 Pre-lapsarian paradise (4)
- 5 String instrument much like 12 Across (8)
- 6 One who travels by thumb (10)
- 7 Small, dense woody plant (5)
- 8 James Bond short story: Quantum of ... (6)
- 9 Questioned (5)
- 14 Least well-behaved (10)
- 17 School subject (9)
- 18 ABBA’s 1974 Eurovision winner (8)
- 19 Bike riders (8)
- 22 Ballroom dance from Latin America (3-3)
- 23 Wife to a late husband (5)
- 25 Thrashed (in a video game) (5)
- 27 Everage, Krabappel, Tumbblad (4)



All answers start with the letter W.

- 1. Batsmen Brian Lara, Chris Gayle and Viv Richards all hail from which great cricketing nation?
- 2. Hungary has traditionally dominated this Olympic team sport, winning 9 gold medals.
- 3. Who was the non-Victorian Team to win an AFL Grand Final?
- 4. The Capitals, Nationals and Wizards are all sporting teams from which city?
- 5. Gerd Muller led this country to Fifa World Cup triumph in 1974.
- 6. What is the nickname of the NSW super Rugby Team?

Quiz by Some Hack!

Quiz

W for Wide World of Sports

Letters



In response to the article ‘What’s in a boycott?’

When the world decides to boycott China for the persecution of its Uyghur population, Iran for its incarceration of protesters in prisons, Palestine for its glorification of terrorism, Arab nations for their demeaning diminution of women or Turkey for its targeting of journalists by jailing them in large number then your article in Honi Soit might have an ounce of credibility.

While you persist in hounding Israel when its neighbour Syria has inflicted abhorrent crimes on its own people on an incomparable scale you reveal your obsessive, destructive focus on Israel.

Hopefully the IHRA working definition of antisemitism will make your efforts to demonise and delegitimise Israel (Israelophobia) less acceptable in the market place of ideas.

Jack Morris

Columns



Ariana Haghighi and Eamonn Murphy

ABSURD ANIMAL ANECDOTES

PEEP THESE PARANORMAL PERSPICACIOUS PROPHETIC PETS!

Usually, and regrettably, we tend to view animals as inferior beings. We think of humans as more intelligent, more civilised than animals, enjoying a higher rung on the Great Chain of Being. How wrong! Prophetic animals, blessed with the gift of clairvoyance, are far more astute than we could ever hope to be.

Noodles the Oracle Dog!

Let us ask you, dear readers, a question. Doyouever wake and wonder, “Will today be one of excitement? Of joy, of laughter, of productivity? Or will today be a drag? Will I laze,

fatigued, marred with melancholy?” Well, we have news for you: the Oracle of Rochester, New York State, has the answers you crave.

Noodles, the 13-year-old soothsaying pug, is a gem. As the amber sunrise shimmers against his caramel coat, and as he sounds his first yawn, he crafts his prophecy. If Noodles lifts himself up, proud and poised, it’s a “bones day” — a fruitful day for all of us is bound to ensue. However, if Noodles slumps into his pillow, surrendering himself to a snooze, it’s a “no bones” day — an indication that we all need a bit of self-care.

So from now on, when you wake and wonder what the day will hold, check Twitter. Noodles will be there to help.

Vale Paul the Octopus.

Paul is the world’s 8-appendaged cephalopod companion. More specifically, he is an astute ami of the German football association. His keepers at the Sea Life Centre in Oberhausen, Germany, noticed he had a penchant for premonition, and put his skills to use.

Paul accurately presaged the winner of football matches 12 times out of 14, landing him a success rate of 85.7% (a High Distinction!). His divinations consisted of him choosing to eat from two food boxes containing a mussel or an oyster. These were delightfully decorated with the garb of each respective football team, and with Paul’s first munch on his lunch, he was sending a worldwide signal.

Paul fled to Davy Jones’s locker in 2010, but not before he reached worldwide acclaim with a correct prediction of the 2010 World Cup winner. Every day, we remember him.



Daany Saeed

SPORTS

Living in sporting limbo

Football season ended abruptly in mid-August. Yet, I still had weekly strategy sessions about forward running patterns and stoppage formations, clinging to a morsel of strange, desperate hope that if I was ready to go when the time came, the cases would go down.

Sport enjoys a privilege of importance that’s been highlighted during the pandemic, with the justification that small joy is important. But what joy is there to find in pretending I’ll be running around Oval 1 with my mates in a

week?

This is not to suggest football deserves exceptionalism, but rather to ask; at what point is this all simply not worth it? What do we stand to gain from being ready to go, if the time ever comes? As the sun starts to lose its timidity and nets in parks everywhere begin to echo again with the sound of willow on leather, I prepare myself for another summer of Saturdays getting sunburnt in fields with ten middle-aged men I resent, and ask myself — what good is being ready to go when the time comes, if its banality has been laid bare?

Go well, I guess.



Harry Gay

A SLICE OF THE ACTION



Abe

GOSSIP

Woof!

Hey guys, I don’t have much gossip to report this week. I was too busy helping with Special Cons applications and frolicking around the inner west. Besides, gossip is a sin.

SUDS, SASS, SURG

Some society AGMs to report from this week. Kimmi Tonkin prevailed over current Board Director Isla Mowbray in a bruising battle for SUDS presidency. She is promising more writing and acting opportunities! Tonkin is the fourth Cellar Officer to become SUDS President, following her predecessor Alice Stafford, 2020’s Margaret Thanos, now a Body Shop activist and a frequent guest on *In The House* and *In the Senate*, and 2019’s Lincoln Gidney. Similarly, Vice President elect Oliver Durbidge is to become the fourth Social Secretary to become SUDS Vice President. When will this dynasty end!

Meanwhile, SASS stacking continued, with Unity’s own Angelina Gu romping home to tack victory. Over at SURG, the DRIP-era continues, with Patrick McKenzie getting elected to something, but I hear he may resign to keep doing his thing at Palace Cinemas (free movies if you use the discount code NUMTOT at the counter). Zander Czerwaniw became President.

Big Party

I was on my afternoon walk at Camperdown Park on Sunday, sniffing around and stealing charcuterie. I was surprised to find that the weekend’s most pumping picnic party belonged to a certain handsome *Honi* editor!

The Boot



WEEK 12, SEMESTER 2

UNION BUSTING SINCE 1942

Deputy Vice Interim Assistant Associate Honourary Chancellor (Naval Warfare) resigns

MARLOW HURST

The Deputy Vice Interim Assistant Associate Honourary Chancellor (Naval Warfare) has announced his intention to resign.

Upon hearing the news, everyone from university management to the broader student body questioned who this man was, why should we care, and what have you done for me lately.

Even though no one's really interested, Doorman Ivermectin, the Deputy Vice

Interim Assistant Associate Honourary Chancellor (Naval Warfare), said he was resigning for health reasons and that he wished to spend time with his wife.

The University has suggested that they will not be recruiting a replacement as they didn't realise they the position existed in the first place.

"There will be no international recruitment drive or an internal search. We didn't even realise he was on the payroll till he told us he was going."

USyd proposes alternative to special cons reform: one free plagiarism

HENRY WILLIS

The introduction of the new 'Completely Plagiarise an Entire Assignment' policy at Sydney University has been met with both hostility and praise. It allows each student to find pre-existing academic documentation and pass it off as their own ONCE throughout their University career.

When exactly you use this golden ticket is subject to personal preference; feeling dusty after a weekend bender - stay in bed a little longer. Finding it hard to cooperate with group members - take

the easy way out.

Despite the overall positive reaction, some students feel their education is being undercut. One student Honi Soit reached out to echoed these sentiments, stating "it's ridiculous. This is the sort of thing that sets students up for failure, this would never fly in the corporate world,"

One struggling student has already made use of his stroke of luck, submitting pirated work for a substantial assignment minutes before the due date without even reading it. To his later shock, however, the poached essay was neither coherent nor relevant to his course.

F23 building to become F45 studio

DEAUNDRE ESPEJO

In its latest real estate pivot, the University of Sydney has revealed it will be selling the F23 Administration Building to fitness giant F45. All management offices will be immediately transformed into premium-priced group fitness studios.

"Looking at our recent finances, it was clear we needed to adopt a more high-intensity approach to performance management" said Vice-Chancellor Mark Scott before powering through some box jump burpees.

Scott, who joined F45 two days ago, says that he has felt the difference almost instantly. "Trust me — these trainers know how to achieve results fast. Would you happen to be interested? I could refer you?"

Under the agreement, F45 shareholder Cardi O'Vascular will also be appointed Deputy Vice-



Chancellor (Education), while the deans of all faculties will be replaced by F45 trainers. O'Vascular plans on bringing higher education "back to basics" through military-style management techniques.

"Don't expect to rest, chit chat or leave this campus dry," he said, commanding *The Boot* correspondents to drop down and give him twenty.

In accordance with the "functional 45" training model, staff will now be expected to

complete hourly allotments of work within 45 minutes, with short rests throughout. "The research says staff need to work harder and more efficiently, not longer," O'Vascular said. "Do you think I got to where I am today by asking for pay raises?"

When questioned about further university cuts under the new administration, Scott chuckled and pulled out choc chip keto cookie from his gym bag. "The only thing we've been cutting here at the University is carbs."

IN THIS EDITION

Fights break out over competing Campo Park picnics

[SEE MORE ON P 123](#)

Coalition announces new policy of net zero IQ

[SEE MORE ON P 10](#)

SHOCK ANNOUNCEMENT: Manning Bar to close

[SEE MORE ON P 4](#)

USU to cut menu items with less than 24 purchases

[SEE MORE ON P 18](#)

Deputy EO announces new anti-corruption body I-CACCS

[SEE MORE ON P 1000](#)

Most sociopathic person you know cares about the environment

[SEE MORE ON P 12](#)

Uni management offers their own form of trick or treat: voluntary redundancy or mandatory redundancy

[SEE MORE ON P 12](#)