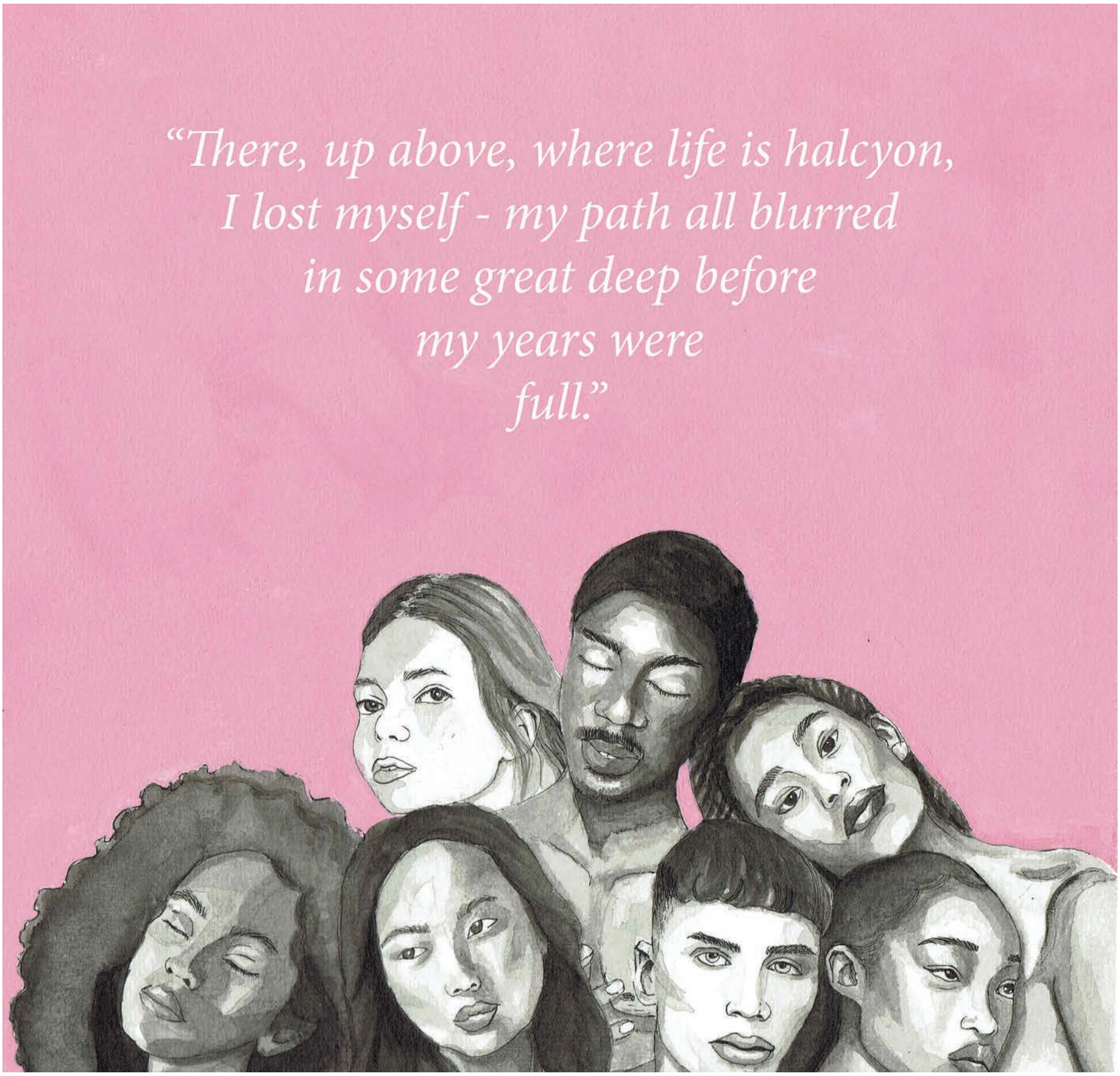
Honi Soit.

WEEK 4, SEM 1 2022

UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY - FREE STUDENT NEWSPAPER - NEWS, CULTURE & ANALYSIS Est. 1929



Banjos, Bluegrass and Bright Stars: A Snapshot of Country Music in Australia

By Leo Su

I love country music. There, I said it. (It's true though – I'm even learning how to play the banjo!)

As a young person living in a metropolitan region, a proclamation like that would usually elicit either puzzled glances or judgmental groans from my peers. I can already imagine their responses, in all of their hackneyed and hyperbolic glory. *That's impossible. I can tolerate every single genre except country*. Or something along those lines.

Everybody knows the stereotypes. Country music is conservative. It's geriatric. It objectifies women.

Continued on page 10.

The imagined return: A migrant's musings on homesickness

It's funny how quickly we can become strangers to our own homes. Only a couple of weeks ago I flew over the Indian Ocean and landed in a makeshift bedroom in Bangladesh, anticipating that the foreign territory of my grandparents' house would be difficult to adjust to.

Nafeesa Rahman goes home - p. 13

ALSO IN THIS EDITION:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Honi Soit is published on the stolen land of the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation. Sovereignty was never ceded; the invasion of this land was, and still is, a process of immense violence, destruction, and theft.

The Editors of *Honi Soit* acknowledge the suffering caused by ongoing colonial structures and commit to confronting the political, economic, legal and social systems which continue to oppress First Nations people.

As a collective, we acknowledge that we are each living, writing, and working on stolen Gadigal, Dharawal and Darug land. Further, the university which we attend is an inherently colonial institution, one which upholds the systems of knowledge and power that have caused deep harm and pain on this continent.

As a student newspaper which operates and distributes within such an institution, we have a responsibility to remain conscious of, and actively combat, complicity in colonisation.

It is important to recognise that First Nations people have, since 1788, resisted and survived colonial violence. Our newspaper needs to platform the voices of this ongoing resistance, truly valuing and heeding Indigenous knowledge and perspectives.

Honi has stood on stolen land since its inception 93 years ago; embedded in the history of this paper is the tireless resistance to oppressive, colonial structures within society by First Nations writers, contributors and editors — it is our duty to uphold their legacy, champion their voices, and continue to fight for First Nations justice.

We pay our deepest respect to Elders both past and present, and extend that respect to all First Nations students, staff, and readers of *Honi Soit*.

Always was, and always will be Aboriginal land.

IN THIS EDITION

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GET IN TOUCH

Have you got a tip for a story? An angry letter to the editors? An article pitch?

Email us at **editors@honisoit.com**.

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

Send mail to Honi Soit Editors at
PO Box 974 Broadway NSW 2007.

EDITORIAL

By Carmeli Argana

I distinctly remember the first day I stepped foot on the main campus at the University of Sydney.

It was Welcome Week, and my first event was an orientation into the Faculty of Arts in the Great Hall. As I waited in line with the rest of the bright-eyed first-years to be let in, I noticed that everyone around me seemed to know each other. That was the first sign that something was wrong.

Then the doors to the Great Hall opened. Despite the warmth of the summer day, the air inside was frigid. Portraits of the University's vice-chancellors greeted me as I entered with cold, distant stares – all of them, old, white men. I was ushered into a back row and when I was seated, all around me were white people in designer clothing and bleach-blonde hair.

It immediately became apparent that I did not belong to the usual flock of students that the University attracted.

As the University of Sydney's student newspaper, *Honi Soit* plays an important role in representing the interests and culture of the entire student body. But this relationship between the paper and the student body is not one-sided. As a publication with significant reach and influence, it's also in a position to shape student culture and interests at the University. The decision to publish certain perspectives is not only contingent on the relevance of such perspectives - we, as students, **actively** decide that it is relevant.

That's why the theme of this week is unique or diverse perspectives. In this edition, you'll find articles that shed light on issues that are not typically deemed 'newsworthy' — for example, Alana Ramshaw's article on the continued criminalisation of homosexuality in Singapore, or Leo Su's reporting on the appointment of Indigenous Practioner-in-Residence Teela Reid. You'll also find articles that bring a fresh perspective on topics that have already been covered, such as Melody Wong's article on the gift of Wordle, or Jenae Madden's analysis of internet services in rural communities.

Unique or diverse perspectives also entails reimagining of mainstream works in ways that carve out a space for the underrepresented. This is not only evident in this edition's content, but also the cover art. I want to thank K. Em for her gorgeous reimagining of 'Canto XV' of Dante's *Inferno*. Out of a longing for a queer community that shared in her experiences as a bisexual woman of colour, she created this as an act of rebellion; against her immigrant family who once threatened to renounce her if she ever came out, and her white classmates who are unable to conceive of the racialised dimensions of her queerness. It's an honour to have it on the front cover of my edition.

I want this edition to not only represent, but *be* everything I wish I had when I first started at USyd. My hope is that students of all different backgrounds will open up this week's paper and feel like there is a place for them at this University.

To everyone who felt a similar sense of isolation starting university, our stories matter. I hope you'll find that in this edition of *Honi*.

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This edition published on 15 March 2022.

Letters

Please send us letters! We love contentions, critique, compliments, etc. You can send them through to editors@honisoit.com

Dear Honi,

I welcome this year's renewed focus on letters, and congratulate our esteemed editors on a fantastic start to the year. Of particular note, I have very much enjoyed articles about hidden rooftops (Roisin Murphy, Welcome Week), peppercorn debts (Samuel Garrett, Week 1) and imposter syndrome (Katarina Kuo, Week 3)...

I write regarding the Week 2 feature article titled The Lord of the King St: Rating Newtown's Pubs. This article excited me as an individual for whom Newtown is the preferred and regular circuit. If the walls of licensed venues in the inner-west could talk, they could tell a myriad of stories, particularly about the devious machinations of stupol at the University. Unfortunately, I was instead greeted with a double-page spread that largely read as a play-by-play of a night out involving an extremely specific group of self-appointed BNOCs whom we are, as the reader, expected to know. Putting aside that BNOCs, as we knew them, died around 2018, it is the self-indulgence of the article that I found particularly galling for a feature. There are hints to this throughout, but this insularity is particularly evident in inside references to stupol that don't resonate with a significant sector of people who don't necessarily engage in student politics as deeply as the article would expect, and seemed designed mostly to get a laugh out of the author's mates specifically.

This is a great shame to me, as many of the pubs in the immediate vicinity of the University have (as alluded to briefly in the article) very interesting historical ties to culturally significant groups on campus which I would have loved to have heard about...

Many thanks,
Daanyal Saeed, Arts/Law V

The Michael Spence Column for Disagreeing Well*

In the weekly column where we air an ill-thought out hot take, Patrick McKenzie lets loose!

Keep your coloured squares to yourself - I don't give a shit about your Wordle guesses.

While I take no issue with silly little word guessing games themselves, I refuse to CATER to the performative circlejerk that is posting the tragedy of how you guessed 'sauce' and 'tease' before finally arriving at 'SAUTE' to social media.

The first time I saw the swathes of clamouring people I follow on Twitter posting rows of coloured squares as an excuse to feign self-awareness, I had no idea what I was looking at. A new meme format? Some form of tokenistic activism? No, my educated contemporaries were simply despairing at THEIR benign realisation that double-lettered words exist. Smooth brains SLOSHing against thick skulls – woe is them.

But I, someone who did about 9 Wordles and never thought about posting them, won't ALLOW myself to keep suffering in silence.

When faced with incessant 'Wordle-posting', I am much like Joe Pesci when he won the 1991 Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for his iconic role in the MOVIE 'Goodfellas': Speechless.

If you got it in two guesses, do I congratulate you and your intellectual prowess? If it took you five, do I think of a witty lambast to reply with? I'm reminded of the distinctly awkward tension every time Spotify Wrapped rolls around: Screenshots shared to stories and middling replies about how it's funny that you had a Grimes track in your top five songs; the compulsion to share taken to its ideological endpoint. Surely it's more special if you just keep it to yourself, knowing smugly that you got 'epoxy' in one?

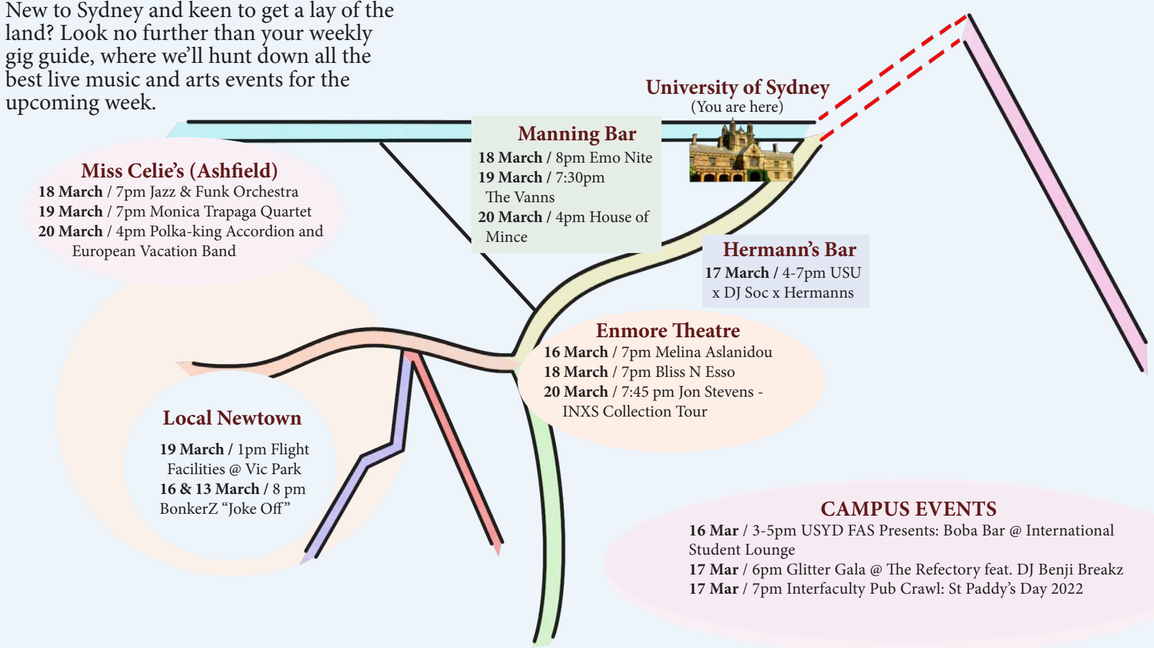
Yes, Josh Wardle's delightfully punny game has riveted millions day in, day out, and I can see how the instant shareability has made it scale as well as it did. However, the only thing I can respect is how Mr Wardle, now seven figures richer thanks to the game's unceremonious acquisition by the New York Times, may never have to work again.

My advice: A paywall, so that only the most insipid wordlers have to RENEW their NYT subscriptions to keep running on the hamster wheel. In the meantime, I long for mid-October 2027, when the five-letter words will finally run out and the world will be rid of this scourge.

Find every Wordle solution for this week hidden discreetly in this column

The Gig Guide

Looking for a way to fill your evenings? New to Sydney and keen to get a lay of the land? Look no further than your weekly gig guide, where we'll hunt down all the best live music and arts events for the upcoming week.



Sydney University Law School hires first Indigenous Practitioner-in-Residence

Leo Su reports.

Sydney Law School appointed land rights lawyer and activist Teela Reid as its first Indigenous Practitioner-in-Residence last month.

A proud Wiradjuri and Wailwan woman, Reid is a Senior Solicitor at Indigenous law firm Chalk & Behrendt and an avid advocate for the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

In her adjunct role as Practitioner-in-Residence, Reid will bridge an academia-practice gap for students and foster stronger connections between the law school and Indigenous communities.

"Teela is there to help decolonise the law school," said Benjamin McGrory, First Nations Officer for the Sydney University Law Society (SULS).

"She's there to help educate non-Indigenous lecturers, professors and students about the impacts of colonisation, Indigenous rights and how the Western legal system can co-exist with Indigenous legal systems."

Alongside Sydney Law School Dean Professor Simon Bronitt, Dr Louise Boon-Kuo and Associate Professor Jacqueline Mowbray, Reid will be part of the school's Indigenous Strategy and Services Committee. The committee is looking at reforming the law school's curriculum this year.

Units of study including real property and land law, as well as civil and criminal procedure, are prospective areas for decolonisation and revitalisation through an Indigenous lens, according to McGrory.

This follows the *University's One Sydney, Many People 2021-2024 Strategy*, which aims to "facilitate innovative and culturally quality-assured representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges in curriculum, programs and courses" within the Sydney Law School by 2023.

When asked about the potential claims of tokenism by cynics, McGrory said that the school "genuinely cares" and wants to make "real change".

"It's not going to happen overnight, but they are taking practical steps to dismantle colonial systems that exist and the barriers that Indigenous students face when studying law," he said.

Whilst Indigenous enrolments have seen an increase over the last decade due to initiatives such as *Wingara Mura Bunga Barrabugu*, the University still has a lower proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (0.9 per cent) compared to the Australian sector (which averages 1.7 per cent).

Support programs targeted at Indigenous students are key to higher enrolment and retention rates, according to McGrory.

"There needs to be a culture in law school where [Indigenous students] see Indigenous staff and Indigenous leadership, as well as mentoring and well-being programs," he said.

Teela's appointment comes at an apt time, following the departure of Murri academic Nicole Watson to UNSW in March 2021.

"Sydney Law School has not had an Indigenous staff member for over a year. Teela is now a role model for all Indigenous students," McGrory said.

"She's got ideas to work with the Law School to bring more opportunities, to give more opportunities… so that Indigenous students see themselves as being able to practise in the law and make change happen."

Next month, Reid will be leading a university event on the Uluru Statement from the Heart as well as a workshop for the First Nations Voices Project.

She will also be speaking at the University's annual *Public Lecture on Indigenous Peoples and Law*, which seeks to "create a public platform for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander scholars to reflect on the nature of Indigenous laws and legal traditions for a wider audience in Australia and abroad".

Other future initiatives include a video project commencing in April as well as a social media page to document the work which is happening at the Sydney Law School in line with its Indigenous strategies. Reid also endeavours to start a podcast entitled *Blak Letter Law*, which focuses on stories of Indigenous advocacy, as an educational resource for students.

Regarding university students themselves, McGrory encourages anyone passionate about Indigenous cultural and social issues to join the SULS First Nations Committee. Committee members will be involved with creating new events, opportunities and wellbeing programs for Indigenous students and allies within Sydney Law School.

"Don't be afraid, you don't have to be an expert on matters. All you have to do is have a passion for social justice and helping Indigenous people," he said.

Applications are now open to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

"Get involved, we want you to be involved, and we welcome everyone."

To apply for SULS' First Nations Committee, contact Benjamin McGrory at firstnations@suls.org.au

Floods force evacuations in south-west Sydney

Ellie Stephenson and Carmeli Argana report.

South-west Sydney experienced dangerous flooding conditions early last week after heavy rainfall over the Georges River catchment. Residents in suburbs including Georges Hall, Moorebank, Holsworthy and Chipping Norton were ordered to evacuate throughout the week during the extreme rainfall event.

"In the eighteen years I've been living here, it's never been that bad," said Neryse Sylvestre, a Chipping Norton resident.

"We live close to the [Georges] River and the water's gotten up high before, but never to the point that we thought it was gonna flood us.

"If the rain had gotten worse for too much longer, I reckon we would've had a flooded garage," Sylvestre said.

A number of major roads were closed throughout the Liverpool area due to flooding, including Henry Lawson Drive at Georges Hall, Heathcote Road at Holsworthy, the Hume Highway at Liverpool and the M5 Motorway at Moorebank.

"I live near Holsworthy station and [Heathcote Road] is the only road to get to the station," said Amy Chant, a Holsworthy resident.

She, alongside members of her family, also described having difficulties getting to work and school.

"Only my dad was really affected because it meant he had to drive to work [as a transport staff member] instead of catching the train," Chant said.

"My mum couldn't get to work [in Liverpool Hospital] when [Newbridge road] was closed."

Evacuation centres were established at Cabra-Vale Diggers Club and Club Menai. Residents were allowed to return to the suburbs on Wednesday afternoon once the flood levels dropped.

The NSW SES Liverpool Unit reported 41 flood rescues and evacuations in the area over the last fortnight, along with 490 requests for assistance.

The flooding in South-west Sydney was part of extreme weather across the Sydney region, with the Northern Beaches also facing serious flood risk due to the overflowing of Manly Dam.

On Sydney's outskirts, evacuations also occurred at Camden as the Nepean River burst its banks.

The previous week saw residents in the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment forced to evacuate as a saturated Warragamba Dam began to spill over.

Federal review of international student working hours prompts concern

Khanh Tran reports.

Concerns have been raised by civil organisations over an impending Federal Government review of the working hours limit for international students.

In February, the Federal Government relaxed international student working hours requirements, meaning that students are no longer bound to the previous limit of 40 hours per fortnight . The change was made in response to "workforce shortages" plaguing Australia following two years of strict border control measures.

The policy is set for review in April 2022. In a statement, Redfern Legal Centre (RLC) expressed significant concerns that the impending review risks exposing international students currently working more than 40 hours per fortnight to financial uncertainty.

"Many international students and migrant workers are forced into breaching visa conditions by working longer hours than they are legally allowed to survive," the statement said.

The RLC is also calling for reforms targeting employers who fail to ensure a safe working environment, and measures to enable disclosures by students who fall into precarious situations.

"Criminal sanctions for employers exploiting migrants and offering below award pay rates are urgently needed. However, without adequate safeguards to support visa holders to come forward, such protections will be rendered ineffective."

Civil organisations such as the Migrant Justice Institute have raised alarms in recent years over the pressures facing overseas students who are pushed into illegal working conditions by employers.

For instance, a 2016 report, *International Student and Wage Theft in Australia*, by UTS Associate Professor Laurie Berg and UNSW Associate Professor Bassina Farbenblum, found that international students often do not report due to fears of loss of employment or pressures surrounding their immigration status.

"They often suffer in silence because of visa concerns or fear of job loss. Our findings confirm that many who complained were in fact sacked," Berg and Farbenblum noted.

"Their visa concerns are also valid - there's nothing to stop the labour regulator sharing information with immigration authorities if a student has worked more hours than their visa allows."

In a statement, SRC President Lauren Lancaster said: "The SRC notes with concern the review by the Federal Government and recognises this may place those already working long hours to be placed at further risk."

"This is another symptom of the structural vulnerability of international students in Australia that perpetuates exploitation, to which we are unequivocally opposed."

Multi-million dollar UniMelb funding suspended over awarding honorary doctorates to exclusively caucasian men

Amelia Koen reports.

The Snow Medical Research Foundation cut multi-million-dollar funding ties to the University of Melbourne (UniMelb) last Monday, suspending their inclusion in the prestigious Snow Fellowship program.

This comes after UniMelb released a photo and a press release on 28 February revealing this year's six honorary doctorate recipients are solely caucasian males — for the third year in a row.

Operating as Australia's largest research foundation, Snow Medical released a tweet on 7 March stating that they had made the "difficult decision" to "suspend" the University's funding and participation in the program due this continued lack of diversity.

Snow Medical chair Tom Snow described it as a "cultural issue" of the UniMelb board, which is the body responsible for deciding the recipients of honorary doctorates each year.

The six men awarded comprise a genomicist, a virologist, a miner who oversaw an iconic Australian airline, a policy-maker, a veterinarian and an architect of the global intellectual property system.

During the awards ceremony, UniMelb Chancellor Allan Myers described their honorary degrees as a "recognition of outstanding achievement in a field of endeavour".

The board has not awarded an honorary doctorate to a non-man or non-white individual since 2018.

The press release additionally states that three women and an Indigenous man were also on the list of this year's awardees. These individuals were unable to attend in person and their doctorates will therefore be "conferred at a later date."

In a press release on 8 March, responding to Snow Medical's suspension of financial philanthropy, UniMelb stated that they are "committed to strengthening a vibrant and inclusive community where diversity is recognised, valued and celebrated."

"While we acknowledge the areas where we need to improve, Snow Medical has made their decision on the basis of a single honorary doctorate event."

However, in an *ABC News* article published 8 March, Snow expressed his frustrations stating that "over the last three years, and they've had three years to think about this, they've only been able to find white men who are able to turn up to the ceremony."

After 16 million dollars in donations to UniMelb across two years, the abrupt withdrawal of ongoing funding from Snow Medical puts "the rest of the sector on notice" according to Marguerite Evans-Galea, co-founder of Women in STEMM Australia.

Snow Medical have stated that they are "committed to working with the University to ensure real change happens" and, although "this will cause short-term pain," Snow says he hopes UniMelb will "massively turn this around" and recognise their mistake.

Snow, also Board Chair of Equality Australia, acknowledges the work that needs to be done in all institutions to provide equal opportunity, including within Snow Medical itself.

"We all have improvements to make, and we can all do better".

In 2020, Snow Medical donated a 'gift' of 5.5 million dollars to UniMelb and USyd, to "plug coronavirus research gaps and fast-track economic recovery".

In 2021 at USyd, eight of 14 honorary doctorates were awarded to men. Of the 14, the vast majority are caucasian. Notably, Shellie Morris, an Indigenous singer-songwriter and educator, was awarded a doctorate "in recognition of her extraordinary contribution to music performance and education, in particular for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their culture and language".

Singapore Court of Appeal rules against decriminalising homosexuality

Alana Ramshaw reports.

The Constitutional validity of legislation outlawing homosexual acts was affirmed by the Singapore Court of Appeal last monday.

Challenges to the legislation argued that the law deprives LGBTQIA+ people of "life or personal liberty", upheld under Article 9(1) of the Constitution of Singapore.

The challenges were dismissed by the court who reasoned: " [The appellants] do not face any real and credible threat of prosecution under Section 377A at this time and therefore do not have standing to pursue their constitutional challenges to that provision."

The ruling comes after multiple unsuccessful attempts to overturn the law in 2014. The Parliament of Singapore voted in 2007 to repeal the rest of Section 337, which prohibited oral and anal sex between consenting adults of any gender. Section 377A, however, remained in place.

LGBTQIA+ advocacy group Pink Dot Singapore (SG), who has been spearheading efforts to repeal the law, released a statement in response to the ruling: "The acknowledgement that Section 377A is unenforceable only in the prosecutorial sense is cold comfort."

"It is time for our leaders to go beyond maintaining uneasy compromises and take affirmative steps towards equality," the statement read.

"Section 377A's real impact lies in how it perpetuates discrimination across every aspect of life: at home, in schools, in the workplace, in our media, and even access to vital services like health care."

Pink Dot SG has provided inspiration for movements and protest actions across Asia, including in Malaysia with Pink Dot Penang 2014, a protest organised by a coalition of queer activist organisations. The protest was notably cancelled due to safety concerns related to opposition from conservative interest groups.

The law is a relic of British colonial rule and prohibits "acts of gross indecency" between men. Currently, such acts are punishable with a jail sentence of up to two years.

The challenges were inspired by the Supreme Court of India's unanimous decision to overturn Section 337 of the Indian Penal Code in 2018.

The Singaporean judgement points to the 2018 policy established by Attorney-General Lucien Wong Yuen Kuai that signalled his intention to not enforce Section 377A.

While the Court of Appeal held that the law was "unenforceable" and therefore not unconstitutional, its enforceability is heavily contingent on the will of future Attorney-Generals, as they have the ability to reassert their right to prosecute under Section 377A.

The campaign to repeal Section 377A is expected to continue alongside similar campaigns in the 70 other countries in which LGBTQIA+ communities, individuals, and families are criminalised.

Farewell, Film Club

Harry Gay bids adieu to a Darlinghurst icon.

Film Club was the self-proclaimed "last, best" video rental store in Australia. The brainchild of Ben Kenny, this small shop had been operating out of Darlinghurst for ten years and was a mainstay for the Sydney film community. The shop set itself apart from other rental stores and the large array of streaming services by offering a wide selection of films unavailable elsewhere. Queer cinema, seminal feminist works, silent films, classics, horror, and international imports all lined the packed shelves. Film Club was an attempt to bring a taste of what lay on the outskirts of mainstream cinematic offerings to the public.

I say 'was' because last year, Kenny was looking for someone to take the mantle of Film Club owner and purchase the shop before the expiration of the lease in February 2022. Despite the good wishes of the community, film fans offering their time to volunteer, and websites like Time Out and Broadsheet getting the word out, Film Club could not be saved. It closed its doors last Friday.

ART BY KATIE HUNTER

I can still remember the first time I went there. Kenny greeted me warmly as I stepped inside. A TV hung above the door and was playing a VHS copy of *Police Story*. I walked in and out of its small overcrowded isles, scanning the vast array of titles, both overwhelmed and excited at everything I could see.

That day, I rushed out with a sizable stack of titles: *Le Million, Audition, Honeyland, Dawson City: Frozen Time, I Was a Male War Bride* and *Paterson*. The autumn leaves crunched underfoot as I walked along the footpaths behind The National Art School, flicking through my pile over and over again, reading the backs, eager to pop them in my player when I got home.

And to think I could rent them for only $2 each! As a student, guaranteed value at such a low price is leagues ahead of streaming services that go underused and demand hours of you to find anything worthwhile.

I can recall returning every so often over the coming months. I'd trek from the Northern Beaches and rush through pounding rain or beating heat to borrow once more.

I remember overfilling my bag with goodies that made lugging them around public transport a nightmare.

I miss chatting with the owner over films, his jubilated eagerness to help find titles I was after, and his banter with the regulars.

Film Club was a space that fostered burgeoning relationships and strengthened the bonds between those who crossed its threshold.

My brother and his girlfriend went to Film Club on one of their earliest dates. She had been there before, but it was his first time. He described how they fell for each other over their shared excitement for the variety of titles on offer, like kids in a candy store.

That day they rented *The Green Ray, Benny's Video, Good Morning, My Night at Maud's, Scenes from a Marriage,* and *Boyfriends and Girlfriends*. He describes how he regrets not renting more while they were open, or buying any of their stuff during the closing down sale. The only remnant of Film Club he has is a copy of *Code Unknown* his partner bought him just before they shut.

Speaking to aspiring director and FilmSoc alum, Chloe Callow says that Film Club has been extremely important to her.

"[It's been] incredibly formative in my past relationships. It kind of became a meaningful meeting area for a lot of my friendship groups, especially those who are into film," she says.

At the same time, Callow suggests it "exposed me to all sorts of different cinema that I didn't have access to on Netflix or even Kanopy, and is just such a treasure trove of collections, especially for out of print stuff. It's a real shame that Film Club is gone now because it's not just a loss for people watching movies, but it was a fantastic archive for all these out of print releases that you literally cannot buy anywhere now.

"These guys really weren't in it for the money, they were in it for the depth of knowledge which is, once again, completely devastating now it's gone.

"At this rate, now that places like Film Club are gone forever and there's no other video rental stores, it just opens the doors for piracy to be the only way to acquire inaccessible movies. And that's by no means their fault. That's just the current state of distribution in Australia," she says.

Everyone else I talked to spoke fondly of the shop, but always in a melancholic way. They wished they went more often, wished they watched more movies, or wished they could have done something to save it.

I, too, wish I had done more. Despite writing this article, I didn't visit the shop nearly as much as I would have liked. I never became a regular they had banter with. I didn't make it to their closing down sale. When someone or something is with you, you take that thing for granted, expecting it always to be there. I never thought Film Club would actually shut. I thought someone would swoop in at the last second, buy it, and keep it running for another decade. Instead, it's gone forever, and there's nothing we can do.

Farewell, Film Club, parting is such sweet sorrow.

While Film Club may be gone, it will live on in the hearts and minds of those who visited its little storefront, and a small piece of it will reside on the shelves of collectors who grabbed some of their titles when they shut their doors for good.

"Film Club is Dead. Long Live Film Club."
- Ben Kenny

The sell-off and shortchanging of student accomodation

Grace Hu gives a digest of what's up with privately-owned student housing.

Recently, students may have become aware of Scape when the USU listed them as a sponsor, debuting the partnership at Welcome Week, with a stall advertising a chance to "win a free year of uni accomodation". Private accommodation providers such as Scape, Urbanest and Iglu, are often associated with high price points and an impersonal environment. Rather than homes, they are WeWorks for students who often don't live in them for very long.

They are also very expensive. For instance, a 13.3 square meter studio apartment at Scape at Abercrombie near the Camperdown campus costs $599 per week.

Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) in Australia has recently become an increasingly mainstream and highly profitable sector for international and institutional investors. According to real estate leader, Savills, the UK PBSA sector is now allegedly set to be worth $135 billion, reflective of the fact that most UK students study away from home in university towns which have limited supplies of private rentals.

Tertiary education is Australia's third largest export (dipping to fourth during the pandemic). In part, this export is driven by the underfunding of universities by the federal government, which drives universities to enrol more international students, who are more profitable per student than domestic students. However there is currently an undersupply of PBSA, meaning institutional investors see a viable opportunity to get in on the boom.

PBSA heavily depends on the supply of international students, evident in submissions by the PBSA Working Group, composed of major players such as AMP Capital, Scape, UniLodge and Iglu. The group's lobbying goes beyond submissions to education strategy consultation, having asked for financial support in the 2021 Federal Budget when border restrictions rendered "occupancy levels dire, typically 20 to 30% and deteriorating with each passing semester".

Scape's investors include a Middle Eastern sovereign wealth fund, China's state-owned commercial bank ICBC, and Luxembourg-based German investor WPI. Iglu was bought for 132 million dollars in 2014 by GIC (a sovereign wealth fund by the Singaporean Government)) and Macquarie Group. UniLodge is now majority owned by Pamoja Capital, a Luxembourg based private equity firm founded by Canadian billionaire John MacBain.

Institutional investment in PBSA as a lucrative asset class and a lack of affordable student housing is driving "town and gown" conflict. USYD's own submissions admit high PBSA prices mean students are increasingly left to compete with lower and middle-income locals for private rental accommodation near campus.

This is best represented by Scape's Pemulway Project, situated on Redfern's the Block, the site of the first urban Indigenous land claim in Australia, and a place of continued Indigenous community and presence. The Aboriginal Housing Company originally received approval for six storeys of student accommodation in 2012.

Subsequently, a modification to build 24 storeys was later approved by the NSW Independent Planning Commission, conceding that an increase in size was necessary due to its proximity to large institutions like USyd, which cite the provision of student accommodation as part of its "strategic visions".

The Pemulway Project was originally designed for Deicorp. Deicorp's housing provider, Atira, is a joint venture between Goldman Sachs and Blue Sky Alternative Investments. Atira was sold by Deicorp to Scape for 700 million dollars in 2019, transferring a portfolio at the time of 3510 beds across 6 facilities in Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide, as well as 3 development properties in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. As a result of this acquisition, Deicorp, Scape and AHC are all stakeholders of the Pemulway Project. This acquisition also means Scape had a bigger real estate portfolio in Australia than Novotel and Meriton.

Scape, supported by 1.5 billion dollars from Allianz, AXA Investment Management and Dutch pension fund APG, then acquired Urbanest for 2.2 billion dollars, which at the time had 6805 beds and an estimated net property income of 100 million dollars per year.

So who sold Urbanest?

Well, Urbanest was owned by the Washington State Investment Board, responsible for the state's industrial insurance program, public funds for colleges and universities, and developmental disability programs". According to its Linkedin, it is responsible for "dramatically contributing to the state's bottom line by earning the lion's share of money needed to cover state pension benefits."

A lack of affordable student accommodation causes both gentrification and encourages a investor-first, student-second approach to housing. And so, that is an investor ledger and crash course on the unhealthy relationship between universities, policymakers, international students, institutional investors and the Sydney rental market.

The French Dispatch trivialises May '68 and student protest

Teresa Ho critiques Wes Anderson's portrayal of the momentous strike.

There is something jarring about the beauty and symmetry of the barricades in *The French Dispatch* (2021). Although a visual spectacle for fans of the auteur, Wes Anderson's polished aesthetics and whimsical film style trivialise the radicalism and social impact of the historic May '68 protests. This incongruity between subject matter and cinematography undercuts the significance of student protest as a whole.

'Revisions to a Manifesto' is the third of four short stories in *The French Dispatch*. Inspired by Mavis Gallant's reflections on May '68 for The New Yorker, 'Revisions' centres on journalist Lucinda Krementz (Frances McDormand), a reporter on the 'Chessboard Revolution'. The student revolution is led by a wiry-haired and thinly moustached Zeffirelli B. (Timothée Chalamet). Anderson is often effective at evoking a child-like sense of whimsy and romanticism through his visually exciting cinematography. 'Revisions' is no different in its light-hearted depiction of a revolution marked by a carefree sense of youthful idealism.

However, this depiction ultimately belies the reality of May '68. The events of May '68 were precipitated by protests in late 1967 and early 1968 against restrictions at Paris Nanterre University that prevented male students from entering female dormitories. Dissent quickly spread to other colleges. On a superficial level, the 'bedroom revolts' appear trivial. However, these revolts were symptomatic of wider dissatisfaction with an education system that privileged the French technocratic state over student interests. Students resented out-dated teaching practices and the lack of communication between themselves and faculty members.

Student demonstrations peaked on 10 and 11 May, the 'Night of the Barricades'. The night began as students erected barricades against riot police. Police responded with concussion grenades and tear gas. 367 people were injured. 468 students were arrested. The brutality of the French Security Police was compared to that of Nazi Storm Troopers. The protests garnered public support, and soon escalated into nationwide general strikes; the three biggest French federations called for a 24-hour strike, bringing the economy to a halt. In response, President de Gaulle ordered workers to resume, and was met with overwhelming support from the 'silent majority'. On 30 May, nearly a million Gaullist supporters marched along the Champs-Élysées, effectively marking the end of May '68.

In an article for the Cleveland Review of Books, Dan DiPero notes how May '68 has "been the victim of revisionist histories that seek to strip it of its radical politics and the violence with which it was met [with]." On the 50th anniversary of May '68, Gucci presented an idealised parody of the protests in its ad campaign, 'Gucci takes to the streets'.

Both May '68 and the 'Chessboard Revolution' begin over seemingly innocuous and petty desires to access female dormitories. However, Anderson leaves audiences ignorant to the political and social context of 1960s Paris in the latter. Its rapid escalation into violent protest, when viewed without knowledge of France's poor education system during the 60s, appears as something to be laughed at. The contents of Zeffirelli's political manifesto remain ambiguous. The violence of the 'Night of the Barricades' is portrayed using the trite metaphor of a chess game. Tear gas is described as nothing more than "fireworks".

By focusing on the failure of the 'Chessboard Revolution', the film further undermines the legitimacy and social importance of May '68. The revolution dies down after Krementz tells Zeffirelli to "stop bickering" and "go make love" with a fellow protester. The fictional revolution is nothing more than a product of sexual frustration and its failure is a product of youthful impetuousness. Whilst May '68 was a political failure, it created a fertile intellectual climate for the emergent women's liberation and gay rights movements. Miring protest in narratives of failure produces reductive histories at the detriment of future activism.

What is most unsettling about the film's ahistoricity isn't its misrepresentation of May '68. It's that by rendering the political background hazy, 'Revisions' presents itself as a parable on the foolishness of all student protest. Krementz's comments about the "touching narcissism of the young" and their "biological need for freedom" dismisses student protest as an unfortunate symptom of youth rather than a productive response to flawed systems.

We need to reject the trivialisation of student protest. When historical depictions like Anderson's undercut the importance of student protest through shallow mischaracterisation, it's up to the individual to recognise the political and social significance beneath the surface. We protest because we see fault in the systems around us, not because we find beauty in placards and megaphones.

It should be of no surprise that Anderson's picture-perfect film-making is not a suitable lens for the nuanced portrayal of political revolt. For social unrest and disorder of this kind, perhaps we need a little less symmetry.

Takeover of Sorbonne University in May 1968.

At the top of her voice: How we police women's larynxes

Nicola Brayan speaks to speech.

For many of us, speaking comes as naturally as breathing. Our voice is a fundamental instrument in communication, but for many it can also be the subject of much criticism and policing. In this article, I explore the ways in which the voices of women and non-male individuals are criticised in a way that cisgender men's voices never are.

The way a voice sounds is primarily shaped by anatomy. We each have vocal folds in our larynx that vibrate when we push air through them. The pitch of your voice is determined by how fast your vocal folds vibrate. Although you can modulate pitch by tightening and loosening your vocal folds, which, in turn, makes your voice higher or lower, longer vocal folds generally vibrate slower than shorter ones. The longer your vocal folds are, the lower your voice is, and vice versa. The length of your vocal folds is typically considered a secondary sex characteristic (a physical feature related to biological sex that is not a reproductive organ). Those assigned male at birth tend to have longer vocal folds, and those assigned female tend to have shorter.

Although it has long been understood that biological sex and gender identity are discrete, social norms surrounding gender presentation treat the presence of secondary sex characteristics, such as the pitch of one's voice, as an immediate marker of gender identity. Cisgender men with higher voices are labelled feminine, cisgender women with lower voices are labelled masculine, and trans people (particularly those who have not undergone hormone or vocal therapy) have their gender identities undermined due to their voice being the 'wrong' pitch. Furthermore, non-binary people are assigned gendered boxes based on the sound of their voice.

Using the anatomy of someone's larynx to police their gender presentation is cruel and arbitrary, and it should not happen. Despite not having the scope to examine the full relationship between voice and gender, this article focuses on the gendered policing of women's voices in contrast to men's.

Women's voices face much more scrutiny than men's. This manifests in two ways. Firstly, high-pitched voices are criticised much more than low-pitched voices. There are a plethora of unpleasant descriptors applied to high-pitched voices — think shrill, screechy, shrieking — but few equivalents exist for lower voices.

Studies show that people trust deeper voices more, although it's unclear how much of that trust is biologically programmed and how much is socially conditioned through being told that men are inherently better leaders. Female leaders like Hillary Clinton and Margaret Thatcher changed the pitch of their voice drastically over the years they were in the public eye, with both rumoured to have taken professional coaching to deepen their voices. Despite this, their voices were still labelled 'shrill' and 'grating' significantly more than their male counterparts.

Secondly, women are further criticised for vocal features such as vocal fry. Vocal fry, or 'creaky voice', occurs when you relax your vocal folds while pushing air through them, slowing the vibration as much as you can, resulting in a raspy-sounding voice. Kim Kardashian is often pointed to as the poster child for vocal fry - most articles explaining what it is will feature a clip of her. It is lambasted as an annoying trait, with some critics (falsely) claiming that it ruins your voice and undermines how seriously you are taken. This is bizarre, as every single person, regardless of their gender, uses vocal fry in their everyday speech. Most of Matthew McConnaughey's lines are delivered with vocal fry, and instead of being lampooned like Kim Kardashian, he is lauded for his sex appeal. In 2015, the podcast This American Life received an influx of hate mail towards female guests who spoke with vocal fry, despite the male host, Ira Glass, using vocal fry frequently throughout episodes. I haven't even touched on vocal mannerisms such as uptalk (when you finish your sentences with rising intonation - something the Kardashians are also lambasted for, despite being a feature of most Australian accents) or filler words such as "like", both being linguistic features that women are over-criticised for. The message seems clear: to be taken seriously, one must sound like a man.

Except, this isn't true. Because when women modulate their voices to sound deeper, they are criticised further. Women with deep voices, like Elizabeth Holmes, are the subject of pernicious conspiracies about the authenticity of their tone. Both Thatcher and Clinton received criticism, from feminists and chauvinists alike, for purportedly deepening their voices over time. Artificially deepening voices has other effects: it makes it harder to employ a full range of intonation, as you can only deepen your voice so far. This leads to women like Clinton being criticised for being "monotone". Deepening your voice also leads to vocal fry, ironically suspending women between criticisms for sounding too shrill or too vapid.

The fundamental problem is not that one must sound like a man to be taken seriously, it is that one must be a man to be taken seriously.

Gatekeeping which voices ought and ought not to be listened to is one of the most insidious tools of oppressive systems. Disguising this gatekeeping as legitimate linguistic criticism makes it even harder to detect and oppose. Voices should not determine the merit of what they are being used to say.

Be critical of those who dismiss others based on the length or mechanics of their vocal folds. And, perhaps most importantly, learn to love your voice just the way it sounds; what you say is so much more valuable than how you say it.

Dermatology is blemished by inequality: The poor have more skin in the game

James Frederiksen dives into a broken industry.

As applications open up for the next intake of dermatology registrars, hopeful medical students will attempt to land one of the 20-25 positions made available by the Australasian College of Dermatologists (ACD) nationwide. With two in three Australians experiencing skin cancer at some point in their life, those fortunate enough to be accepted into the programme will go on to administer a crucial public service to their patients for decades to come. Assuming, of course, that those patients live in a major city.

In almost all cases, as the distance between you and a major city increases, the quality of your healthcare decreases. Compared to people living in major cities, rural inhabitants are six times more likely to report not having a GP nearby and nearly ten times more likely to report not having a specialist nearby. A key area of study here pertains to hospitalisations for preventable diseases, where remoteness is the best predictor of suffering in almost all cases.

Dermatology is worthy of particular criticism because the conditions that plague rural communities are incredibly dangerous yet eminently treatable. Remote Aboriginal communities, for example, are the worst sufferers of skin sores worldwide, and when left untreated they can trigger further, and often lethal, complications such as renal failure or rheumatic heart disease. Scabies, an itchy and contagious rash that causes skin sores, is found in 35% of children and 25% of adults in remote northern Australia. It can also be cured within two weeks if a patient is given access to the appropriate treatment. In many cases however, Australians living in remote and rural areas are simply not able to get access to it.

The root cause of this is the relative concentration of dermatologists in urban areas. In Australia in 2021, only six accredited dermatologists out of 591 worked permanently in rural areas. Meanwhile, in Bondi Junction, there are nine dermatologists operating out of the same building.

On 6 March, the Grattan Institute released a report into out-of-pocket healthcare expenses, listing dermatology as a specialty of particular concern. This is because the structure of the Australian medical system effectively rewards dermatologists for going into lucrative private practices in major urban centres.

The report identified that over 60% of dermatologists charge more than double the schedule fee of $90. In Sydney, consultation costs are routinely more than triple the schedule fee. Of the 20 practices I contacted, the cheapest appointment was $240, the most expensive was $331, and the average was $290.

Australian citizens can, of course, access the public health system, but there are wait times of up to 600 days for those seeking routine first appointments. With government messaging suggesting a skin check annually, people at risk for skin cancer are essentially forced into the private system. So too are sufferers of psoriasis (2.3-6.6% of Australians), severe cystic acne (~5%) and eczema (10-15%), for whom effective treatment can only be legally prescribed by a dermatologist. Such skin diseases can be incurable and debilitating without lifelong treatment, leaving patients with no choice but to reluctantly incur the costs of a private practice.

Underpinning issues of unequal access and inflated prices is a more sinister social trend. In urban centres such as Sydney, dermatologists focus much of their practice on less-severe cosmetic issues than more debilitating diseases suffered by rural inhabitants. While it is difficult to sustain this thesis with substantive data, surveying dermatologist clinic websites in wealthy areas is telling. As just one of numerous examples, Complete Dermatology in Bondi dedicates an entire section of its website to cosmetic treatments such as botox, face lifts and anti-ageing treatments. When compared to the struggle of rural inhabitants to access specialist services for treatable diseases, this focus on superficial cosmetic treatments appears vain. As a public good, dermatologists such as those in Bondi could be better served helping those in remote areas.

The problem is, for those doctors more interested in profits than community service, dermatology has been corrupted by the marketing divisions of skincare companies intent on redefining skin health as an aesthetic judgement, rather than skin that is disease-free.

One such metric that indicates a growing focus on aesthetic dermatology is the emergence of cosmeceutical specialists. Cosmeceuticals are therapeutic products that are intended to have a beneficial effect on skin health and beauty, but their effectiveness is contested because they are unregulated. Across Australia, there are three times as many dermatologists interested in cosmeceuticals as there are in rural outreach clinics (use the "Filter by specialty" tool to see for yourself).

One prominent Australian dermatologist sells her own line of cosmeceutical products, advertised as 'skincare backed by science'. One of her products – purportedly designed for skin care and the treatment of acne – is available on her website for $315. For a similar price, one could consult a dermatologist, receive a prescription for Isotretinoin (the most effective acne treatment) and pick it up from their local pharmacy. I hope this doctor has never specifically recommended her products to her patients, as that would likely constitute a breach of Section 3 of the ACD Professional Code of Ethics – "clinical decisions will not be influenced by personal gain".

Dermatology is not necessarily unique in that the concentration of money in urban centres is leaving rural inhabitants without necessary medical services. Indeed, analogies can be drawn to the growth of cosmetic surgery – another potentially lucrative industry that draws medical professionals away from serving the public good.

The issues surrounding unequal access to dermatologists are known to the ACD, and they have made changes to the training programme selection criteria in the hopes of amending them.

According to its website, the ACD "encourages applicants with a desire to practice in rural and regional areas to apply". It also advertises pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to get into the training programme, however at the time of publication, the link associated with this pathway does not work.

Sydney medical student Daniel* feels the current incentives for rural medical placements simply don't work for dermatology specialists. "Derm is different because it is not a hospital thing. There is a high demand for dermatologists, so patients will just come to you. The only people who seem interested in working in rural areas are the people who were born there," he said.

As long as monetary incentives remain with urban centres, cosmetics and surgical procedures, it is hard to imagine the inequality that underpins dermatology will be fixed in the near future. In its current form, the dermatology specialty is a blemish on the Australian medical system.

**Note: Name has been changed.*

The precedented history of 'unprecedented times'

Veronica Lenard explores the pandemic's linguistic histories.

If you've read an email, a news article, or even had a conversation with anyone in the last two years, you've likely come into contact with the phrase "unprecedented times".

As Zoom went from brand to verb, and euphemisms for "pandemic" entered our vocabularies, our language expanded to include neologisms and new cliches to describe the rapidly changing world around us. Many aspects of our times aren't as unprecedented as they seem, but the most precedented one may be the use of the phrase "unprecedented times".

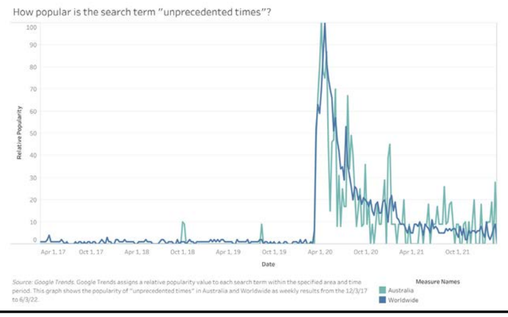
Somewhat unsurprisingly, data from Google Trends suggests that searches for the phrase peaked during the period of March to April 2020. This data is the translation of search results into relative interest values from 0 to 100 (the peak popularity of the term) to represent the frequency of searches within the set region and time period. This makes sense when a Google Search for "unprecedented times" (refined by the date range of 29 March 2020 to -26 April 2020, which is the most popular period of search in Australia), produces around four and a half million results. Many of these results, even within the early months of the pandemic, label these phrases as cliches that should be avoided.

Cliches are often considered to be lazy or ineffective forms of expression. However, as argued in Armanda Ramona Stroia's journal article 'Journalistic clichés under the conceptual "umbrella" of isotopies', cliches can provide a sense of familiarity in complex and overpopulated media environments. These terms can then serve as connections within a shared social language.

Such terms can also concisely describe the confusion of the last two years with impressive capacity for the receiver to understand what the communicator is talking about without really saying it. Nonetheless, the repeated use of these phrases has reduced their meaning to little more than filler for emails or newsletters. When faced with constant uncertainty, confusion, and what often feels indescribable, phrases like "unprecedented times" or "the new normal" can become simple blanket statements to describe (and perhaps obscure) vast complexity.

For a phrase that feels paradigmatic, a search in Google's Ngram viewer shows that it has appeared in English books over at least the last two hundred years. Whilst the phrase does not seem to appear in the Google Books catalogue until the early 1800s, it notably peaks near 1827, 1917, 1941 and 2009, periods associated with the cholera pandemic, the World Wars, the Global Financial Crisis and swine flu. Whilst this phrase has low overall frequency, its higher usage during these times seems to coincide with the occurrence of significant historical events, albeit with minor delays when accounting for the publishing process.

As we continue to encounter new uncertainties and look for new terms to describe them, perhaps we should search within our current cliches for the messages that they attempt to communicate. It seems like if we keep waiting for "precedented" times, they might never come. We might as well adjust.



Wordle: The simple pleasure of a gift

Melody Wong gives us something special.

For a significant part of the past two years, there have been rules on how many people you can hang out with and where you are allowed to go. It's almost as if we have been locked out of our ability to connect with others. And in times as stressful as these, we long for something less overwhelming. We are drawn back to the basics.

That's how Wordle appeared.

To me, Wordle is the embodiment of simplicity. Its clean design and lack of ads heightens the simplicity of its gameplay; green if a letter is in the right spot, yellow if misplaced, and grey if irrelevant. The five-letter daily word also adds to the accessibility of the game; daily words are drawn from common words instead of long-winded, technical jargon. Rather than a brain challenge, Wordle is a game that gives your mind a daily (much-needed) warm-up.

Like many other crossword games, Wordle is meant to be solved independently. But with the introduction of the sharing function, it has gifted its players a sense of imagined community in a time where it is hard to stay connected. In return, the players have reciprocated this gift by keeping the community spoiler-free. Whilst people may use its sharing function to brag — "I finished today's Wordle within two tries!" — you'll rarely see people actually sharing the answer of the day. This community norm of shared respect between members has shaped the game into one of the most appealing communities globally, which is part of Wordle's charm.

The other part has to be Wordle's backstory. The creator, Josh Wardle, developed it as a gift to his partner. In an interview with the *New York Times*, Wardle said: "I wanted to come up with a game that [my partner] would enjoy." Thus, this notion of the 'gift' is embedded in Wordle's origin.

It is also embedded in the social and labour interactions of the community. Wordle can be analysed through the lens of a gift economy - a system that includes the acts of reciprocation, of gifting and receiving gifts. In Wordle's case, the community gives back in various ways; some gave the creator constructive suggestions regarding the sharing function, and some created alternative versions of the game in different languages. This gift-giving exchange between users and the creator duo carries on, resembling what Tisha Turk calls the "circular giving" characteristics of a gift economy in her article 'Fan work: Labor, worth, and participation in fandom's gift economy'. Interactions are premised on social relations of trust and mutual respect between online community members.

But a gift economy system falls apart when a price tag is attached to that trust and mutual respect.

Wordle was recently sold to the *New York Times* at a price in the "low seven digits". Despite the creator's firm refusal to monetise the game, the decision has attracted ire from the community. For example, a Twitter user commented that "The NYT took one nice and simple thing that a lot of people really liked ... and implied that they'll stick it behind a paywall." This raises the question: is there still a place for the value of gifts in our capitalist, profit-driven world?

It's hard to predict what will happen to Wordle. What once began as a relatively small game that came at the height of yet more lockdowns has become a global phenomenon that major brands have sought to monopolise. But to me, the appeal of Wordle will always lie in its essence; a reminder of the simple pleasure of a gift.

Dropping in or dropping out: Online learning in rural Australia

Jenae Madden on studying between the fault lines of coverage.

Wifi: connected, disconnected. Phone hotspot, 3G, SOS only, Zoom is offline, we couldn't find your document, waiting to download, blank squares, paper clips, a little grey circle chasing its tail. I shut my eyes. I can still see the circle, around and around and around. If you can't hear me screaming, that's just the lag.

It was June 2021. The Delta virus began teeming in pockets of Sydney and my shifts at work were getting precarious. My bank account was emptying, my rent was due and dinner was a toss up between ramen or toast. I thought, *fuck this*. I packed my bags, locked the bedroom door of my share house and took the first train home. I knew if I was going to continue the semester, it was going to have to be from my grandparent's dairy farm some 100 kilometres away. That way, even if I was broke, I would be guaranteed a bed to sleep in and a good dinner.

I was welcomed home with the familiar scent of bottlebrush and brisk valley air. I dropped my port on the front steps and my mother pulled me into an embrace. The greetings subdued, and I sat at the kitchen table with my laptop. There was one thing I had not missed while studying in Sydney: the state of the internet.

I tried re-connecting to the wifi, I tried turning it on and off. I tried hotspot, I tried my mum's hotspot. Without fail, the internet speeds were abysmal. I couldn't even load the online speed test for the NBN support guy on the phone. As I sat waiting for screens to load and frozen webpages to come unstuck, I was unsure if I would make it through the semester. I wondered, quietly, if the NBN drops out, would it mean I'd drop out too?

I'm sure for many reading, the fiery debate shrouding the National Broadband Network and its rollout seems well fizzled out by now. Prime Minister Scott Morrison quietly closed the curtain on the rollout at the end of 2020 to make way for the newer, speedier Telstra 5G network. However, there was little acknowledgement for remote communities that would be waiting for years to come for the new Telstra-owned connection. It was as if ScoMo wanted to sweep the whole thing under the rug, remembered like a fuzzy memory, or tiny loose threads that one could only put together with the right prompts.

So while rural communities wait for their dose of 5G, they are left to rely on the NBN network. This might not be so bad if the NBN connection was rolled out as a blanket coverage, not like the ad hoc patchwork of technology Australia was left with. What I'm saying here is that not all NBN connections are the same. In more populous metropolitan areas, the NBN had been connected through the classic fibre-to-the-node fixture. But back on my grandparent's dairy, like in so many other parts of rural Australia, connection is set up via the fixed NBN satellite, and it is borderline archaic technology.

The satellite has been the NBN's cost-cutting solution to combat the missing infrastructure in remote areas to facilitate fibre-optic wiring. But it comes with a myriad of problems. Speeds are barely faster than the former ADSL connections; service frequently drops in and out, and quite literally changes with the weather. What's more, the satellite has strict data caps due to limited bandwidth. Back home, we can't access more data, even if we could afford to.

Over the 2021 lockdown, we had 60GB a month to cover me and my siblings, the three of us studying from home: I was at uni, my brother in his last years of primary school, and my sister in Year 12. The internet wouldn't last just two weeks before we were rationing my mum's hotspot, which was just as slow, and incredibly expensive.

There were some measures to combat the inequality between connections. To make the NBN satellite more viable, providers tried to initiate something called server priority. Basically, the satellite would try to prioritise 'essential' activities like email and online banking over, say, video streaming. However, in a post-COVID world where the web is less a place to surf and more like an IV drip, activities like video streaming are essential, even beyond the case for studying online.

"The University could do a much better job of accommodating the student body of rural students"

With Telstra licking their lips, readying to acquire the existing NBN copper line infrastructure, there are fears that its monopoly of power will stifle competitive incentives to patch the shoddy connection of the regions with slick and sexy 5G coverage. Why would Telstra need to rush to connect rural Australia if no one else is racing them to it? This is a fear steeped in reality as last year, Telstra gave 50 per cent of their profits to shareholders and barely coughed up 3 per cent to improve regional connectivity.

Currently, there is little pressure from the government or news media to ensure that all Australians are connected, *equally connected*, and really, no one is talking about it. Perhaps this can be assumed as a symptom of the recent and rapid closure of numerous regional newsrooms across the country, meaning these non-city issues are criminally under-reported, but that is another article.

What we do know is that according to the Australian Digital Inclusion Index some 2.5 million Australians remained offline in 2021. The report, funded by Telstra themselves, outlined rural accessibility as the chief issue in this online-offline digital divide. It pointed to an upward trend of rural Australian households connecting to the NBN, implying that the capital to country digital divide was narrowing. However, the report (perhaps intentionally, considering its Telstra patronage) failed to account for those who are fully hooked up, but to connections so poor that they are excluded from the online conversation anyway.

It needs to be acknowledged that there is more to this than those online vs. offline. There are also those who exist in-between the fault lines of coverage. I was able to come back to Sydney to study, but I fear for my siblings, for those in my hometown, for those out studying from the regions of rural Australia, who will be left to fall through the cracks.

As we get back to studying on-campus, pausing our conversations while planes whir overhead, it feels as though the dark chapters of COVID-19 are finally coming to a close. But I implore you to think of those studying beyond the metropolitan centres. Many rural students can't afford to be stuck in a foreign city, far-away from home in the case of another outbreak, and this semester will be continuing (or beginning) their studies online as their only option - they too should be awarded the same connectivity opportunities as their metropolitan counterparts.

While this is an issue for internet service providers and government to fix, the University could do a much better job of accommodating the student body of rural students, to ensure they are equipped with the proper internet to complete their studies, especially during this — dare I say — *unprecedented* time (see page 8).

Rural Australians are no strangers to isolation. But that will take on a whole new meaning if we are stuck behind the loading screens, locked out of a new world built to deal with and adapt to the coronavirus pandemic.

Banjos, Bluegrass and Bright Stars —

Ahead of the Tamworth Country Music Festival's 50th Anniversary next month, there's more to country music than meets the eye.

Leo Su sets out to appreciate the beauty, stories, and place of the genre in Australia.

I love country music.

There, I said it. (It's true though—I'm even learning how to play the banjo!)

As a young person living in a metropolitan region, a proclamation like that would usually elicit either puzzled glances or judgmental groans from my peers. I can already imagine their responses, in all of their hackneyed and hyperbolic glory. *That's impossible. I can tolerate every single genre except country.* Or something along those lines.

Everybody knows the stereotypes. Country music is conservative. It's geriatric. It objectifies women. There's even 'bro-country', a specific term coined by *New York Magazine* journalist Jody Rosen to describe the cliches that are often associated with contemporary country songs—whether it's trucks, alcohol, or downright misogyny.

But according to Dr Toby Martin, a historian of country music in Australia, these pervading images are often misleading.

"In the 1920-30s when [country music] first arrived from America, it was very much the rock and roll…of the day," he says.

"It was a modern music form that was written by and for young people. Music from America was like the cool young thing to do."

Instead, Dr Martin attributes the country music stigma to class structures and social stratification.

"When it came here, it came as hillbilly music," he says. "Hillbilly was othered class-wise as a different kind of music for a different kind of person—for the uneducated, illiterate, working class, and rural.

"It arrived in Australia loaded with these pejorative associations. Musicians have exploited that often over the history of country music and played up to those stereotypes."

Indeed, early pioneers of Australian country music such as Tex Morton and Slim Dusty were famous for their deliberate 'singing cowboy' image. But despite this, and despite country music's conservative reputation, Dr Martin wants people to look beyond the surface.

"In Australia [country music has] actually been used by people to promote progressive views, such as Aboriginal people telling stories of struggle and overcoming struggle," he says. "It's also been a form of music which women have used to talk about feminist stories."

Works such as Aboriginal musician Vic Simms' album *The Loner* and Shirley Thoms' song 'A Cowgirl's Life for Me' exemplify the subversive potential of country music. Simms' 1973 country album was recorded whilst he was incarcerated, and is about Indigenous inequality and racism. Similarly, Thoms' 1941 song rejects the idea of domesticity and marriage.

In fact, as Dr Martin writes in his book *Yodelling Boundary Riders*, "[during] the last two decades, some of [country music's] most popular performers have been Aboriginal or women. It has also splintered into sub-genres such as alt country, bluegrass and folk".

Intrigued by this, I decided to go seek out the personal story of one particular artist who pushed forward the frontiers of bluegrass for women.

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There's a certain peacefulness when you're up in the Blue Mountains region, surrounded by eucalyptus trees. Amidst the seclusion, the events earlier that day fade into the distance—whether it's the lane closures from a car crash on the Great Western Highway or the stress of arriving on time. Worries slip away, like the water which flows through the Nepean River that was crossed an hour earlier. A natural boundary symbolising my egress from metropolitan Sydney.

Here in the town of Wentworth Falls, I arrive on the doorstep of Karen Lynne's house.

Lynne is an Australian country and bluegrass artist, whose career has spanned across several decades. She greets me seconds after I ring the bell. It's surreal hearing her voice; it's the same one in the songs I was listening to on the drive here from Sydney.

I thank her in advance for her time and she laughs self-deprecatingly. "I'm not sure why a young person like you would want to talk about country music, let alone with me," she says.

Her living room is full of microphones and instruments. Guitars, banjos—both open-back and resonator—line the area. The walls are adorned with the names of American country greats—Patsy Cline, Bill Monroe, Dolly Parton, Earl Scrubbs. They're joined by photographs of Lynne and some of the band members she's collaborated with over her career, including her husband Martin Louis and close friend Quentin Fraser.

Soon enough, we're sitting down at a circular glass table, cakes in the centre. Coffee is offered and so are stories.

Music was always a part of Lynne's life, growing up in a family of eight. Familial singalongs were the norm.

"We didn't have a TV, so it was really just what our family did," she says. "My dad always loved music, my mum liked to sing.

"I remember she would wash up and she would be singing the harmonies and dad would be at the table singing his old country songs. I'd sing along too."

Despite the low-income conditions of her childhood, Lynne fondly recollects the memory of acquiring her very first guitar.

"We didn't have any money," she says. "So, my dad found an old shell of a guitar. It was broken and he actually rebuilt the back of it. He was really good with his hands; he could just make amazing things.

"I remember just before my [tenth] birthday, my dad had told me to stay in the house and not go in the back. I peeked through the curtain to the back in the kitchen and the guitar was hanging on the washing line because he varnished it and he was drying it."

Laughing, Lynne tells me about her calluses from playing the makeshift guitar due to the high action between the strings and the fretboard. She also tells me about why she is so fond of country music.

"Country songs are just some of the best songs 'cause they tell stories," she says.

"I could never sing a song that I can't believe in. If I'm singing a song from whatever point of view, it's almost like I am that person for those three minutes."

"…the Australian country music sector has more than doubled in value since 1997 to $574 million."

"I have to be able to sing the song from my heart. So, for me, it was about singing the song and moving people—for me, music has to move you."

Unsurprisingly, this sentiment is reflected in Lynne's own music. In her song 'The Road that Brought Me Here', Lynne sings that even after decades of her career, "I still do it for the music, it's the only thing that's real / and it's my way to show you how I feel."

In the same song, Lynne also sings how the "part that matters to [her]" is "not the fame and fortune / the awards or the applause." When I ask her about the context of this line, she details the trajectory of her career over the last 25 years.

"In the industry, you have a use by-date, especially women, unfortunately because there's a certain look and a certain sound you're supposed to have.

"And it's not that we get cast out. We just get a bit lost. We get forgotten. I guess the industry needs poster girls to plug themselves."

Nodding, I recall how the career of 1940s country music pioneer Shirley Thoms effectively ended after she married and had children, a fact which Dr Martin confirmed. It's a sad reality that needs to be addressed.

But despite an extended hiatus due to motherhood, a job with music therapy in aged care, and the death of her father, Lynne has no plans of leaving the music scene for good.

"The next couple of years, [I'm] definitely doing some more recording," she says.

Any new music released would supplement the accolades and achievements which Lynne has already achieved with her discography over the years, including various Golden Guitar Award nominations as well as the Frank Ifield International Spur Award.

A Snapshot of Country Music in Australia

Eyes twinkling, Lynne recalls how her colleagues joked about calling her the "Queen of Bluegrass" following the release of her third studio album *Blue Mountain Rain,* Australia's first bluegrass album featuring a solo female artist.

Bluegrass is a subgenre of country music characterised by its emphasis on acoustic stringed instruments—such as the banjo, dobro, fiddle and mandolin.

"I just love the cry in the instrument," Lynne says about the dobro, her favourite of them all.

Unlike mainstream country music, the bluegrass scene in Australia remains primarily male- dominated. Female singer Genni Kane had made headway as a vocalist for the bluegrass band The Flying Emus during the 1980s, but Lynne became the very first woman to release a bluegrass album under her own name in 2003.

Although she expressed some concern about the decline in Australian bluegrass artists, Lynne tells me she's glad there are at least some younger Australian artists, particularly female ones, who are continuing with the bluegrass tradition—referring to artists such as Kristy Cox and 22-year-old Taylor Pfeiffer.

"For a genre to keep going and be healthy, you've got to have young people in it," she says.

This sentiment is shared by The Davidson Brothers, a bluegrass duo from rural Victoria, who established the Australian Bluegrass Scholarship in 2011 to encourage up-and-coming artists to enter the bluegrass scene.

After I return home from the Blue Mountains, I ring up duo member Lachlan Davidson to ask more about it.

"My brother [Hamish] and I started playing bluegrass [when we were] around 10 to 12," Davidson says. "Back in maybe 1996, we started going to festivals and had a lot of people encourage us a lot. wanted to encourage these people…to follow bluegrass as a career path…so that's what really drove us to make the decision to set [the Australian Bluegrass Scholarship] up."

Awarded annually, the Australian Bluegrass Scholarship consists of a monetary grant to fund instrument purchases, recording projects, tours or mentorship projects, as well as studio recording opportunities.

"We didn't want to see all the talents take another path and just give up bluegrass when they were playing at such great levels at young ages. We thought, yeah, we wanted to support them in any way we could," Davidson says.

Previously, the scholarship began its life as the 'Australian Youth Bluegrass Scholarship' limited to those under 25 years old, but it is now open to all ages.

According to the selection criteria on the website, the scholarship is given to an "individual who is passionate about Bluegrass music and has the potential to contribute to the growth of the genre, particularly in Australia." Despite the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Australian Bluegrass Scholarship was most recently awarded in June 2021 to Jacob McGuffie, a member of the bluegrass trio 'The Beekeepers'.

Past winners include mandolinist Pepita Emmerichs, guitarist Daniel Watkins, and fiddler Jeri Foreman. Approximately one in three of its recipients so far have been women.

When asked about the future of bluegrass and country music generally, Davidson is optimistic. "I think the audience has definitely expanded," he says. "More people are open to it nowadays."

Davidson's sentiments are supported by a 2018 Report conducted by the Country Music Association of Australia (CMAA).

In spite of the negative image which putatively plagues country music, the report found that the Australian country music sector had more than doubled in value since 1997 to $574 million, with country music's share of overall sales seeing an increase from 15 per cent to 19 per cent across 2017-2018.

"Stories of everyday living that bring a new perspective on the mundane… stories of character, stories of the underrepresented, stories of aspiration."

"There was a big generation gap everywhere we went—there was us, not even teenagers yet, and then everybody else was in their thirties. So, there was no one in there. No one in the middle, through their twenties."

However, Davidson believes that the rise of the internet and cultural products (such as the bluegrass soundtrack to 2000 film *O Brother, Where Art Thou*) has helped boost the popularity of the genre in Australia.

"We were seeing people younger than us learning and playing great, and we thought this was fantastic," Davidson says.

"We got a lot of encouragement from the older generation, and we felt, 'well, now's time for us to do the same.' We

Additionally, 14 per cent of songwriters registered with the Australasian Performing Right Association (APRA) identified as country song-writers in 2018, compared to the 6 per cent from 1997.

The CMAA attributes this growth in popularity to the rise of streaming services like Spotify, which reported Australia as the fastest growing market for country music, as well as the increased number of country music festivals and circuits in Australia.

These factors are especially prominent in the growing popularity of country amongst young people. Dedicated country music shows on community radio stations with young audiences, such as FBi, 2SER, and Double J, also play a role.

Emboldened by the knowledge that country music is gaining traction even within my peers, I managed to contact Shruti Janakiraman, a current university student and a fellow country music lover from a non-country music background.

"The vibe of country music is just so comforting," she says, when asked about her love for the genre. "You have all these people that are very honest and genuine in their lyrics in a way that a lot of other genres of music aren't necessarily."

For Janakiraman, the beauty and essence of country music lies in its storytelling.

"When you listen to country music, it's like a very accurate portrayal of how these individuals feel as well as how a lot of people feel when they experience day-to-day incidents in their life.

"Country music has really compelling characters," she says. "It's like this multi-stage storytelling that plays out in a 2-minute song that's very skilful."

Many American country examples come to mind, as Janakiraman points out. The Chicks' 'Goodbye Earl' details the murder of an abusive husband. Bobbie Gentry's 'Fancy' limns a tale of breaking the poverty cycle. And the journey of adulthood is told through Maddie & Tae's 'Downside of Growing Up'.

But just like its American cousin, storytelling is also found in the heart of Australian country music. Take Karen Lynne's aforementioned 'The Road that Brought Me Here' which delivers her life story through song. Or the vivid war-time imagery evoked by Lee Kernaghan's album *Spirit of the Anzacs*.

In concurrence with Janakiraman and Lynne, Dr Martin raises country's storytelling as its signature characteristic.

"In the industry, you have a use-by-date, especially women, unfortunately because there's a certain look and a certain sound you're supposed to have."

"It's always hard to define musical genres," he says. "But I think if I was going to choose one [fundamental thing about country music], I would say it's about the story, it's about the narrative style of the direct writing."

"Telling a complicated, emotional, or complicated political story in simple words is an incredible skill. I hugely admire the economy of the words of country to cut through."

Throughout all the changes which the genre has seen, one thing remains constant. Country music in Australia has told our stories for the past hundred years, and it will continue telling them one guitar lick at a time.

So next time, think twice before you turn off that radio or skip that country track. Listen carefully for the story. Stories of everyday living that bring a new perspective on the mundane. Stories of the triumph over adversity, whether it be racism, a drought, or other vicissitudes of life. Stories of character, stories of the underrepresented, stories of aspiration. You might end up loving country music too.

ART BY KHANH TRAN

Finding language in the uproar: Alexievich & Kaminsky

Thomas Fotiou examines the voices from Ukraine.

Amid the growing crisis in Ukraine, a swarm of confusing and clashing voices about its tumultuous history has emerged. Amid this maelstrom of disparate worldviews, I have discovered the writing of Svetlana Alexievich and Ilya Kaminsky.

Svetlana Alexievich opens *Chernobyl Prayer* (1997), her polyphonic oral history of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster, with the "lone human voice" of a witness. It seeks to locate the experiences of Ukrainians, Belarusians and Russians within a disaster that has had profound and enduring social consequences. As a Ukrainian-born Belarusian oral historian and journalist, Alexievich's work oriented Chernobyl's horror within the ordinary rather than the extraordinary, allowing personal accounts of the past to retain historiographical value.

Alexievich describes her mission as one where she "paint(s) and collect(s) mundane feelings, thoughts and words", constructs "the day in the life of ordinary people", and remembers the disassembling of "home". Her voice counters the erasure of ordinary voices on the Chernobyl Disaster, providing a deeper history than is provided by official political narratives.

The Ukraine Crisis — an entanglement of historical, legal and political problems that remain difficult to unravel — is another event that illustrates the ways ordinary voices go unheard. Despite the proliferation of social media, I have found myself gravitating towards other platforms to educate myself on what ordinary people are experiencing in moments like these.

Similarly, Kaminsky's intensely personal collection of poetry, *Deaf Republic*, confronts how complex histories destroy individual stories. The collection draws on a wide spectrum of historical contexts, from the 2005 Orange Revolution in Ukraine — nationwide protests against electoral fraud — to the 2014-15 annexation of Crimea. The poem dances around metatheatre, the poetic, and the historical, playing with the auditory imagination to fuse alternate visions of Ukraine's past, present and future. In 'Central Square', Kaminsky highlights the consequences of political rebellion. As the poem's main persona Sonya is murdered, "the town watches", quietly suggesting the fate that awaits should they dissent. Around her reads a sign of defiance: "I RESISTED ARREST".

In 'And Yet, on Some Nights', Kaminsky foreshadows a perverse rewriting of history:

"Years later, some will say none of this happened, the shops were open, we were happy and went to see puppet shows in the park. And yet, on some nights, townspeople dim the lights and teach their children to sign. Our country is a stage."

Alexievich also considers the role of trauma in the destruction of language as able to describe individual experience. Her interview with Viktor Latun, a Russian photographer who has shot Chernobyl, evinces that "we live not on the ground but in the realm of dreams, of talk, of words. We need to add something to everyday life in order to understand it. Even when we are living next to death."

Alexievich and Kamisky's need to "add something to everyday life", to clarify its nuances and complexities, articulates the need to reach for such language in recording and narrating the crisis in Ukraine. That is, we need language that stands courageous against the political discourse that seeks to overcome it.

Mundane and ordinary, *'The Idiot'*

Faye Tang revisits the campus novel.

One windy afternoon in 1980s Vermont, five well-dressed classicists shove their friend off a cliff. Fifty years prior, a young and beautiful English Lord goes to Oxford holding a teddy bear and promptly falls prey to dipsomania. Another century before that, in southern Germany, an organic chemistry student brings to life an eight-foot-tall corpse, thereby condemning his loved ones to utter devastation.

Such is the legacy of the campus novel. Dark, dramatic, elitist—it's easy to see how this subgenre's cultish status bled into the mainstream, leaving hordes of students disappointed by their comparatively mild tertiary life. The average university student murders nothing but their sleep schedule, and the closest they get to electrifying reanimation is a double-shot espresso (I withhold comment on alcoholic tendencies). But Elif Batuman's *The Idiot* (2017) novelises this very mundanity, capturing the humble messiness of new adulthood.

The year is 1995, and email is new. So begins the novel's blurb, which goes on to detail the only two major events in the first volume—Selin, our awkward but endearingly honest protagonist, meets a "charismatic and worldly Serbian classmate, Svetlana," and begins exchanging cryptic emails with her crush, an "older mathematics student from Hungary" named Ivan. In her spare time, she does her reading for 'Beginning Russian', a story composed to teach grammar called *Nina in Siberia*.

The novel has no obvious plot. Instead, like an omnibenevolent entity, Batuman holds your hand through every line, tugging you this way and that, provoking smiles at her clever turns of phrase. There's a versatility to the book that makes certain parts resonate with certain people, like an obscure irrelevant personality indicator. I was charmed by a bout of existential fear caused by Selin thinking about the Dumbo movie. A friend who studies psychology was fascinated by Selin's crippling literalism — once, when a classmate politely asks how Selin is, she stands for ages thinking of a response; finding she cannot, she walks away without saying anything.

But not everyone responds positively to being lost in a literary maze. On Goodreads, *The Idiot* has several ambivalent reviews, praising its sense of humour but reviling that "much of the narrative and dialogue feels completely unnecessary", and that "nothing seemed to be happening except a girl describing her classes at university".

It's almost as if people are saying: this is not what a novel should be about. In a time ravaged by plagues and political division, what good is a novel that doesn't make any kind of ideological contribution? Even the sphere of campus novels, *The Idiot* seems egregiously apolitical. Donna Tartt's cult novel *The Secret History* (1992) is an incisive, if indulgent, exposé of elite corruption; Waugh's classic *Brideshead Revisited* (1945) is a postwar reflection on the dying English aristocracy; Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) is a cautionary tale about scientific morality.

But what exactly is the point of *The Idiot*?

In an interview with Vox, Batuman describes her ideal novel: one about daily routine, domesticity, people whose spheres of influence include perhaps a younger sister and a pet dog—essentially, a novel that chronicles "the garbage of life". That label is more an observation than a judgement. Often when we talk of society or culture, we're really talking about politics. When we talk of politics, we're really talking about executive power. We always have our eyes glued to the big screen, the one showcasing the stage of world politics, and any art that doesn't contribute to it is often dismissed as 'chick-lit' by patriarchal voices.

In fact, Batuman's ideal novel has existed for some time.

From Jane Austen's portraits of 19th century quotidian life, to Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, this kind of book embraces the quiet mornings, the domestic arguments, the imaginary playing of the children. Because ultimately, it's the daily lives of people that make up a nation, that give birth to a culture. That is the novel's "political job", as Batuman puts it, "to reintegrate the things we dismissed as garbage".

As such, Batuman decries the boundary between the personal and the political which, in turn, invites us to see our mundanity in a different light; just as Selin thinks critically about the politics of eating peas in front of her crush, so should we reexamine the seemingly arbitrary nooks and crannies of our own lives.

A Guardian review posits that the "triumph of Batuman's book is to make this period of youth matter", and so it does—it matters, despite its lack of bloodsworn friendships, esoteric cults; its blissful ignorance of geopolitics. And youth matters all the more for being clumsy, painful, and yes, idiotic – it's from that sophomoric mess which we find, eventually, the foundations of our place in this world.

Resist: Midnight Oil's impassioned plea for climate action

Valentina Carrizo's bed is burning.

It was a miserable day in the HSC cycle when Mr Mikalic from P.E. romped into our English classroom. Standing over 6ft tall, his lisp gave his booming voice a boyish quality. The class chattered excitedly as he tossed aside a stack of worksheets prepared by our teacher. We were a class consumed daily by ATAR calculators and essay structures. In the tradition of any renegade substitute teacher, he sat atop the table, swinging his size 12's onto the chair in front of him.

"How many of you have heard of Midnight Oil?"

Prepared for the blank stares that met him, Mr Mikalic turned back to the desk and picked up a different bundle of papers. "These are the lyrics to some of their songs," he said.

I don't remember which songs he had printed out, just that they were in a font that looked typewritten. Most of all, I remember his expression. His face lit up with more glee than when he made us play dodgeball with basketballs.

It wasn't just his generation who had a reverence for the prog-rock legends. Midnight Oil was the catalyst for the Greenpeace generation: young people who felt they'd been shaken out of a middle-class stupor and awoken to the realities of environmental degradation, social injustice, and political complacency.

This year, Midnight Oil is back with the album *Resist*. It's a curtain call on the last 46 years of music, a parting message and dire warning for the future. While an environmentally-charged punk ethos dominates, decisive guitar chords craft a distinct identity in what shapes up to be a twelve-track manifesto. Raw vocals synergise with organ solos and sincere lyrics, calling upon all generations to act.

The album opens with 'Rising Seas'. Peter Garrett's distinctive warble rises off the lullaby-like intro, a cross-generational siren call that we are about to face the mirror of truth — and probably won't like what we see. Before long, the song crashes into the reliable mixture of guitar and synth that the band have maintained from their heritage, this time with modern catchwords like "climate-denying".

Track three takes us on a botanical journey through the Tarkine Rainforest. The weeping acoustic guitar riff provokes reflection upon the consequences of neglecting nature.

Garrett's drawl creeps into 'At the Time of Writing': a critique of climate action lethargy in Australia."Our ocean moat protects us, our friends will surely come," he sings. Stripped down and sonically palatable, all attention is on the lyrics. While the message of 1987's 'Beds Are Burning' became obscured by the fame of its iconic sound, this song centres its didactic message, spotlighting the climate crisis from a post-apocalyptic perspective.

'We Resist' is the most haunting and pensive track. What feels like a forward march builds anticipation but fizzles out, reflecting the crossroads we are at in the climate emergency. Echoey drums punctuate heavily distorted guitar, creating a constant push and pull between light and dark notes. Bridged with electronic sounds from the 80s, a piano arpeggio brings us back to clarity before ending on a resounding "only if we resist."

The record closes out with 'Last Frontier'; thunder and a cockatoo screeching precedes news anchors reporting on the climate crisis in different languages. Much like in 'The Barka-Darling River', another track on the album, this song presents a nuanced political perspective as to why nationalist responses alone cannot fix global issues. Orchestral in its own right, the album closes out with sophisticated lyrics and an assortment of instrumentals, proving that Midnight Oil are elder statesmen of music. They leave us not with a full stop, but a question mark.

Though the album is a farewell, it doesn't feel like goodbye. The subject matter Midnight Oil covers is too prescient, too vital, to feel like we are saying farewell to this band, much less these issues. Instead, their music will continue to resound at protests, marches, picket lines, and pubs. As long as our beds are burning and our oceans rising, Midnight Oil's music will always be relevant. Let's hope that one blessed day, it no longer is.

Do you have endometriosis? Signs, Symptoms and Treatments for an incurable disease.

Emily Mackay explores diagnosis and treatment.

What is endometriosis?

Endometriosis is an incurable, chronic condition which causes the inner lining of the uterus associated with menstruation to grow outside the uterus. The endometrial tissue can attach itself to surrounding pelvic tissues and organs causing painful adhesions and scar tissue to form. The disease has been listed as one of the 20 most painful conditions by the NHS, along with shingles, heart attacks and broken bones. So why is it still widely misdiagnosed and insufficiently researched?

Since 2018, I have had two laparoscopic surgeries - both of which required hours of angrily pitching to my doctors that I desperately needed help. When I was 15, I had been suffering with endometrial pain constantly for eight months. Multiple hospitalisations, painkillers and hormonal medications left me completely zonked out and still in crippling pain. When I finally managed to see a renowned gynaecologist after four months of waiting, I was told that I was simply "overreacting" and "making up the pain".

The doctor attempted to refer me to see a pain psychologist and prescribed me antidepressants as a coping mechanism. I was devastated, frustrated, and confused. How could there be nothing wrong with me? Was this all a product of my imagination? A tonne of research and an insightful conversation with my Mum identified the most likely cause of my pain: endometriosis. A month later, I stormed into the specialist's office with one thing on my mind: getting surgery as quickly as possible. The specialist hesitantly booked one for the day before my birthday - yay. I was satisfied and content.

Little did I know that I would indeed be diagnosed with severe endometriosis. The endometrial tissue was so immense that it exceeded my actual uterus in size, yet that's not what pained me the most. When I was minutes away from anaesthesia, the specialist refused to be convinced, politely offering: "Would you like to stay in hospital overnight? I don't think we'll find anything." Ouch.

When I finally managed to see a renowned gynaecologist after four months of waiting, I was told that I was simply "overreacting" and "making up the pain".

Misdiagnosis

The real answer to this question is that most people simply don't know what it is and how it's different from "normal" period pain. People experiencing endometriosis are told constantly by specialists that the pain is all in their head. As a result, there is a dearth of menstruators openly expressing and identifying their symptoms out of fear of being dismissed by the so-called 'experts'. Nevertheless, a consistent medical de-prioritisation of endometriosis has led to 15 out of every 1000 hospitalisations among women aged 15-44 to be endometriosis related (2016-2017). In addition, another 2017 study indicated that 29% of endometriotic women demonstrated moderate to severe anxiety and 14.5% presented signs of depression.

Along with the social and mental impact, a failure to diagnose and treat endometriosis in the early stages has been attributed to severe health complications, including infertility, irregular menstrual periods, amenorrhea, ovarian cancer, and food intolerances.

In the face of such adversity, sufferers are forced to take it upon themselves to identify their symptoms early and self-diagnose. Laparoscopic surgery is the only way to medically diagnose endometriosis, and requires an impressive level of self-determination, self-trust, and painkillers. Yet, surgery should only be used as a last resort.

Is it endometriosis or "just period pain"?

The first step in diagnosis is working out if the pain you are experiencing is indeed endometriosis or "just period pain".

Period Pain

Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) encompasses a large range of naturally induced symptoms that occur prior to and during menstruation, resulting from the hormones oestrogen and progesterone. Many people experience moderate pain during their period caused by contractions of the uterus that lasts for the first couple of days of menstruation when oestrogen levels are high. This often follows PMS symptoms such as mood swings, acne and breast tenderness. PMS symptoms are usually treatable through period pain medications or the contraceptive pill. During PMS, your ability to perform everyday tasks should not be significantly restricted. If it is, this would be the first sign of abnormality.

Treatments for PMS

If you suffer from pain during your period, there are some strategies you can take to lessen the pain, including: using a heat pack, doing gentle exercises (such as yoga), complementary therapy (such as acupuncture), pain relief medications, the contraceptive pill or an IUD implant.

Endometriosis

In contrast, pain from endometriosis tends to shift every cycle and can be present in the lower back, upper abdominal, bowels, bladder, and ovaries. People with endometriosis tend to experience chronic pelvic pain that "comes in waves" relevant to each stage of the menstrual cycle; pain does not necessarily occur exclusively around menstruation. It is common for sufferers to experience periods of severe pain resulting in physical impairment and hospitalisation. Additionally, sufferers can develop chronic fatigue, intolerances to foods (such as gluten and dairy), pain during intercourse, nausea, as well as pain with bowel or urinal movements.

Treatments for Endometriosis

There is no singular way to cure endometriosis, however, there are some treatments available. Hormonal therapy, such as contraceptives, can be used to prevent ovulation and menstruation to restrict the growth of endometrial tissue. A laparoscopic surgery may also be undertaken to remove scarring and abnormal tissue growth. In extreme circumstances, patients may have their ovaries or entire uterus removed.

Some common self-care strategies for endometriosis at home include regular exercise, yoga, meditation, pain medications, heat packs, maintaining a healthy and balanced diet, psychological support, mindfulness, regular sleep and therapeutic treatments such as acupuncture. If you believe you are experiencing endometriosis, above all it is imperative that you speak to a gynaecologist to explore possible treatments.

Re-personalising the self

Toni Whitcombe takes a walk outside her body.

You twist your muddy boots into the bristles of the doormat, rest your umbrella against the wall, and add your tote bag to the mound of jackets that sit on the couch inside. In front of you, fifty-two pairs of shoes hammer the floorboards to Bowie's "Let's Dance" while hands dive in and out of chip bowls.

Shortly after you've entered the front room, two lemon-yellow converse desert the group and make their way towards you.

"Hey! You're finally here" she says as she wraps you in her soft warm arms, in one of those long embraces that whispers "You're here with me, you're safe."

"Sorry I'm so late, the traffic was really bad," you mumble into her ear. "Do you know where the bathroom is?"

She detaches herself from you and points into the darkness.

"Yeah, I think it's the first door on the right, just down the hall there."

"Ok perfect, I'll be right back. I love you."

"I love you too."

And now you're in the bathroom.

Mopping up your smudged mascara with a square of toilet paper helps distract you from all the possible ways that you could be perceived by the strangers who flood the rest of the house. There is no ambiguity between these four walls. Alone, you are not reduced to the changeable and indiscernible way in which others grasp you; you are the clear and inescapable way that you identify yourself to be. But your uninterrupted voice is hostile tonight. It is undisputed and deafening inside this echo chamber you have sealed yourself within. Belatedly, you notice that your body has spat out your mind; that it's slid under the bathroom door and snuck back into the depths of the party.

Disentangled from your imagination, hollowed of all memories and rinsed of all emotions, your physical form glides towards the glugging noise that pours out of the next room. Here, a short brown-haired woman is hunched over a mahogany benchtop upon which several ignored water glasses and near-empty bottles of wine are splayed.

"Hey again stranger, do you want some red too?" she asks.

Without a thought, the words "No I'm okay" crawl out of your lips.

"Alright, nevermind." She pushes aside her wine and substitutes it for a glass of water, proceeding to silently peer through it and study how the light makes it distort your figure.

You've similarly examined the precise ways in which her body contorts in different settings: how her mouth disappears when anxious; how her ears become sponges when she engages in political discussions; and how, when she's upset, her feet turn into lead inside her lemon yellow shoes… But right now her face escapes you. It feels as if you're looking at her through someone else's eyes. Someone has stolen yours and replaced them with their own.

You don't have the vocabulary to describe what you're experiencing to her, and you're afraid that any attempt to do so will freeze you in this state. So as the line between subjects and objects continues to smudge, you melt into a stool that rests next to her. All you can do is wait for your mind to return to you. You've forgotten where you left it. After all, remembering was not your job.

I unlock the bathroom door from the outside, twist the handle, and let your mind reunite with your body in the external world.

Through writing this piece to you, I have been able to gain some sense of control over and familiarity with an experience which has repeatedly alienated me from my own subjectivity. Over the past ten or so years, depersonalisation has made me a stranger to myself – and by extension, those I love – to varying degrees and lengths of time. I've read that some people may only ever experience depersonalisation as a one-time occurrence, while others with the disorder can spend their whole lives suspended in this feeling of unreality and detachment from their own mental processes or body. This prospect alone makes it difficult to remember that depersonalisation is actually a natural way in which our bodies can react to stress or trauma.

Unfortunately, there's no salve that you can apply to your mind when it peels away everything you know and feel from your body. Just like a painful sunburn, all you can do is be patient with yourself – it takes time to heal.

Uncle Ming's Bar: A shot of contemporary Orientalism

Fabian Robertson reviews Sydney's most racist speakeasy.

Lecturers explaining Orientalism should simply take their students on a field trip to Uncle Ming's Bar — a grotesque hodgepodge of fetishized Asian cultures mashed together by owners who probably don't know how to use chopsticks.

Ming's is located on York Street across the road from Wynyard Park, down a semi-concealed staircase below an unassuming tailor. Since its opening in 2012, Ming's has faithfully served Sydneysiders with its ambient atmosphere, creative cocktails, and in-your-face racial insensitivity.

Yet upon arrival, you may at first be oblivious to the cultural bastardisation that lies before you. As the child of a first-generation Chinese immigrant, I am somewhat ashamed to admit that I was initially entranced by the soft red glow that bathes the venue, and lured — as if by magnetism — to the attractively backlit bar primed to dull critical thinking.

Thankfully, once the alcohol wore off, the scarlet-tinged oasis that lay before me eventually faded. What remains — after closer inspection and a bit of online sleuthing — is a genuine case for why Ming's exemplifies contemporary Orientalism.

At risk of oversimplification, Edward Said defined Orientalism as the Western tradition of perceiving the East as 'exotic', undeveloped and inferior in a way that enables a presumption of authority. In the case of Ming's, Orientalism manifests clearly in four key departments.

1. Exoticism

The bar is branded as an "opium-den" run by the fictional Uncle Ming: one of "Shanghai's most notorious figures – a sweet potato vendor who began a life of crime as a policeman collecting protection money from local opium traders". If a team of writers were locked in a room with only Pauline Hanson interviews and Rush Hour gag reels playing on repeat, I doubt they could conjure up more offensive clichés for the branding of a Chinese-themed establishment.

Putting aside the fact that associating China with opium is such a vacuous stereotype, describing a social destination as an opium den is utterly morbid. Opium — a source of morphine and heroin — caused widespread addiction in China from the 18th Century. Funnily enough, it was Western countries that imported the drug into Chinese territory, against the wishes and laws of the Qing Dynasty. The problem became so severe that China fought two wars against Britain and Britain-France in an attempt, in part, to stop imports of the drug.

In this context, opium symbolises a rather tragic segment of Chinese history. On top of that, a Google search of 'opium den' produces images of dingy, crowded rooms filled with forlorn and emaciated figures — the sight of which would likely terrify the ignorant halfwit who first dreamt up the bar's concept.

Beyond being distasteful, such stereotypes perpetuate an alienating form of exoticism. For the sake of branding, Ming's operators have created a caricature that subliminally distances China and its people from the Western hegemon. Consequently, Chinese people are depicted not as part of the community but as 'the Other'; not as the everyday patrons of Ming's but as "sweet potato vendors", opium-users, or "notorious" criminals in Shanghai.

2. Homogenisation

Westerners conflating disparate Asian nationalities and reducing Asia to a single homogenous entity is a common occurrence. Once, an undiscerning drunk fellow yelled out "ninja samurai" to my Chinese friend and I as we walked down a quiet street in Western Sydney. Ming's elevates such callous homogenisation to dizzyingly insensitive heights.

Across the internet, Ming's is branded as either Asian-themed or Chinese-themed. It's patently obvious that, to the owners, there is no real difference.

Ming's fictional backstory and the etymology of his name point to a Chinese influence. Upon entry to the bar however, this becomes enmeshed in a careless concoction of elements from vastly different East Asian countries. Singapore, Japan, Malaysia, South Korea, North Korea and Vietnam all contribute to Ming's branding, menus and interior design.

Aside from reinforcing the reductive Western perception of Asia as one homogenised entity, the grotesque cultural Frankenstein that is Uncle Ming's provides a clear insight into the racist worldview of its management.

This is particularly apparent in the bar's egregious marketing, with their Instagram feed doubling as a public noticeboard for the account owner's racist musings. The profile is littered with photos from various Asian cultures with captions belittling its subjects in attempts to comedically promote the bar. One is captioned "Throwback to that one time Uncle Ming won the Melbourne cup" and depicts a Japanese Samurai Warrior on a silk painting. Yep, a *Japanese* Samurai Warrior. Other posts identify Uncle Ming in photos of a real-life Chinese street vendor and Japanese salaryman.

At Uncle Ming's Bar, Asia is one monolithic entity that warrants no meaningful exploration, respect or celebration. Rather, its nations and people are to be stereotyped, ridiculed and exploited for profit.

3. Racist impersonations

The bar frequently adopts the online persona of Uncle Ming, which involves typing in broken English and speaking about Ming in the third person. One post, depicting a random man bending over on a sidewalk is captioned "Uncle Ming has menu on his website so you don't have to bend over and squint like cousin Chan ... Uncle Ming has forgot that time you drew in crayon on auntie Fung's wall and blamed it on Uncle Ming."

Another post is captioned "Mumma Ming very angry with Uncle Ming. He forget Mothers Day. 16 voicemails. Uncle Ming must wait till afternoon, to drink and listen to the many time he dishonour Mumma Ming."

The Ming persona is also adopted in their responses to Google reviews. One reads "Ni Hao Mr Saagar, when Ming busy we cannot break rules and the wait only 3-7 mins. Ming think you say sorry to your wife for being an hour late and don't argue with guard. Aunty Ming don't like to wait for 1 hour and Ming always sorry to Aunty."

If you're feeling masochistic and want to survey the full extent of the bar's racism, peruse their Instagram and responses to Google reviews.

4. White, white, white

Unsurprisingly, photographic evidence suggests Ming's patronage is largely white, or failing that, largely stupid. While some Asian-looking revellers have publicly tagged the bar in social media posts, it's worth noting that the capacity of these individuals to critique the venue was likely either inhibited by alcohol or their possession of fewer brain cells than Instagram followers.

Like the majority of its patrons, the managing director and co-founder of Uncle Ming's Bar is the very white-looking Justin Best. While I allege no malice on Best's part, the man's entrepreneurialism demonstrates a startling lack of cultural sensitivity. Best(ie), if you're reading this, try having a conversation with someone of Chinese descent. If that fails, maybe open up a map of Asia and look at the boundary lines - you gotta start somewhere.

If, after reading this article, you want the authentic Uncle Ming's experience without having to support a racist enterprise, try glueing a dried block of instant noodles to a wall and running into it headfirst. Culturally and physiologically speaking, that should have a comparable impact.

If, rather, you'd like to acquaint yourself with the theory of Orientalism, check out Edward Said. Maybe if Best had the fortune of coming across Said's writing, he would not have opened a bar that's very essence bastardises and exploits cultures that are not his own. Perhaps, in an alternative universe where he studied Arts instead of Commerce, Justin Best manages a tasteful CBD bar called Uncle Steve's.

Fermented memories — Between *Chao* and *Nước Tương*

Khanh Tran narrates the significance of preserved goods.

The Cantonese-Vietnamese pantry in my family's kitchen is packed with ingredients brimming with umami. From preserved condiments such as shrimp paste (or *mắm tôm*), to salt-cured lemons, each of these ingredients can elevate what is seemingly banal to a masterpiece. Think a refreshing glass of zesty, preserved iced lemonade, or a powerful punch of shrimp paste to heighten the senses in a bowl of *bủ tiếu* (beef vermicelli).

Two that stand out are fermented tofu and soy sauce for the memories and significance they represent in our family.

Noted for its pungency is the fermented tofu, otherwise known as *tàu hủ chao* (preserved bean curds). Preserved in their own brine, these square cubes carry a potent, albeit pungent aroma and are primed to pack a punch in any savoury dish.

Growing up, I detested these cubes. However, I was swiftly converted when I learned how to prepare them.

At home, there was always a jar of tofu in our cupboard. *Chao* comes in a few varieties, one in which a dark scarlet hue develops through the use of red yeast culture. This is the kind of fermented tofu that my grandma would rely on to make braising liquid for pork, goat stews, or a hearty taro hotpot. For those with a penchant for spicy flavours, *chao* also comes in versions where chilli flakes are added.

Similarly derived from soybeans or peanuts, soy sauce deserves its own mention. Though hundreds of variations exist, my favourite remains Maggi-esque — soy-based and sharp with a lingering aftertaste. Being at the crossroads of cultures, I freely alternate between the liquid form and its oily cousin frequently used in Chinese cuisine. Together with a garnish of preserved shrimps, the former can transform plain congee into a masterpiece. In contrast, the latter is a powerful addition that elevates silent broths into a colourful medley.

Of course, my family's (and by extension, my) preference for these two most mundane of condiments speaks volumes to our history. Having emigrated from then-North Vietnam in 1954, my grandparents belong to the *Bắc 54* generation. As such, they've developed firmly Northern tastebuds. This, combined with my dad's Cantonese roots, brings with it a bias towards soy sauce rather than fish sauce. Within these condiments lies the intersection where the North's gentle conservatism and Guangzhou's loud exuberance collides.

Whenever I pass by a jar of *chao* in Marrickville or a golden bottle of Maggi's soy sauce they conjure fond memories of helping prepare the soy marinade for a serving of Hainanese Chicken. Then, passing the fruits of our collective labour to one another, we would partake in the day's gossip akin to the piquant flavours that *chao* and *nước tương* endow and finish our boisterous family dinners.

Although fermented foods such as *chao* may seem mundane, they represent the lovingly chaotic microcosm that is my family's cupboard. Being two years since I last set foot in Saigon, preparing a piping hot taro stew with *chao* to share with friends takes me back to the exuberant daily rituals that characterise my Viet and Cantonese existence.

Coconut: Brown on the outside, white on the inside

Sumyia Nasim and **Bipasha Chakraborty** write.

On a Year 10 excursion to a school in a country town, we were asked to point out the differences between a 'city' and 'rural' education. I distinctly remember a student in the front row confidently saying, "Look at them, it's like playing spot the Aussie!" Through teachers' and students' muffled laughs, we were taught to think nothing of it. Blame it on their sheltered upbringing.

I've recently been coming to terms with the idea that I grew up quite sheltered. Not in the usual, worldly sense, but rather the opposite. In high school, my friends and I could be involved in and share our cultures with one another, showing off our traditional outfits, bringing food from home, and spending lunchtimes sharing words and phrases in our respective languages. We were part of a racial majority.

Meanwhile, our conversations were enveloped in intra-racial comments using terms such as 'coconut,' and 'you're such a white girl', usually brushed off with an awkward laugh. Yet only recently, when someone called me the "whitest brown person they knew", did I come to realise how flawed this statement was and the effect it had on my cultural identity.

Studying at USYD came as a culture shock. I was now often the only person of colour present in a room (not to mention getting called on whenever an issue of race is discussed in a tutorial), confronted by the fundamental detachment from peers who are so obviously from a different world.

I've had tutors in online classes single out Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) to ask how the pandemic is going "wherever you are". I've been deafened by the long, hesitant pauses followed by an "I'm not even gonna try to pronounce that one" from anyone marking the roll. We've been consistently reminded that we are not socially viewed as 'Australian' in these spaces, despite the years spent subtly rejecting our cultures in an attempt to grasp at the perfect representation of who we should be.

Coconut. Brown on the outside, white on the inside. It's a term used to derogatorily refer to a brown person that has been 'whitewashed,' or doesn't represent what is believed to be the norm of what it means to be South Asian. One that is not in touch with their culture in the acceptable ways, from not fluently speaking their mother tongue, to not having a particular affinity for spicy food. Used most commonly by other BIPOC, it's a damaging, counter-productive idea that reaffirms the stereotype that identity is homogenous.

Friends have justified these comments with statements like "it isn't meant to be used in a derogatory way" or "it just is what it is". But it is not what it is. Such statements suggest that whiteness is the ideal. Equating superficial elements with whiteness is problematic when pop culture, slang, aesthetics and beauty standards are often appropriated from the rich cultural heritage of minority communities.

Whiteness continues to receive praise, acceptance, and leniency despite its defining elements being appropriated and gentrified. This is not extended to BIPOC, who are instead vilified and disempowered for aspiring to fit these standards. There is no right way of living as a POC; it is expansive and broad. By calling me white you are erasing my identity and assigning me to a new one as I do not fit the stereotype created in your mind of how my brownness should be presented. Cultural assimilation has always been the expectation, under the guise of celebrating diversity and multiculturalism 'just enough'. Not so brown that you aren't seen as Aussie, and not so Westernised that you're called a coconut.

Shamefully, there used to be a sense of pride in being called "white". Social structures place whiteness at the top of the pedestal. Being able to 'water down' yourself and assimilate has made it easier to be more tolerable for others. Having to sacrifice and reject your cultural identity to feel accepted, validated and valued within a white society. This harm has been accumulating our whole lives, and now years of healing and unlearning lie ahead.

In the years since high school, old friends now introduce themselves using the correct pronunciation of their name, ones that we, even being from the same cultural background, were implicitly taught not to use at school. It's subtly laughed off with an "I'm not a coconut anymore!" As though making our identities more palatable by Anglicising our names wasn't an attempt at survival.

We're all still working to overcome our internalised racism, in the midst of constantly searching for familiarity and normalcy. We're uncovering all the incessant micro-aggressions that have been so normalised for so long. Years of taking on others' 'sheltered' perspectives as our burdens to carry, now wrapped in guilt and shame for not noticing sooner.

Our relationships with our cultural identity are works in progress. We don't need to validate our brownness to anyone, so stop trying to take it away from us. We are brown on the outside **and** brown on the inside.

A migrant's musings on homesickness

Nafeesa Rahman goes home.

It's funny how quickly we can become strangers to our own homes. Only a couple of weeks ago I flew over the Indian Ocean and landed in a makeshift bedroom in Bangladesh, anticipating that the foreign territory of my grandparents' house would be difficult to adjust to. But the days spent in my homeland, surrounded by the warmth of family, drifted by smoothly, and it was only when it came time to return that an acute sense of discomfort pervaded me. I tried to suppress the feeling until I unlocked my bedroom door again in Sydney.

That's when the dreary homesickness settled in.

It was a disease of the heart, a pressingly painful feeling of loneliness that made me feel like nothing was right. I lost my appetite for cereal in the mornings. I hated the sound of Australian news on TV. I spent hours sifting through the same old pictures of my trip, wondering if and when I'd be able to return. But the worst part was the nagging guilt – the feeling that my homesickness was in no way justified. Sydney was my home, and had been for as long as I could remember. How can someone feel homesick at home? After all, my family and I were migrants — we chose to come across the seas and grow our roots in Sydney. Did my homesickness indicate an ingratitude for my present life, and for the home that my parents had worked so hard to establish?

In my frenzy to treat the lingering discomfort, I stumbled upon an interesting term - 'imagined return', coined by Prof. Javier Serrano of University of California in his 2008 article, 'The Imagined Return: Hope and Imagination among International Migrants from Rural Mexico'. Serrano suggests that while migrants are drawn overseas in the promise of a more prosperous tomorrow, they often idealise a valiant return to their homeland as a kind of reckoning with the past that they left behind. Serrano states that for migrants, the prospect of ultimately returning to the comforts of the homeland is often what gives them the confidence to leave the nest in the first place.

The imagined return I had conjured linked back to my own family heritage, and the ancestral trend of migration sewn into Bangladeshi history. The exodus of migrants from rural areas to urban cities has been long-standing, fuelled by prospects of finding work, treatment, or better educational opportunities in the developed city.

In fact, the enduring mobility in the Bengal region has links to the history of migration in greater South Asia, dating back to the partition period of the colonial era, when India was divided into Pakistan, and eventually Bangladesh. Even today, like an unspoken code, one of the things a first-generation Bengali migrant asks another is "Where's your desher bari?", or 'village home'. It's a link back to a time before migration was so common.

My grandparents always told us about the simple charm of their desher baris, the swinging palm trees, the tin-roofed houses, the local ponds where they learnt to swim. These stories almost always contained a nostalgic flair; a longing for a simpler life, like the telling and retelling of these stories was a kind of coping mechanism for chronic homesickness, a means to imagine a return to what once was.

I'm lucky to say that time eventually healed my wounds, and the tormenting feelings of isolation and disorientation passed. As my body recalibrated to the flows of regularity, my home away from home drifted to a memory as it was always destined to, and the fantasy of an alternate life, an imagined return to the homeland, became clear for what it was - simply a figment of the imagination.

ART BY
ELLIE STEPHENSON

ART BY SAM RANDLE

My mother's language

Maria Carmeli Purisima Argana (re)learns Tagalog.
Translation by **Maria Cynthia Purisima Argana.**

I once asked my mother what it meant to be bilingual. I had just seen her get off a work call with one of her clients, explaining the intricacies of insurance policy in perfect English. The next minute, she was on the phone with my grandparents, talking in clipped Tagalog about their upcoming doctor's appointment. When she finally got off the phone, she told me that being bilingual meant more than just fluency in two languages. It also entailed the state of one's mind, the ability to rapidly translate one's thoughts into the language that others could best understand.

As someone who was studying a language at the time, this idea intrigued me. I asked her if she thought of things in English before translating them to Tagalog in speaking.

"No," she replied. "The opposite."

I've been learning and speaking English since my earliest years in Australia. Although I was inevitably exposed to Tagalog by virtue of growing up in a Filipino household, I was constantly reminded as a toddler, and then a kindergarten student, to use English instead of Tagalog in expressing myself. Soon enough, the reminders stopped. By the time I was six, every word that came out of my mouth was in English.

Every migrant knows what it means to be an outsider. And every migrant knows the desire to fit in. To assimilate into the 'new' country is an ideal, something to strive towards. It's seen as a marker of success. A significant part of that is fluency in English.

But the thing about assimilation is that it necessarily entails chipping away at one's native culture to create space for the new one. And in a country like Australia that continues to uphold the colonial project started by European settlers, assimilation is intertwined with the ideal of whiteness. This is the implicit message that all Australian migrants have internalised - the whiter you code yourself, the more successful you are at fitting in.

"But to gain fluency in a language also means reprogramming your brain to think in that language."

I've spent my entire schooling life perfecting my English. But to gain fluency in a language also means reprogramming your brain to think in that language. And as I've learned how to craft beautiful sentences of prose, or articulate complex ideas in simpler words, I've neglected the part of myself that could think in Tagalog – that conceived of myself as Filipino.

Recently, I've started learning Tagalog again. Firstly, out of a sense of necessity for my job (being responsible for *Honi*'s multilingual section), but then out of a desire to dismantle the damaging effects of assimilation. Fluency entails more than just speaking and understanding, but also regaining an appreciation for the behaviours, attitudes and values I had discarded long ago.

But it's not enough for me that these ideas are articulated in the language of my assimilation. To continue reclaiming the identity I have lost, I must also reclaim my mother's language as my own.

Wika ng aking ina

Nag-aral (muli) ng Tagalog si **Maria Carmeli Purisima Argana.**

Minsan tinanong ko ang aking ina kung ano ba ang kahulugan ng pagiging bilingwal. Ito'y matapos kong marinig kung paano nya ipinaliwanag nang mahusay sa wikang Ingles ang masalimuot na kalarakaran ng insurance sa kausap nya sa telepono. At pagkatapos noon, Tagalog na Tagalog naman sya sa pikikipag-usap sa ang aking lolo at lola tungkol sa kanilang appointment sa doktor. Sabi nya sa akin, ang pagiging bilingwal ay higit pa sa kakayahang makipagtalastasan sa dalawang wika. Kasama din dito ang kalagayan ng pag-iisip, ang kakayahang dagling maisalin ang mga saloobin sa mga salitang pinakamadaling maunawaan ng iba.

Bilang mag-aaral ng bagong lenguahe nang mga panahong iyon, naintriga ako. Tinanong ko sya kung nag-iisip ba sya sa Ingles bago magsalin at magsalita ng Tagalog.

"Hindi," sagot nya. "Baligtad."

Ingles na ang salitang inaaral at ginagamit ko sa pagsasalita magbuhat ng dumating kami dito sa Australia. Kahit pa di maiiwasang lantad ang Tagalog sa aking paglaki bilang bahagi ng pamilyang Pilipino, mula pagkabata hanggang sa pagtungtong sa kindergarten, lagi ang paalala sa akin na mangusap sa Ingles. Di malaon, natigil din ang mga paalala. Sapagkat sa gulang na anim na taon, pawang Ingles na ang lahat ng katagang lumalabas sa aking bibig.

Alam ng lahat ng migrante kung paano maging dayuhan. At alam din ng bawat migrante ang pagnanais na mapabilang. Ang mapasanib sa 'bagong' hirang na bayan ay ideyal at bagay na pagsusumikapan, isang batayan ng pagiging matagumpay. Isang malaking bahagi nito ang pagiging matatas sa wikang Ingles.

Subalit sa pagsasanib, kailangan din ng pagtatastas sa kinagisnang kultura upang magbigay puwang sa pagtanggap sa bago. At sa isang bansang katulad ng Australia na patuloy na tumatangkilik sa proyektong kolonyal na sinimulan ng mga Europeong dayo dito, ang pagsasanib ay nakabigkis din sa ideyal ng pagiging puti. Kung mas maibabanghay mo ang iyong sarili sa pagiging puti, mas mapagtatagumpayan mong mapasanib sa bagong hirang na bayan—ito ang hindi lantad na mensahe na unti-unting nanuot sa pag-iisip ng mga migrante.

"Subalit ang makamit ang katatasan na ito ay kaakibat din ng pagdiin sa utak na mag-isip sa wikang ganito."

Ang mahabang panahong ginugol ko sa pag-aaral ay sya ring oras na ginugol ko upang ma-perpekto ang paggamit ng wikang Ingles. Subalit ang makamit ang katatasan na ito ay kaakibat din ng pagdiin sa utak na mag-isip sa wikang ganito. Kayat habang natututo akong lumikha ng magagandang sanaysay, bumaybay sa masalimuot na mga ideya at balangkasin ito sa mga payak na pangungusap, napabayaan ko ang bahagi ng aking pagkatao na kayang mag-isip sa Tagalog—yaong makakapagbadya sa aking pagiging Pilipino.

Kamakailan ay nagsimula uli akong mag-aral ng Tagalog. Una, dala ng pangangailangan sa trabaho (bilang tagapangasiwa ng multilingual section ng *Honi*) subalit dahil na rin sa kagustuhan kong buwagin ang mapanirang epekto ng pagsasanib. Ang pagiging matatas sa wika ay higit pa sa pagsasalita at pag-unawa, kundi ang pagbawi din sa pagtanggap sa mga pag-uugali, gawi at pagpapahalaga na naisantabi ko sa mahabang panahon.

At hindi lamang sapat na ang mga saloobing ito ay naisalita ko sa wika ng aking pinagsaniban. Upang patuloy na mabawi ang identidad na nawala sa akin, kailangan din ang muling pag-angkin sa wika ng aking Ina billang sarili kong wika.

Karaoke Khronicles

Angelina Nguyen writes.

– Track 1 –
The first choice was automatic—
Bụi Phấn, a moral message disguised
as a children's song.
It speaks of nostalgia,
the very thing it now generates.

In the distant past, I sang it with my father,
guided through fluctuating tones,
the octave leap connecting verse and chorus,
his swaying to the oom-cha-cha. It was
a seated waltz. I knew
the poetry without translation. I felt
the way he did it smiling.
It never bothered me
that the question I had back then
was never answered.

Was it white chalk in his hair
Or was he getting older?

I was too young to know what a metaphor was
but I could recognise, feel one.
I learned that everything is secretly
something else.

What I failed to understand was that nothing
could stay as it did, that it was a tune I would sing less
far too soon.

– Track 2 –
The first game of hide-and-seek I played
was with my voice in someone else's house.

My father gestured towards the television
and passed the remote with all its bulging buttons to me.
Although the endless scroll of queued tracks,
panoramic stock images
of what I imagined was countryside Vietnam,
and the shuffling lyrics filled with colour
were sights I was wholly acquainted with,
his request for me to sing was unsettling.
He knew only the enthusiasm at home
for the music we shared,
not the children's accusations —*show-off*,
not the parents' concerns —*what potential wasted potential*,
not my eyes desiring to close like shutters
and stay fixed.

I leapt over those hurdles of murmurs,
grabbed the remote and chose *Hero*,
to say "This is what I am capable of",
"I am more than these childish songs",
"I am fine with this."

– Track 3 –
The first karaoke bar experience I had was
during an after-party.
I came after a faux wedding, a masquerade with everyone
in fancy dress, wearing fake grins.
They screamed to a song about taking what they wanted,
about making dollars, how much fun they were having.
but earlier, they whispered about the bride's self-interest,
about how the whole affair was easy money,
how much fun they were having.

I was reminded of where I stood,
of where I was lucky to stand.
My father told me I was lucky, but I never knew that it meant
lucky to be born here and not across the ocean,
lucky not to be in a constant battle with permanent residency as the temporary prize,
lucky to have the freedom that those with the same surname and hunger as me
must relinquish to afford.

And yet, despite the fact that I was lucky, I did nothing with it.

When I arrived home, my father attempted to learn about the night,
his usual
What did you get up to today?
So did you get up there on the stage this time?
Did you have a good time?
They were each met with less than three words.

I spared my father the details
but wondered what he would have done.
Maybe laughed and agreed
how lucky she was to have found someone willing to make this transaction,
or perhaps he would have called them out,
made them doubt the morality,
of the entire situation, of the truth they were speaking.
At least he would have reacted.

I sat there, a microphone in one hand
and with the other opened, ready to catch,
snatch their words and release their power right back.
All I did was let them slip through
and pile on the ground.

– Track 4 –
The first time I noticed what I was losing,
I pretended that recovering it would be possible
whenever I needed to.

On occasion, my father sets up the machine,
flicks all the switches to the maximum,
turns off the living room lights,
and belts, slightly flat and out of sync,
to love songs, laments, boléros.

He hardly invites me to join in now,
not when he wants to boast about me,
not when the duet cues for a second voice,
not when he is alone.
I have my own theories why
but I have never gone to any lengths
to prove them right or wrong.

He does not know that I watch from afar,
telling myself
I should do it, collapse onto the cushioned lounge beside him,
initiate some large small talk,
and just sing.

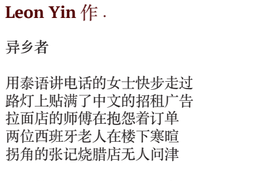
The Stranger

Leon Yin 作 .

异乡者

用泰语讲电话的女士快步走过
路灯上贴满了中文的招租广告
拉面店的师傅在抱怨着订单
两位西班牙老人在楼下寒暄
拐角的张记烧腊店无人问津

身边的北京大爷似乎异常高兴
汤面的热气氤氲了他的镜片
酒杯碰撞的清脆在我耳边响起
我想，他敬的是他身边的朋友
是这大地上的所有异乡者

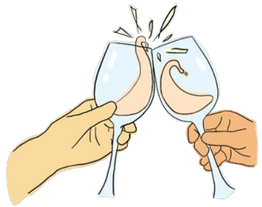


无题

屋脊上的海浪
城市中的潜水员
谁不曾渴望找寻
臭水沟的失落梦想

船舶在召唤
迷失方向的灯塔
还有八千海里
我的家

黑色土地的人们
向破碎的水晶喊话
海鸥的思念
礁石不会回答



The timeless Stream

Sri Anantha Valli writes.

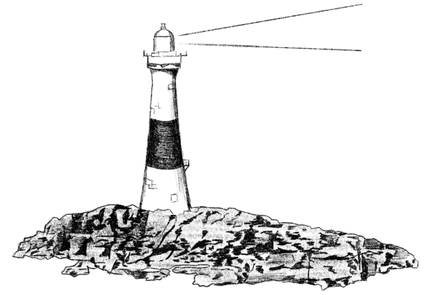
– Prologue –

Water eclipsed her golden head
Every trickle darkened her curls
Velvet soap effervesced in the cast iron bath
Her intuitive personage no longer vanquished
Her paranoia waned
The river succumbed to enslavement

The sacred affinity
Engulfed by the fumes of whiteness
The water is always with you
The whispers of elders solaced her.

– Epilogue –

The agony
anguish
vigour of her people
Disassemble the hegemony
she said
No plethora of solatium could reconcile the past
she said
He is still out there
Daughter, *the water is always with you*
Fight the *maayul*
Her ancestral fondness
unvanquished.



ART BY ATHINA MATHIOUDAKIS

For the love of laksa

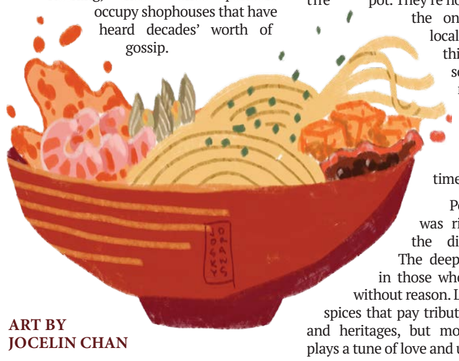
Adeline Chai muses. Translation by **Syed Muhammad Fathi.**

Anthony Bourdain, a famed food critic, coined laksa as the "Breakfast of the Gods" for its tangy texture and rich flavour. Yet the praises that connoisseurs sing do not come close to encapsulating laksa's true glory in the personal and cultural significance that it holds.

Given the various reincarnations of laksa among Southeast Asian countries, its origin is elusive. It is suggested that laksa emerged out of intercultural marriages between Chinese sailors who came to the Malay Archipelago for the Spice Trade and local women, who then incorporated their traditional spices into Chinese noodle soup.

Two years have passed since I got the chance to visit my hometown. For me, the most difficult part in adapting to the 'new normal' was not social distancing nor masks. It was having laksa made from mass-produced paste packets that never hit the right spot in the absence of authenticity.

Growing up, laksa was present in most of the meals I shared with my family. The dish reminds me of a *kopitiam*. *Kopitiams* are the heart and soul of Kuching in the same way that pubs are integral to Australian culture. Usually cushioned between a hair salon and pharmacy on almost every street in Kuching, these coffee parlours occupy shophouses that have heard decades' worth of gossip.



ART BY JOCELIN CHAN

At 9 AM, a *kopitiam* is brimming with life. I tell the Uncle behind the laksa stall my usual order.

"Laksa with yellow noodles and without bean sprouts, please," I say as I settle on a green plastic stool.

I scan the place and see retirees embroiled in a passionate discussion about state affairs over coffee. The parlour's boss is transfixed on his staff who serve two orders on each hand, responding to the impatient grunts coming from customers. *Kopitiams* thus represent a gallery of Kuching life.

Taking a plunge into laksa's concoction of spices such as cumin, fennel, and chillies in the morning is undoubtedly a wake-up call. I remember grumbling about growing pains with my best friend when her family took me to breakfast before school. When my grandparents were still physically capable of joining me and my Mum on our food adventures, our catch-ups would happen at Madam Tang's. Central to these fond memories was a bowl of laksa.

Despite new restaurants constructed as homage to *kopitiams*, there is still something special about a traditional Malaysian *kopitiam* that makes it irreplaceable and beloved.

It's something that I've come to accept as I watch my own laksa broth simmer in the pot. They're not nearly as good as the ones you can find locally but every sip of this oily and spicy soup is a visceral reminder of home, a vestige of the childhood memories that chip away with time.

Perhaps Bourdain was right in describing the dish as heavenly. The deep emotions it stirs in those who sample it is not without reason. Laksa is a medley of spices that pay tribute to several places and heritages, but most importantly, it plays a tune of love and unity.

Demi Laksa

Nukilan **Adeline Chai.**
Diterjemahkan oleh **Syed Muhammad Fathi.**

Pengkritik makanan terkenal, Anthony Bourdain, pernah menggelarnya "Sarapan Dewa" atas perisanya yang sungguh luar biasa. Walaupun indah telinga mendengar, namun pujian yang didendangkan oleh penggemar makanan tidak akan pernah sesekali dapat menggambarkan keunggulan laksa Sarawak, serta impaknya terhadap masyarakat setempat.

Pelbagai variasi laksa telah muncul di sepanjang Asia Tenggara dan ini menyebabkan asal-usul laksa sangat sukar untuk diketahui. Ianya dicadangkan bahawa laksa telah muncul hasil daripada perkahwinan antara kaum di antara pedagang Cina yang singgah ke Kepulauan Melayu di atas dasar perdagangan rempah dan wanita-wanita tempatan. Mereka inilah yang menggabungkan herba tradisional tempatan ke dalam kuah bihun Cina untuk menghasilkan laksa.

Dua tahun telah berlalu semenjak saya berkesempatan untuk pulang ke tanah air. Bagi saya, perkara yang paling sukar untuk saya sesuaikan diri pada norma baharu sekarang bukanlah pada penguatkuasaan penjarakan sosial ataupun pelitup muka, tetapi ianya dengan laksa palsu yang dikeluarkan secara besar-besaran yang tidak mampu untuk menandingi rasa asli laksa tempatan.

Dasawarsa ini, laksa muncul dalam hampir semua hidangan yang saya kongsi bersama keluarga, dan makanan itulah yang membuatkan saya terkenang akan kopitiam. Kopitiam merupakan hati dan jiwa bagi Kuching sebagaimana Australia menghargai pub-pub mereka. Kebiasaannya, kopitiam boleh dijumpai di antara kedai farmasi dan kedai salon rambut di hampir setiap pelosok Kuching sambil dikelilingi dinding berdekad lamanya yang sudah mendengar seribu satu kisah.

Tepat jam 9 pagi, kopitiam mula riuh-rendah dengan suasana kehidupan. Seperti biasa, saya memesan kepada Pakcik di gerai laksa – "laksa mi kuning tanpa tauge satu!" – sebelum mengambil tempat saya di kedai tersebut.

Sekilas pandang, saya perasan beberapa pesara yang sedang hangat berbicara tentang politik semasa sambil menghirup kopi, dan juga tauke kedai yang tekun meneliti pekerja-pekerjanya yang sedang menghidang pesanan kepada pelanggan-pelanggan yang jelas kurang puas hati dengan layanan daripada mereka. Benarlah, kopitiam itu merupakan cerminan kehidupan Kuching yang sentiasa meriah dan berbagai warna.

Dengan campuran herba seperti jintan putih, jintan manis, dan cili padi, semestinya kita akan terus menjadi cergas setelah menikmati sarapan sebegitu rupa. Saya masih mengimbau kembali memori bersama sahabat karib saya sewaktu keluarga beliau membawa saya keluar untuk sarapan sebelum waktu persekolahan. Sewaktu atuk dan nenek saya masih berkudrat untuk menyertai kami, ibu dan saya akan mengadakan pertemuan kami di kedai Madam Tang's. Di dalam memori-memori indah itu, semangkuk laksa menjadi tumpuan utama.

Meskipun kedai-kedai Malaysia yang lain cuba untuk meniru konsep kopitiam itu sendiri – namun, suasana kopitiam di Malaysia tidak boleh dicari ganti di tempat lain. Sesuatu yang sudah lama saya terima, sedang saya memerhati kuah laksa buatan sendiri mendidih di dalam periuk: walaupun rasanya cukup tiada tanding dengan laksa tempatan, tetapi setiap hirupan kuah itu menjadi peringatan tegar buat saya, satu koleksi memori kanak-kanak yang makin hilang dek zaman.

Mungkin Anthony Bourdain benar dalam mengatakan hidangan ini diutus dari langit, dan mungkin hidangan ini juga mampu membangkitkan suatu perasaan di dalam sang perasa atas satu sebab – laksa, suatu hidangan campuran herba yang menyanjung hormat kepada pelbagai tempat, budaya dan warisan, namun yang paling penting, ia mampu mendendangkan melodi cinta serta perpaduan.

Bug PR — How do we think about the insect world?

Ellie Stephenson bugs out.

Very often, I meet people who are squeamish about bugs. Screams ring if and when they see a spider, and creepy-crawlies are unceremoniously squished or batted away. Friends or relatives are called in to extract the poor beetle in question, trapped between a sheet of paper and a glass.

I confess, I do not really understand the fear of bugs. They are very small, mostly harmless, and humans enjoy a large advantage over bugs in terms of size and coordination. While some can be dangerous, the average bug is pretty friendly.

What's more, bugs are incredibly useful. Insects — wasps, beetles, butterflies — are major pollinators, essential to food security, operating as vital cogs in ecosystems worldwide. Our waste products are digested and recycled by bugs: saprophages, coprophages, carrion-eaters. Despite a cultural perception that bugs are dirty, borers, flies, and dung beetles are the diligent cleaners of the world, quietly cleaning up the messes of civilisation and wilderness alike.

As important as they are, bugs are deep in crisis. Many scientists and communities report once thriving swarms of bugs as rapidly disappearing; seasons and locations that once pulsed with insect life are now strangely quiet. The loss of pollinators is felt keenly in the ecosphere.

Studies of insect populations have reported depressing and alarming levels of decline: a 2019 paper which reviewed accounts of insect death across the world, found that current rates of decline could lead to the extinction of 40% of global insect populations in the coming decades. Further, reports of a 99.5% decline in the population of Australia's beloved bogong moths are a chilling wake-up call to the scale of insect death we are facing.

As bugs struggle for survival against the rapid vicissitudes of pollution, pesticides, habitat loss, and climate change, humans need to think soberly about our relationship with the invertebrate world.

Obviously, combatting bug deaths will require serious policy changes to development, agriculture, and climate mitigation plans. For too long, humans have made bleak wholescale changes to the ecosystems that surround us, focusing on what appear as huge and quantifiable issues: agricultural turnover, profitable new suburbs and mines, and industrial output. Insects are small and often unseen. Population surveys are relatively sparse and, like much data on biodiversity, concentrated in the Global North. As such, the lives of molluscs, moths, and midges are not always given due consideration in our decision-making calculi.

But does the squeamishness and revulsion many people hold towards bugs have tangible consequences for human-bug relations, contributing to sustained climate inaction?

In one sense, it seems intuitive that human distaste for bugs reduces the social and political investment in protecting them and their ecosystems. It's common for environmentalist campaigns to focus on imagery of cute and exciting animals — think koalas, elephants and dolphins. We often struggle to motivate people to care about the lifeforms that are more mundane or less aesthetically appealing.

Perhaps this disinterest and dislike of bugs has implications for the way we discuss ecological crises. 2016 research in the journal *Insect Conservation and Diversity* lamented the focus of Australian media on European honey bees as pollinators to the detriment of native insects. Encouraging people to value and emotionally connect with bug life could improve people's investment in the policy changes which might save them.

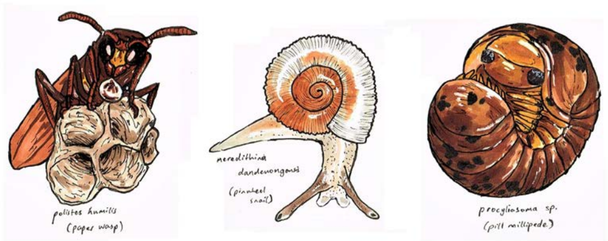
All the same, finding an animal adorable does not guarantee that it will be effectively protected. The media coverage and mimetic charity campaigns on koala vulnerability has not meaningfully slowed the march of deforestation. Australia is facing an extinction crisis that extends to objectively adorable marsupials; if being cute was enough to save a species, bilbies and potoroos would be superabundant.

Many of the causes of extinction are out of ordinary people's direct consciousness and control; a warming climate and decisions about land usage are far removed from people's emotional connection to animals.

Nevertheless, when I hear people joke that they wish insects would just disappear or see people release a plume of pesticide into the air upon sighting a beetle, it seems that some positive bug PR would not go astray.

Disgust towards bugs is so deeply ingrained that it's hard to imagine people reversing lifelong anti-bug sentiment easily. Teaching people to notice and appreciate the bugs around us from an early age is important — we need to appreciate dragonflies, native bees, and jewel beetles as we explore the world. Building insect hotels in the backyard and learning about the extraordinary diversity in bug species could help people to view them as more than just pests.

Bugs are threatened by a variety of macro-level processes, most of which are humanity's fault. Given all they do for us, we should at least give them the affection they deserve.



ART BY ALTAY HAGREBET

Nuclear testing in Maralinga, sixty years on

Katarina Butler recounts.

CW: Discussions of colonial violence.

In the wake of Hiroshima, every major power on Earth scrambled to develop nuclear weapons to maintain military relevance. One such country was Britain, and in a bid to strengthen Australia's relationship with the Brits, the Menzies government offered swathes of land for nuclear testing. The areas chosen were predominantly inhabited by First Nations people.

Testing in Australia was carried out in three locations: Montebello Islands, Emu Field, and Maralinga, between 1952 and 1957. A total of twelve major atomic detonations occurred, creating large fireballs and mushroom clouds that released radioactive debris that is still detectable today. The explosions were similar in size to those seen at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Maralinga faced seven atomic detonations and hundreds of smaller-scale experiments which developed weapons and safety systems for Western powers. These minor trials dispersed radioactive material, including plutonium and uranium, across these sites.

The entire program was characterised by poor safety for everyone involved. Some experiments involved RAAF planes flying through mushroom clouds to sample the radiation. The personnel were untrained, did not have adequate monitoring devices, and, in some cases, were sent out without protective equipment.

For the surrounding communities, the testing also posed, and poses, significant health risks.

Nuclear fallout is a mix of unfissioned material and radioactive material produced during the explosion (such as cesium-137). Radioactive chemicals do not degrade the way that other explosives byproducts do. Instead, they have 'half-lives' which denote the time taken for half of the radioactive material to decay and become inactive (or decay into another lower-weight radioactive compound). Large amounts of plutonium-239 were dispersed during these tests.

Initially, unfissioned plutonium-239 was thought to be relatively harmless. However, recent research from Monash University indicates otherwise. When larger plutonium particles enter the atmosphere, they can release radioactive nanoparticles which spread across the environment attached to dust or rain. As wildlife take up this plutonium from the soil, it is believed to slowly release into other flora and fauna — with dangerous implications for people living on Country. This is particularly concerning considering the 24,100 year half-life of plutonium-239.

In the lead up to the tests, British Armed Forces failed to warn First Nations people of the dangers associated with the program. Only one officer was responsible for covering the thousands of square kilometres to inform whomever he could find. The officer, Walter MacDougall, was then criticised by the Chief Scientists, who wrote that "he is apparently placing the affairs of a handful of natives above those of the British Commonwealth of Nations."

From 1955 to 1985 the Anangu people of Maralinga Tjarutja were displaced to the nearby Lutheran Mission. While the British's Operation Brumby attempted to dilute the high concentrations of radioactive material now embedded in the land, concerns about remaining contamination lingered.

In 1985, the McLelland Royal Commission proved that further decontamination efforts were needed. The Royal Commission also criticised the complicity of the Australian Government and its lack of safety concerns. Eight years later, the British Government made a $35 million payment to the $101 million cleanup cost. The process involved the removal and off-site decontamination of hundreds of thousands of cubic metres of soil before its reburial.

The Maralinga Technical Advisory Committee was thus formed to oversee remediation. Decontamination efforts were hindered by the reluctance of the British to accurately disclose the location and extent of testing. Fortunately, only 120 square kilometres of the contaminated 3200 remained unremediated in the year 2000, with clean up and monitoring efforts ongoing today.

Between 2001 and 2009, the South Australian and Federal governments entered negotiations with the Anangu people, ensuring that they would be able to safely return to Country. Anangu people had to prove that they could monitor for erosion, damage, and contamination before being officially granted land back.

The disaster of Maralinga is disturbingly familiar. Today, just like in the 1950s, the settler-colonial state of Australia is abusing Country, leaving it victim to climate change-induced fires and floods. We see the deferral of responsibility to Traditional Owners who, yet again, are cleaning up the mess of ongoing colonial violence. In both cases, the struggle for Indigenous land rights must also be a struggle to restore what has been socially and environmentally lost to centuries of colonial damage and abuse.

Eucalyptusdom: Through the spectral forest

Abigail Ma reviews the Powerhouse Museum's exhibition Eucalyptusdom.

Against the rugged primary colours of the Australian landscape, the white-skinned Eucalypt stands apart. While inner-city Ultimo feels far removed from its bushland home, it is here at Sydney's Powerhouse Museum that one of the tree's many nomenclatures – the 'ghost gum' – materialises from the darkness of the exhibition space.

"These ghosts are atmospheric and viscous, woven into light, texture, and sound."

Curated by First Nations director and Wiradjuri woman Emily McDaniel, alongside Sarah Rees and Nina Earl, *Eucalyptusdom* showcases commissioned works from composers including Ashley Hay, Vera Hong, Nicholas Mangan, Lucy Simpson, and Wukun Wanambi, to explore Australia's shifting relationship with the gumtree in the context of settler-colonialism.

Both themes of 'haunting' and 'truth-telling' lie at the central heartwood of the exhibit. Conceptually, this haunting refers both to First Nations' spirituality and knowledge, as well as a resistance to the legacies of colonialism: a "relentless remembering and reminding that will not be appeased by settler society's assurances of innocence and reconciliation", as argued by academics Eve Tuck and C.Ree.

These ghosts are atmospheric and viscous, woven into light, texture, and sound. An eerie undercurrent of voices draw visitors toward floating visions such as Lucy Simpson's *Mayabuu (still, continuing)* (2021), where layers of white and dusty-peach silk, dyed with Yuwaalaraay and Gadigal earth and plant pigments, hang from a circular ceiling frame. In the centre, warm light illuminates the Eucalyptus branches printed on the fabric, animating them as they sway and settle in an invisible breeze.

As Simpson intends, the ephemerality of the work "remembers cycles of life and long-time (both back and forward) and maps movement through space and story", reminding visitors of "the importance of relationships, and the interconnected kinship systems woven into the story of Bibil [Eucalpytus]."

This kin-centric relationship is similarly expressed by Wukun Wanambi's *Mittji* (2021), a spectral forest of Larrakitj (traditional memorial poles) designed to "eventually erod[e] and return Yolngu back to Country". Gravestones are perhaps the Western equivalent — though, upon reflection, impermeable stone appears incompatible with our own human transience, pointing to the Anthropocenic conceit imbued within Western value systems.

Still, if mortal bodies are temporary, legacies of settler-colonialism remain deep-rooted.

The Eucalyptus stands – and falls – as a witness to this paradox. Susan Skelly, in her review of *Eucalyptusdom*, notes that the exhibition space becomes "a kind of parallel universe. On the one hand, it is a curation of objects built on the colonial economics of botany [...] On the other hand are things not so easily framed and captioned: interconnections, culture, myths, ancestral stories, the country that grew the trees."

Eucalyptusdom exposes the inadequacies of the former. As the Powerhouse's embedded artist Agatha Gothe-Snape, whose research led to the exhibition's inception, queries: "How do you fall in love with something when you can't name it, when it keeps escaping your methods of categorisation, of knowledge?"

Nicholas Mangan's deeply visceral video installation, *Cutting* (2021), embodies this tense entanglement between Western and Indigenous knowledge systems by recreating the extractive logic of settler-capitalism.

Audiences are positioned as voyeuristic consumers who watch as a jagged blade saws through the air, accompanied by the discordant grinding sounds of metal against wood. Mangan deliberately omits visual violence within his work, allowing museum-goers to imagine the process of dissection that generates tangible products, evidenced in the wooden samples from 1890-1925 contained within steel pallet crates onto which the video screen is mounted.

Behind-the-scenes storytelling through art, such as that which Mangan achieves, "reactivat[es] relics from the past [...] to draw out spectres of earlier times, without romanticising them".

Still, there exists an undeniable aesthetic beauty in the scaly blues, greens and pinks of the Eucalyptus leaf under the microscope.

In blurring the paradigm between art and artefact, *Eucalyptusdom* reframes the Eurocentric, colonial history of anthropology and problematic practices of collection and objectification through a critical Indigenous lens. Even the exhibition labels have been transformed according to a First Nations' ethos, shifting from their prescriptive role to instead facilitate personal, emotional, and spiritual reflection.

"Still, if mortal bodies are temporary, legacies of settler-colonialism remain deep-rooted."

Under the heading, 'Spectres and Sentinals', author Ashley Hay encourages visitors to:

"Imagine the texture of a smooth Eucalyptus trunk; holding a different kind of time, slow progress compared to the seconds, minutes, hours of our daily chronologies."

As we wander through the spectral forest of *Eucalyptusdom*, we, like the gum trees, must remember what we have seen.

What lingers, what *haunts*: the people and stories and infinite histories of destruction, regeneration and hope inscribed on the silver-white skin of the ghost gum are far greater than the sum of the Eucalyptus's extracted parts.

Eucalyptusdom is at The Powerhouse Museum until 28 August 2022.

ART BY AMELIA KOEN

Field Notes

Amelia Koen on childhood ecologies.

I experienced my childhood, teenage years, and early adulthood in the leaf-littered suburb of St Ives. Rife with small pockets of nature, it's filled with numerous quaint woods, towering reserves, green parks, flowing gullies, and quiet creeks.

In the late damp summers and dewy brisk winters, I relished in the blooming of mushrooms — peaking above single blades of grass, broadly stepping out from fallen tree trunks — and the smells evoked by fresh growth along the narrow waterways that ran behind my house.

As young children, my elder brother and I spent hours in the garden we were so fortunate to have; interacting with our mini-ecosphere using our small hands and new minds, we 'invented' a few ecologies of our own — here are just three of our favourite self-named flora:

Firstly, the *Cheese Plant,* whose flowers look like the stringy cheese carefully peeled off a primary school cheese-stick, or grated parmesan crosshatching the spag-bol off the kids' menu.

After spending too much time googling variations of 'string-cheese tree' and 'flowers that look like cheese', I found our culprit: the white-flowering, green leaf variety of *Loropetalum Chinense*. Specifically, I remember how it used to catch the wind like confetti, swirling and swaying through its thin petals; in my memories, it feels like I watched it for a lifetime. I suppose I did.

Our curious obsession with plants-as-food continued with the *Fried Egg Tree*, also known as the white variety of the *Sasanqua Camellia* — onto which we used to sprinkle 'cheese' from the *Loropetalum* to make an 'omelette'.

Camellia flowers have a habit of falling off their tree entirely intact; white petals splay out in irregular, organic shapes, bushy yellow beds of stamens rest in their centre. Trying to find the most egg-like flower on offer that day, we tenderly scooped them up in our hands to proudly show one another. I cherish these memories embedded in nature, of days filled with simple treasures, of unbound yet gentle imaginations.

I really can't elucidate the origins of the name we gave to this next plant other than to say we had clearly just watched the 1971 adaptation of *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* because we dubbed it *Slugworth Slime*. Now, why we chose to name a plant after the movie's antagonist — and President of Slugworth Chocolates Inc. — I'm honestly unsure, but I'd point to the fun of alliteration when you're only six.

The *slime* part of the name, however, I can explain. The small, bulbous roots of this plant behave somewhat like a natural chalk. Scraping them along concrete to create shapes and form visual ideas, the bleeding ooze of the roots leaves behind a glistening trail of, well, *Slugworth Slime*.

As a child, every pathway and pothole I walked my feet along felt like a joyous exploration of new lands. But soon, holding tightly to my father's thumb while trying not to slip on rocks in the shimmering creek became brisk walks along the same path, squeezed in during lunch breaks as an adult.

Be sure to relish in the small natures around you, even as you, yourself, evolve. Refuse a hyperopic experience of the natural world — engage closely with your everyday ecologies, with childlike inquiry.

President

Lauren Lancaster.

Over the past week, I have, like the rest of you, been getting into the swing of semester. Our efforts with Special Considerations over the past few months are paying off – with most outstanding cases on the 'old system' being cleared or to be cleared shortly. This will mean everyone can benefit from the new system, which makes applications easier to amend and track. This week, I attended the Education Action Group's meeting, where we discussed protesting the upcoming appearance of Peter Dutton on a webinar for the United States Studies Centre (shame), and concretised building efforts for the joint student/staff strike. On Friday, a national EAG meeting was called in which we voted on a National Day of Action for Education – it will be Wednesday April 13th, so mark it in your calendars. We are particularly concerned with engaging uni students beyond Sydney, so I look forward to expanding our activism and solidarity across the state.

As part of the general action surrounding the release of the National Student Safety Survey results, I undertook a responding with compassion training by the Full Stop Foundation on Friday. Here I collaborated with student leaders across Australia to learn how to most effectively support survivors and handle disclosures of sexual violence. This training is available to our student leaders across the university. As a member of the Women's Collective in particular, we know that the NSSS release may lead to increased disclosures and will continue to agitate against the university's significant shortcomings in terms of immediate and long-term responses to sexual violence. Specifically, the residential colleges and student accommodation are high-risk zones and do not have appropriate mechanisms in place to deal with sexual violence. We stand with survivors and encourage all non-cis-male students to join the Women's Collective.

Last but not least, I, the General Secretaries and the Chair of Standing Legal continued with constitutional reform. We have redrafted the constitution in parts, my focus being on the representatives, membership and overarching principles guiding the document. We aim to have completed the draft by early April, to present to council in June (leaving a month for people to read, give comment etc).

Education

Lia Perkins and **Deaglan Goodwin.**

Hello! It's been an exciting start to the semester with Mardi Gras last weekend. We joined the student contingent to Pride in Protest's Mardi Gras march down Oxford Street. It was fantastic to return to the original sentiment of Mardi Gras, that it is a radical protest for LGBTQI rights. The Religious Discrimination Bill is a big attack on Trans kids and adults, and it can only be stopped by support on the streets.

The EAG has a few upcoming events, including a protest against Peter Dutton's presence at a USyd United States Studies Centre event on March 16th. We will be taking a picture outside the building on campus, opposing Peter Dutton and Scott Morrison's recent announcement about significantly increasing defence spending and the size of the military. We will also be opposing Penny Wong and the ALP's unwavering commitment to Australian imperialism.

Two days later, the USyd Senate is meeting to consider further attacks that they can make to education and student wellbeing. The Senate is the highest governing body of the university, and we will be protesting them to send a message that students and staff oppose their running of the university for profit.

We continue to lay the groundwork for student solidarity with staff strikes, which are expected to happen later in the semester. Also! The National Union of Students is organising a National Day of Action around free education in early April.

On March 25th there will be a huge climate strike in the city, with a contingent marching from USyd to a university continent at UTS and then to the Domain. The USyd contingent will meet at 10:15am outside Fisher Library. In the context of a flooding crisis in NSW, the demand for 100% public renewable energy by 2030 is essential. We have been supporting the strike by helping the Enviro collective build for the strike on campus. Upcoming events:

Protest Peter Dutton on campus, Weds, March 16th, 12pm USSC

USyd Senate Protest, Fri, March 17th, 11am F23

Day of the Unborn Child, Sunday, March 27th

UTS Protest to Defend Education, Wednesday, March 23rd 12pm UTS

Women

Madeleine Clark and **Monica McNaught-Lee.**

This past couple of weeks have been busy for the Women's Collective and politics more generally. It's clear that we are in a new stage of catastrophe and crisis for capitalism. Politicians can no longer deny the impacts of climate change and it is devastating to see the human cost of their inaction. With this in mind WoCo is supporting the Climate Strike on the 25th of March. The new sub variant of omicron is also the result of the government's inaction and we will see more lives lost and severely impacted because of this.

The Women's Collective has been active discussing these issues and we also have been busy organising. We've attended the Mardi Gras rally, had meetings and banner paints and we have a suite of events and actions lined up for the next couple of weeks. Of note is our annual 'Counter-protest the Day of the Unborn' rally which will be on the 27th of March. We are organising this with the UTS Women's Collective and as the participants of this day not only represent an anti-abortion stance but also reflect the far right more broadly, it makes coming out and fighting them more necessary.

To prepare for this rally we are hosting a training session on the 17th of March which will be open to all students to attend. We are also organising actions around the release of the National Student Safety Survey which will show us new statistics on the rates of sexual violence on campus. To stay in touch with these events you can find us on Instagram and Facebook @usydwoco.

Ethnocultural

Anya Doan, Misbah Ansari and **Ashrika Paruthi.**

As of Week 2 and 3 for ACAR, we have been finalising on our vision for ACAR Honi. We have recently released a call-out form for submissions as well as for the editorial committee. Submissions are relatively low at the moment, so we plan to amplify this opportunity in the next coming weeks. We look forward to beginning the discussion and editing process where we can understand each contributor's ideas for their submission and how we can collectively curate the publication.

In addition, ACAR has just hosted its first reading group this year. We have decided to alternate between autonomous and non-autonomous reading groups. This first one was non-autonomous and we read excerpts from The Annihilation of Caste by B. R. Ambedkar and a relevant contextual text. The turn-out was great as we had participants from other collectives as well as other universities. We plan to continue having reading groups of hybrid attending options of in-person and online to garner even more participants.

ACAR has been active and in communication with other ethnocultural collectives from other universities as well. Last week, we had a meeting with UTS' ethnocultural collective. An important discussion we had regards the recent proposals to immigration schemes which will heavily impact and disfavour international students and their rights in Australia. Conveners of ACAR and UTS ethnocultural collective plan to inform and discuss with our collective about potential actions that can be taken against this, cross-collectively. Another idea we spoke about was crafting a petition for a BIPOC Safe Space on campus as this is non-existent at our university. And given the recent reports of racial harassment on campus/in classes, we feel that this is crucial action to take and must be discussed further.

A main objective of ACAR this year is to strengthen the system of support and connection within the collective. As such, we have been focusing on planning and organising intra-collective events and activities, and our weekly meetings have been dedicated to brainstorming restful and recuperating activities. On our list so far, we have casual catch-ups, movie nights, cooking/food making.

Queer

Ira Patole, Yasmin Andrews and **William Stano.**

QuAC had a great time building in collaboration with WOCO during Week Two for Mardi Gras via banner making event, though sadly flyering efforts were washed out by the rain. It was amazing to see so many people gathered at Taylor Square to continue pushing against the Religious Discrimination, fight for the decriminalization of sex work, and celebrate our LGBTQ+ history and community.

In our recent meeting we have been discussing not only how we can get more community members involved but how we can build a larger network of allies as well. We have also begun talks about how to push back against the proposed SAVE WOMEN'S SPORT bill spearheaded by Claire Chandler as well as an initiative involving the university to streamline name changing processes in institutions account systems.

Stay tuned for more projects and protests on our Facebook Page — USYD Queer Action Collective, and any question, comments, or concerns can be directed to queer.officers@src.usyd.edu.au

Intercampus

Alexander Poirer, Franklin (Tengfei) Pan, Bridgitte Holden and **Jie Lu.**

Hello everyone, and welcome to the back pages of Honi!

You might be wondering exactly what the role of an Inter-Campus Officer is, especially since pretty much every satellite campus for study (not placement) has been closed or moved to Main Campus (the sole bastion satellite being the Con); we sometimes wonder the same thing. Now in my (Alex's) second term of holding this Office, and with the recent revelation that the role is an autonomous position, we've decided to send out feelers to potentially create the Inter-Campus Collective. What is the purpose of the Collective? We're not sure. If you have any ideas, please email us at inter.campus@src.usyd.edu.au.

But in all seriousness, we hope that everyone had a fantastic time at Welcome Fest this year, and are getting into their studies back on campus smoothly. The beginning of this year saw a massive launch of the Welcome Fest at the Conservatorium's usual Welcome Day on the Monday of the week, with a collaboration between the Con, CSA, USU, and SRC. The Council was quite visible there, holding a stall in the prime position in the foyer next to the main staircase where they could hand out year planners and chat with students. President Lauren was also there the entire day, speaking alongside USU President Prue and Honorary Secretary Belinda in the introductory talks to the new Con students, explaining their unions and how students can best benefit from them. We received a lot of feedback from students about how much they've appreciated the talks, and they feel a lot more connected to the rest of the Uni.

We've also placed posters around the Con about the SRC's activism so students can get involved.

Now that we're back on campus to study, that means a lot more running between classes; and for those at the Con it means a lot more public transport and extra opal card fees between classes. As part of the Welcome Fest, the USU organised for the Redfern-Fisher minibus to run between the Con and Main Campus thrice per day. We hope to continue this, after reviewing the successes and failings; but we are honestly super excited that we finally managed to get the bus after so long. Clearly it's possible to do, and the University must continue it, to ensure Con students actually receive their benefits to paying SSAF.

The SRC's Guide to Living on Little Money for University Students

PLACES TO GET MONEY

Centrelink

If you are a full-time student, and an Australian resident, you may be eligible for a Centrelink payment. The amount you are paid depends on how old you are, where you live, and what your other incomes are. If you live away from your family home you may also get a Rent Assistance payment. Check the SRC Centrelink leaflet for more details. If you are a part-time student because of illness, disability, or uni requirements, you might also be eligible for a payment. Talk to an SRC caseworker.

University of Sydney Financial Support

The University offers scholarships (academic excellence), bursaries (financial need), and interest free loans. Check the Uni's Financial Support webpage for details on the many different scholarships and bursaries available. The Uni also provides 12 month interest free loans. It is a good idea to only take a loan if you are going to be able to repay it, as failure to do so will result in financial sanctions that will restrict your ability to use the library, see your grades, or even graduate.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Working

Joining your trade union is a great way to have a stable work life. Unions will protect your work rights individually and collectively, and their fees are tax deductible, and also give you other member benefits.

To join go to australianunions.org.au/join.

Take care with Pay Day Loans

You may have seen advertisements on television showing how easy it is to get a short-term loan. What the ads do not show you is how expensive these loans really are, with fees that cost an equivalent of 45% to 50% interest. The SRC strongly advises you against taking out one of these loans, and instead talk to a caseworker about viable alternatives.

Take care with Buy Now Pay Later

It is great to have interest free periods on loans, and partial payment schemes such as Afterpay, and Ezipay, but the penalties for late repayments can be very high. If you are going to use one of these services, calculate when you will be able to complete the payment, and how much this will actually cost you.

Electricity and Gas Bills

If you are struggling to pay your energy bills, call your energy provider as soon as possible. They can offer a range of assistance, including payment extensions, payment plans, hardship programs, and information about concessions, rebates and other support. You may also be eligible for an Energy Accounts Payment Assistance voucher for a once off payment towards your bill. You can also reduce your "bill shock" by paying a small amount each week towards you bills.

Phone & internet

Pre-paid accounts allow you to monitor your usage and keep track of your weekly spending. Being locked into a contract can reduce the monthly price, but might end up costing more in the long term if you manage to find a better deal, or need to move house. Free alternatives include using the University's internet to make phone calls and send messages through apps like Facebook messenger, Wechat, and Whatsapp. Keep in mind that some free Wi-Fi providers, e.g., the Uni, cafes, and local councils, will use your private information for their own purposes or sell it on to third parties. Yes, the Uni tracks you when you use their Wi-Fi!

Debts

The SRC Legal Service may be able to help negotiate suitable repayments for debts. There are also telephone advice lines including the National Debt Help Line and the Gambling Help Line. If you are struggling with debt we also recommend you meet with a Financial Counsellor to provide confidential assistance in managing and resolving debt. To find one that is free and in your area, go to fcan.com.au. Be very cautious to use the services of a debt consolidation agency. Often the interest rates mean that you will never repay your debts, and can lead to bankruptcy.

Budgeting

There are many different ideas on how to budget: make a spreadsheet to know how much to spend on each thing; give yourself pocket money; or pay a little bit on each bill each week.

For more ideas go to ASIC's MoneySmart page.

Food

There are a few free and affordable grocery providers, including:

The Food Pantry – a low cost, food rescue grocery shop; and

The Staples Bag – very affordable grocery packs at lots of different locations

There are also free and affordable meal providers listed on the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre website (under Meals and Food Services), or go to Asklzzy to find out what is available in your area.

Preparing food for yourself is cheaper than buying take away. There are lots of easy cook recipes and snack ideas online, or find someone who will cook dinner for/with you. You could provide the entertainment (board game), while they provide the dinner. Bring take away containers for leftovers. The Uni has microwaves you can use, which will save you from the expense of buying food on campus.

Lots of restaurants have discount lunch options, and most food courts will provide discounts near closing time. Be careful of food kept out of the fridge or heating for too long. Fresh food markets will discount boxes of food at closing time. You may also find pieces of fruit and vegetables that have fallen on the ground ("gleaning").

HOUSING

Finding a home

Cheap housing in Sydney is extremely rare to find. There are many scams around that trick people out of their money, so if you find a deal that seems too good to be true, it's likely to be a scam. Before paying a deposit or bond make sure you inspect the property, and carefully read the contract before signing it, paying particular attention to fees for moving out early. Get receipts for all money paid, and email a photo of them to yourself. The SRC has a leaflet with more hints and tips about accommodation, including getting help with your bond, and taking precautions when dealing with your landlord.

For more money saving tips and resource links, read the full article online.

Read the online guide to Living on Little Money
See: srcusyd.net.au/src-help/money/guide-to-living-on-little-money

Ask Abe

SRC caseworker help Q&A

Plagiarism: Collusion Allegation

Hey Abe,

My lecturer won't give me my mark for an assignment because I worked on it with my friend. We didn't cheat, so I don't know what the fuss is about. We just helped each other understand the question, because the subject was taught really badly. Can I get into trouble for that?

Working Together

Hey Working Together,

It sounds like your assignment has been referred to the Faculty's academic integrity team, because they think you might have gained an unfair advantage by using your friend's work. You can certainly get into trouble for that, where the likely penalty is a fail for the assignment. Thinking that the subject was poorly taught would not be considered a good excuse for your actions. The Uni has information here (sydney.edu.au/study/why-choose-sydney/student-life/student-news/2020/10/14/sharing-isnt-always-caring-collusion-and-how-to-avoid-it.html) about the difference between legitimate cooperation and collusion. If you are working with another student, make sure that you do not show them your assignment, or look at theirs. Only talk about general concepts, and don't take written notes. Avoid using "tutoring" services, especially where you pay a fee to subscribe. If you do receive an academic integrity allegation, ask a caseworker for help.

Abe

For more information on Plagiarism, Academic Honesty & Integritiy see:
srcusyd.net.au/src-help/academic-issues/plagiarism/

Cryptic + Sudoku by Cloudrunner, Quick by Tournesol, Quiz by Some Hack

Target

6 words: This is me trying
12 words: Perfectly fine
18 words: Gorgeous
24 words: Superstar

T	H	E
N	D	A
N	C	E

Quiz

1. Which of these musical artists didn't perform at the 1985 Live Aid concert?
A) Queen B) Madonna C) Elton John
D) Bob Dylan E) Stevie Wonder

2. What great Australian achievement provoked Bob Hawke to say "any boss who sacks anyone for not turning up today is a bum."

3. Revolutionary leader Thomas Sankara changed the name of Upper Volta to this country (meaning man of the upright man in English).

4. Which of these 80s scifi films' visions of a far off future, have still not been past by our own real life calendar?
A) Blade runner B) Terminator C) Back to the Future D) Akira

5. What structure, officially referred to as the Anti Fascist Protection Rampart, was destroyed in the 1980s?

6. What classic novel's first line is " It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen. Winston Smith, his chin nuzzled into his breast in an effort to escape the vile wind, slipped quickly through the glass doors of Victory Mansions, though not quickly enough to prevent a swirl of gritty dust from entering along with him"

		9		3				8
2	1			6			9	
	3				2			
		3	7					9
					6		1	4
	4		2					
5		4						
	6			9				
		8	1					3

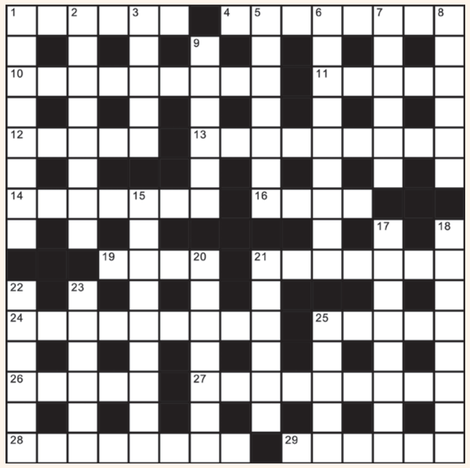
Quick Crossword

Across

1. Man of the cloth (6)
4. Krypton's most famous resident (8)
10. America's 'Music City' (9)
11. Mistake (5)
12. Gain new knowledge or skill (5)
13. Espresso with milk (9)
14. Composer of La bohème, Tosca, Turandot (7)
16. Impolite (4)
19. Do the technicolour yawn (4)
21/25D. Period drama starring Hugh Bonneville and Maggie Smith (7,5)
24. Old farmer (9)
25. Relaxed walk (5)
26. Japanese writing system using Chinese characters (5)
27. Totally developed, major (4-5)
28. Gwen Stefani hit (4,4)
29. Swanling (6)

Down

1. Odysseus' faithful wife (8)
2. Specific occasion (8)
3. 1954 film musical: ... Brides for ... Brothers (5)
5. Second-hand automobile (4,3)
6. Facial cosmetic (9)
7. Broadway star or mythical creature (6)
8. Honest ways: the straight and ... (6)
9. Graduates from a certain institution (6)
15. Looking up (9)
17. Mulish (8)
18. World Wide Web (8)
20. Why (4,3)
21. Cheat (6)
22. Chimney, say (6)
23. Easily recognised, classic (6)
25. See 21 Across



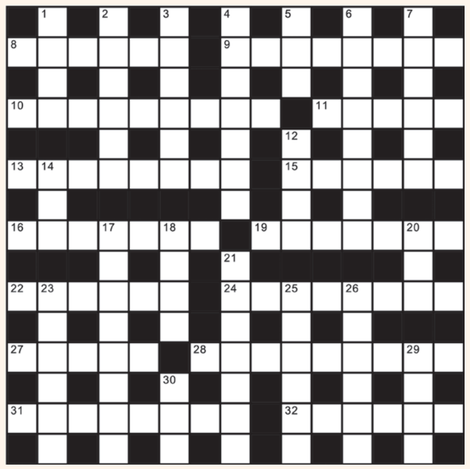
Cryptic Crossword

Across

8. Winter month gold rush (6)
9. Vermeer crazy in love forever and always (8)
10. Herd migrates and feeds, oddly, in the ACT (9)
11. Bloodthirsty Leatherface reveals MO (5)
13. Sho_t o_ _nxi_ty (8)
15. International relations on England's borders have been straighted out (6)
16/19. Swift re-release of *L.A. Story?* (7,7)
22. Agitates for Kesha's dispute (6)
24. Remedy for mad clown? (4,4)
27. Nag sounds grating (5)
28. Predators produce salty discharge (9)
31. WAP singer and netballer finish woolen garment (8)
32. Reform execution method in this day and age (6)

Down

1. True need to give up grass for harmony (4)
2. Artist shouts "Ay, you!" at Loki's rival (6)
3. NATO mobilises, this time immediately (2,4)
4. Gush about Rent (7)
5. Left burning (3)
6. Reactions, unrest, timorousness as USSR disintegrates (8)
7. Apply heat to final piece of sodium-chloride lattice (6)
12. Site of a gold rush, property of 30 Down (4)
14. 9 Across, 13 Across, or 5 Down, say, for TS (3)
17. By the pond in LA? (8)
18. Geoffrey going for gold (4)
20. I'll be over shortly? (3)
21. Partitions native American group in three directions (7)
23. Ahoy! or other exclamation (6)
25. Cyril's messed up the words (6)
26. Dispatch tandoori takeaway to Mr Gray (6)
29. Police prosecute principal of wanky Inner West school (4)
30. Freud talked about me! (3)



Answers

Puzzle answers available online at honisoit.com/puzzle-answers

FREE PULLOUT: Scratch-N-Sniff black mould stickers! Trendy respiratory illness!

Incoherent. Always.

The End Times

Wed Mar 16 Vol. 420 + 4 Cheaper and more available than toilet paper! The only newspaper. Proudly Murdoch. Pro-News. Anti-Truth. People's Republic of USyd. $4.20

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT OF RC MILLS TOILET SPARKS CONTROVERSY, ACTIVISTS ORGANISE "SHIT-IN"

Reporting by Isabel Formby.

Despite their lack of maintenance of many other dilapidated buildings on campus, the university made a surprising announcement last week promising a refurbishment of the toilets in the RC Mills building. This has been met with hostility and disappointment from the student body.

The RC Mills building is home to the Schaeffer Fine Arts Library; USyd's best kept secret, with limited study space, and a quiet yet warm atmosphere. Down the hall is the women's bathroom where the proposed improvements are set to take place.

"The toilets in Mills are my favourite on campus." comments a female student, who wishes to remain nameless. "Studying in Schaeff allows me to maintain my sexy and mysterious reputation, and the toilets are a crucial aspect of the experience."

The refurbishment of the toilets will see new facilities installed, along with a complete interior redecoration. This proposal has been met with intense backlash from a vocal minority of the campus left. 'What has them riled up this time?' you may ask. And the answer is: a single, squarish toilet.

"As a socialist, I know what it's like to be forced into the fringes of society," says notorious campus flyer-bomber, Krystal Myer. "So what if the seat is discoloured and the half-flush button is jammed? The toilet is unique and beautiful in it's own way; it deserves respect and reverence, not to be torn out of the ground and sent to landfill. Redoing the toilets is effectively erasing USyd's activist history, and I won't stand idly by and let that happen"

In response to the proposed changes, Myer and a number of her 'comrades' are planning a sit- in protest; what is now being referred to by the majority of students as a "shit-in". All students, regardless of gender are encouraged to participate.

"I mean, I guess the square toilet is pretty cool," a male member of Solidarity adds. "I'm just fascinated at the lack of urinals. It's not every day you're granted access to the Ladies' room."

Students intend to occupy the toilets until the proposals are scrapped, or the toilet is granted heritage status. *More to follow.*

Doomed	*Destined*
Petrol	Multilingual
IWD Breakfasts	IWD Kickons
Open-toed shoes	Group sex
Press freedom	Sunscreen
HQD vapes	Conflic resolution
Trains	Taxis
UniMelb	Claymation
Foxtel	Emulsification

IN THIS ISSUE:

SYDNEY TOURISTS MISTAKE USYD FOR HARRY POTTER SET AFTER SEEING DUTTON ON CAMPUS

MAN ENJOYS PINK CUPCAKE MADE BY FEMALE CO-WORKER, LEAVES WRAPPER FOR CLEANER

PRESENT THIS COUPON AT THE SYDNEY BIENNALE AS A PERFORMANCE ARTWORK

"IT'S LESS SHIT THAN PISS-N-R AT LEAST": FIRST-YEAR ENGO STUDENT RESPONDS TO THE NEW ENGINEERING BUILDING

Less than a month after its grand opening to the feasting eyes of a lockdown-weary Engo population, the hotly anticipated Engineering Precinct opened to much awe and fanfare from the Sydney University Management Education Group for Managerial Action.

However, much astonishment and gasps were heard as *Honi* visited Cadigal Green and revealed that a whopping $200M was lavished on the glass monolith.

"You can't be serious," exclaimed a visibly frustrated third-year Mechanical Engineering major, staring in disbelief. He soon led the editors to a flaw that he deemed offensive.

It was a broken hand-dryer, still full of detritus and bacteria. He cited a number of studies showing the detrimental effects of using hand-dryers, other than the fact that the Desxon brand conjures up toxic Brexit remnants from Jam Desxon's prized machines.

"Not only are they broken. They blow bacteria back-and-forth and circulate it in your face," Henry Harcourt-Mervin said.

"Engineering buildings will never change. It smells like burning fucking plastic!" the man exclaimed.

For him, this represents an institution that does not care for its engineering students and oppresses its most famous cohort. As he departed for a bite at the swanky new BUDS Grill, he turned around and lifted a middle finger to the glass edifice, baying at the chance to overthrow the establishment.

BNOC FORCES GLITTER GALA ATTENDEES TO SIGN NDA ABOUT RECYCLED MARDI GRAS OUTFIT

SRC Publicity Officer Bodicia Dyspnea said "If you saw my Heaps Gay outfit, no you didn't!" before threatening to sue *The End Times* if we published the content of this interview. "I'm sorry, I am just too busy paying the rent to search out a brand new $500 outfit for the unwashed masses. Also, shipping is delayed. Maybe I'll wear it to Bella Brutta next fortnight."

FIFTH YEAR HONI EDITOR ANNOUNCES RUN WITH SENIORS UNITED PARTY

Washed-up student journalist Bertie Stone told The End Times, "I'm one of the few people brave enough to offer a substantive defence of geriatrics against the Second Year Orthodoxy. I'm joining the Seniors United Party for a better and fairer deal for freelance writers in their mid-20s. I stand with tobacco smokers in the fight against vapes."

LOCAL MOTHER CLAIMS INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF "GAY SEX AND DRUGS" AFTER ACCIDENTAL 'CLOSE FRIENDS' ADD ON MARDI GRAS

Local Mother I. Zopen has insisted that she could not possibly be mad about the stimulating content posted on her daughter's close friends story, on the night of Mardi Gras. "She's an adult, I'm an adult, we're all adults, it's adult content", she insisted.

This week's Honi: TL;DR