



You should be friends with your lecturers

The struggle between direct practicality and abstract intellectual benefit is a constant feature of Australian culture, and holds particular prominence in the university setting.

Whitlam's implementation of free tertiary education for all rested on a conception of the arts as a public good and an integral part of Australian identity. In decades since, consecutive Liberal governments' fiscal austerity has depleted the role of leisurely intellect in both our culture and our education.

Roisin Murphy and Sam Randle write — Page 12

The economic reasoning for this is muddy — Australia Institute data released in 2021 suggested the arts sector creates six times as many jobs as construction, per dollar of turnover. It's logical to conclude that the framing of decisions of arts funding aren't purely fiscal. Instead, there is a divide in opinions about which social investments are worthwhile. Nowhere is this more prominent than in universities. Recent years have seen the price of generalist degrees doubling, and subject breadth in Bachelor of Arts

ExSpences: VC charged uni for boys' club membership

Former Vice-Chancellor (VC) Michael Spence expensed \$133,525.46 over two years against the University, and spent thousands on a personal membership to the exclusive Oxford and Cambridge club.

Spence's expense sheets from his last two years as VC were released to Honi Soit under Freedom of Information legislation. They reveal that the former VC received yearly reimbursements for the renewal of membership fees to the Oxford and

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Barefoot on campus: Toes out on Eastern Ave - p.7

History of the vibrator - p.14

What are USyd students torrenting on campus Wi-Fi? - p.18

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 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, Cammeraygal, 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.

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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 Zara Zadro for Honi Soit.

University life has always flourished where students and staff can determine their own intellectual activities. In bygone years at this university, whole departments have emerged from the industry of unrelenting academics, unionists, and student activists, who have defended the value of pedagogical autonomy and self-governed knowledge. Our feature for this week, 'Why you should be mates with your lecturer' by Roisin Murphy and Sam Randle, details the history of the Departments of Political Economy, and Gender and Cultural Studies, which both originated from divergent schools of academic thought in the '60s and '70s. While Political Economy reflected a rupture in the Faculty of Economics, Gender and Cultural Studies splintered off from the Department of Philosophy, responding to the contemporary expansion of gender theory and a growing need for independent feminist research and teaching at a tertiary level.

It is astonishing to consider the co-creation of academic curricula by both staff and students in our present times, where a suffocating, top-down system of management is utterly naturalised within the University's entire design, immuring the arts and social sciences. Of course, the egalitarian fight that won these departments their autonomy was not an easy one, and has been rarely fought across the Australian university sector. It seems that change is self-determined and self-determining; when an old norm

is defied, widespread reckoning often quickly follows.

Honi Soit might easily be slotted into this radical history of self-determination: a relic of recreational intellectualism and playful absurdity, entirely created by students and for students. It is contextualised by the knowledge transferred to us in university classrooms and through the informal learning that occurs in activist spaces. It is grounded in counter-cultural perspectives — anti-capitalist, anti-colonial, feminist, queer, and more — affirmed as equal in academic value to traditional, mainstream ones by activists of the past.

In a 1995 editorial, the editors of Honi Soit once dramatically proclaimed: "We control Honi, and so we control your future. As a wise man once said, Honi is all about power."

Perhaps their wording is a little too authoritarian, but the gist rings true. The power, and perhaps the threat, which marks Honi has always resided in its radical autonomy. This is true of our education at this University as a whole. Knowledge is empowered in educational settings where it is free to evolve among its teachers and learners. It is crippled when it is shoved into cookie-cutter structures determined by profiteering management, who do not participate in teaching or learning. To echo the cries of students and unionists on strike at this campus two weeks ago: We are the university.

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Disclaimer: Honi Soit is published by the Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney, Level 1 Wentworth Building, City Road, University of Sydney NSW 2006. The SRC's operation costs, space and administrative support are financed by the University of Sydney. Honi Soit is printed under the auspices of the SRC's Directors of Student Publications (DSP): Emily Mackay, Jinhui (Candice) Lu, Mahmoud Al Rifai, Sara Kie, Lily Wei, Cooper Gannon. All expressions are published on the basis that they are not to be regarded as the opinions of the SRC unless specifically stated. The Council accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of any of the opinions or information contained within this newspaper, nor does it endorse any of the advertisements and insertions. Please direct all advertising inquiries to publications.manager@src.usyd.edu.au.

This edition published on 30 August 2022. ISSN: 2207-5593.

Disclaimer: Editor Zara Zadro is a member of campus faction Switch. Zadro is not involved in any University of Sydney SRC Election related reporting, and was not involved in producing any content in this newspaper relevant to the SRC Election.



Sex & the City Rd

Rude Girl has kept her eye on plenty of campus happenings this week, and thanks her intrepid fans for keeping their eyes and DMs firmly open.

While USyd Rants has seen increased activity lately as a result of new admins publishing rapid-fire content, they would perhaps benefit from a touch more discretion. The popular Facebook page published an edited video of education activists disrupting an Open Day lecture attended by former Federal Treasurer Joe Hockey, set to peppy TikTok stock music and complete with awkward zoom-ins on confused prospective students in the crowd.

While the page markets itself as a place for neutral debate, one of the admins commented in support of the video mocking student activism. More pertinently, the video had been posted two hours earlier on the USyd Conservative Club Facebook page — where it received less than a quarter of the views. It seems that campus hacks have come to the realisation that the rants page is a place to share their recruitment material far and wide without the pesky burden of attaching it to your name.

Rude Girl would also note that comments and posts on anonymous pages are not a particularly effective way of skirting electoral regulations. Discerning voters, keep an eye out for those who mock student politics yet are still somehow on the ballot for SRC. On a similar note, joke

ticket members should know that losing elections is not a productive hobby.

Michael Spence Column for Disagreeing Well

Ellie Stephenson writes.

Guy Stutner's article 'BeReal: Not the antidote to social media' last week made some persuasive claims about why BeReal doesn't correctly diagnose the reason why social media is rotting our collective brain. But I'm going to go further: BeReal is an actively sinister psychological force. You should log the fuck off.

Long ago, in the 1890s, Ivan Pavlov accidentally discovered classical conditioning while researching salivation in dogs. It turns out, brains make associations between different stimuli when they're presented in close succession. In those bygone dogs' case, it was the ticking of a metronome and some dog food. In yours, it's the BeReal notification and the glow of psychological validation.

Well, you might say, so what? Why shouldn't I log onto my BeReal and get the pleasant cognitive shimmer of seeing my friends' random vignettes? What harm does it do?

Conditioning yourself to respond reflexively to the demands of a computer is insane. It's nothing short of degrading to be bossed around by a phone app — some sort of twisted mass ritual of cyber voyeurism.

The real problem with social media



isn't that it's fake: it's that it worms its way into the recesses of our crania. Our thought processes get irreparably warped by what we see online: the overwhelming access to information, the rampancy of conflict and misinformation, the immediacy of the perverse in all aspects of our lives. BeReal drags us ever more inextricably into communion with the internet, leaving us waiting, dog-like, for our daily two minutes of Being Real.

Long ago, in 2014, Dong Nguyen, the creator of the viral phone game Flappy Bird, removed the game from the App Store. Recognising that its addictive simplicity and uncontrollable virality made it dangerous, Nguyen refused to be a digital Dr Frankenstein. The creators of BeReal ought to do the same.

Is my housemate evil?

I'd consider myself quite a sex-positive person. More sex? Less sex? All sex? No sex? As long as you're having fun, I'm all for it! And it was in this spirit, when hearing my housemate's one-night stand had not reached full bloom due to a lack of condoms, that I offered up access to my stash whenever they needed it.

So colour me silly when one Tuesday night, or Wednesday morning rather, at 2am I hear a ruffle next to my bed. I turn over to see my housemate with their iPhone torch out, poking through the drawers of my bed-side table, mere inches from my once-peacefully asleep head.

"WTF dude," I choked, earning a startled flashlight in my face.

"I'm just after a condom," they said, confused by my reaction.

I leant over and grabbed some from the back of my drawer, grumpy as ever, and then they left for their school-night

screwing. Now they've been acting cold around me. I fear I may have come across as casting moral judgement when I should have been supportive of the fact they are now practicing safe sex. Am I overreacting or is my housemate evil?

ANSWER: Safe sex is hot, but solid sleep is hotter. Evil evil evil — off to horny jail they go.

Letters editors@honisoit.com

Dear Honi Soit,

No Balloon Release Australia was very concerned to receive a report that helium balloons were being handed out at Open Day, 27 August. Balloons were seen disappearing into the atmosphere, and caught in nearby trees.

Emails to the Students Council in previous years have been ignored, so I am hoping some action will result from this email.

Helium balloons are easily released, ending up as litter, somewhere, and threatening wildlife and farm animals.

Marine scientists are particularly concerned as balloons are known to kill or harm turtles, shearwaters, albatross and other marine wildlife.

Balloons are considered single use plastic as they do not biodegrade and cannot be recycled (research by UTas). They are problematic if not disposed of responsibly — and releasing them is not responsible disposal. They must be put into the waste stream.

Yours sincerely,
Karen Joynes



The Gig Guide

Tuesday 30th

Lazy Bones // Cutthroat Kelly // 7pm

Wednesday 31st

Seymour Centre // Commerce Revue // 7pm

Cellar Theatre // Amadeus // 7pm

Thursday 1st September

Seymour Centre // Commerce Revue // 7pm

Mary's Underground // Going Under // 8pm

Oxford Art Factory // Battlesnake // 7:30pm

The Landsdowne // Diver // 7:30pm

Engmore Theatre // Crooked Colours // 8pm

Friday 2nd

Seymour Centre // Commerce Revue // 7pm

Cellar Theatre // Amadeus // 7pm

Enmore Theatre // Fist Full of Rock // 7pm

Waywards @ The Bank // The Sooks // 7pm

OAF // Honey Nothings // 7:30pm

Upcoming gigs in and around the CBD and Inner West. DM to be featured, Editor's Choice marked with *

Factory Theatre // Hatchie // 8pm

Vic on the Park // Presque Vu // 10pm

Saturday 3rd

Seymour Centre // Commerce Revue // 7pm

Cellar Theatre // Amadeus // 7pm

Hornden Pavillion // Hayden James // 8pm

The Lord Gladstone // Cosmic Boogie // 7:30pm // runs till 3am

Waywards@ The Bank // Sinclair // 7pm

Lansdowne // Eggy & the Stroppies // 7:30pm

Golden Age Cinema // Sappho // 8pm

Sunday 4th

Gasoline Pony // The VilleBillies // 1pm

Upcoming

Friday 16 September // Manning Bar // Barbie Party Sydney // 8pm

Saturday 17- Sunday 18 September // Carriageworks // Festival of Dangerous Ideas // see online for more details

DRUG WARNING

Fake 'Kalma' alprazolam (benzodiazepine) tablets found to contain strong opioids

Know the risks

- Testing of fake (counterfeit) 'Kalma' tablets found they contain a strong opioid, namely etodesnitazene. 'Nitazenes' can be as strong or stronger than fentanyl. Another synthetic opioid (O-desmethyltramadol) was also found in the same tablets.
- Tablets containing strong opioids can cause unexpected and severe overdose or death, even from a single tablet.
- Risk of harm is also higher if you:
 - Mix different sedative drugs. Alcohol, benzodiazepines (benzos) and opioids are very dangerous to combine.
 - Take a counterfeit product
 - Take a higher dose
 - Use drugs when you are alone
- Fentanyl test strips are unable to detect these opioids.
- Fake Kalma 2mg tablets are more likely to be rectangular in shape. Prescribed Kalma tablets purchased at pharmacies are oval.
- Fake benzos (often called street Xanax) may contain a variety of drugs and look very similar to real pharmaceuticals.

Strong opioids have recently been found in some fake Kalma tablets in NSW. They are white, rectangular tablets marked AL on one side, G2 on reverse.



Effects to look out for

- Difficulty speaking or walking, drowsiness, loss of consciousness, slow breathing/snoring and skin turning blue or grey.
- Be on the lookout for unexpected effects

Getting help

If you see the warning signs of overdose: Seek help immediately from your nearest emergency department or call Triple Zero (000).

Start CPR if someone is not breathing. Use naloxone if you have it, repeat doses may be required. Call '000' even if naloxone has been given.

Take Home Naloxone Program

- Naloxone is an easy to use, life-saving medicine that can temporarily reverse an opioid overdose. People at risk of experiencing an opioid overdose or who may witness an overdose can get naloxone for free without a prescription from some NSW community pharmacies, NSW Health needle and syringe programs, opioid treatment services and NUAA.
- Naloxone is available in easy to use products: Nyxoid® nasal spray and Prenoxad® pre-filled syringe.
- For participating sites and more information on take-home naloxone: <https://yourroom.health.nsw.gov.au/getting-help/Pages/Naloxone.aspx>

Support and advice

- For free and confidential advice:
 - Call Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS) on 1800 250 015 at any time 24/7. Start a Web Chat with an ADIS counsellor Mon-Fri, 8.30am-5pm.
 - Call NUAA on 1800 644 413 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) to speak to a peer or visit [NUAA/DanceWizeNSW](https://www.nuaa.org.au) for a factsheet on fake benzos.
 - Call the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26 for advice on adverse effects from drugs.
 - Visit Your Room for information on benzos.

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/aod/public-drug-alerts/Pages/default.aspx>

Issued 26 August 2022 © NSW Health.



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Ethical investments, Foodhub money and PULP: USU Board August Recap

Khanh Tran reports.

While munching on vegan spring rolls last Friday, safe (and dry) from the rainy clouds just outside the Holme Building, the University of Sydney Union (USU) Board convened over a small feast to discuss pressing issues affecting USyd's largest (and wealthiest) student organisation.

Strong financial performance

A steady flow of new members, sustained demand for campus food outlets and a packed event schedule produced a substantial surplus of \$350,000 higher than had been forecasted for the period, according to Finance Director Rebecca Sahni. However, that performance is partly attributable to "the [staff] positions that could not be filled" according to Sahni, echoing shortages of casual labour across the country throughout winter.

Despite the significant turnover, USU CEO Andrew Mills flagged a number of emerging issues surrounding the nation's economic outlook, citing the Reserve Bank of Australia's (RBA) forecasting inflation rates hitting 7 per cent by December, looming British and American recessions and Australia's low unemployment levels as reasons for caution.

He also welcomed the Albanese government's move to implement 10-days paid domestic violence leave to all workers including casual staff.

"So that will be a big step forward for local organisations," said Mills. "For us, we're very happy to see that and we do have formal arrangements already in place doing this and we do see cases of this [need for domestic violence leave] happening."

Mills also paid a nod to *Honi's* eulogy on the Holme Building's bygone rainbow-coloured cereal cylinders.

Extra \$20,000 to support SRC x USU Foodhub's pace

Discussions then turned to the additional money needed to sustain

the operation of Foodhub, a program established earlier this semester between the Students' Representative Council (SRC) and the USU.

The SRC x USU Foodhub is located on Level 4 of the Wentworth Building adjacent to the International Student Lounge (ISL). It provides free essential groceries, ready-to-eat meals and personal hygiene products on a demand-driven basis with support from Foodbank NSW & ACT.

According to USU President Cole Scott-Curwood, the joint initiative has been met with unexpectedly high demand.

"In my conversations with the SRC, it's become clear that what we've budgeted to support Foodhub is insufficient for the demand that we've been experiencing," Scott-Curwood said.

In response, he submitted that \$20,000 be set aside to help support Foodhub so that the program can continue on its current trajectory, adding that the final funding number is being discussed with USU management and SRC executives.

A brief moment of confusion ensued when Senate-appointed Board Director David Wright intervened to clarify procedural rules surrounding the proposed \$20,000 for Foodhub.

"I would prefer to see something come to the Board to say that management has approved the \$20,000 because it's their delegation," Wright told Scott-Curwood.

Similarly, fellow Board Director and Ethnocultural portfolio holder Naz Sharifi quizzed Scott-Curwood on Foodhub's viability should funding dry up.

Responding to Sharifi, Scott-Curwood hoped that USyd would be generous in its consideration of the organisation's Foodhub funding request.

"The desirable outcome is that the University [recognises] the criticality of food security initiatives and would pick up the costs. There will of course be communication with the SRC on how

Foodhub is supported, it's an important initiative that's had more demand than anticipated," he said.

Later on, following a question for clarification from *Honi* on Foodhub's fate should the \$20,000 not eventuate, he said that the funding is secure and would not be drawn into hypotheticals otherwise.

"We have the \$20,000. I would not prefer to speculate on what would happen if we didn't have money because I think the key thing is that we've allocated the funds. It means that we've got money to secure [Foodhub] for the rest of the year."

Efforts towards ethical investments

In his report to the Board, Honorary Treasurer David Zhu delved into the Board's ongoing efforts to revamp its investment strategies and portfolios to align with public expectations and ethical guidelines.

"I can't go too much into details due to sensitivities on this but we have progressed quite successfully on our request for a proposal presentation to our Investment Manager so that will hopefully be passed by this Board very soon," Zhu said.

These efforts trace back to two months ago when Zhu's predecessor Honorary Treasurer Ben Hines updated the Board on its efforts to diversify its investment portfolios, following an *Honi* investigation into the Board's ties to non-renewable interests in its investments.

"This is something that will not only meet our financial objectives in giving our members the value they deserve but also putting forward those values in industry," Zhu said.

Congratulations on the print edition of PULP Magazine

Cheers were heard across the floor when the topic of *PULP Magazine* arrived, with a visibly enthused Isla Mowbray proverbially leaping up to promote the revamped student

publication to her colleagues.

"The final product is incredibly rewarding for everyone involved in the wider community and the USU at large. I'm really happy to see what they've come up with," Mowbray told the room.

"I love to see that creative hub [*PULP Magazine*] and the potential of the whole team."

The first edition of *PULP Magazine* is also available online and is headed by a 7-person editorial team consisting of Senior Editor Marlow Hurst, Editors Nandini Dhir, Harry Gay, Bonnie Huang, Ariana Haghghi, Patrick McKenzie and Rhea Thomas.

Portfolio holders' updates

Of the brief updates from the USU's various portfolios, planning for collaborations with the SRC's Rad Sex and Consent Week occupied Naz Sharifi's time while Madhullikaa Singh was busy overseeing the USU's programs for the upcoming International Festival. Meanwhile, Board Director Alexander Poirier expressed disappointment over the University's historic exclusion of student organisations like the USU and SRC over longstanding criticism of USyd's disability inclusivity and Disability Services from the latter.

New Senate-appointed Board Director

In other news, the roll of Board Directors changed with the Alyssa White chosen to succeed Marie Leech as one of the Senate-appointed Directors aside from David Wright. White currently presides as Senior Manager for University Governance and Deputy Secretary to the Senate, reporting directly to the apex of USyd's decision-making body.

And with that, the meeting promptly moved *in camera* to consider confidential matters over work, health and safety (WHS) among others.

Student activists crash lecture hall attended by Joe Hockey in fifth day of staff strikes this year

Carmeli Argana and Khanh Tran report.

Student activists stormed a lecture hall that former Liberal Treasurer Joe Hockey attended at the University of Sydney's annual Open Day. The impromptu protest was part of a larger education campaign against fee hikes and in pursuit of better staff working conditions.

USyd SRC Education Officer Deaglan Godwin and National Union of Students (NUS) Education Officer Luc Velez led the protest against Hockey, calling for Hockey to "get out".

"This man right here is responsible for trying to deregulate university fees!" Godwin told those in the lecture theatre. The event was an Open Day information session on the University's Bachelor of Commerce degree.

In 2014, then-Treasurer Joe Hockey delivered a budget that promised sector-wide deregulation, which would have allowed higher education providers to determine the costs of the degrees on offer. Such reforms would have likely led to significant fee hikes.

Hockey's 'horror' budget would have also resulted in a 20 per cent reduction in government contributions to students' fees. This would have seen students in Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP) students paying 61 per cent of their fees.

"Fees were not deregulated because students fought back!" Velez said.

Protesters chanted: "JOE HOCKEY, GET OUT! WE KNOW WHAT YOU'RE ALL ABOUT! CUTS! JOB LOSSES! MONEY FOR THE BOSSES!"

The impromptu protest occurred on the same day that the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) took industrial action as part of its ongoing negotiations for a new enterprise bargaining agreement with USyd management.

Victoria to tackle nursing shortage by providing free nursing, midwifery degrees

Ellie Stephenson and Thomas Sargeant report.

The Victorian Government has announced it will make studying nursing and midwifery degrees free for domestic students in 2023 and 2024 in a move to address the shortage of workers in the healthcare system.

All students entering a professional nursing or midwifery degree will receive \$9000 while they study, and an additional \$7500 if they go on to work in Victorian health services for two years. The \$16,500 payment is intended to cover the course costs for over 10,000 students, representing part of a \$270 million injection into the state's healthcare system.

Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews announced the program Sunday

morning at the Victorian branch of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation.

"Every health system in the country is under enormous pressure due to the pandemic. The best thing we can do to support our hardworking staff is give them more support on the ground – that's why this package will train and hire more nurses than ever before," said Andrews.

University of Sydney Women's Officer Dashie Prasad welcomed the changes, but told *Honi* that policies could go further, covering more students.

"We know there's a really huge shortage [of nurses and teachers] and that's necessary for filling the gap and the NSW Government should consider this," they said. "We reckon this call

should actually be put to the Federal Government to make all degrees free."

NSW has faced long-term issues with understaffing, which have been expressed extensively by nurses in a series of strikes throughout the year. The combined pressures of COVID-19 and a pay cap lagging behind inflation have seen nurses and midwives describe widespread burnout. Similar issues are facing the education sector.

Prasad added that shortages could be further addressed by paying students to study. "Whether that looks like an



PHOTOGRAPHY BY LUKE OTTAVI (TOP) AND HERSHA KADKOL (BOTTOM)

RIP! ZIP! for Honi withdraws from race, SHAKE for Honi provisionally elected

Carmeli Argana and Khanh Tran report.

The mysterious ZIP! for Honi ticket has officially withdrawn their nomination from the race to edit *Honi Soit*, leaving SHAKE for Honi as the winner without election.

SHAKE for Honi consists of ten members: Andy Park (Switch), Bipasha Chakraborty, Christine Lai (SAlt-adjacent), Ethan Floyd, Eamonn Murphy (Switch), Veronica Lenard, Misbah Ansari, Luke Cass (Switch), Luke Mesterovic (Unity) and Katarina Butler (SLS).

Although the identity of ZIP! for Honi was never revealed, it is highly suspected they were either a joke ticket cooked up by former editors and stupol hacks, or independently-aligned individuals with minimal experience writing for *Honi*.

This marks the second time that the Presidential and *Honi Soit* elections have been uncontested since 2020 when Swapnik Sanagavarapu and Bloom for Honi were elected uncontested.

In stark contrast to this year, 2021's SRC Elections marked the largest ever election in the organisation's history,

with a record 6442 votes cast. This indicates a student politics atmosphere that is experiencing a dip in participation due to a number of factors, including pre-negotiated arrangements, factional exhaustion and declining interest in stupol machinations.

Online campaigning commences on Wednesday 7 September whereas in-person campaigning will begin on 12 September.

Voting in the SRC Elections runs from 20–22 September through in-person ballots with the option of absentee ballots.

Disclaimer: Zara Zadro is a current member of Switch and will not be involved in coverage of the 2022 SRC, NUS, and Honi Soit elections.

"It is highly suspected they were a joke ticket cooked up by former editors and stupol hacks or independently-aligned individuals."

increase to students getting Centrelink, or it looks like a wage rate for training nurses and teachers, we think that is a very appropriate call and there are discussions in unions to get this started as well," they said.

USyd SRC President Lauren Lancaster agreed that the changes could go further.

"Any government decision to make any degree free is great and is a promise of what we could do to make all education free," she said.

Lancaster added that the healthcare sector required more widespread cultural change to deal with "the deeply hostile working conditions [nurses and midwives] are confronted with... in terms of massive overworking, poor pay, cultures of sexual harassment."

VC splurged thousands of University money on exclusive OxBridge and Australian boys' clubs

Fabian Robertson and Christian Holman investigate.

Former Vice-Chancellor (VC) Michael Spence expended \$133,525.46 over two years against the University, and spent thousands on a personal membership to the exclusive Oxford and Cambridge club.

Spence's expense sheets from his last two years as VC were released to *Honi Soit* under Freedom of Information legislation. They reveal that the former VC received yearly reimbursements for the renewal of membership fees to the Oxford and Cambridge club, totalling \$3562.33 over the two-year period.

“Spence received yearly reimbursements for the renewal of membership fees to the Oxford and Cambridge club, totalling \$3562.33 over two years.”

The 200-year old social club is reserved for alumni of Oxford and Cambridge, and describes itself as “spacious, private and well-appointed”, enabling “members to meet friends and colleagues in magnificent surroundings, host a party, relax or simply find a quiet place to work”.

The Oxford and Cambridge Club's membership includes various politicians and royalty, including the Queen of Denmark, the Prince of Wales, and the former Duke of Edinburgh, as well as celebrities like Stephen Fry.

The club is highly selective – to be considered for “election to membership”, a candidate must be proposed and seconded by existing members before being evaluated by a selection committee.

According to the released documents, Spence renewed his membership in January every year. The expense sheets do not include the club's stipulated joining fee, suggesting Spence has been a member of the club for at least three years.

When queried, the USyd media office did not clarify for how long Spence sought reimbursements for this membership from the University. In the absence of official comment from USyd, it is possible that Spence expended Oxford and Cambridge Club costs to the University for the length of his tenure. Additionally, as an alumni of Oxford, it is also possible that Spence was a member before his tenure commenced, meaning he may have shifted what was previously a personal expense to a ‘business expense’ when taking up his role at the University.

USyd policy classifies memberships to “fitness clubs, golf clubs or other bodies that are not required to carry out University business” as “personal expenses” that are not allowed to be expended to the University.

When asked to justify Spence's membership, a spokesperson for the University simply stated “club membership and subscriptions are claimed and approved with consideration of relevance to the role”.

Spence also spent \$815 at the Australian Club, an exclusive all-male social club on Macquarie Street in the heart of Sydney's CBD. The total expenditure was vaguely attributed to \$342 for ‘Entertainment’ and \$402 for ‘Business lunches’, with no further detail provided as to the nature or purpose of

these costs.

The Australian Club was established in 1878 and is the oldest gentlemen's club in the southern hemisphere, boasting membership from celebrities, High Court judges and past Prime Ministers including Malcolm Turnbull. The Club is at the centre of ongoing controversy regarding its exclusionary all-male status. A 2021 club referendum to decide whether to open up membership to women was defeated with 62 per cent voting against.

University policy states that ‘Entertainment and meals’ are personal expenses and are not allowed to be expended to the University, subject to exceptions.

Executives spent \$10,279 on subscriptions over three years

From 2019-2021, USyd's Executive spent a total of \$10,279 on various subscriptions. Spence himself was responsible for the majority of this, expensing \$8,633.55 for subscriptions over two years. This included monthly renewals of print and digital subscriptions to *The Australian*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Australian Financial Review* and *The Daily Telegraph*. For example, Spence spent \$99 a month on the *AFR*, with Spence's typical monthly spend on newspapers alone amounting to \$285.33.

If this expenditure practice was consistent over the course of Spence's time as VC, his total spend of University money on newspapers would add up to a whopping \$44,511.58.

“Spence's typical monthly spend on newspapers was \$285.33. If this expenditure practice was consistent over the course of his tenure, his total spend on newspapers would be \$44,511.58.”

Like most personal expenses, subscriptions that are not required to carry out USyd business are generally prohibited from being billed to the University, with the exception of two annual subscriptions required for “research purposes” or that are “position-relevant”. In response to a request for comment, the University confirmed the relevant restrictions had been waived, contending that exemptions to the policy had been validly claimed.

“Approval of expense claims by University staff is at the discretion of the approving manager. The Chancellor is the default approver of the VC's expenses,” a University spokesperson said.

The frequent lack of enforcement of this policy and unilateral approval by a fellow Senate member condones a practice where the rules simply do not apply to those at the top of USyd's hierarchy. This is only exacerbated by the close personal and professional relationship between a Chancellor and VC, and that Spence was VC at the time of Hutchinson's hiring.

\$14,963.72 to visit a future employer

Spence was announced as the next President and Provost of the University College London (UCL) in February, 2020.

“Professor Arthur [Outgoing President] and Dr Spence [Incoming President] will work closely over the coming months to ensure a smooth transition,” said UCL in a statement at the time.

Just one month later, Spence expended \$14,963.72 from USyd to travel to London to UCL, ostensibly on a University ‘Partner Visit’.

Responding to a request for comment, the University claims these costs were to be reimbursed by UCL. However, this trip was framed and claimed as a professional trip made by the VC. The competing narratives of the purpose of the trip, or on whose dime and time Spence was making it, introduces questions as to whether UCL planned to cover these costs or how his expenses over there were actually going to be split.

A partnership agreement in ‘teaching, training and research’ was indeed formalised between USyd and UCL at the end of 2020, nine months after his trip. Such partnerships between universities are not uncommon – USyd officially has 28 of them. However, UCL was the only University partner that the VC expensed and was planning on formally visiting.

This trip, however, was ultimately cancelled due to the pandemic. There is no record of a reimbursement from UCL, and while they may have intended to reimburse after the trip was made, the conflict of receiving a salary as an employee of USyd while overseas engaging in non-University business, raises questions as to whether his recruitment influenced the taking, timing and duration of the trip.

Can the VC spend whatever he wants?

As mentioned, Chancellor Belinda Hutchinson, who has expensed over \$16,000 against the University herself, is the default approver for the VC's expense claims and exemptions.

In response to a request for comment on Spence's expenses claimed for headphones, AppleCare warranty and flowers for his official residence, the University stated, “there is an element of judgement on the part of the employee and manager considering their role and frequency of such claims.”

Spence's records are littered with an array of lavish expenses, suggesting wide powers to expense at will. For example, Spence even expensed lunch with his own portrait artist.

This reliance on personal discretion and the arrangement of unilateral approval by a fellow Senate member provides inadequate checks and balances against a habitual use of exemptions that render policies restricting expenses functionally meaningless.

Spence received an estimated salary of \$1.6 million, bringing into question the need for the University to cover Spence's arguably personal expenses, especially to the extent they amount to a sum comparable to that of a full-time employee at USyd.

Many of the additional non-monetary benefits

available to the VC are not known.

“An individual's contractual entitlements are confidential and we do not disclose them,” the University said in response to *Honi's* questions on such benefits.

“Approval of expense claims by the VC is at the discretion of the... Chancellor.”

What is publicly known is the provision of official residence by the University to a sitting VC. For Spence, this residency was a mansion in Woollahra, which was listed for sale at the end of his term for \$10 million.

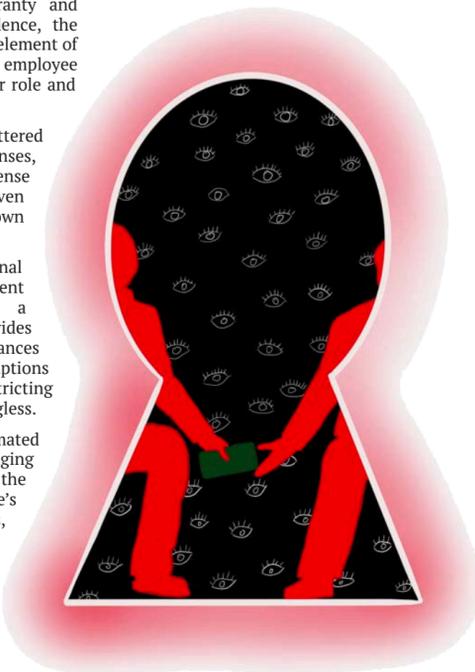
The swathe of benefits and spending freedoms afforded to Spence have seemingly remained in place for current VC Mark Scott. Scott took over in December 2021, and had already claimed taxis, parking, postage expenses and newspaper subscriptions to the Australian Financial Review and The Sydney Morning Herald in his first month on the job.

Without taking into account additional benefits and carve-outs within his contract, Scott receives an annual salary of \$1.15 million.

The University states they “are currently in the preliminary stages of reviewing our policies and procedures.”

Thus far, Honi has revealed a practice of Executives spending USyd money lavishly on costs with tenuous links to their professional roles. What makes Michael Spence stand out is not only the extent of his spending, but the apparent impunity with which he was able to seek reimbursement for seemingly personal costs.

**ART BY
BIPASHA CHAKRABORTY**



The Barefoot Editors: Toes out on Eastern Avenue

Thomas Sargeant, Amelia Koen, and Roisin Murphy tarnish their digital footprint.

Content warning: Feet

As a radical student newspaper, *Honi Soit* has a responsibility to push the boundaries of campus culture.

When one thinks of roaming around campus barefoot, the people they have in mind are undesirable at best. Hippies, stoners, weird artists. But what would happen if three hot and normal students took up the mantle, sacrificing their sex appeal to discover what we're all itching to know: what happens if you spend a whole day on campus, skin to the ground?

Unfortunately, editors have been met with severe pushback from conservative forces coming to the defence of footwear. Even in so-called progressive spaces on campus, we were met with intolerance. Feet, apparently, are the forgotten frontier of the body acceptance movement.

“What happens if you spend a whole day on campus, skin to the ground?”

Despite courting up-and-down looks and a fair deal of controversy across campus, the journey was an invaluable experience, both on an educational and spiritual level.

So that you too can live like us, here is our comprehensive journey and guide to campus, barefoot.

Eastern Avenue & The Quad:

The beginning of our journey was a revelation. Removing our foot prisons and experiencing the warm touch of campus beneath us, we set off across Eastern Avenue. One small step for an editor, one giant leap for the barefoot movement.



Our heavy footfall echoed across campus. The sun was shining, ibises were singing, students were handing out flyers for Law Revue. We felt free. Not only did we feel that we were on campus, but we could feel campus on us.

Our confidence on this walk was positively magnetic. It seems that the rest of campus was similarly charged, as they were positively repelled and kept a safe distance. The ground was smooth and safe, clear of debris and danger. We recommend any similarly intrepid explorers steer clear of the rocky edges.

The pot of gold at the end of Eastern Avenue was well-worth the trip. The warm pavement was replaced with the cold embrace of the Quadrangle lawns, where we sunned ourselves and tanned our toes. We were at total peace. Then the rain began to fall.

Barefoot Friendliness Rating (BFR): 9 toes out of 10 for flatness.

Courtyard Cafe:

In need of some rest and relaxation (and pizza), we journeyed to Courtyard Cafe for shelter. We put the ‘science’ in Science Road by testing our thermal endurance against the rapidly cooling and increasingly wet environment. We were brought to heel by this harsh reality, and quickly made our way inside the Holme Building. *The student union will surely offer safety*, we rationalised. How wrong we were.

Unnamed USU board directors hurled what could be described at least as abuse at us, just three barefoot soldiers on a mission.

“Why did I look down?” remarked one.

“People eat here,” said another.

“I think people on campus should wear shoes... generally everywhere. Shoes off is for home. Or the beach,” they added. It wasn't hard to see their true colours.

Despite attempting to mask their hatred as care, saying, “It's a welfare issue... people can get diseases,” we could see the truth.

BFR: 6 toes out of 10 toes for boringness and prejudice.

Graffiti Tunnel:

As a site of public art and student expression, the Graffiti Tunnel was an obvious path for us to tread. Protected from wind, rain, and stares, we were invigorated by the colourful art around us, and felt that we were leaving our own mark.

The ground itself was smooth sailing, nary a pebble in sight to slow us down. Though years of paint and our lack of grip turned the floor into a DIY slip-and-slide, our only criticism of the space is its temperature. We would recommend that others on our path protect themselves with a beanie, AKA a sock for your head.

BFR: 7 toes out of 10 for psychedelic vibrancy.

Manning and Queer Space:

Of all our journeys, the Queer Space was certainly the most physically dangerous. Simultaneously though, it was the most emotionally safe. A place where all are accepted – tits out, toes out, everything in between. Even if the difference in our lifestyle was continually pointed out, the questions were mostly curious rather than discriminatory, such as: Why? Are you okay? Aren't you cold? We were met, if not with open toes, open arms.

“Of all our journeys, the Queer Space was certainly the most physically dangerous.”

The Manning building was a horrible, horrible place. Stepping into the spiritual death place of student culture, we felt hopeful about our ability to spur on the revival Manning needed. But for anything to change, we need collective action. Collective sentiment. 2 dykes, 1 fag, 6 feet, and 28 toes was not enough. The dismay with which we were met was a reality check: most students are quicker to come to uni, join an Evangelical group

in a Manning meeting room and go home, than engage in an idea with the potential to revive campus life.

For the most part, the poor treatment was left to unreturned smiles and looks the other way. When one of us went out to the food court on our own, it turned to discrimination. Stares. Dirty looks. Phones out. Just send the photos to USyd Rants already. It'd end the suffering sooner.

Queer Space: 8 toes out of 10 for the emotional safety net.

Manning: 1 toe out of 10 for destroying student life.

F23:

Taking a leaf from radicals-gone-by, we stormed F23. In a feat of radicalism we took our feet to the bosses – like many progressives, we were disappointed to discover lobbying would be as ineffective as over-the-counter insoles.

Unsurprisingly, the type of individuals the building attracts were quick to judge our appearance and even quicker to document it. iPhones were flying to capture our muddy little paws which sullied the otherwise pristine floors.

Like any decent student journalist worth their socks, we went upstairs eager to seek comment from the University media team. *What is the University's official stance on shoeless students? The University claims to be an inclusive space. Does this extend to barefoot students, even those with ugly feet? Personally, do you think our feet are ugly? Even those without ten toes? Do you think I'm hot?*

Our swipe access wouldn't let us higher than level 2, resulting in a silent but firm ‘no comment’ from the University as we plodded away.

BFR: 2 toes out of 10 for managerialism.

City Rd:

A long-time barefoot veteran warned us of the horrors of City Road but we were not prepared for what was yet to pass. Two roads diverged on Eastern Avenue, and we were sorry we could not travel both. One to the footbridge and one to the wet asphalt; our brave soles took to the urban pumice stone. One word: Sandpaper.

It's one thing to be barefoot on the relative safety of campus, but the vulnerable journey across City Road emphasised the no-mans-land that bisects our University's shoe or not to shoe community. For the shoe community, City Road acts as a place of brief outside-world contact when on campus. For the un-shoed, it is a protruding flaw, an impasse, that shattered our inter-campus illusions and put us on the back-foot. The jagged terrain of the 14 metre wide road combined with the raging tempest overhead made it certifiably not barefoot friendly.

BFR: 0 toes out of 10 for ones we lost.

Hermanns:

We prevailed, and made it to the other side; our feet only mildly torn up. In the lead-up to this point, we had been regaled with tales of Hermann's intolerance for the #BarefootMovement. So, with a nervous splat, our soggy feet landed on the Bar's geometric tiles. Expecting to be turned away, we had to make the most

of our fleeting time. Naturally, we ordered margs at 3pm. To our surprise, they obliged us. We took our seats in the ever-empty bar, and let our toes fly in the wind.

Sitting in the Hermanns courtyard as we write this – shoes off, of course – I am reminded of how fucking dirty the Hermann's floors made our soles. Clearly they are allergic to sweeping. The floor was surprisingly non-sticky, presumably because students would have to actually attend Hermanns in order to spill anything.

BFR: 4 toes out of 10 for a shit marg.

The Rose:

For a long time, the Rose Hotel in Chippendale has been our place of safety. While not explicitly on campus, emotionally, it is. After a dreadfully upsetting reception at uni, we thought that we could find peace in a post-law revue barefoot beer. Our long-term favourite pub manager warned us that he had in fact kicked people out for less. Never did he, or we, think that we'd receive such a threat. When the toes come out, so do the knives. Akin to losing a toenail, getting threatened out of the Rose left the deepest wound of all.

“When the toes come out, so do the knives.”

BFR: 6 toes out of 10 for a non-judgmental warning.

Conclusion

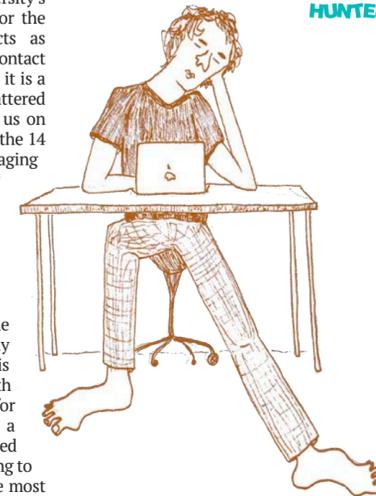
This journey was not about the friends made or enemies revealed, but the discovery of a life more full and a shoe more empty.

Sydney University is not the site of radical acceptance that we thought it was, as there is clearly a long way to go until the shoeless among us feel safe. For now, the pups are back in the kennel. Campus deserves more barefoot advocacy, perhaps in the form of something such as a FootSoc. Or more accurately, NoSoc.

Peace.

Please direct all comments, questions, and foot fetishism to editors@honisoit.com or our anonymous tip form.

**ART BY
KATIE
HUNTER**



USyd's staff cuts have already compromised Politics and International Relations students

Out of breath from running up Footbridge's stairs, I was thrilled that the stars had aligned enough for me to make it to my first lecture for the semester: GOVT2901: *Contemporary Issues in Politics and International Relations II*. Designed to develop problem-solving skills in a team setting, the unit is a core subject for students in the Politics & International Relations (PIR) stream.

Imagine the dismay of students, then, when the introduction slide outlining our weekly guest lecturers contained two empty slots. Dr Jamie Roberts, our unit coordinator and sole tutor, explained that due to staff cuts there were no subject matter experts left in the department for our topics in Weeks 9 and 11. Roberts had already been forced to outsource a lecturer from the Australian National University (ANU) for Week 2's lecture on the Indo-Pacific region. He also warned that Week 9 would likely be cancelled as the class falls on a public holiday, and Week 11 had been defeatedly labelled 'TBA (sigh)'. Dr Roberts, like many of the surviving academics in the Department of Government and International Relations, is struggling to provide quality teaching due to staff cuts anecdotally exceeding 40 per cent of the department.

The effects of these cuts means that overworked academics, decreased elective choices, and a declining quality of teaching for students is now the norm. Dr Roberts' job is unconventionally split "70:20:10" between teaching, administrative and research roles, however he notes that it

"feels like [it adds up to] 120" due to an overloading of these responsibilities; teaching and administration in particular. This stress negatively impacts academics personal and professional lives, and makes it even harder for them to provide quality lessons or meet tight marking turnaround times.

Second year Politics and International Relations student Oliver Petkovich explained that students taking GOVT2921: *Intermediate International Relations* last semester faced a similar issue to those taking GOVT2901, with no new content being presented in Weeks 11, 12 or 13 of the unit.

"During a tutorial, our tutor explained that we were not being taught the International Law topic because they no longer had an expert to teach it. We ran out of content by Week 10, and the tutors did their best to still provide engaging lessons," Petkovich said. Despite GOVT2921 having consistently high enrolments, there is no one to actually teach the subject if expert academics have been let go.

Not only have austerity measures impeded upon academics' ability to teach courses with well-rounded content, they have decreased already limited third year selective choices. Courses which didn't escape administration's greedy hands include GOVT3655: *Latin American Politics*, GOVT3665: *Collateral Damage and The Cost of Conflict*, and GOVT3989: *Divided Societies and Parliament and Democracy*.

Barely a week before the start of

semester last year, the selective unit GOVT3986: *Gender, Security and Human Rights* was also cancelled; currently, it is only offered remotely. This last minute cancellation created major issues for students' degree progression, as they scrambled to enrol in another course with limited availability to ensure they could complete their degree on time.

Third year student Amita Singh expressed frustration over the administrative burden on staff and lack of communication with students. She says she was "disappointed with the course not existing and the lack of notice prior to university classes beginning, as [students] rarely have units in GOVT/IR that primarily focus on women in policy". Further, students taking *Aboriginal and TSI Politics and Policy* told *Honi* that the current unit-coordinator, while a knowledgeable academic, replaced a First Nations academic who was originally set to take the course.

The experiences of these students and staff are representative of an endemic issue in the priorities of the university's highly corporatised system of management. Frankly, given the billion-dollar surplus made by the University this year, no one is buying the narrative that the University is a financial victim of 'hard times' due to the pandemic, such that it cannot afford to properly fund the Department of Government and International Relations (not to mention other units in the Faculty of Arts and Social Science and the university at large).

Gian Ellis-Gannell doesn't recognise her degree anymore.

It's critical that students engage in ongoing strike action and advocacy, such as by joining the picket lines and the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU), to reinforce the fact that staff working conditions are directly commensurate with the quality of student education.

Another important way that students can show support for staff and advocate for a better education is to fill out each units' End of Semester Survey when they pop up in your emails later this semester. Though they may seem tiresome, staff stress that these student feedback surveys are one of the few ways that they can justify the merit of a course to University management. As mechanisms of change, their power is admittedly shrouded in managerial obscurity, as it has long been disproven that student enjoyment of courses is the deciding factor in staff cuts, or whether the subject as a whole is continued or cancelled.

Even though end of semester surveys are no substitute for joining collectives, building student movements together, or raising your voice at protests, these events are not accessible to many students with disabilities or sensory sensitivities. Surveys are then an important way that each of us can make an active contribution to our education. At the very least, we can all spend ten minutes providing positive feedback to our tutors and unit coordinators who spend countless unpaid hours providing the best possible education.

Mae Milne writes.

nightmarish juxtaposition of greenery and industry.

The construction of the project has proved as troublesome as its genesis, as the underground drilling and tunnelling used during the construction of the Westconnex Tunnel has caused multiple landowners across Sydney to report damage to their properties. Issues such as cracks, broken windows, and skewed door frames are being reported from St Peters to Rozelle. Due to the high number of complaints, a class action is now being investigated by law firm Omni Bridgeway, alongside Dentons Australia. The firms are currently collecting data to determine the volume and extent of the damage reported, in order to determine whether there is a large enough body of claimants for a class action to be worthwhile. The firms predict that a large number of these property damage claims will arise from the Stage 3 Rozelle interchange tunnelling. This tunnel is significantly wider and shallower than the recently constructed M4 and M5 tunnels, and runs under older, densely built suburbs which are more vulnerable to ground movements.

Local resident and member of Facebook group *No WestCONnex: Public Transport*, Andrew Chuter, has staunchly opposed the highway since it was first proposed.

"The main concern is the same concern with all urban motorways: they are a fundamental planning error. They are inefficient and eye-wateringly expensive. We desperately need a massive shift to public and active transport," he writes.

He is additionally concerned that "the exhaust stacks are unfiltered, causing localised air pollution such as carcinogenic PM2.5 particles. However, the greenhouse

emissions, mainly CO2, spread all around the planet and exacerbate the climate emergency. We must stop urban motorways as urgently as we must stop coal and gas mines".

Not only is this infrastructure ecologically and socially damaging, but it also is being delivered with an eye-watering fee. Motorists can expect to be charged \$1.40 to enter the interchange, with a distance based toll charging 50c/kilometre after that. These tolls will be capped at \$10 when the motorway opens, but will continue to rise as the tolls increase at 4 percent each year. However, rather than this money going back to the government to fund future infrastructure, it appears that the sole beneficiary of these roads will be Transurban, a multinational road operating company which acquired full ownership of WestConnex sometime in 2021.

The Kirby report sums it up well: "As with other aspects of WestConnex, one is left with the impression that the Government's real interest is the creation of yet another asset that they can sell, where car users thereafter have to pay ever increasing tolls to some large company such as Transurban."



Barriers facing disabled activism at university

Khanh Tran argues that the key for an inclusive, accessible student movement is more effort, listening and discernment.

With higher education barely registering in the conversation leading up to the Commission's findings, four disabilities student activists are calling for deeper reflection to combat ableism in our universities.

Second-class tier within student activism

Among the various disabled activists *Honi* spoke to, there was a sense that demands surrounding disabilities are too often an afterthought in left-wing activism, and that there exists a serious lack of intersectional organising between Disabilities and other collectives.

Grace Wallman, SALS Disabilities and SRC Welfare Officer, is concerned about the low priority given to disability issues by some progressive activists, despite the intersectional interests and politics that disabled activism shares with other portfolios.

"I've had people who hold really major positions within the NUS [National Union of Students], express to me that [we] should not be fighting about this thing [disability] because [they] don't think it's as important as [other issues]," Wallman said.

The difficulty, Wallman adds, is that larger collectives often conduct their activism in a standard, cookie-cutter fashion that omits disabled perspectives, leading to campaigns missing the additional power that arguments from disabled students can bring to the table.

"Disability is not particularly considered within the overall calculus of marginalised identities. I think a lot of the time that things that would benefit disabled students would really benefit all students," argues Wallman.

Similarly, for Sarah Korte, an SRC Disabilities Officer, though the lively, byzantine machinations of stupol has its appeals, at times, stupol actors fail to take stock of others' accessibility needs.

ScohNo! PM's job rampage tramples democracy

The past few years have seen a government plagued with scandals, from rorts to suspicious appointments, to endless questions of integrity. Now, the highest level of our government has delivered us a new drama. Scott Morrison, the former Prime Minister of Australia, secretly swore himself in as Minister in five portfolios, in a move that has been widely condemned. During the height of the COVID crisis when citizens were facing job losses, lockdowns, and the fear of disease, the former PM decided to give himself another job (or several).

On 14 March 2020, he appointed himself as a secondary Health Minister, which Greg Hunt (then-serving Health Minister) was informed of. Given the extreme circumstances of a global pandemic which had significant impacts on a local and national scale, some argue Morrison can be excused for this. As a result of the *Biosecurity Act 2015*, which was enacted when we declared a national health emergency, the Health Minister is granted special emergency powers. Morrison argued that should the Health Minister fall ill or require assistance, his appointment would provide a 'safeguard' of stability and 'continuity' of leadership. Given that this is literally the job of the Assistant Health Minister, it's hard to understand why ScoMo failed to trust in his own appointees.

Following his secret appointment,

Korte references Socialist Alternative (SALT) members' insistence on extended speaking times as one example of a hurdle within stupol to access for disabled advocates. She said that, when her co-Officer Holly Zhang suggested that speaking time be limited, a SALT member retorted that the Disability Officers were "limiting speech".

Meanwhile, Georgie McDaid (NLS), an autistic wheelchair user and NUS Disabilities Officer, referenced similar stories during NUS NatCon, citing a moment when a speaker relayed to the conference that they were told by SALT that if they were "unwilling to chain [their] wheelchair in front of a bus", they were unfit to partake in activism.

Against this background, Wallman, Korte, and McDaid agree that more effort, listening and discernment is needed from fellow activists, even if, in McDaid's words, "this is not an overnight fix". Better inclusion for disabled activists in organising means measures such as accessible maps, accommodation for quiet areas and more active listening are all crucial to building a stronger student movement.

"You should listen to the disabled people around you and seek to educate yourself," urged Wallman.

Invisibility a barrier to Disabilities Collectives' growth

One key obstacle facing Disabilities Collectives across the country lies in a simple question: Should I disclose my disability?

Other than visible disabilities, many in the disabled community have invisible disabilities or a mix of both, meaning that it takes significant courage to 'come out' and disclose one's disability.

Gemma Lucy Smart, one of SUPRA's Disabilities Equity Officers, told us that at the postgraduate level, disclosure of one's disabilities remain risky, as supervisors enjoy a near-monopoly on students' academic future, being the "only one" that

Morrison continued to expand his powers by becoming the Finance Minister alongside Mathias Cormann, on 30 March 2020. As both state and federal governments were spending massive amounts of money in emergency response and job support, the extended support for the Finance portfolio is understandable. However, the secret appointment of Mr Morrison was kept not only from the Australian public, but from the Finance Minister himself.

The continued expansion of his powers is highly suspect. Whilst one may be able to defend his choices in the face of 'extraordinary times', his refusal to inform his own ministers is extremely 'sinister', as stated by former PM Malcolm Turnbull. The failure to include his highest-ranking cabinet ministers in these substantial decisions suggests not only an immoral and questionably legal aspect to the whole affair, but a distinct lack of trust in his closest ranks.

In April 2021, he assigned himself to Industry, Science and Resources, again failing to inform any individuals within his government. And again in March, he appointed himself to the portfolios of Treasury and Home Affairs.

Many have questioned the legality of these actions given the extreme secrecy involved. Whilst there has historically been a convention of making appointments public (often on live TV or via a press

receives a student's academic plan.

"Ultimately, if that person and their colleagues don't have an attitude of accommodation, or have an ableist attitude, if they're not open to disabled students, then disclosing [disability] can cause really big rifts in the supervisory relationship."

Smart raises that the burden is even greater for disabled international students, who may understand disability differently to Australian students, rendering these students not only invisible to their community but also themselves.

"There are cultural differences between understanding of disability and whether disability is even a word that you want to use at all, particularly across South East Asia," Smart told *Honi*.

As a result, she is of the strong opinion that USyd owes a "duty of care for there to be some training" for new students, particularly those in postgraduate coursework degrees.

Even though Australia's Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) outlaws employers from compelling applicants to disclose their disability, exceptions exists for roles where a person's disability prevents them from fulfilling the "inherent requirements" of a job.

Indeed, Smart shares anecdotes of disabled student advocates who change their name on social media and LinkedIn in order to escape the scrutiny of employers, out of fears that employers may look unfavourably upon their disability.

All this means that, for Disabilities Collectives and student advocates, invisibility is deeply embedded in the entire architecture of the university and society, it is structural.

However, McDaid has hope: citing the NUS' submission to the Disability Royal Commission in 2020, she says that statistics indicating one in five people in Australia having a disability shows that there is a vast,

release), it is not a legal requirement of the constitution. By taking advantage of this loophole, Morrison has violated the trust and transparency that is central to our democracy. As he was elected our leader – it is his duty and obligation to be both transparent and honest in the decisions that govern our lives, particularly on such a large and unprecedented scale as this. Purposefully keeping such significant decisions hidden from his cabinet demonstrates not only his lack of character but also his lack of faith. By directly undermining those ministers that he worked with, and specifically chose for those roles, the public is left to wonder: why didn't he trust them?

Moreover, this lack of trust, both within the government and from the public, is an increasing problem within politics. Whilst politicians have historically been untrustworthy, a continued lack of accountability has eroded faith in our political system and major parties, with some of Morrison's own colleagues calling for him to step down. Once the story broke, Morrison was questioned on these actions, repeatedly asserting that these measures were simply 'precautionary' and came as a result of the 'highly dynamic environment'.

This represents yet another failure to take accountability for his actions. Speaking on 2GB on Tuesday, Morrison acknowledged 'to his recollection' that he was sworn in

untapped groundswell of political power and unity for disabilities activism.

Need for pay a key need to improve disabilities activism

A recurrent thread throughout *Honi's* conversations with the four was a sense that within student politics, the expectation of a constant, exhausting grind culture sits uncomfortably with the unpaid nature of their roles. McDaid, for instance, knows that nearly every student Disability Officers in the country goes unpaid, while navigating a university architecture rife with structural ableism.

"If you're not on the DSP [Disability Support Program], which a lot of disabled students aren't because it's really hard to get. I come from a place of privilege as I am on DSP but I know that that's not the situation for a lot of people," says McDaid, who is on a part-time university load in addition to work and her NUS role.

Korte feels the same, saying that she struggles to balance working at Accessible Arts and the demands of her position, all while navigating the non-tactile, often inaccessible physical terrain of the modern university, "Disabled students are probably some of the most disadvantaged, who struggles with medication and can't work the same amount as other students."

McDaid does acknowledge that the issue of unpaid labour transcends student unions' willingness, raising the Howard-era voluntary student unionism (VSU) as a key problem in hampering student activism nationwide.

Nonetheless, all agree that paying a stipend or salary for Disabilities and Access Officers is a start to signal that Australian student activism is serious about disabilities inclusion, rather than featuring disabilities activists as a token gesture, an afterthought.

Chiara Bragato writes.

to several ministries, but it 'was his [my] understanding' that there were no more. The blatant denial of his actions, despite evidence which emerged almost immediately after, further demonstrates the underhanded nature of this whole affair.

Questionably, while claiming the appointments were merely an emergency measure, Morrison utilised these powers to override a decision regarding a gas exploration licence, despite establishing them to ensure that decisions were not made "unilaterally by a Minister with authority to administer that Department".

Scott Morrison's direct undermining of democratic processes, and his weak attempt to be accountable, reinforces his lack of leadership and transparency. The blatant hypocrisy and power-seeking behaviours exhibited by Morrison throughout his term as Prime Minister are abhorrent, and it is shocking that this behaviour is excusable within our existing political system.

ART BY
IMOGEN MAROSZ



Theology should be widely taught in Australian universities

Khanh Tran makes the case for better religious literacy in the public square.

It is no secret that the 2021 Census represented an important moment for people of faith; those who identified themselves as atheists rose from 30 to 38.9 per cent, nipping at the heels of Christianity's diminished 43.9 per cent. Other faiths like Islam and Buddhism had an appreciable increase but the overall result was clear: religious identity is on the decline.

Unlike Europe and Britain's older universities, Australian universities generally eschew theology in their offerings, with only a handful of religiously-affiliated institutions such as the Australian Catholic University (ACU), Notre Dame, the nondenominational University of Divinity and the Uniting Church-affiliated Theology faculty of Charles Sturt University (CSU) having a dedicated Theology major. By contrast, the majority of Australian universities' curriculums are modelled on the secular University College London (UCL) and Scotland's ancient universities, where theology was largely left to religiously-affiliated theological colleges.

In USyd's Studies in Religion major, students are introduced to a broad range of religious beliefs and their inner workings. By contrast, theology delves deeply into the doctrinal reasoning of specific faiths, including Christianity. Think, diving into interreligious dialogue in the modern world, or perhaps *'Love, Sex, Death and God'*, disabled theology, and Philosophy of Religion.

Over the past decade globally, a trend has been emerging where theology, like other subjects within the arts and humanities, has come under attack

from austerity measures, closures and a steady decline in student number. What this leaves, however, is a diminished public debate where a lack of interest in religious literacy risks undermining our ability to debate the nuances of religious philosophy and belief.

The key difference between theology taught within the context of the secular university and confined in a seminary is academic freedom.

Unlike universities with theology faculties or hybrid institutions, seminaries and theological colleges are exclusively devoted to furthering the specific beliefs of their respective Christian (or other beliefs') denomination. Further, their funding source, primarily drawing from that denomination's coffers, means that academics in seminaries and theological colleges are ultimately subjected to their institution's ideological persuasion.

One example of this is the former 400-year-old Heythrop College in London, originally founded as a seminary for aspiring Jesuit ecclesiastics in Louvain. Heythrop was crippled not only by England's fee deregulations but also because of a reluctant Catholic Church unwilling to let its coexistence with secularism continue.

Heythrop's 50-year experiment with secularism was a daring act, it granted both pontifical degrees accredited by the Holy See and secular degrees from the University of London. Its Pride Society generated backlash from conservative quarters and accused of spreading "militant ideologies", it had professors who were ex-priests and even housed atheist philosophers.

Behind the scenes, another source of opposition was brewing. In short, England's Catholic hierarchy was uncomfortable and displeased with the freedom that Heythrop enjoyed. The delicate balance between its identity as a seminary and university was broken by the English hierarchy's intolerance for progressivism and academic freedom.

One line stood out even after the past four years, and it encapsulates the tension that runs between progressive and conservative Christians in higher education.

"Fundamentally, our task is not to run a university, it is to preach the good news," Preston told *The Tablet* in 2018, in regards to the Jesuits' decision to let the 400 year-old Heythrop die.

Such is Preston's prerogative as Provincial, however, it embodied a view that theology should retreat to the comforts of the seminary, safely insulated from public scrutiny and worldly worries.

Nor is Heythrop the only example. Oxford's progressive St Benet's Hall, formerly headed by queer-affirming theologian Werner Jeanrond, is set to close its door in the near future in the background of theology departments closing in Sheffield, Lincoln and Bangor. Closer to home in Australia, Studies of Religion faces unprecedented pressure following the Coalition's Job-Ready Graduates Packages in 2020.

In other words, to confine theology to the seminary is to leave religious debate in the public square increasingly in the hands of dogma and, at worst, to religious conservatives.

I am not suggesting that theology graduates hold the monopoly on religious literacy or progressive religiosity, rather, the increasing monopoly of seminaries' hold on theological teaching means that the most radically conservative interests, backed by enormous financial endowments, will expand their grip on how religion is interpreted. Or more broadly, how religion interacts with the wider world.

It would serve the public interest to expand theology into the secular academy. The debate we have on religion, not least the reckless sensationalism with which mainstream journalism treats Islam or an inadequate understanding of why multicultural communities live in large communities breaching COVID-19 rules. Indeed, some of these misguided views are propagated practised by atheists in the mould of New Atheism's leading apocalyptic horsemen: Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris and A. C. Grayling.

To continue to exclude theology from universities would risk driving the state of public debate on religious belief the sole preserve of seminaries, who are too often bound to the dogma of their respective Church and funder. Religious literacy is an asset with which we should embrace, one that enriches our understanding of the humane rather than shrug religion off to our detriment.

George Orwell described the negative effects of organised sports on the human psyche pretty well. "As soon as you feel that you and some larger unit will be disgraced if you lose, the most savage combative instincts are aroused," he said. "Serious sport has nothing to do with fair play. It is bound up with hatred, jealousy, boastfulness, disregard of all rules and sadistic pleasure in

Disclaimer: Khanh Tran is an alumni of Heythrop College, University of London.

Why does sport make us such arseholes?

James Frederiksen interrogates white line fever.

I'm 10 years old sitting with my dad and sister at ANZ Stadium, watching our South Sydney Rabbitohs get smashed by the Sydney Roosters. In the dying stages of the match, David Fa'alogo becomes upset after being tackled. He shows his displeasure by punching the defender in the face. The man reels away holding his jaw, and a jubilant roar fills the stands. We might be losing, but at least someone has finally punched Braith Anasta.

Whatever your sporting preference is, chances are a top level player has been suspended for violent conduct. Unless the violence was particularly egregious, the player was also probably celebrated for it. In this year's State of Origin, fans were treated to a spectacularly one-sided brawl between Dane Gagai and Matt Burton, with pundits applauding the display of 'state pride'.

Noteworthy cases are endless. Apart from being one of the best strikers of his generation, Luis Suarez is perhaps best known for biting his opponents. He accumulated 26 matches on the sidelines for three separate nibbles of opposition players. Then there's Mike Tyson, who famously took a break from inflicting brain damage at an unprecedented rate to give Evander Holyfield's ear some unsolicited cosmetic surgery with his teeth. Roy Keane captained Manchester United to glory in the 2000s, and was renowned for his dogged determination and relentless aggression. While commenting in 2021, Keane reminisced about how he would deal with a poor performance: "What I might do, I might smash into somebody, just to make me feel better". Non-contact sports aren't exempt either. Earlier this year, 15-year-old tennis player Michael Kouame slapped his

opponent in the face after losing, and who could forget the fight between the Boomers and the entire nation of the Philippines back in 2018.

To a certain subsection of sports fans, tuggery equals commitment and physical blow-ups are the best indicator of how much you care. I have never quite understood how losing control of your emotions and making yourself ineligible to play for numerous weeks signifies your love for the team, but for some this connection is self-evident. When it comes to fisticuffs, context matters: no one really cares when two consenting millionaires square off before being dragged away by their respective teams, and in the case of Gagai and Burton, the consequence was a fine of less money than they were paid to play. Beating the shit out of someone in a pub is a fair bit less heroic, and far more likely to land you a place in a jail cell than the rich tapestry of Australian sporting folklore.

There is a term for the psychological shift that occurs when sportspeople step across the boundaries imprinted on the grass and onto the field. It reflects the transformation that otherwise reasonable human beings undertake when they become violent combatants. In Australia, that term is white line fever.

George Orwell described the negative effects of organised sports on the human psyche pretty well. "As soon as you feel that you and some larger unit will be disgraced if you lose, the most savage combative instincts are aroused," he said. "Serious sport has nothing to do with fair play. It is bound up with hatred, jealousy, boastfulness, disregard of all rules and sadistic pleasure in

Controversy at the cinema

"Don't ever think that the world owes you anything because it doesn't. The world doesn't owe you a thing," says Joy Mangano, Jennifer Lawrence's character in *Joy* (2015), directed by David O'Russell — the subject of this article.

Based on a true story, Joy follows an inventor-turned-entrepreneur as she faces challenges in her career and personal life, involving a turbulent home and complicated family relationships. Despite many setbacks, she creates, patents, manufactures, and promotes her one-of-a-kind 'miracle mop' to business success. All in all, it is the genuinely inspirational and emotional story of a single mother navigating the taxing, male-dominated realm of commerce. While critics considered this a weaker O'Russell entry, praise was unanimous for the lead performance and the "fascinating fact-based tale".

Unfortunately, O'Russell has continued to create and promote his other films to critical success despite a long history of sexual assault allegations and on-set abuse, documented by testimony and evidence. So, this brings about an important question:

Can you still enjoy and value a film starring your favourite actors when knowing of its director's unremedied, problematic behaviour?

O'Russell's past re-emerged following the trailer release for his upcoming film, *Amsterdam* (2022). Due to the particularly incendiary nature of information on the internet, this meant that the film's cast, including Christian Bale, Robert De Niro, Margot Robbie, and Taylor Swift, naturally faced criticism for deciding to collaborate with a director owning such a notorious track record.

The Mary Sue summed up the ongoing controversy surrounding the film aptly:

"Russell is possibly better known for his horrid workplace behaviour than he is for his actual films at this point".

Yet criticism of the actors, while perhaps necessary, should not entirely place blame on their shoulders. Those in positions of authority in the film industry, namely the executive producers who hire directors, should arguably bear the most blame but are not in the public eye to the same extent.

Meanwhile, actors, as high-profile figures, enable directors' projects to come to fruition. Absolving alleged aggressors of their offences, and the reputational smear that comes with them, in any home, workplace, or institution, sets a poor public standard. Unfortunately, when audiences begin to hold them accountable for supposedly unscrupulous behaviour, artists fall onto the useful crutch of crying 'cancel culture', muddying public discourse on the need for accountability.

Many fans were especially disappointed by the hypocrisy of stars who preach about justice and gender equality in deciding to support a project overseen by O'Russell, particularly in the post-#MeToo era.

Feigning ignorance is also a poor defence when these accusations are supported by leaked emails and reports, including:

- O'Russell's 19-year-old transgender niece filed a complaint that he groped her over a decade ago. O'Russell confirmed this, justifying his action as a response to her "acting very provocative toward him" – in other words, she asked for it.
- His abusive demeanour on *Three Kings* (1999), led to the second-assistant director quitting.

witnessing violence: in other words it is war minus the shooting.

As discussed, white line fever runs hot in the veins of many professional sportsmen. Yet even at an amateur level, white line fever threatens to turn meaningless weekend fixtures into feisty affairs. Alas, even I—a goalkeeper who peaked shortly after highschool and now plays in Division two of the Northern Suburbs All Age Mens competition—am not immune from its effects. One incident springs to mind.

I took off as soon as the pass beat my defence. My negligible footspeed shouldn't matter because the pass was overhit. Try as he might, their striker will not beat me to it. Why would he try when I have quite clearly gotten here first? Astro turf is a bit uncomfortable to go to ground on, and I'd rather not get a scrape on my knee – you know, that weeping scab usually reserved for children and skateboarders that adheres to every fabric it comes into contact with and never fully heals until the season ends. As I gently bend over to scoop up the ball, I can't help but notice that his airborne legs have made rather a lot of contact with the side of my knee. The potential for a significant injury compels me to stand over him and inquire about the state of his mental faculties.

"WHAT THE FUCK IS WRONG WITH YOU, YOU STUPID CUNT?"

I spent the next 40 minutes praying for him to get another chance so that I could launch myself at his body as hard as humanly possible. Probably towards one of the more important joints as well, because I wanted to get my money's worth. I am not usually like this.

Valerie Chidiac critiques the fans behind problematic film directors.

- O'Russell allegedly put Christopher Nolan into a headlock to force him to let go of *Jude Law* in *Memento* (2000) in favour of his own project.
- Video proof shows him swearing at and demoralising Lily Tomlin, with an unidentified crew member hiding in the corner, as O'Russell violently threw objects across the room.
- He also reduced Amy Adams to tears until fellow actor Christian Bale intervened, who reunited with Russell for *Amsterdam*. Journalist Jonathan Alter confirmed this incident to Sony Entertainment CEO Michael Lynton.

Tomlin has since responded that she and O'Russell "made up" after that fight, which, while a personal decision, potentially demonstrates that higher-up crew members can get away with abuse.

Adams' response was different and she has not worked with Russell since. "I was really just devastated on set. I mean, not every day, but most. Jennifer [Lawrence] doesn't take any of it on. She's Teflon. And I am not Teflon. But I also don't like to see other people treated badly. It's not OK with me. Life to me is more important than movies," she said in a 2016 GQ interview with Stuart McGurk.

Russell did not direct another movie for six years after the Tomlin incident, but still ended up making *The Fighter* (2010), *Silver Linings Playbook* (2012), and *American Hustle* (2013). His first project after *Joy* was to be an Amazon series with the Weinstein Company, but Amazon only opted out after Harvey Weinstein's prevalent sexual abuse was uncovered; O'Russell's abusive behaviour played no part in the cancellation.

While the film industry may not "owe

In 2019-20, 3,279 Australians ended up in hospital as a result of an injury sustained playing soccer. I happened to be one of them, thanks to an overzealous forward dislocating and fracturing my right big toe. Injuries are scary to watch, and even scarier when they happen to you. It is only when you end up on the sidelines as a result of unsanctioned aggression that you realise what we excuse as "White Line Fever" is really something far more sinister.

The recent Round 24 clash between the Sydney Roosters and the Melbourne Storm is the perfect analogue for what is wrong with how Australians watch sport. The intensity on the field was unbelievable, and had boiled over into obvious cheap shots by both sides. The commentators once again applauded it as an example of the epitome of Rugby League. That was until Victor Radley suffered a concussion that left him bubbling at the mouth and convulsing on the grass. Radley could conceivably have died on the pitch, and it was only then that commentator Warren Smith called for restraint.

Perhaps I am not the ideal spokesperson for holding back, given I just outed myself as a psychopath with a penchant for ruptured knee ligaments. Sports are inherently dangerous, and playing at the limits of the rules may give you a better chance of winning, but it can also change the trajectory of another person's life. We consent to the combat because it is fun, but more needs to be done in Australia to ensure that the heat of battle is not seen as the benchmark for on-field performance. Soccer season has just ended, and in the offseason I plan to do plenty of soul-searching to finally kick my white line fever for good.

Lessons I've learnt from loneliness

Isabella Freeland goes solo.

You can do all the self-care in the world, but loneliness is an overwhelmingly awful feeling.

It comes at unexpected times. Like when I can't split an Uber with someone at the end of the night. Like when I want company at the supermarket. Like when I really need someone to cry to.

I'm almost 22 and have never been in a relationship. I've been dramatic. I've done the midnight drives. I've been sad, confused, and resentful. But I'm not alone in loneliness: it is an inevitable feeling. At some point in our lives, we will all feel lonely.

Here's what I've learnt.

Lesson 1: Society has a fucked-up perspective on solo activity.

There's nothing I despise more than the trend of "taking yourself on a date". I have two problems with it. Firstly, it implies that for something to be rewarding, there must be a 'date' connotation attached to it. Why does going and getting sushi by yourself on a random Wednesday have to be a 'solo-date'? Why is it not just 'getting dinner'? Must every experience be framed in this quasi-romantic light, as if spending time by yourself can't be understood without imagining spending time with others?

Secondly, it suggests that doing things alone is a special experience, and one that is uncommon. The idea that doing

things alone is a big deal diminishes them, because it makes them feel abnormal. I go to the movies by myself a couple of times a week. It is neither weird, nor something that makes me feel lonely. I've always been confused when people react weirdly to it, because watching movies is an inherently solo activity. I enjoy getting meals by myself too. I can order whatever I want, leave whenever I desire, and put my AirPods in and watch something on my phone if I feel like it. I am completely at peace with the experience.

Lesson 2: Don't listen to your friends in relationships.

Almost all my friends are in long-term relationships, which means they have little to no perspective on the trials and tribulations of going on first dates. First dates are normally uneventful, mentally exhausting, and a huge waste of a Saturday night. Meeting people has become far harder since COVID. Fewer people go out to bars and clubs on the weekend, and instead turn to house parties and pub sessions. People are shy. They don't like introducing themselves to strangers. Fair enough too.

I guess being gay makes this harder, because you don't even know who in the crowd shares your preferences, but I still think it is a universally difficult experience. That's why, when my friends in relationships tell me that something is "right around the corner" and that they "have a good feeling" about a first date,

I want to scream. I want to tell them that they will never understand (or have forgotten) the frustration of going on first date after first date, and all of them leading to nothing. I want to tell them that all I want is for them to listen and agree with me. There is no easy fix, and nothing they say will change how I feel.

Lesson 3: Occasionally, it will consume you.

Sometimes I lie in bed and lament the fact I haven't used my time at university to be in a relationship. Because I know that dating when you work full time is harder, and that, if you do find someone, you have less time to spend with them. I know I'll never have the experience of a uni relationship. That makes me sad.

I told a friend the other day that I'm starting to feel jealous when someone tells me they've just started a relationship. He told me I was being insanely selfish. Maybe I am. But I can't change the way I feel. It's frustrating always being happy for others, and never being the one on the other side. However, sometimes you just have to be upset about it. You will sometimes get stuck in the rut of "is it me? Am I the problem?". However, I think it's productive to feel like this sometimes. It's cathartic. It means you don't overreact every single time a date goes badly, because you've let it out.

I know this won't be forever, but I don't know when things will change. What I do know is that you can learn a lot in being by

ART BY ELLIE STEPHENSON

yourself. You can critically evaluate your relationships, and you can have incredibly high-quality friendships. Friendships that can, a lot of the time, make loneliness less all-consuming. I've learnt that some friendships aren't worth pursuing, and that not everyone will give you what you want. I have only been able to refine this skill being alone. You can learn how to leave situations you feel uncomfortable in. You can feel fully comfortable in yourself, without the desire to please someone else. I know exactly who I am. I know what I like doing, who I like doing it with, and what makes me happy. I feel lucky to have discovered this so young. This doesn't mean it's easy. Getting to that stage is really hard, and sometimes, almost impossible.

To anyone else in my position, I feel you.

Sometimes, it sucks. And that's okay.



WHY YOU SHOULD BE FRIENDS WITH YOUR LECTURERS

The struggle between direct practicality and abstract intellectual benefit is a constant feature of Australian culture, and holds particular prominence in the university setting.

Whitlam's implementation of free tertiary education for all rested on a conception of the arts as a public good and an integral part of Australian identity. In decades since, consecutive Liberal governments' fiscal austerity has depleted the role of leisurely intellect in both our culture and our education.

The economic reasoning for this is muddy — Australia Institute data released in 2021 suggested the arts sector creates six times as many jobs as construction, per dollar of turnover. It's logical to conclude that the framing of decisions about arts funding aren't purely fiscal. Instead, there is a divide in opinions about which social investments are worthwhile. Nowhere is this more prominent than in universities. Recent years have seen the price of generalist degrees doubling, and subject breadth in Bachelor of Arts programs at multiple universities thinning out.

Future FASS, the plan put forward by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences claiming to ensure the sustainability of University offerings in the coming decades, is ostensibly a program of renewal. The priorities of the restructure are to remove inefficiencies in the Faculty's administration, promote interdisciplinarity, and ensure there is continued breadth and depth in research and teaching.

“There is a divide in opinions about which social investments are worthwhile. Nowhere is this more prominent than in universities.”

Future FASS was developed under the same guiding principles that underpin the in-development 2032 Strategic Plan. Commenting on the future of the University's teaching and research operation, Provost Annamarie Jagose explained that some teaching or research activity may have to be cut.

“We're a very comprehensive university; we do a bit of almost everything. What principles would we apply in order to think about what we would step away from? What could we bear not to do...” said Jagose in a 2032 Strategy webinar in February.

“In every one of the subject areas we teach, do we expect there to be equivalently high-performing research cultures? Or in some instances, are research and teaching questions separable, so that we have teaching activities not necessarily underpinned by high-performing research.”

This attitude infuses the University's recent attempts to undermine the 40-40-

20 model, which allows academics to divide their time between 40 per cent teaching, 40 per cent research and 20 per cent administration. Formally allocated time for research is a global staple for leading universities.

Of course, there is no inherent requirement that a Bachelor degree be delivered on such a principle. Having academics prioritise teaching would certainly improve revenue generation: in 2021 and 2020, course fees brought in \$1.76 and \$1.48 billion. Meanwhile, research and consulting netted \$462 million in 2021 and \$423 million in 2020. A vast majority of this came in the form of federal research funding, not industry partnerships.

With over a billion dollar difference between teaching and research-based revenue streams, the motivation for the University to emphasise teaching becomes clear. Against a backdrop of decreased federal funding and international student enrolments, it's a survival strategy.

This is the context of Future FASS. While it is unlikely that the program will sound the sudden death knell for Arts at USyd, managerialism and austerity will cause its slow decline. In response to hostile governments that have seen tertiary education as a privilege, not a right, the University and FASS are responding like any survivalist would: with rations.

Over the course of your degree, you may have noticed courses no longer on offer, a move to mixed or exclusively-online teaching for some courses, or increasing class sizes. This may seem anomalous or simply unfortunate, without highlighting an obvious decline in Arts education. But a slow death over decades is a death, nonetheless.

Even if we believe this narrative of austerity — which we ought not to, given the \$2.54 billion in operating surpluses since 2011 — we might wonder how to push back, to restore autonomy to staff and students.

Fortunately, USyd has a rich history of resistance, pioneering new ways to research and teach, engaging students with the cutting edge of their discipline. And of course, very little of it was approved by management.

This uni ain't big enough for two economists

Most students entering a major in Political Economy or a left-wing student political space quickly learn of the contested history of the discipline at USyd.

During the 1950s to 1970s postwar era, the field of economics was gripped by one paradigm: the so-called *neoclassical synthesis*. This approach sterilised economics of its specific social context, and severely restricted thought on what governments could do to address social ailments like unemployment, gender inequality, and racial disparities.

As a social science, many students and staff argued that economics should play an important role in addressing the issues of the 60s and 70s: the Vietnam War, rampant gender inequality, civil rights, South African apartheid, and environmental degradation.

Students saw very little scope for their economics education to explore these issues academically or prepare them to tackle them afterwards. They desired an alternative: Political Economy.

The name 'Political Economy' refers to the earliest examples of economic literature — the likes of Adam Smith, Karl Marx, and includes contemporary strands such as ecological and feminist economics. Where the mainstream approach failed, these subdisciplines stood apart by reintroducing a political emphasis to economics.

But not everyone in the Faculty of Economics appreciated the Political Economy push. From 1969 there was constant tension within the Faculty, including a struggle that brought together over 100 teachers and 4000 students together in an 11-day strike in 1976 at its peak. The struggle would also engage (then-students) Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and former-Prime Minister Tony Abbott.

It all began when the latest iteration of the mainstream neoclassical curriculum was introduced in 1969. Frank Stilwell, a lecturer who joined the University in 1970, told *Honi* that several staff were upset with how the program was introduced.

“The sub-professional staff were annoyed about the authoritarian way in which this new [version of the neoclassical synthesis] syllabus had been introduced by some recently-appointed professors; and the students, frankly, just found it overly theoretical, overly mathematical, tedious, and irrelevant to what they thought the real world was about,” Stilwell said.

A project like Future FASS claims to be student-centric, yet the historic development of Political Economy's course offerings demonstrates how far you can actually take this principle when it's students deciding what's “student-centric,” not management. In response to the negative feedback on the economics syllabus, renegade staff co-developed a curriculum with students in the early 1970s.

“It was home-grown through the combined efforts of dissident staff and students. I remember one day a protest was called which included designing an alternative curriculum,” Stilwell said.

“We [the staff] decided on some basic principles and the students played a very prominent role in designing this pluralist course.”

Students recognised value in

How a toxic, top-down focus on employability has eroded our universities and poisoned our education.

Roisin Murphy and Sam Randle explain how you can save your degree from drudgery.

ART BY ELLIE STEPHENSON

the mainstream approach, but wanted to explore new methodologies, considering economics as a body of debate rather than a standardised toolkit devoid of historical, social, and political context.

“It would still have a segment on the neoclassical synthesis, but it would also have segments on Marxist economics, on feminist economics, institutional economics and an array of topics... associated with environmentalism, economic development, socialist alternatives to capitalism and so forth.”

These new Political Economy courses, developed in 1973 and referred to as the ‘Day of Protest’ courses, were exceptionally popular compared to the standard Economics offerings. Survey results from the Student Economics Society and reported in *Honi* in 1976 show only 2 per cent of Economics students regarded their coursework as “stimulating” while 90 per cent of students rated their Political Economy courses as “very good” or “good”. 81 per cent preferred the Political Economy coursework to the mainstream Economics counterpart.

The success of Political Economy was facilitated by student-staff solidarity, with students' demands being met with pedagogical integrity.

“[The staff] knew that a healthy discipline is one that draws from diverse viewpoints and that it's intrinsically valuable to the progress of knowledge to have this process of intellectual competition... and to avoid political bias,” Stilwell added.

Future FASS has also introduced a new ‘Discipline’ structure to replace its ‘Departments,’ purportedly to streamline research and teaching. Accordingly, the Department of Political Economy became the Discipline of Political Economy.

Historically, the fight for Departmental status by the Political Economists was grassroots, not top-down.

Then-professors Colin Simkin and Warren Hogan used their powers as mainstream educators to constantly block Political Economy programs. Initially, the Political Economists wanted to teach their courses under the Economics umbrella, but this was intolerable for Simkin and Hogan.

The Political Economists pursued a formal split instead, a move which was

denied by University management and the Faculty of Economics in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, but finally achieved in 2008. Accordingly, restructuring as a Department was contextually appropriate. The Future FASS restructure is comparatively arbitrary and less focused on academic autonomy.

Chair for the Discipline of Political Economy, Associate Professor Lynne Chester, described to *Honi* how the Future FASS arrangements are unlikely to improve the Discipline's teaching efforts because they already respond to student interest and adjust their offerings accordingly.

“We've always kept a close eye on the trends in our enrolments; and the social science enrolments have really dipped in recent years,” Chester said.

“When I first taught ECOP1001 [in 2012], I think I nearly died — there wasn't a big enough lecture theatre. I'm talking like 650 students, but all the social sciences have seen a fall-off in enrolments pre-COVID.”

The reasons behind the decline are mostly out of the Discipline's control: social science degrees are regularly denigrated in the public sphere compared to their natural science counterparts, and students may have been drawn to degrees associated with improved job prospects following the Global Financial Crisis. Chester also explained how University stakeholders shape enrolments beyond such broader social factors.

“There's all sorts of interfaces with prospective students that we are not part of. There might be an Open Day or some sort of information day; that would be the only time we'd really get exposure to prospective students. A lot is dependent on another group of people in the University: the marketers,” she said.

Accordingly, the University must ensure the social sciences are valued in their marketing material. A program built around securing the future of FASS would use University resources to actively encourage students to pursue their interests in these disciplines.

Chester also criticised the emphasis on interdisciplinarity in Future FASS.

“I think that [interdisciplinary] might be becoming an overworked word, like sustainability. What does collaboration actually mean?” she said.

“We've been increasingly encouraged to do interdisciplinary research, collaborations and projects, but I don't think they're unusual in the history of the last 20 or so years.”

“I guess [Future FASS] is embedded with interesting objectives about interdisciplinarity in collaborations and research activities. Are there actually structures in Future FASS to promote that? Possibly, but they don't leap out.”

In reality, it seems the real driving force behind the renewed emphasis on interdisciplinarity is the withholding of funding from management and the previous Federal Government for pure social sciences research.

“[Funding] is probably not as rich as it used to be, and I think the competitive process is a lot tougher now. You have to have an interdisciplinary team for a lot of the proposed funding projects.”

Regrettably, Future FASS blatantly disregards the achievements of the hard-fought Political Economy discipline. The changes inadequately support a Discipline already on the margins of the academic mainstream — failing to adequately funnel students into its programs and money into its research will likely instigate its slow death.

Gender Studies and Architecture walk into a strike

While learning the history of Political Economy is a rite of passage for the USyd left, it's less common to hear of the similarly radical beginnings of Gender and Cultural Studies, or how students and staff in the Architecture faculty decided a curriculum on their own terms.

Gender and Cultural Studies (GCS) at USyd is a program unlike any other. The academic experience is uniquely grounded in principles of equity, generosity, and open-minded intellectual inquiry. This can be significantly attributed to an underlying history of students and staff collectively demanding academic conditions relevant to their needs.

The pre-conditions for this began in 1972, when all sub-professional staff and students in the Department of Philosophy were given a vote in departmental meetings, meaning decision-making became entirely democratic.

“Students were deeply angered by the disruption to the departmental democracy and student autonomy they had fought so hard for.”

In 1973, two PhD students, Jean Curthoys and Liz Jacka, took a proposal to the Department that they teach a course to be named ‘The Politics of Sexual Oppression’. The Department voted in favour, as did the Faculty of Arts. But in June that year, the decision was overturned by the Professional Board, who rejected it on the grounds that Curthoys and Jacka, as PhD students, were underqualified. As a contemporary *Honi* article notes, the University had “appointed several people with comparable qualifications” in the past.

Students were deeply angered by the disruption to the departmental democracy and student autonomy they had fought so hard for. A strike emerged across multiple disciplines demanding that the course be taught. Instead of ceasing classes altogether, the strike was dynamic — students and staff often attended regular classes, but would only discuss matters relating to the demand. An *Honi* article from June 1973 invites those wanting to get involved to attend a “Women's Embassy” in the quad, where they could arrange for someone to come and speak at their lecture or tutorial on the matter. The strike attracted 2000 students and staff, and soon became “chameleon-like”, taking on various colours of political discourse.

Eventually, the intervention of Jack Munday and the Builders Labourers Federation (BLF) served as the nail in the coffin. As explained by important figures in Sydney radicalism, Meredith and Verity Burgmann, in their book *Green Bans Red Union* (2017), Munday believed the Professional Board's decision was sexist, and placed a ban on all construction by BLF members at the University. This threatened work on the medical faculty building and a \$3 million theatre complex (\$30 million in 2022, adjusted to inflation).

“In these days of social enlightenment and reform, the wiping out of these discriminations should start at the universities. Now we find that discrimination is being promoted at the universities,” Munday justified.

Soon after the BLF ban began, an agreement was struck with the University. The course, renamed ‘Philosophical Aspects of Feminist Thought’, was taught, and began what is now GCS.



The strike was an important historical

landmark: it addressed the need for a better university in which students and staff had a say, and demanded better treatment of women. This unique interaction between an internal University issue and a broader political one gained traction among the general public: “Unions Call for Women's Studies,” the *Daily Telegraph* read. Clearly, the setting of the University was not divorced from wider society.

It was, however, not the first time that students and staff had come together to decide the fate of education on autonomous terms. In 1972, students of the Architecture Faculty held a “pig architecture” strike that pressured the then-Dean to allow a new curriculum, one which “addressed pressing social and environmental issues.”

Recent Architecture graduate, Seth Dias, described the strike as a “dramatic upheaval within the architectural community”.

“Students demanded a curriculum that would better equip them with the knowledge to grapple with societal issues,” he said.

“As a recent student at the school I witnessed traces of the 1972 strikers' achievements across my degree.”

Dias noted that the “ongoing crises of today are not addressed in a particularly direct manner within the course content... continued cuts over the past few years have reduced the flexibility and choice that the strikers won during their campaign.”

“Students of the school should consider re-deploying the tactics used in 1972 to demand a better education... an education that is able to critically confront the issues of our time,” Dias urged.

A pivotal feature of both the action in the Architecture Faculty and the Department of Philosophy, is that they presented students with University-based political action which sought to address both internal and external issues. In particular, the 1973 strike provided justification for students to spend time pontificating on such topics outside the classroom, something previously dismissed as a waste of time.

Since the mid-2000s, on-campus engagement has plummeted. The dwindling number of students who are engaged in extracurricular activities are statistically unlikely to be involved with clubs or societies concerned with political issues. Students' relationships with campus is a victim of complex circumstances; an overpriced rental market, low welfare rates, and Voluntary Student Unionism — all of which benefit University management, because they just so happen to leave students with less time to dedicate to political organising.

Throughout 2022, the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) has been striking to demand better working conditions from the University. The NTEU's log of claims targets the exorbitant amounts of unpaid labour performed by casual staff, a lack of

Indigenous staff members, and the need for paid gender affirmation leave.

Discourse among students has taken a different form compared to the 70s. Arguments once had in the *Honi* letters section are now had over USyd Rants. But the subject matter is not dissimilar. Much of this year's disagreement has been around a fundamental

question: *Why should we spend our time trying to make political statements, when we should be focusing on our education?* Those against the industrial action will argue that university isn't for protesting and political discourse, it's for going to class.

But the question does not address what our discussion needs to. Instead, we must re-frame it using the lessons of the 1973 strike: you don't have to choose to *either* pursue your education or engage in broad socio-political issues — they are one and the same. Categorising the two as mutually exclusive only prevents us from improving our education. Universities are most true to their role when they address the needs of their social context.

Programs like Future FASS, which briefly threatened to hinder the autonomy of GCS through a merger, inadvertently take a leaf from the book of those trying to shut down early feminist philosophy courses. Consequently, it's the same strategy of student-staff collectivism that will combat it. Change that provides pedagogical benefit is rarely top-down.

In reflecting on this, Dr Grace Sharkey, Postdoctoral Research Associate in GCS, noted “the form of a Department often reflects trends within the associated discipline, and students are often at the forefront of those trends.”

“Like the move from the Department of Women's Studies to Gender and Cultural Studies in the 1990s... change isn't necessarily bad, but good change comes from within,” she said.

The foundations of GCS at USyd are inextricably tied to principles of staff and student autonomy and democracy. The impact of this continues in the form of course delivery, and is particularly felt through the commitment of many of its staff members to prioritising student voices.

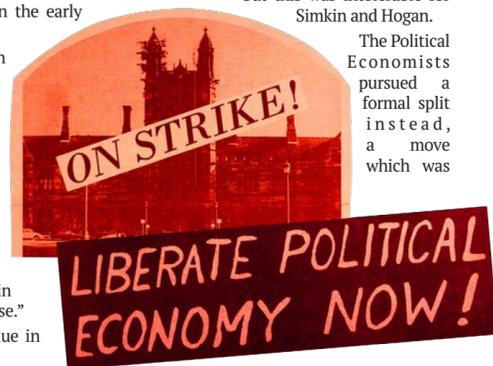
“Regardless of the restructurings happening around us, we at Gender and Cultural Studies will continue to do the things that make us who we are,” Dr Sharkey emphasised.

“We will prioritise teaching and learning, even when faced with unsustainable workloads. We will promote academic generosity and maintain our vibrant and welcoming HDR community. Changing our name won't change those things.”

Pour one out for student-staff solidarity

The tussle between ‘practical’ thinking and programs of more broad cultural benefit will continue both within the University, and as a social theme in Australia. But the language will consistently become more subtle, under the guise of making us ‘Job Ready.’ It's our responsibility to ensure the discussion we have around proposals like Future FASS adequately address their flaws.

It's a further responsibility of students to engage deeply with university staff, not just as pedagogues but as intellect, social beings, and people; it is in our interests, because the onus will always be on students and staff collectively to inquire with rigour, and ensure we're on the right side of history. Management are never going to spell it out for us.



COLLECTIVISED ART IN THE CONTEMPORARY INNER-WEST

collectivised art in the contemporary inner-west

Amelia Koen opens the garage door.

To anyone who has ever tumbled down the streets of Sydney's Inner West, it is no secret that art and its galleries are dappled throughout. Communal spaces for artists to work, interact, and exhibit are the cornerstone of many artists' early careers. Teeming within repurposed garages, warehouses, and terraces-turned-galleries — art of the community, and by the community, is an oft-overlooked lifeblood.

"I have always believed that artists get better results if they work collectively," founding member of Sydney's *Yellow House Artists Collective*, George Gittoes, told *Honi*.

Residing in Potts Point, *Yellow House Artists Collective* (YH) was one of the city's first and most influential artist collectives of the 1970s. Gittoes and his wife Hellen Rose — who started the equally seminal *Gunnery Collective* in Woolloomooloo — told *Honi* that they have "both worked with teams of artists all our life and do not support [the] approach of lone artists working in isolation."

Where the networks and ideas of solo artists are given the space to bleed onto one another, communal art-spaces continue to be collaboratively beneficial for their material and social outcomes.

Though, obtaining a space large enough for multiple artists to practice and exhibit is an obstacle in itself. According to George, "YH was psychedelic era and we paid the rent — the *Gunnery* was Punk era and it was a squat in a building that formerly belonged to the Navy."

In today's context, where rent is extortionate and squatting is less socially acceptable and feasible, artists face the challenge of affordability and accessibility. According to Domain, across the June 2022 quarter alone the rental price of a house in Sydney jumped by 3.3% (\$620pw) and units by 5% (\$525pw), setting a record for the steepest annual increase in 14 years at 11.7%. During this current quarter, Newtown is sitting at \$750pw on average for a house, Chippendale at \$788pw, Marrickville at \$778, and Enmore at \$790, to list only a few.

According to one source, the approximate average annual salary of an artist at the beginning of their career can be as low as \$20,000; clearly, the numbers don't stack up. How can new artists afford to be artists, and what types of collective gallery-spaces make it possible?

To better understand the landscape in which artist-run-initiatives (ARIs) and not-for-profit (NFP) galleries are able to

operate, I spoke to Redfern's own garage-gallery Duckrabbit about their history, philosophy, and the largest obstacles in the contemporary art landscape.

Duckrabbit / 138 Little Eveleigh Street, Redfern

Located along the Redfern-run, Duckrabbit has been a USyd local for years. The converted garage space was established by Hugh Ramage in 2015 as an artist-run-initiative (ARI), though it has been a workshop space leased by Ramage for 15 years. Having established several other ARI spaces in the Inner-West over his career — including 'Cog' on Pitt Street in 1987, studios in Chippendale's 'Chocolate Factory' warehouse from 1992-1995, and studios in a former rag factory in Redfern since 1995 — Hugh utilises Duckrabbit as a space for artists at all stages of their careers to exhibit their work, no questions asked.

I was fortunate enough to speak with Duckrabbit Exhibition Coordinator, Katerina Penko, to discuss the origins of Duckrabbit and its development over time as one of the only not-for-profit galleries in the area.

FOUNDING

Eager to better understand the genesis of Duckrabbit, I asked Katerina about the arts culture it was launched from, and how the space came to be established within the Redfern community.

"[Duckrabbit is] a part of that whole generation of artists who found warehouse spaces, moved in, set them up with little kitchenettes, rewired them, did a bit of plumbing and put up giant silks-screen printing tables and set up studios," she said.

"Generally, artists need to share the space with other people. When Hugh set up Cog, he lived there on the mezzanine and then he divided it up into four spaces. For example, he had the artist Richard Allan who created graphics for Mambo. That led him to establish the gallery as an artist-run space to show people's work."

Notably, Katerina explained that Hugh views Duckrabbit as an extension of his own art practice: "Living as a full-time artist and experiencing those challenges means he's sympathetic to artists simply wanting to show their work to an audience — especially emerging artists who have little experience of how the art world operates."

"It's very dynamic. It's created opportunities for artists who wouldn't have had those opportunities otherwise. It meant also that there's been a lot of discourse, cross-fertilisation and connection with artists working in different genres," she said.

NO QUESTIONS ASKED

One unexpected aspect of organising an artist-run exhibition space is that Hugh doesn't request any exhibition proposal from artists wanting to show their work. Out of its 90

exhibitions, Duckrabbit has never asked to see artists' works before their display, nor does Hugh determine if the works are appropriate.

"Hugh does not vet an artist's work when they enquire about showing with us... He just says yes and books them a week. The artist has complete creative control over how their work is presented and what constitutes their art practice," said Katerina.

HOW DO NFP/ARIS RUN?

I asked Katerina how the role of Duckrabbit functions within the Inner-West and Redfern community of artists, hoping to unearth how such an active, vibrant NFP art-space manages to stay afloat.

She said: "To be clear, Duckrabbit is artist-run and not for profit but the artist exhibiting covers our rent for the week and other associated outgoings. We have received no grants for the opportunities we've provided to over 100 artists across seven years of exhibiting.

"We have a (not for sale) mailing list of over 2500 people that we invite to each artist's show and our Insta/FB generates additional interest. We've so far managed to avoid the cost of setting up a website and other overheads normally associated with a commercial gallery."

Beyond practical operations, Katerina also explained that Duckrabbit provides a non-commercial space wherein Hugh's leadership is openly provided to exhibiting artists; there are no managers or dealers.

"The traditional format is to go through a dealer, and that involves either having to promote yourself to someone and there's a lot more artists than there are dealers and galleries," Katerina detailed.

"The bottom line is that dealers take anywhere from — back then it was 30% — 40 to 60% commission on the sale of work.

"[Duckrabbit is an] opportunity for artists to show their work, it's not always for the purpose of sale but you sell your work to pay the rent, to buy more materials and so on."

Reflecting on one of their youngest exhibiting artists, Katerina recounted his first solo show: "He turned 17 on the night of his opening. We had a birthday cake and we all sang happy birthday...The works were only \$30 to \$50 but he had a sell-out show and made about \$3000."

ART BY AMELIA KOEN



Such anecdotes illuminate the supportive, community-minded nature of Duckrabbit, while also highlighting that artists, even at the earliest stages of their career, can have a successful show given the space and support.

Interestingly, one of the main pitfalls of becoming an established artist that works through a dealer, rather than with a not-for-profit, can be the "pigeonholing" of one's work according to Katerina, "whether it's abstract art, figurative or landscape."

"There is an expectation that if you become known for beautiful giant flower paintings, that the market then wants that kind of work from you — and so the artist can be compromised in a way because the dealer obviously wants to sell [in-demand artworks]."

I got the distinct sense that this is the exact opposite of Hugh's intentions for Duckrabbit, whose own artistic aesthetics range vastly. The art-space enables artists to explore their individual aesthetic without the restriction of market demand.

Echoing Katerina's sentiments about the economically unsustainable nature of the commission taken by dealers and galleries, the director/curator of St. Peters NFP 'Tortuga', H Morgan-Harris explained that: "In a shared, artist-run space such as Tortuga, the hire rates are low, commission is minimal, and because of the highly collaborative community we exist within, there is an established crowd of buyers."

"Our community is highly organised, mobile and adaptable, and it operates without the restrictions of local government organisation," said Morgan-Harris.

OBSTACLES + FINANCE

"Rentable, affordable space is the biggest obstacle in an ever-diminishing, inner-city, developing environment," said Katerina, reaffirming the pains of staying afloat for small, independent galleries in the modern art landscape.

In an interview for a 2018 infrastructure analysis by WSU, Hugh expressed that the only reason Duckrabbit has been able to survive is precisely because it is a NFP organisation. The paper notes that the \$30,000 annual rent of the space is "well below market value" because the landlord (the Esperanto Society) chose not to raise the rent.

According to Domain, the current average weekly rent for a house in Redfern is \$850 — meaning that Duckrabbit is saving at least \$14,200 per year due to its uniquely affordable

tenancy. Though fantastic for the artists and community it serves, this is not a financial luxury afforded to all ARI spaces in Sydney.

Hugh also acknowledged that "he would not be able to afford a similar space in the area, and it would mean moving out of the city into a regional centre."

Similarly, Morgan-Harris told *Honi* that affordable space is an often insurmountable challenge for aspiring ARIs.

"We need production space (IN1 industrial zoning), 24/7 access, hoists, high ceilings et cetera. Old warehouse stock is ideal, but we are increasingly losing this to gentrification and development," said Morgan-Harris.

"Not-for-profit communities such as ours rely on affordability to exist and run-down industrial areas offer this. As they go, so do we."



Massagers-cum-Toys: The reverberating history of the vibrator

Simone Maddison burrows deep into the archives.

The prevailing history of the vibrator is shrouded in night-time mystery and buried deep beneath duvets. Buzzing softly between whispers for almost two hundred years, vibrators have only recently rushed to the fore as symbols of sexual liberation — albeit for mostly straight white women à la 'The Rabbit' in *Sex and the City*. But these objects have a more electrifying past within Western scientific discourses, existing as instruments for cultivating communities of pleasure and celebrating diversity. This culture of splayed-openness, which over half of us adult Australians take for granted, is distant from the sheltered privacy of the bedroom.

The pink and purple, twisting and turning, rounded and rubber vibrators we know today are a far-cry from the devices fixed with immovable generators and confined to doctors' surgeries in Victorian England, invented by physician Joseph Mortimer Granville. Believing that vibrations powered the nervous system, Granville's *peruteur* aimed to calm stomachs, clear sinuses and rejuvenate tired muscles. Contrary to historian Rachel P. Maines' now defunct thesis that 19th century physicians used vibrators to massage clitorises and cure female hysteria, Granville targeted his device exclusively toward men. These strict gender binaries created a paradox amidst the emerging crisis of 'new masculinity' — a reactionary movement against the perceived over-civilisation of men into bookish and scrawny 'effetes' caused by the Industrial Revolution. As such, the vibrator initially constructed the same patriarchal ideals of sexual aggression, body-building and personal care that it would eventually be co-opted to resist.

By the early 20th century, the vibrator was made portable; it could be taken home and held in one's hands. As domestic appliances, vibrators emerged as the epitome of care, beauty, motherhood and femininity, having previously enjoyed success as upper-class symbols of modernity and new-age science.

WHITE CUBES

Over the course of our conversation, it becomes clear that Duckrabbit's mode of organising is highly polarised to that of traditional and large galleries with extensive funding, who meticulously plan exhibitions years in advance.

I asked Katerina about the importance of maintaining non-commercial spaces — like garages such as Duckrabbit — as an option for artists rather than traditional 'white cubes'.

"Galleries like Duckrabbit provide unbiased access to all, whether as exhibitors or viewers," she said. "An important aspect of Duckrabbit's role is to demystify the experience for an artist who is putting on a show. For the general public we aim to provide accessibility — removing intimidation for the viewer and providing a non-intimidating environment for them to simply walk in, engage with the work and the maker of the work."

"We also see it as enormously educative in that the artist 'event-manages' their show for the week — hanging it, promoting it, engaging with viewers/collectors. This all comes under Hugh's mentorship. He has had more than 25 solo shows so he advises and guides artists to ensure a successful outcome.

Most importantly, their meanings were markedly non-sexual.

When US manufacturing conglomerate Hamilton Beach began advertising its *New-Life Vibrator* in 1912, it affirmed the technology's place in a 500-page manual concerning *Health and How to Get It*. By the following year, the addition of a vibrating attachment to the Duntley Vacuum Cleaner had fomented its connection to family values in the Anglo-American imagination.

But these marketable 'massagers' became time-saving tools in more ways than one. Quotidian depictions of Polar Cubs on billboards and back pages may have allowed advertisers to avoid direct charges of supposed immorality, but their sexual connotations were loud and clear. While the phallic attachments and vibrating belts pioneered by Hygeia Vibratory Co. in 1902 vaguely promised to increase "vital power", articles in *Woman's Home Companion* stated that "all the pleasure of youth... will throb within you". Of course, these gendered codes did little to empower the 'modern girl' or her 'fallen sisters' beyond their overt eroticisation. Yet when the *Journal of the American Medical Association* declared that "the vibrator business is a delusion and a snare" in 1915, the vibrator market reactively pivoted towards the service of international holistic therapy. At no other point would vibrators move so subversively against the professionalisation of medical discourses and their anti-masturbatory rhetoric.

These new meanings stimulated nascent feminist and queer subcultures around sexual experimentation and self-determination. At a time when doctors were obsessed with pathologising sexual practices, the vibrator reconnected bodies with the stories of intimacy pulsing between them. As the first safe and accessible sex toys, vibrators materialised an embodied experience of sexuality: of touching the innermost parts of oneself, liking it, and learning to love it. Buttressed by the *Kinsey Reports'* 1953 findings that sexuality was best mapped on a spectrum, the vibrator became proof of the inexistence of 'deviant' or 'perverse' identities. Sex was realised as desire, eliciting

We support trans-generational artists — the youngest was 17, our most senior 85, and artists from diverse ethnic and gender backgrounds."

Morgan-Harris also noted that institutional 'white cube' galleries are frequently not the correct fit for many artists, unlike the "grassroots perspective" offered by Tortuga.

"The great majority of our artists would be unlikely to find representation in a white walled space, not because they are not incredibly talented, but because the gallery/exhibition environment in Sydney generally caters towards artists who already have a public profile or following."

Beyond creating a welcoming space for both artists and viewers, Katerina explained that the physical space of Duckrabbit is equally as important. She pointed to the versatility of the space: it can be constructed to have intimate corners or vast open space, depending on the artists' personal practice.

From an architectural point of view, "it's the roller door which is really critical to [Duckrabbit]; people look in, and feel really comfortable walking into that space."

"We've all gone into a gallery where it's glass-frontage and sometimes you even have to buzz the doorbell, someone's got to let you in. That is very off-putting,

it doesn't nurture a relationship between the viewer and the art," Katerina said, explaining that the rolling garage door remains wide-open whenever a show is on to create ideological, social accessibility to the space.

GOING FORWARD

Clearly, spaces like Tortuga and Duckrabbit are pillars of the Inner-West art community. Without them, many artists would've had no space or support to put on their first solo show, nor the opportunity to learn from someone as established as Hugh and his team.

Now, perhaps even more so than in the era of the *Yellow House*, or Hugh's 1987 art-space Cog, artists rely on not-for-profit, collectivised spaces like these in order to get their start.

The seemingly rapid art-extinction unfolding throughout our city due to extortionate rent, inaccessible art-environments, and intellectual exclusivity might just be surmountable through more gallery formats like Duckrabbit and Tortuga. So, next time you're on your way to USyd or Redfern Station, stop by the roller door and stick your head in — you never know what you'll find @duckrabbitart.

trans histories outside galleries and archives remain scarce. In many ways, each vibrator holds the weight of these stories in its ridged contours and battery packs, resisting the essentialisation of these sexual and social identities. As author C. Riley Snorton argues, they reflect a "movement with no clear origin and no point of arrival."

For all the vibrator's stubborn dedication towards a single end-point, its history is anything but linear and straight-forward. It is theatrical, controversial, pery, and impervious — and increasingly less hidden behind narratives of sickness and sin. From the timeless sophistication of the Hitachi Magic Wand, to the chic novelty of the Lelo Gigi, there still remains so much potential for even more radical discoveries.

ART BY DEAUNDRE ESPEJO

Legend has it that Cleopatra created one of the earliest vibrators by filling a gourd with angry bees. **The Gourd** \$24.99 BEES NOT INCLUDED

The Pulsocoon can vibrate up to 5,000 times per minute, depending on how vigorously one cranks the handle. **The Pulsocoon** \$269.99 DOCTOR APPROVED

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The Bridge Troll of Jubilee Park

Felix Faber chronicles the ordeals of Jubilee Park's rumoured troll.

Me and my boys were going down to Jubilee Park to throw rocks at the light rails when we met a bridge troll. He was underneath the bridge, all hunched and fucked-up looking and shit. Donny was like "Hey, troll boy! Why are you so fucked-up looking and shit?" And the troll was just like "I don't know, I just am." Donny was kinda out of line to say that to the troll's face, but I wasn't gonna say shit because Donny is sort of our leader because he's got an Xbox One and his cousin buys us beer. Besides, he was kinda right too — the troll had this gnarly, fucked-up face that was all pockmarked and stony, and he was covered by this crazy lichen shit and stuff, and he was wearing a mushroom as a hat which was crazy, too. Donny was all like "why are you wearing that mushroom as a hat, though?" which was fair because, again, the mushroom looked real fucked up.

The troll just went like "well I need it to keep myself out of the sun," and Mikey pipes up and goes "my guy, the sun? You are a *bridge troll!* You live in the shade!" I won't lie, this was kind of unexpected coming from Mikey because he's a new addition to the group and we've been hazing him a lot by pouring Diet Coke and Mentos down the back of his shirt, so he hasn't been speaking up much. But he asked the troll about his fucked-up mushroom hat, so I guess he's been gaining confidence, which means the hazing must be working.

Anyway so the troll says some shit like "well I need the hat for when I venture outwards from the bridge", which was such a loser thing to say — like, "venture outwards", who are you, my freaking English teacher? So anyway, after we got done calling him a pussy for saying "venture outwards" Donny goes all like "why do you even need to venture outwards bro, like what do you even need to get from the outside world?" Which, not gonna lie, was kind of stupid for Donny to even ask because like, a) The bridge kind of is the outside world, like the troll doesn't have a roof or a door or any shit he just has a dense pile of fur and straw that he sleeps in and a rivulet of water running down the arch of the bridge — like, the guy doesn't even have a fridge. And b) Like, fucken — what if he needs to get food, bro? Like he's a troll not a fucken tree, he needs to eat too, or maybe sometimes he wants to chill out or go to the movies, like of course he's going to need to leave the bridge. But I didn't wanna say shit to Donny so I just kind of let it slide.

Anyway, the troll says "well, when I need to get food, that's when I venture outwards" like, duh, you can't be surprised at that Donny, of course he needs to eat. But Donny just goes "well what do you eat then, troll-boy?" and the troll makes this fucked up creepy looking grin and goes "well, bread of course — just like you!" and Donny goes "what, like fucking Wonder White?" and the troll just goes "no, no, I make my own!"

At this point, Mikey starts to seem real nervous and I kinda get nervous too because we realise that at some point the sun has set and the park has emptied of people, which is weird because usually we come to the park to throw rocks at the light rail in the afternoon so we can scare all the pensioners who are going to the casino. But somehow it'd just turned to night in the time we'd been talking. I tried to tell Donny to knock it off but he wouldn't listen, and just kept trying to fuck with the troll. He was all like "oh so you make your own? You buy yeast and flour and shit, pussy?" and the troll just smiled and went "well, I make my own flour — I mill it from the bones of naughty children, like you."

That set Donny the fuck off, and he just starts yelling at the troll all like "you can't threaten me, my dad's a cop, he'll fuck you up!" Donny's dad isn't actually a cop, he just says that to people when they're getting up in his shit, like when the newsagent won't let him sample the Diet Cokes or when a troll threatens to mill his bones into flour.

Anyway, Donny's all mad at this fucking bridge troll, who grabs him by the arms and starts pulling him towards his gaping, slavering mouth, and I'm just standing there like *yo, Donny is fucked, he's about to get eaten by that bridge troll*, when Mikey pulls out a crowbar from his backpack and starts whaling on the troll — I'm talking going to town on this fucking bridge troll, like *THWACK THWACK THWACK*. So the troll drops Donny and starts cowering all like "stop, stop!" and Donny and me pull out our crowbars from our backpacks — we all had crowbars because we were gonna go smash up the cars in the teachers' car park — and we just beat the shit out of this fucking troll with our crowbars. Anyway, eventually the troll is just cowering there or whatever, and we decide to hit the bricks before his troll buddies show up, but we dig through his pants for his wallet first and we find like fifty bucks in it, which is pretty sweet.

Anyway, so basically we bought ourselves some food from the Tramsheds food court with the fifty, which was pretty tight, but then Donny had to head home to get ready for his brother's dance recital or whatever. Every now and then we'll see the troll again chilling underneath the bridge, and we'll just nod to him like "sup" and he'll nod back like "sup" because even if we whaled on him with those crowbars or whatever, we've got a relationship of mutual respect so we don't fuck with him and vice versa. It's pretty tight, cause he's started eating the kids from our school, the ones that don't carry crowbars around. And I think that'd kind of suck.



ART BY JUN KWOUN

'Campy and eclectic': Arts Revue 2022 'Wipeout'

Ethan Floyd reviews.

After a two-year hiatus due to COVID-related shenanigans, Arts Revue returns to the Seymour Centre's Reginald Theatre with a campy and eclectic show highlighting everything we know and love about student sketch comedy.

This year has already seen some fantastic revues which maintained a clear theme throughout. POC Revue's futuristic tone was set early in the show and carried throughout with cleverly-written sketches. It seemed POC Revue walked so that Arts Revue could run, channelling all of this, but in a subversive way — weaving not one, but a number of engaging themes and storylines throughout the show in a way which left the audience giggling long after the curtains closed.

Directors Ochre Pastro and Will Torney, alongside producer Daisy Semmler, craft a show that invokes the Argentinian TV show from which it borrows its namesake. Sam Hill-Wade's nefarious version of former Wipeout host Richard Hammond had the audience cackling with his hijinks throughout the show and, with appearances during and between other sketches, tied the show's main theme together cohesively.

An underrated sketch was 'The Bachelor does Wipeout', which sees Patrick McKenzie as the Bachelor and a well-dressed Luke Mešterović as Osher Günsberg, attempting to host a rose ceremony while contestants are 'wiped out' by a spinning obstacle.

'Fucking hilarious': Law Revue 2022 'Pulp Jurisdiction'

Christian Holman chuckles.

It turns out that if you pack 40 type-A students into a room with glue guns and glitter for 22 hours every week, they hand in one hell of a group assignment. And they sure understood that assignment; to be loud, facetious, and fucking hilarious.

Timing is everything. And the moment could not have been better, leading up to mid-semester break, for some performance-enhancing comic relief to be injected into the dreary lives of students as the Seymour Centre opened its doors to Law Revue once again,

Clearly, some incredible work has been done in the pitch workshops which have taken up most Tuesdays and Thursdays over the past several months, with a number of original sketches becoming highlights of this year's show.

Annabelle Shannon shone in 'Manual Car Driver', a musical sketch to the tune

"...a show that is full of fast laughs, slow-burners and some hilariously over-the-top physical comedy."

of Grease's 'Beauty School Dropout', along with Hill-Wade. Delivering some great vocals, it's surprising that the two of them — particularly Shannon — weren't considered for more singing roles. That being said, the other cast members who are given the microphone do a fantastic job as well.

Nic Doring and Pat Fuccilli show off their impeccable comedic timing in 'Deadshit Lifeguard', showing us a day in the life of the world's dumbest surf life saver. The two give subtle yet hilarious performances, and go on to steal the show in every one of their other sketches.

Speaking of show-stealing comedic duos, self-confessed Greek heartthrob Mešterović and Irish-accent aficionado Tom Hetherington-Welch seem in their element in 'Scottish PE Teacher', with Mešterović assuming the role of toxic masculinity personified and Hetherington-Welch as an insightful child

therapist.

Also showing off their comedic chops were McKenzie and Claire Hwang, delivering a series of 'Pocket Watch' sketches which see two people fall in love over a mutual love of timepiece accessories and time-themed pickup lines. These telenovela-style sketches were a highlight

of the show, and the pair's corny yet hilarious dialogue evokes the traditions of student sketch comedy. Sharing the stage across several appearances, McKenzie and Hwang's storyline is quintessential 'arts revue' — charismatic actors, an engaging theme, and some goofy dialogue!

Some other notable mentions are Fuccilli and Eloise Aiken's Y2K-inspired love ballad 'I Fell in Love With a Finance Bro', light-hearted-children's-story-turned-horrific-medial-drama 'Spot's Trip to the Vet', and a heartwarming impression sketch featuring a homeless Kevin McCloud (of BBC's Grand Designs) titled 'Kevin McCloud Needs a Place to Stay'.

These all go to show the miracles taking place in the writers' room this year, producing a show which is full of fast laughs, slow-burners and some hilariously over-the-top physical comedy.

Arts Revue's sound and lighting crew experienced some technical difficulties on Wednesday, at one point playing a musical track for a touch too long, and at another point missing some lighting cues which made for interesting theatre. Fortunately, quick thinking and resilience from the tech crew and the show's stage managers Danny Yazdani and Asqa Suryana kept the show on the road and the audience engaged.

Adele Beaumont alleviated any confusion in the audience, making several quippy fourth-wall breaks throughout the show. Given student sketch comedy's tradition of finding humour in awkwardness, this played not only as funny but also hugely endearing. Demonstrating an environment of patience and teamwork between the dedicated cast and crew of this year's show, moments like this managed to warm my cold reviewer's heart.

All in all, while suffering from (but at all times overcoming) the typical pitfalls of opening night, Arts Revue 2022 *Wipeout* is a mixed bag of cleverly-written sketches with a handful of outstanding moments, delivered by a truly talented cast. A must-see at Seymour this week.

Arts Revue 2022 *Wipeout* plays at the Seymour Centre's Reginald Theatre until Saturday 27 August. Tickets are available from the Seymour Centre's website or at the box office.

with Director Genevieve Couvret was an early highlight of the night.

"... the absence of filler sketches made it difficult to draw a snortless breath."

Catching an overwhelming affection for the formidable cast becomes hopelessly unavoidable when we are introduced to murderous Queen Elizabeth II (played by comic genius Coco Frolich) in Ariana Grande parody 'One Less Sovereign Without You'. Later, our favourite 90s heartthrobs became overly litigious defamation bad boys Ben Roberts-Smith, Peter Dutton, John Barilaro, Johnny Depp, and Christian Porter (brought to life by Lauren Lancaster, Beau Glass, Kiran Gupta, Ariana Haghghi, and Anna Simpson). These catchy and character-centred numbers really make you feel like you're watching a revue that only this cast could pull off. Also, who knew the roar and rumblings of fascism within the world's cold-war superpowers could be put to 'Material Girl' and 'Cocacabana'?

You'd be hard-pressed to find any of the rough edges one ordinarily sees on an opening night. The exceptionally experienced revue executive — all of them women — put together a production of laughter without lull; the absence of filler sketches made it difficult to draw a snortless breath. Audience's attention was pulled from the side-splitting passive aggression anger management session (starring Martha Barlow, Julia Saab,

and Prudence Wilkens-Wheat) to the coronation of short king and His almost-Royal Highness Beau Glass.

Yes, there was a reliable collection of law-laden gags; a Michael Jackson-inspired zombie-hit 'Bill Her' parodied lawyers' penchant for overcharging clients (led by Producer Dani Stephenson). Especially memorable was a sketch in which Dora the Explorer (also played by Stephenson) led the audience in pro-death-penalty chants as Swiper stood trial for larceny.

But what made this year's revue particularly memorable was how it strayed from simply copying an old formula, drawing on fresh blood — the majority of the cast being first-timers — to deliver something new. This was most brilliantly evident in sketches like 'Montage It' (starring Prudence Wilkins-Wheat and Ella McCrindle) and characters like covid, cocaine, and coercive control Barbies (played by Eliza Crossley, Dani Stephenson, and Elizabeth Nutting respectively).

The band at law revue has always been outstanding, and they continued this year to be an under-utilised part of the show. I just want to meet them, I just want to be them. Their instrumental versions of all the great music we've missed out on hearing at the clubs during the pandemic has me hoping I may run into them some time, anywhere, after the show. Call me?

For those sitting on the edge of a fortnight of take-homes and take-out, it might be time to ditch the desk, snag some tickets and see how they lay down the law in *Pulp Jurisdiction*.



A mixed week for Australia's mining sector

Ellie Stephenson reports.

It's not every week that we get to report a loss for the mining industry (and, consequently, a win for the world).

Fortunately, this week saw a positive development in the long-term fight against mining in the Illawarra Water Catchment, in Sydney's backyard. The owner of Mt Kembla's Dendrobium Coal Mine, South32, announced that they were pulling out of the project to extend the mine, after discovering that the extension's return on investment would be insufficient.

South32 CEO Graham Kerr said in a statement that the decision "follows an extensive analysis of the alternatives for Dendrobium together with the anticipated returns from the up-front capital investment that would be required".

The extension to the existing metallurgical coal mine would have

threatened tens of upland swamps, which play an important role in filtering and maintaining Sydney's water supply, as Honi reported earlier this month.

This week also saw Santos pause drilling in the Barossa gas fields in the Tiwi Islands while the Federal Court deliberates on a legal challenge to the project by Munupi Traditional Owners.

The National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) was sued by Tiwi Islander Dennis Tipakalippa, who argues that the regulator's approval of Santos' gas drilling did not involve sufficient consultation of the Munupi clan.

According to the Environmental Defenders Office, which is representing the plaintiff, Tipakalippa said: "Drilling into the seabed is like drilling into our bodies. I'm relieved that Santos will drop drilling before it gets to the gas and will

not start any new well – that is a big worry for us, so it's very important to get that promise."

"Drilling into the seabed is like drilling into our bodies. I'm relieved that Santos will drop drilling before it gets to the gas and will not start any new well."

In gloomier news, the Albanese government announced it would open up over 46,000 square kilometres of Commonwealth waters to oil and gas exploration.

The federal Resources Minister, Madeleine King, described the releases as economically beneficial for Australia: "At the same time as we strive to reduce

emissions it must be emphasised that continued exploration for oil and gas in Commonwealth waters is central to alleviating future domestic gas shortfalls."

The move received criticism from climate Independents and Greens politicians, who saw it as conflicting with Australia's climate mitigation goals.

Senator David Pocock told the ABC that the announcement "doesn't make sense" in the context of legislated 43 per cent emissions reductions targets.

Tasmanian Greens Senator Peter Whish-Wilson questioned Labor's commitment to climate action via Twitter following the announcement, arguing that "Labor likes to talk big on climate, but when it really matters they'll do exactly what their fossil fuel donors demand."

WHAT ARE USYD STUDENTS TORRENTING ON CAMPUS WI-FI?

Disclaimer: The author of this article does not advocate for the infringement of copyright, though he does believe its abolition would result in a creative and artistic utopia.

For many, their first torrenting experience is a kind of revelation about the power of the internet. Having heard of ThePirateBay through hushed whispers in the schoolyard, they quickly install a sketchy torrent application (now with bonus crypto-miners) and immediately get to downloading the latest 1080p.h265. HDRip of *Spider-Man 3*. Unlike centralised sources hosting such files on their own servers, peer-to-peer file-sharing networks are inherently difficult to shut down, despite being in the crosshairs of large media conglomerates seeking to enforce their intellectual property rights for decades.

A particularly insidious tactic employed by 'copyright trolls' in the modern day is to pressure the middlemen in any network, like internet service providers, to police the activity of users on their behalf. It's not uncommon these days to hear of film and video game publishers who upload a marked copy of their own media onto public trackers, like ThePirateBay, and gather the IP addresses of those who download it. Within a couple of weeks, a cease-and-desist letter shows up at your home, or in the worst-case scenario, an originating process for legal proceedings. Even if these corporations don't resort to baiting pirates themselves, it's easy enough to scrape a list of IP addresses from existing torrents by monitoring the 'peers' to a file at any given point.

To demonstrate how simple this detective work can be, the website 'I Know What You Download' actively tracks the peers to a list of 1.5 million torrents and makes their records publicly available online. All you'd need to do is to look up an IP Address to find the full history of their torrent activity. Of course, the first thing I did when discovering this resource was to log on to campus WiFi and snoop

into what USyd students (and potentially staff) were torrenting in the background while sitting in classes or studying at the library. The results, while not entirely surprising, should raise some alarm bells about the digital OPSEC of your average USyd attendee.

It's mostly porn. Overwhelmingly, the activity demonstrated that the vast majority of torrent traffic through the USyd campus network was for large HD porn videos, sometimes up to 10GB in size. In fact, the website has realised that USyd's IP address downloads so much porn that it's even automatically categorised the network with the tag 'likes porn'. As to why anyone would want to have several 10GB porn videos on their hard drive, and choose to torrent them through the University network, I cannot say. Other categories that saw significant traffic were video games, with someone downloading a full 50GB repack of *Far Cry 6* just last week, and art house films such as the Criterion Collection edition of David Lynch's *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me*.

Am I trying to be a copyright narc for pointing all of this out? Absolutely not – though I do think that pirating Ubisoft games is a waste of anyone's bandwidth, even the University's. But I must

imagine that this sort of activity, which is so easily detectable by a third-party source, would be even simpler for the University's tech department. Moreover, whilst the website I visited couldn't decipher the individual student identification numbers responsible for downloading each torrent, my understanding is that this too would be a trivial challenge for the University to figure out.

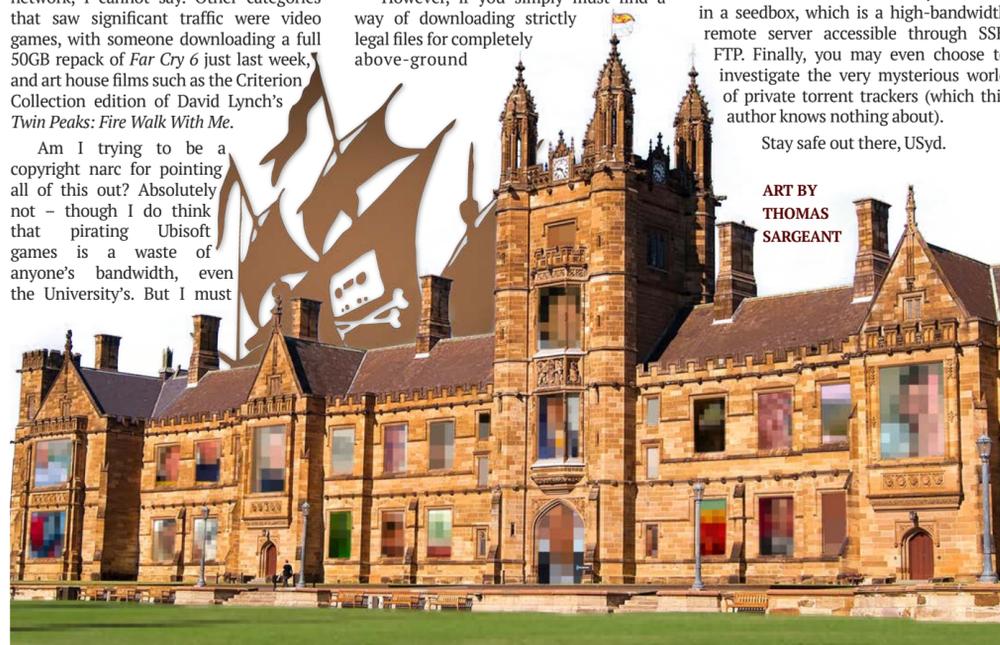
"Overwhelmingly, the activity demonstrated that the vast majority of torrent traffic through the USyd campus network was for large HD porn videos"

However, if you simply must find a way of downloading strictly legal files for completely above-ground

and (I stress again) strictly legal purposes, it's perhaps about time to learn some privacy practices to elude the prying eyes of network administrators. First, look for what you need on online archival sites or blogs, like archive.org. Despite being centralised, these websites are ironically much more difficult for admins to pinpoint specific downloaders under, unless they are compelled to release their records – if they keep them at all. For even more security, consider tunnelling through a VPN, or even using the Tor browser. Whilst admins will be able to see spikes in traffic or the fact you're using Tor, the encryption afforded by these avenues means it will be nigh-impossible to decipher the content of the data passed through. Further, you could redirect the actual downloading of the torrent off a network by investing in a seedbox, which is a high-bandwidth remote server accessible through SSH FTP. Finally, you may even choose to investigate the very mysterious world of private torrent trackers (which this author knows nothing about).

Stay safe out there, USyd.

ART BY
THOMAS
SARGEANT



FIELD NOTES: ASHFIELD KITCHEN WINDOW

Ava Broinowski ponders the banal.

The white wall behind the laundry line melts into a bright, blank space brewed in early hungover sun and laced with fragile shadows of a leafless tree smothered with ivy, through the kitchen window.

the lightness tingles in the unslept red fractures of the under eye veins that remind you of what you won't remember, the residual heat, slow and soft, in sticky circles left from glasses on tables.

the gentle discomfort melts away, though, in the blue stillness and thumbprint smudges of clouds, and the ivy-smothered tree, and the damp sweet smell of warm mounds of cut grass in Ashfield park.

the clouds are a little vague, like the cotton in our heads, wilting over the polychrome red brick, of inner-west blocks and their stubborn lawns (the modest old Sydney postcard) they fade at the edges into blue, blooming and sun drenched, in yellows and gold, like the linoleum floor.

And with the little clinking spoon stirring instant coffee granules into lukewarm milk for us, and then the hanging of laundry, and in the slowness of it all, the clouds sigh with us. The wonderfully banal.



ART BY ELLIE STEPHENSON

Connecting the dots: Abnormal protein may link together all forms of motor neurone disease, USyd study finds

Mikaela Chen reports.

University of Sydney researchers have found an abnormal protein that may be shared between all forms of motor neurone disease (MND), also known as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). Their findings on the protein, superoxide dismutase 1 (SOD1), were recently published in the scientific journal *Brain*. These findings open new pathways of treatment for a severe disease that weakens muscles in the hands, feet, or voice and frequently causes death within five years of diagnosis.

Incorrectly functioning SOD1 was one of the first-identified genetic risk factors for some types of MND. In an interview with *Honi*, Dr Benjamin Trist, one of the lead authors of the paper and a researcher at the University of Sydney's Brain and Mind Centre, explained the significance of identifying the prevalence of SOD1 in MND cases.

"These findings open new pathways of treatment for a severe disease that weakens muscles in the hands, feet, or voice and frequently causes death within five years of diagnosis."

"I think the most important discovery from this study is that this particular protein was previously only thought to impact about 10 per cent of MND patients. Our findings basically just say that the protein is actually abnormal in

all forms of the disorder," said Trist.

Being aware of this common protein link will allow scientists to investigate expanded treatment options for a greater number of patients with MND.

Trist explains that "there are treatments that have been designed to target this protein, and previously they've only been tested in that kind of 10 per cent of patients. What our findings mean is that you could apply this treatment to all motor neurone disease patients and it may be able to positively impact a broader spectrum of people."

Normally, SOD1 is an important protein for maintaining the health of all cells in the body, and protects cells from reactive oxygen chemical species. However, for people with MND, the functions of SOD1 are diminished, rendering it unable to provide adequate protection from these damaging chemical species. The protein has also been identified as toxic to motor neurons themselves in patients who suffer from the disease.

In the laboratory, a lead can announce itself in unexpected ways. Dr Trist and group leader Professor Kay Double were studying metal levels in brains affected by Parkinson's disease, a type of movement disorder different to MND, when the SOD1 protein captured their attention. Scientists have been aware of this abnormal protein in patients since 1993, but did not understand its ubiquity in MND cases until now.

"This meant that while we were just beginning investigations in Parkinson's

disease, we were able to actually use up this big big body of data in motor neurone disease research to help inform us what could be going on in the Parkinson's patients."

After tidying up their Parkinson's research, they turned their attention to SOD1 and MND, specifically.

"What our findings mean is that you could apply this treatment to all motor neurone disease patients and it may be able to positively impact a broader spectrum of people."

The MND study used post-mortem human tissue sourced entirely from donors. Frozen tissue was crushed up and proteins in the tissue cells were separated by size and other factors. SOD1 was identified using antibodies and examined using techniques such as mass spectrometry. Chemically treated sample tissue, which preserves the tissue structure, was able to show the researchers the location and presence of the SOD1 protein in their samples. The protein was found to accumulate in specific parts of spinal cord motor neurons, which is a reliable indicator for all forms of MND.

The paper was coordinated by Dr Benjamin Trist and Professor Kay Double at USyd across five years, and involves the efforts of over thirty people from the

UK, France, and the United States.

Dr Trist also highlighted that important scientific findings do not come by without challenges nor significant setbacks.

"When you're trying to convince people to fund your work you have to convince them that what you're doing is worthwhile and could be worthwhile; not just for knowledge, but for the patients you're working to advocate for," said Trist.

"I think a really important thing for people who are thinking about getting into research to remember is that it doesn't always work. I had three separate experiments that I spent a year or more working on, cumulatively, that didn't work. You get to a point where you say, 'I'm calling this now, cutting my losses, and I'm just going to try something else'. At the time you feel like you've wasted six months of your life doing something. It's a difficult pill to swallow, but it's all part of it."

The team is hoping to further investigate whether SOD1 could be a protein to target in treating other disorders, such as Parkinson's disease. They are also trying to improve on current therapies for SOD1-related cell death by developing better ways to stabilise the protein without removing it from the body altogether.

The paper is open access and can be read on Brain's website.

Honi Soit Writing Competition 2022: Award Winners

We received almost 100 entries across the fiction and nonfiction categories of the competition this year. Thank you to our judges, Eda Gunaydin and Madeleine Watts, and our donor of 12 years, Dr Thomas Wenkhart. We will be publishing the full shortlist on the Honi Soit website.

Other lovers with queer names

Abigail Ma

First place Fiction

“I’m thinking about trying the Div,” announces Lenora.

“Oh, really?” I offer, non-committedly. Lenora is prone to outbursts like these.

Her face has been cut in half by the cubicle between us and I can’t see her mouth. Like this, we’re meeting through a kink in the shutters.

“They’re offering a one-month subscription discount if you sign up between now and December,” her eyes continue. “Two lives for the price of half, hey?”

I nod and widen my eyes, trying to convey as much enthusiasm as possible within the limited real estate available.

Lenora turns away for a moment, then back to me.

“Emile is on it,” she says, in a lowered voice. “Does he seem...” she hesitates, searching. “Happier, to you?”

I glance over. Emile’s a big guy – sort of lumberjack build – hunched over his desk. A few years younger than me, though he already looks older. Ostensibly, he’s plugging numbers into a spreadsheet, but even from here, I notice a familiar kind of dreaminess spilling across his features, filling the indents between his brows like grot.

On the train home, I receive a message from

Jia.

Fuck. *Eyes forward. Steady breaths.*

I force myself to remain still, tensing every muscle, and try not to collapse in relief as a thin veil of glass descends, settling into the valleys of my cheekbones and onto the flat bridge of my nose, encasing me like ice.

The train resumes. My eyes are pressed to the window, roving back and forth in their socketed prison, watching a sea of black leather brogues step inside the carriage. Next stop.

Five silhouettes in an old apartment block, three television screens, two cats. Next stop.

A native tree – the name of which I still don’t know – flowering violet against a sky the colour of bruised peaches. Next stop.

A white-haired woman hovers beside me. I get up. She gives me a wide berth, then shuffles into the warm seat. Next stop.

A young man stumbles towards the opening doors. He frowns, fumbling for something. But they’re already closing, and he is already dissolving. Fat raindrops tear through his image, warping his features like stretch marks as the train plunges forward.

“You look different from your profile.” “I think it’s the cold.” I grinned. “It gives a sort of brightening effect.”

Jia giggled, a sound like running water. “I know! The aunties keep wanting to know which whitening cream I use.”

We spoke in Hokkien, some English, a little German (we were both still learning). Our voices increased in volume and pitch, drifting through the urban jungle of *der Tiergarten*, earning strange looks from passers-by who wondered whether they’d stumbled on these siblings/friends/cousins/couple in a moment of impassioned anger or excitement.

The sky went from grey to purplish-grey. “I’m having a gathering at mine.

I watch him carefully. He’s frowning.

“Good for her,” he says, finally. “She’s too young to be cooped up in that office all day.”

“But I’m *not*?”

“Of course not,” Sebastian laughs, shaking his head. “But we’ve already had our turn.” He looks up at me, deep sea eyes flecked with sunlight-filtered gold, and loops his fingers through mine. Inside, my own stare back – sharkish, narrow, black.

There had been others, sure, but no one to whom I could affix that elusive title, love. Perhaps it was because I wanted so badly to leave Penang, that I couldn’t conceive of loving someone within the wreckage of that beloved place. That my daylight and night-time selves; the irreconcilable binaries of woman and man; anyone who emerged through an auntie’s inviting smile, or from the dark recesses of some illicit club, could never be both.

But perhaps in Berlin. Though I hadn’t prepared for snow, nor the wind that numbed my ears and cheeks; a permanent condition of menthol-mint haze that felt as though I’d doused myself in the ice water fruit vendors stored in buckets to keep their offerings cool. I was used to the humidity – not exactly welcomed, but always expected – sewn into my skin like an invisible coat that, for the first time, melted and trickled down my cheek as I collected my bags from the carousel.

As I rode the train to *der Mitte*, an elegant dome of glass and steel rose from clean-cut sandstone – later described, by the tinny audio guide, as a *feat of engineering*. There was nothing back home that could be described as such, only the old colonial facades of George Town, or perhaps the precarious sculptural arrangement of four family members, balancing on a single motorbike.

I wandered beside the canal, marvelling at the puffy red and black coats that ambled along its frozen surface. Eventually, I checked into a hostel filled with English, American, Australian: a garbled pidgin song played too loud, and settled myself on the bottom bunk. I had a name; a woman that had moved a few months ago, the daughter of a friend of a friend.

Hi Jia, this is Jun. Siew gave me your WhatsApp 🙄

She’s online. Typing.

Hi Jun! Nice to meet you (sort of). How long have you been in Berlin? 🙄

Arrived this morning.

Wow, how was the flight?

Not terrible – though the plane food was 🙄

Hopefully it’s better in Berlin?

How do you feel about potatoes, pickles and cheese? 🙄

“You look different from your profile.” “I think it’s the cold.” I grinned. “It gives a sort of brightening effect.”

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The sky went from grey to purplish-grey. “I’m having a gathering at mine.

Tomorrow night.” said Jia as we parted. “You should come. It’s mostly Berliners, some English people. I haven’t met too many other Malaysians, and not a single Penangite.”

“So, I’m the diversity hire?”

She laughed, shaking her head in farewell. As I watched her retreating form against the falling snow, I didn’t even try to shake the slow, stupid smile plastered across my face.

That night, two things happened: Jia greeted me at the door, her arm around another man. I spent the first half of the evening sulking; the second speaking to a man with hair the colour of silk-spun wheat.

I’d never kissed someone like Sebastian before. He was so tall I had to stand on tip-toe just to reach him. I leaned into him and his arms were firm, like the mortar and pestle in my mother’s kitchen. I kissed him like I really meant it, because of the way he looked at me: like I might fall apart, like he knew that this was the first time I had ever kissed another man.

We pulled apart, and I couldn’t look at him because my ears were burning. I saw Jia, watching from the corner, and something inside me withered. Because the fear was still there. Because Jia knew from where I’d come, and who I was meant to be, and the lifeline she once was became a tendril wrapped around my throat, dragging me to the depths of the ocean.

“Is this your first Division?” asked the man at the front desk.

I nodded.

“I’ll get you to fill out our waiver over there,” he said, perfunctorily, passing me the clipboard and pointing to the waiting room. “I’ll call you when we’re ready.”

I sat down in one of the identical teal-green seats. The was only one other person here: a woman, elder. Silvery hair, brown skin. She was absorbed in the form before her, scribbling details in hurried strokes, a ring of burnished gold around her finger.

Rest assured that our medical practitioners maintain strict doctor-patient confidentiality. Your responses will never be shared with any third-parties, and are recorded only to ensure that our patients are sound of mind, and understand the outcomes and possible side-effects of the Division they plan to undertake.

They laid me on my back and told me it shouldn’t hurt too much, just breathe through the pain the needle pierced layers of skin something rippled, electric, chemical, shivering base so deep it seized my whole body. Everything was green and purple, a colour-shifting sliding hue, fast and slow, searing white strobe light and black darkness, movement bleeding into the next frame.

And then it stopped. And it was like being torn in two, but slowly, in a good way; a sort of lazy, euphoric feeling that pooled through my body like warm syrup. Like falling asleep on a plane but my neck wasn’t there to jolt me back and I kept falling, spiralling through revolving doors and shifting crystalline structures made of iridescent white light, building towards some higher destination devoid of colour, devoid of sound, devoid of feeling, of everything.

When I woke again, the nurse ushered me into a separate waiting room, exactly the same as before, except now the seats were fuchsia pink. I sat for twenty minutes under observation, then strode through the doorway of the building, walked a hundred metres, and stopped. There was something to the air...a feeling, a density different than before. I glanced around, but the rectangular white buildings, the spacious streets either side, appeared unchanged. Only my head felt heavy, my neck spindly

and weak, and my shadow seemed fainter, half of what it once was.

Given an infinite set of possibilities within a secondary world that shouldn’t exist but somehow does, I have all the choice I ever wanted. But I ran from Penang only to retreat back to her, plunging into the unknown just to reach again for familiar shapes.

The key slotted smoothly into the lock, rotating with a satisfying click.

“Are you coming?” she murmured, without turning back to look at me.

I could already see the shape of the question in the twilight, like pinpricks of light and possibility and destruction and decay: a swirling nebula a thousand years beyond the doorway. She wasn’t really asking, because she already knew, she knew it all, and still she knew that I would come.

I drifted past her and into the hallway. It didn’t hurt as much as I thought. Just a dull ache somewhere in the recesses of my brain.

She switched off the light. The blinds were open, but they wouldn’t see from up here. Her eyes were on me, her pupils soft and dark and velvet. I kissed her and something dislodged inside my chest, blood flowing freely from the wound like molten silver. I bit her lip to keep from crying out. She sighed deeply, and the space between our bodies dissolved.

The sheets were cool, our mouths agape in wordless chorus. For a moment his face his flaxen hair sharp eyes his shoulders god I love his shoulders o h and I remembered that he was home. The first time we met he choked on red wine spilled I reached out to wipe it with my thumb pushed her hard onto the mattress she unfolded onto her back like paper but we were late for our booking it’s a Wednesday Jun it’ll be empty he was right-

She looked up at me, and I at her. Our gazes collided, crashing like waves, as though her dusty shoebox apartment was the epicentre of it all.

My subscription ends on May fourteenth. After that, my shadow returns in full opacity, and the headcases stop, and so does my relationship with Jia.

Sebastian and I sit on the sofa. He puts his arm around me and I feel small, but safe, though the lump inside my chest compacts further, threatening to surrender to the night. I glance over at the chrysanthemums, their ghostly petals illuminated by moonlight.

Mourning flowers. But for what, exactly?

First Edition

Zoe Le Marinel

Second place Fiction

Part 1. Mullumbimby

“Nothing. Nothing is left.” Gordon surveyed the emptiness over my shoulder.

“Yeah, yeah, I can see that, Gordon.” The room was empty except for the two of us. My room. There were lines on the floor and walls where the other furniture had been. The mop water was still drying. The windows were opened. My school bag was by the door, bulged down the bottom with clothes, saggy up the top with cables. The fan went round and round on the lowest setting, tempting in the air and sending it out again, stealing the fresh morning out of the sky. We felt ourselves retreating away from the room. It felt less and less like mine every moment. It just felt like my dad’s house. My dad’s spare room.

Gordon spoke up when I couldn’t. His

voice was slow and measured, like golden syrup, which is so difficult to get off a spoon into a mixing bowl.

“Where did everything go? Why is there nothing?” He never usually asks questions.

“Well, we don’t live here anymore, Gordon. Mum and Dad have split. Us and mum, we’re moving out, closer to school and shops and the big libraries.” Gordon spoke again, his voice like deep, calming thunder.

“Libraries? Do they have my everything?”

“No, Gordon. I have all the books. We just can’t carry you with you holding all of them. You’re the heaviest as it is. The moving guys said they’d have to wait for the third guy to get here before moving you.”

“Move?” He’s upset. I can feel his sorrow. I look over at him. The shelves are empty, all packed away and halfway to the new place. I can never remember the street name. But I left the three drawers across the middle. Full of letters from old-ex-girlfriends, birthday cards, restaurant napkin poems. They won’t bother the removalists, but they mean as much to Gordon as they do to me.

Dad knocks. His pale eyes come in first, floating around the doorframe on spindly nerves, followed by the rest of his body, stretched out and full of wool like a Dali woman. His mouth comes last.

“How [are] we [going]?” He says, skipping every other word in the sentence.

“[Do] [you] want [any] help?” He’s saving all his words for the job interviews. I see them at the back of his throat when he speaks.

“No, thanks. I’m just waiting for the guys to take the bookcase.” Dad doesn’t know Gordon’s name, and I can’t bring myself to explain it. It makes me feel like I made it up.

He closes the door, the mouth retreating, then the womanly body, and the eyes, well...the eyes stay. They say all the words the mouth is taxing. They say too many. They’re exhausted.

Gordon sinks deeper into the floorboards, sighing.

“Where is the everything? Where is the library?” The rumbling voice. I sit down against the wall opposite him. It’s hot. The new house will have air conditioning. I try to tell him again.

“I told you Gordon, all the books...” But my words fail me as I watch him. Sleek, strong English oak. Grooves and corners carved into the sides, graceful, masculine. He doesn’t mean the books. He means me.

He doesn’t speak.

“Gordon...I...I don’t know.” He doesn’t say anything.

“I’m just...trying to figure it out, okay? It’ll fall back into place. I’m all still here, I’m in one piece, aren’t I?”

Gordon doesn’t say anything.

“Gordon. Don’t ignore me.”

Silent, and so proud. He wants the books back, but I don’t have them. Not yet.

“Just a little longer, Gordon. I promise.”

He doesn’t say anything. Just waits. I’ll take a leaf out of his book.

We wait. Birds outside the window. The wind blowing. The river, distant and wet.

Another knock. A man shambles in, kind faced. Miles away from our sorrow.

“Just this one here?” He gestures.

I look at Gordon. He’s still waiting.

“Yeah, just him.”

He sticks his head out my window.

“Paul! Uh-huh, bring Jake in here.”

They load Gordon into the truck. He’s still waiting.

Part 2. Lismore

I draw the curtains over the French doors, and the light from my study comes in like smoke. Mel got us a briefcase record player as a house-warming present, and it lies open on my cabinet, Billie Holiday

going round and round and round, her face frozen in a sad smile upside down, right side up. My bed is made, the covers pulled back for me to get in, but I have one thing left to do. I left this box for last, a sweet reward. Everything inside wrapped up like gifts, better because they already fit. How wonderful to unwrap gift after gift and feel that you are becoming whole again. I take the box cutter and make my first incision. Savouring every movement, I curl my fingers around the cardboard and fold back each side like I’m diffusing a bomb. I peel away a layer of butcher’s paper to reveal, ah!

Books. Not just any books. The others have been put away, no. These are *my* books. The ones that whisper to me, the ones that live half in this world and half in mine. They are wrapped up, swaddled like infants. I run my hands over the very top layer of them, and behind me I hear a voice, like a breaking wave, like applause from outside the theatre. My bookcase is weeping.

“Shh, Gordon.”

Last to leave, first to arrive. When we opened the back of the moving truck Gordon was there, waiting. He lives now in the northwest corner, beside the record player. He’s been waiting all day.

I slide the first book out from among the others, it’s packed tightly. I know this one. The spine is textured, hardcover and the corners are sharp. I tear open the paper. A man with a ruff looks up at me severely, and in gold lettering:

The Complete Works of Shakespeare
Only the middle shelf can fit it. Gordon whispers with joy:
‘These violent delights have violent ends, And in their triumph die, like fire and powder’

The next book. Another hard cover. It feels fragile, so I unwrap it carefully.
The Decameron. Giovanni Boccaccio. 1620, reprinted 1931.

I put it away, and Gordon tells me an old story, of two lovers in an orchard, and a sage bush, under which a great poisonous toad lurks and croaks.

The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde found crumpled in a second-hand shop. No publication date, but beautiful illustrations. Gordon recites to me.

‘Would have read the legend of my passion, Known the bitter secret of my heart, Kissed as we have kissed, But never parted, as we are fated now to part.’

The Wind in the Willows, Kenneth Grahame, 1908, reprinted 1966

Winnie the Pooh, A.A. Milne, publication scribbled over in crayon, by my mother.

A Series of Unfortunate Events, Lemony Snicket, First Editions. All 13, one after the other. Gordon hums with delight.

The Canterbury Tales, Chaucer. Middle English edition. My grandmother’s, cover taped on by me. Gordon’s voice trembles in a strange language.

‘When the Aprille with his shoures soote...’

The carpet becomes littered with butcher’s paper, some crumpled, some flat, some torn. The bookcase fills up. I unwrap the last book. A slim volume of Wordsworth.
‘No check, no stay, this streamlet fears, How merrily it goes!’

‘Twill murmur on a thousand years, And flow as it now flows.’
Billie Holiday stops. I flip the record.

Part 3. Flood

I fly up from Sydney as soon as the mid-term break starts, reading the alert text over and over. We drive through the ravaged streets of Lismore. Either side of the road, the trees are painted with grime 4 meters up, a strata line of brown across the land. The traffic lights at the intersection don’t work yet, we wait our turn. A house

faces backwards. Wire fences are black with waste. Mould climbs the car dealership. The cars convene, askew. A man hoses down the front of his bakery.

Outside the front of every house is a mountain. I have seen piles of rubbish before. I have seen tips and construction sites; these mountains are different. Because it is plain to see that these are precious things. Paintings, beautiful furniture, pianos, cushions not even begun to mould. The cruel thing about a flood is that even after the water drains away, the mould takes more.

At last, we arrive at our house. I can see the empty eyes of my study. I see the waterline above the windows. A shudder passes through me when I see our own pile. My mother ghosts into the house, floating right through the walls, and I walk slowly around the mountain. In it are more precious things than I can ever count. A globe belonging to my grandfather. The curtains for my French doors, pattered with ivy. Old trophies. And finally, facing west. I see him.

First to arrive, last to leave. He lies against the side of the mountain, exhausted, defeated. Shelves empty. The books were scooped away from him, so I’m told. Like handfuls of mud and rock. He swelled up with the water, like muscles expanding and tensing, the old guard putting up a final resistance. He swelled so much that the three doors across the front don’t open any more. I want to lift him up in my arms and comfort him. Any minute now, a truck will pull up and he’ll be lifted up and out of sight. It seems impossible that this old friend will leave me alone here, will disappear where I can’t follow him. With him goes the way it’s always been. The old ways of being happy. I hear his voice, broken like a crack of thunder.

“There you are.” “I’m sorry Gordon. I couldn’t save them. Nothing...nothing is left.” My eyes burn with tears. I reach out and touch him. I feel the grooves carved into the side of him, and I feel the brine just under the surface. He keels back a little further, weighed down with grief. I kneel beside him, and we fall back into our old sorrow. It comes again and again, passing over us and between us like the breaking of waves. How could water ever mean life again?

Gordon’s voice descends again, like an echo on the ceiling. Echoing me.

“It will fall...into place. You are...still here. You are in...one piece.”

Like an old man he says it over and over, the echo rippling back and forth. “It will fall...into place. You are...still here. You are in...one piece.” He falls silent. What a lonely place the world will seem without him. I wish I could curl up beside him and stiffen like a statue, a faceless object whose life ends here. But he’s right. He’s always right. And when they take him away all I can think of is how good it feels to be alive.

Epilogue- Sydney

“You don’t have to do that, really! I have a box set coming in the mail this week. You sure? Well...thank you. Really.”

He hands me the book with a silly grin on his face. On the walk home I give him a rundown of the plot. There’s a character in there just like him, and he makes me promise to lend it to him sometime.

Back in my little room, I look for a place to put away my new treasure. The corner of my shelf where I keep the books is slowly growing, some are replacements, some are new and unfamiliar. I run my hand down the cover of the new addition.

Nicholas Nickelby. Charles Dickens. Published 1839, Reprinted 1930. My favourite.

I slide it in between two older volumes, and like a whorl of dust stealing through a sunbeam, I hear a voice whisper.

“The pain of parting is nothing to the joy of meeting again.”

Bildungsroman Interrupted

Elizabeth Bourke

Third place Fiction

Cassie and I always walked together. Saph and Cass. Wine and cheese. Rum and coke. Gin and tonic. If you asked her, Cassie was the gin. And the wine, and the rum. She used their bottles as paperweights for the textbooks in her dorm.

Sometimes we walked together to Westfield, where we dodged a kaleidoscope of plastic fiddle-leaf figs and ladies sipping lattes and squalling toddlers in the shopping centre cafés. We always checked the sushi place for specials, and prayed the two-for-five maki rolls wouldn’t make us sick.

But we savoured our last walk through uni. Future walks would be snapped off like white bone by lockdown and stopwatches (set to one hour). So we let the path of our last walk dribble long and looping and meandering and past the footy fields engorged with dew and past the law library squatted like a toaster and round the sulphurous chemistry labs that made my nose sting. Our last walk was a ripened fruit, dangling over our heads, plucked and clenched between teeth, so its sweet juice burst over our tongues and made chapped lips sting above our linked hands.

I now hover in the corridor outside Cassie’s dorm. I look both ways, preparing to cross this road between us and broken rules. We’re not allowed visitors during lockdown. The conspiracy of it all snaps the beige hallways into vivid, high-def, 1080p clarity.

Only the stock photo students on gym flyers pinned to the noticeboard watch me linger. But just in case, I plunge thumb-tacks through their lips to stop them snitching. I knock on Cassie’s door. It opens immediately.

The haze from two-dollar scented candles is lowered like a wet mouth over her dorm. My gaze snaps to her desk. There are bottles stacked on top of her piled textbooks. The menisci of the liquids inside sag low, lower than the last time I visited her dorm. That morning’s breakfast was toast with an anaemic scraping of peanut butter on top. The meal is still sitting on Cassie’s desk, glossed over with cling film. Beside it, there’s a crime scene of splashed broth ringed around a Styrofoam instant noodle cup. I smell it on Cassie’s breath when she hugs me.

I inject sunshine into my tone. ‘You should go outside, Cass. We’re allowed an hour of exercise a day. A walk would be good for you.’

Cass shakes her head at me and grins. The ice-cream cone charms on her earrings jangle by her neck. The skin over her throat is taut and trembling. She’s so close to me that I can see the festering inflammation around her congealed ear piercings. If she moves too quickly, would pus ooze out of them?

‘I’m not going outside today.’ Cassie twirls to face me, but her smile is twilight. ‘Let’s talk instead. I need to talk.’ She scoots aside a millennial-pink cushion on her bed, peels back a weighted blanket, slides under its suffocating mass, pats the mattress next to her. Come lie down.

A feeling broils in the back of my throat. But I swallow the feeling and I shove it down my oesophagus where Cassie can’t see and its acid necrotises the muscular folds of my stomach.

I lower myself onto her bed.

The sheets are stiff with stale sweat. The weighted blanket snares my legs. I remember that I have a strip of bubble gum in my pocket, which I unwrap and drop into the moist trough under my tongue. The space is wet and soft as a shucked oyster. I chew so hard that my teeth rattle in my jaw and my face muscles ache but it drowns out a little of what Cassie says. She talks with her breath fouling on the pillow.

I chew. Cassie tells me how the bottles of spirits got so low.

Honi Soit Writing Competition 2022: Award Winners

Bildungsroman Interrupted continued.

I chew.

Cassie tells me how she’s decaying inside, rotting like her pink earlobes. I chew.

The clouds outside grow red then dark and then they’re gone, dissolved into inky night. And Cassie still talks.

I chew.

When she’s finished, her honeypot eyes are molten with gratitude. There’s a candle by her nose. When she smiles at me I smell burning hair, but I can’t be sure whose scalp it’s from.

*

Last week, huddles of girls hunched over the bathroom sinks. We scrubbed soap into the backs of our hands, our palms, under our nails, then the backs again. We ignored posters blu-tacked to mirrors that told us how we were washing them wrong. We scrubbed them for as long as it took to talk, about cling-filmed meals and the student who forgot to mute themselves during our online lecture.

But now it’s the second week of lockdown. Those gathered girls were transitory species, gone now. I’m alone in the bathrooms as I shove my hands under the tap’s lukewarm spray and read the how-to-wash-your-hands posters. I drift down the corridors on socked feet. Lofi hip hop squeezes through the papery walls. Clinking cutlery is a foreign birdsong behind doors. Perhaps I’ve become one of those people in nature documentaries, circling a colony of students without ever really encountering one. When I hear them, I pause mid-step with my nose upturned and lip quivering. If my ears were as long as a rabbit’s they’d twitch and flicker and capture the sounds like butterflies in a net. No one ever hears me.

I go for walks, past the empty university and dusty shopfronts. The marigolds in Victoria Park have gone to seed without anyone to deadhead their flowers. I walk beside a highway. There are no cars. The throbbing silence wedges like a chicken bone in my throat.

My phone’s vibrations in my pocket are the squallings of a dying animal. 81 missed messages from Cassie on Monday.

94 on Tuesday.

108 on Wednesday.

Cassie’s messages are umbilical. They reach through my phone and feel around blindly for me. They try to peel back my scalp and stamp their contents on my brain. But I leave them unopened because I know what kind of messages she’d be sending whilst fifteen standards deep. I saw her in the bathrooms yesterday. I mumbled that I’d been busy with assignments and left without washing my hands.

They say that birds sing in the morning to let each other know they made it through the night. Birds sing, Cassie sends messages, and I tread detours on my silent walks to stand outside her dorm.

I now rest my forehead against her door and mash my pink toes together. I’ll wait here until I hear the rustle of McDonald’s takeaway bags, the scratch of a lighter or the smell of those two-dollar candles. I’ll wait for a bird to sing on the other side of that door, to tell me she’s made it through the night.

*

My phone’s alarm pings, but I’m already awake. I roll socks onto my feet. Tug my phone from the charger with clean, red hands. My brain rattles between the four white walls of my dorm, it rattles between the piles of underwear on my desk and my plate crumbed with yesterday’s lasagne.

I stare at the ceiling. There’s a crack in it. I’m sure it wasn’t there before, appearing overnight like a spiderweb scrawled across plaster. But maybe it’s always been there, just unnoticed because I’ve never stared at the ceiling for so long. I half close my eyes and drift through that crack in the ceiling and then I’m standing in front of the washbasin in the bathrooms.

The midday light through frosted glass is like too-milky tea. There’s a pimple on my chin and I pop it with nails bitten to the quick. I wipe my fingers on pyjama pants. I need to pee but the bathroom’s beige tiles are tessellated with puddles of water. I tiptoe between them to keep my socks dry and the pads of my feet go grey with dust. I stretch my arms out for balance. Step here, not there, is there a mosquito in that puddle? ‘Saph.’

It’s Cassie. She’s sitting on the floor of one of the communal shower stalls. But everyone knows that you can’t touch the tiles in there, it’s a petri dish for Sarah’s tinea. I stagger backwards and mosquito-y water soaks the heel of my right sock.

But something’s wrong. Cassie sits with her back against the wall and knees pulled to her chest. Water drips from the showerhead and slides down matted clumps of hair. Her pyjamas are drenched and they pucker at the armpits. She pushes bare toes into the drain and they look like red jelly beans.

‘What on *Earth* are you doing, Cass?’

‘I decided that I’d wait for you, since you aren’t answering my messages.’ I tread across the damp tiles. When I sit beside Cassie on the shower floor, water soaks the seat of my pyjamas. The reek of old bleach on tiles mingles with the alcohol dribbled down Cassie’s front. It makes the buttons on her flannelette shirt sticky. My face goes hot like it does just before I puke, so I upturn my palm into the stream of icy water dripping from the shower head and splash it onto my cheeks.

‘Why won’t you open my messages? What have I done to piss you off so much?’ ‘Nothing.’

‘Then why are you ignoring me? I need to talk, Saph.’

There’s that feeling again, bubbling in the back of my throat like it did on her bed. But I recognise it now. It’s a stream of words. It’s been spooling inside me for weeks, growing longer and tangling and turning rancid in that soft squishy part of my belly. But if I tug it out now, I’m sure I’ll choke on the words as they unravel. So instead, I stare at my hands as I scratch moulty grout from around tiles and roll the grains between my fingers.

‘Saph? Are you listening to me?’

Ah. That’s it, that’s the thing. I don’t want to listen. I don’t want to let those messages sit on my chest like a disease that’s scarred her lungs, so now they’ll scar mine. But then Cassie kneels over me. Her bruised knees brace on the wet floor and she pushes back my head and opens my mouth and hooks the words on my tongue with her pinkie and *pulls*.

The words spew out of me, like a never-ending ribbon yanked from a magician’s sleeve at a kid’s birthday party. I double up and cry over my stomach because I’m sick from the pressure of the kinds of messages she sends while fifteen standards deep and I’m sick from the pressure of my words being tugged out of that pit where I’ve hidden them. And then Cassie’s arguing, yelling, balling my words in her fists and hurling them back at me and against the tiles and shoving them down the drain like wads of hair from my scalp. And then she’s gone. The door to the Level 2 girls’ bathroom slams after her. I’m left cupping the words in my lap.

I tug the shower tap on. Warm water drums on the back of my neck and douses my pyjamas and makes my socks translucent-white as squid skins. It’s my first shower in a week. My head lolls to my chest as I watch those festering words twirl down the drain.

I make as much noise as I can when I return to my dorm. I slap wet feet on the carpet and jangle the door’s latch as I open it. I clatter dirty plates together when I wash them in the empty communal kitchens. I crank the volume of my speakers so high that even the crack in my ceiling seems to shudder.

Let someone else be the one to listen for Cassie, to mark her signs of survival. It won’t be me.

Bad Arguments

Sophie Shead

First place Nonfiction

People make bad arguments for good things all the time. True conclusions find themselves, through ignorance or inattention, allied with false premises. Reasonable assessments of particulars are generalised into absurdity.

Abortion is, I believe, a good thing. Unfortunately, many popular arguments in its favour are bad. Let’s consider a few.

1. *“Abortion is not an expression of sincere concern for the unborn, but a misogynistic attempt to control women”.* This argument, regarding the motivation of anti-choicers, is often but not always true. Some anti-choicers genuinely do lament the suffering caused by forced pregnancy; they just lament it less than (what they consider to be) murder. Others may be motivated by concern for the unborn at the same time as misogyny.

2. *“Cis men should not make laws about women’s bodies”.* (Alternative formulation: “No uterus, no opinion”). This suffers from the same problems as the former argument, as well as an additional one: Politics do not neatly track identity. Consider the many people with uteruses who are nonetheless anti-choice. One sits on the US Supreme Court.

3. *“Anti-choicers are characteristically conservative, and conservative policy neglects many people’s lives and welfare once they’re born”.* Even where this generalisation holds (it doesn’t always: See otherwise leftist opponents of abortion), it is, at best, an accusation of hypocrisy. People can hold good and bad views at the same time.

These attacks are all vulnerable to the uterus-possessing, economically progressive, adoption-and-parental-leave-obsessed, anti-choice interlocutor. This is because the correlations which these arguments identify – the sort of person who tends to be anti-choice; their standard motivations and political beliefs – are just that: correlations. While economic conservatism may strongly track anti-choice ideology, it is not essential to it. Certainly, these correlations reveal important insights about the anti-choice position – for instance, they might explain anti-choicers’ limited interest in preserving access to life-saving abortion – but they fail to discount it wholesale. One can take a circuitous journey to the truth.

The problem which plagues each of these arguments (and even the much stronger claim: *“My body my choice”* – if invoked without further defence or qualification) is a failure to contend directly with the essential conservative challenge. Namely, that the foetus is a person, and thus should not be killed. If this argument stands, charges of hypocrisy, misogyny, or insincerity – illuminating and significant though they may be – cannot surmount it.

Fortunately, it doesn’t stand. There are many good arguments for the permissibility of abortion. These explain, compellingly, that foetuses are not moral persons; thus, killing them is not murder. And that even if they were, we still wouldn’t have an obligation to keep them alive. Abortion is self-defence; no parasite is entitled to make a home of your body, even if removing it would cause it to die.

But anti-choice arguments make another, less obvious and more interesting mistake. They assume that under conditions of factual uncertainty we ought to always defer to the protection of the unborn. Journalist and self-described “pro-life liberal” Elizabeth Bruenig writes:

“The significant possibility that the fetus is alive is enough under most Christian ethical formulations to favor avoiding any action that might end such a life, much in the way that a Christian would be warned against firing a gun into a box if it was possible that someone *might* be inside it. Human life

is significant enough, in other words, to allow wide latitude for.”

In short, any existent possibility of foetal personhood demands our submission, because murder is so gravely wrong. Certainly, a low but real probability of something very morally bad is worthy of our attention. Counterevidence of foetal non-personhood is indispensable for exactly this reason. But the argument that we must avoid any risk of murder at all costs, deployed against abortion, fails to fairly consider *how steep those costs might be*, and what, exactly, they might look like. In other words, such arguments do not engage with a sufficiently detailed and precise account of the harm of forced pregnancy.

The Turnaway Study is the largest ever long-term study of people denied and granted abortions in the United States. It found, controlling for pre-existing circumstances, that people denied abortions were at significantly greater risk of poverty, domestic violence, and serious ill health. To a liberal this may be unsurprising. But studies like these counter common and false views about abortion’s negative impacts.

Writer Sophie Lewis contends that it is unwise to deny that abortion results in the loss of life. “When “pro-life” forces agitate against feticide on the basis that it is killing” Lewis argues, “pro-abortion feminists should be able to acknowledge, without shame, that yes, of course it is... And it’s a good thing... for otherwise the world would sag under the weight of forced life”. The central, imaginative oversight of abortion’s opponents is their failure to take the weight of forced life seriously.

When we were both eighteen, my friend had an abortion; hers was the first unwanted pregnancy I had ever witnessed. Though she booked her abortion immediately, it was delayed by eight weeks. During this time, I watched my friend deform. Her body wasn’t visibly different, but she was. She cried and threw up. She was so tired that she could barely work or study. She appeared extinguished. I had never seen the spectre of motherhood look so deathly; I had never really seen it at all.

I soon started believing that abortion was not merely morally permissible but, in fact, morally good. No formal argument had convinced me.

Anti-choicers might add another argument to my list:

4. *“Forced pregnancy harms the pregnant person”.* This is almost always true in one way or another. But, to anti-choicers, this assessment neglects an essential comparison: abortion harms the foetus, whose suffering we, the self-appointed suffering assessors, cannot see or hear. I witnessed what a taste of unwanted pregnancy did to my friend; her foetus had no right of reply.

Anti-choicers opine at length about these unequally distributed powers of advocacy. But their worry gets things the wrong way around. Our cultural account of forced pregnancy is hazy, sanitised, and incomplete. It ignores a set of important facts. First, that a person whose body is conscripted in service of another relinquishes more than just their physical freedom. And second, that physical freedom is *freedom-generative* like very little else.

Anti-choice arguments make more than one mistake. They misunderstand the moral status of the foetus. But they also misunderstand the harm of denied abortion, which – given the necessity of moral triage in a context of competing interests and factual uncertainty – is the foetus’s rival. The reasonable anti-chooser might concede that *Yes, the pregnant person suffers; but her suffering is a necessary sacrifice.* He doesn’t dare wonder: *How much does she suffer, and in what way?*

Against this certain human pain, opponents of abortion weigh a speculative risk to life. But here is another bad argument. For there is very little value in life as anti-choicers construe it – austere, formless, and unchosen – and a great deal in life as we know and live it now.

Mother Tongue

Nicola Brayan

Second place Nonfiction

There is a type of grasshopper in Northern Australia with a bright orange body patterned with cobalt blue splotches. In layman’s English, it’s called Leichhardt’s grasshopper, named after the German explorer who documented them. Its scientific name is *petasida ephippigera*, denoting the genus it is taxonomised under. In Kundjeyhmi, a dialect spoken in the land it lives on, it is called *alyurr*. This name also describes species of herbs; specifically, the herbs that the grasshopper eats. It also refers to the lightning spirit who the Binjji people believe brings the rains - rains heralded by the grasshoppers’ presence. Each name this grasshopper has carries a distinct set of meanings, each holding significance for different people. To an English speaker, the name is a reminder of Australia’s colonial past. To a biologist, the name slots the grasshopper into a familiar taxonomy. And to a Kundjeyhmi speaker, the name is imbued with ecological knowledge about where and when to find the grasshopper.

We live in symbiosis with our languages, learning from them and shaping them with our choices. Language is not an arbitrary assemblage of sounds, but the beating heart of culture, without which it cannot survive. The suppression of language is a tool for cultural genocide. This concept can be explored through Australia’s history of oppressing through language control, the ramifications of which are ongoing, and can only come close to being remedied by fighting back at linguistic oppression.

Before colonisation, over 250 languages were spoken in Australia, comprising over 800 dialects. These languages are unlike any others in the world. The largest Australian language family is the Pama-Nyungan group, which captures languages spoken across 90% of Australia. The name itself illustrates the breadth of its scope: just as the family stretches from the northeast to southwest of Australia, “pama” and “nyunga” are the words for “man” in the languages of those respective areas. Linguists have pinpointed Queensland as the origin of the Pama-Nyungan language 6000 years ago and traced its spread across Australia as a way of understanding how people migrated. The stories of these people are found in language.

There are no words in any language that can describe the devastation and shame of Australia’s Assimilation period. The trauma it caused can never be recovered from. Among the countless cultural casualties of this period were the languages it strangled. Many Indigenous people today do not speak the languages of their ancestors. They are forced to slot the Dreaming into the rigid tense system of English. They have had skin names stolen from them. They know *alyurr*, the blue spotted harbinger of rain, not by the lightning it portends but by the European man who claims to have discovered it. Oppressing language is violence. It is cultural murder.

In a way, I guess I felt complacent by my very nature.

Indigenous languages also have a wealth of ecological and cultural knowledge woven into them. Phenomena like *alyurr*, which are common in many Indigenous languages, are called sign metonymies: instances where a single term denotes both an animal and a part of the environment it depends on. Unlike languages like English, which distinguish between past, present, and future in their tense systems, many Indigenous languages only distinguish between past and non-past. This grammatical construction of time is bound to the Dreaming, the Indigenous system of spirituality: the past and ongoing interconnectedness of land, people, and culture. If the Dreaming has always been and will always be, rigid distinctions between present and future aren’t necessary. In Central Australia, systems of kinship are expressed through skin names, deriving from a complex system of connections between generations and families. One’s skin name situates them in their relationships, including who they can and cannot marry. These uses of language are integral to the speakers’ experiences of culture. They teach speakers about the world, the plants and the animals that they hunt and live alongside. They shape speakers’ understanding of time and spirituality. They construct relationships. Culture survives through language.

Only 40 of those 250 Indigenous languages are still spoken today. This is not to mention the hundreds of dialects, each with their own rich stories of connection between speaker and the land they live in, that have also perished. This devastation of Australia’s languages occurred through two prongs of colonial violence.

The first is the decline of the population that spoke them. Between 1788 and 1900, Australia’s Indigenous population was reduced by 90% as the direct consequence of colonisation. Colonisers introduced foreign diseases to Indigenous communities, including venereal diseases introduced through sexual violence, which decimated the population. They committed genocidal massacres to lessen the threat that Indigenous people posed to their acquisition of land and establishment of a European colony. The displacement of Indigenous people from their land and the plants and animals they relied on to survive only further compounded their suffering. A language cannot survive without speakers. Even in cases where the speech community was not totally annihilated, the utility of a language lessens when there are fewer people you can speak it with. If no one outside your small community speaks the same dialect as you, learning another dialect, and even raising children speaking that dialect, is a necessary step to survive.

The second, more targeted way that Indigenous languages were devastated by colonisation was through policy. In 1937, the Assimilation Policy was put into effect. This policy formalised the Stolen Generations, within which Indigenous children with a non-Indigenous parent and fair enough skin to pass as white were snatched from their families and rehomed in white society. They were completely separated from the culture that constituted everything they knew, forbidden from speaking their own languages. Their names were changed. Indigenous people whose skin was too dark to pass as white were forced onto missions and reservations, where they were heavily restricted and forced to speak English. They lost access to their ancestral land, often lumped in with people from entirely different nations.

There are no words in any language that can describe the devastation and shame of Australia’s Assimilation period. The trauma it caused can never be recovered from. Among the countless cultural casualties of this period were the languages it strangled. Many Indigenous people today do not speak the languages of their ancestors. They are forced to slot the Dreaming into the rigid tense system of English. They have had skin names stolen from them. They know *alyurr*, the blue spotted harbinger of rain, not by the lightning it portends but by the European man who claims to have discovered it. Oppressing language is violence. It is cultural murder.

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In a way, I guess I felt complacent by my very nature.

White people would tell me that I did not act Aboriginal, that I was different. Eloquent. I was supposed to laugh at jokes made at my people’s expense just by the basis of my skin pigmentation. But this was nothing like assault, I would repeat to myself. I was a product of assimilation. My blue eyes watered down my history. I never lived on dry country, accepted insults or enforced liquor laws. A genetic malaise that I just can’t seem to shake.

Some malaises, however, are conspicuous, coupled with an inability to cover up or obfuscate. For my Auntie, however, this malaise was to others a skin condition. One that needed to be treated by brute force. Australia: not unlike many of its other colonised, sovereign-based countries, continues to hold imperialistic ideals that make up many of the systemic issues that remain untreated today.

The second measure, while less direct, can be taken by all Australians. Embrace the languages that have been uttered here, as the pulse of our land, for thousands of years. Replace coloniser names like ‘Ayer’s Rock’ with local names like Uluru. Learn how to pronounce the names of Indigenous people, even if they’re names you’re unfamiliar with. Respect that not everyone understands time and tense the way you do. Listen when people explain why grasshoppers are named for lightning.

We cannot right the wrongs of our past. We can only apologise for them and promise to do better. Language, and words, are our lifeblood. Use them wisely.

Terra Nulled: The Ballad of Two Tiddas and the Reconciliation of Our Identity

Taylah Cooper

Third place Nonfiction

“Pain has an element of blank; It cannot recollect When it began, or if there were A day when it was not.

It has no future but itself, Its infinite realms contain Its past, enlightened to perceive New periods of pain.”
— Emily Dickinson

“When I was five years old, I used to get *bashed up a lot because I was darker than anybody else, yeah, I used to come home with blood all over me.*”

Aunty Carol Cooper responds to my opening question with a sense of resignation and hesitancy. “When did you realise society was not accepting of Aboriginality?” I had asked. It’s one every Australian has an answer to- regardless of heritage, one that will never be left unanswered. Anti-Aboriginal action and rhetoric is as universal an experience to an Australian as a sausage snag or burnt feet on a tar road. It’s ingrained into our souls, stories and well beings; such memories are passed down not only through aural means but through blood. This irreversible, hereditary cutusion is one Australia must not only answer to but resolve. Trauma, like a malady, embeds itself into mob and overstays its welcome.

I grew up in a town akin to Aunty Carol’s native Katoomba. One that habitually sustained small town simplicities, white faces waltz around and the elderly congregate to farmhouse-chic cafes whilst teenagers whirl through consumerist havens as if they are bordellos. I was ordered to keep inside the house when I lived in the Rough Parts. Belligerent, skeletal suburbia that simply meant a high Indigenous population and over-policing. I remember the screams that ten year old me had been trained to block out and walking around the neighbourhood, seeing those of my colour sneering at Indigenous kids walking past.

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Some malaises, however, are conspicuous, coupled with an inability to cover up or obfuscate. For my Auntie, however, this malaise was to others a skin condition. One that needed to be treated by brute force. Australia: not unlike many of its other colonised, sovereign-based countries, continues to hold imperialistic ideals that make up many of the systemic issues that remain untreated today.

Those not of colour- specifically White Australians, have historically held an indignant attitude to not solely the identification of these issues- but the specifying of how these issues have been normalised and cultivated in our past and present. The sanctioned and rose-tinted bokeh effect that has been substantiated in our national narrative of history, up until as little as ten years ago. Warrigal Creek, Appin, Waterloo Creek, Pinjarra and Myall Creek. Massacres that the majority of the Australian population consider with almost no regard. A national “cult of forgetfulness”,

as described by anthropologist William Stanner. A cult that has attempted to obscure the brutish, ethnic cleansing of a group that has existed on the continent of Australia for over 60000 years. One that is not just an insignificant birthmark on Sovereign Australia’s initial days, but the continued practice of modern-day eugenics that is still facing traumatic repercussions fifty years after its official ending. Prejudice and discrimination are complex and tightly interwoven between other minority groups and the discussion of such will be paradoxically contradictory and conflicting but also coalesce and unite those alike through our individual lived experiences.

Reconciliation is a beautiful thing, not only for the Indigenous population of Australia, but for its other inhabitants. To ignore or try to reverse the traumatic malignancy of racism that is not solely an Australian issue, as I’m sure you’ve noticed. The past two years have been an extraordinarily significant time for public awareness of societal injustice. No longer are we living in a world where acts of violence and prejudice are concentrated in a small bubble, no longer do we have to accept one’s fate of being silenced when the only people to hold its assailants accountable are the assailants themselves, but a hyper-awareness that came with self-isolation and aloneness, sitting with one’s ideals, morals and virtues alongside the ever-growing and almost prodigious level of visibility of the 21st century. To be apolitical in a world where politics grasps the very nature of a person’s being, from the moment they are born to the moment they die, is to be complacent with your own privilege.

To survive as a marginalised member of society, one needs to learn a balancing act of constant vigilance, to hold an awareness of those around you and their intentions. Balancing the pain and sorrow is cardinal. For in the good always exists a silver lining or an end, and in the silver lining always exists a forthcoming good. That is a pure reflection of life, universal to all. The traumatic past is the truth, but our survival is also the truth. Truth-telling is key to unity, to treaty, to sovereignty.

For reconciliation is much more than an apology, it’s the rekindling of land ownership, environmental sustainability and climate awareness of Australia’s beautiful and diverse landscape, its creatures that inhabit it and Australia’s multi-culturalistic image that has been founded upon in more recent years. Somehow, we are still hosts to indignance with its own singular native population.

Malpractice, negligence runs pervasive.

To progress it is vital to understand that we are not numbers, anecdotes and news stories to scroll past your social media feed, we are not brownie points, or sympathy takers. Some of us are broken, are in the process of being broken, or are attempting to salvage what has been destroyed. We have been both metaphorically and physically hauled away from our organic and nurtured environment, our practices and customs. Our landscape demolished and our significance nulled for the enjoyment and occupation of another. We, alike the traditionalist greats, have magnificent land, culture, arts and wonders of our own world. Not only are we fighting a battle with those who had attempted to terrorise us and nullify it, starting as early as a label of “nobody’s land”, we are grappling with the terrors of identity, unlearning toxic standards, behaviours and practices installed into ourselves before conception and beyond. To dust off the powdery, colonial mildew and to not only cure and rehabilitate Australia to its rightful owners but to coalesce its inhabitants, both native and settler, to a recognition of societal injustice and the systemic change that is to come with such. New laws, regulations, social attitudes and harmonies that will come to define Australia. Australia is healing, and its native population is the pioneers to such recovery. One can choose to join or choose not to.

The world will catch up. For what you reap is what you sow.

President

Lauren Lancaster.

This week Lia Perkins and I shared the Presidency because it was Show Week for Law Revue (which went smashing!). Thank you to Lia for her willingness to take up some of the responsibilities of the office. You can read about what she got up to below as well.

When we were not dancing under the theatre lights of the Seymour Centre, I managed to get a fair bit done.

First, Lia and I met with Campus Infrastructure to canvas the requirements of a new SRC Office. While I am doubtful that this will happen in my term despite us requesting funding months ago, and consistently making complaints about recurring mould and infrastructure issues, I am glad to see some movement

on this front.

I also checked in with the web developers of our new site, UKMSL, and will be interviewed by them next week about the development experience and the way student unions use social media and digital platforms. We should have the new site up and running by the end of the year.

On Saturday, the University Open Day provided an excellent opportunity for staff solidarity. I along with Lia, and a number of officebearers (as well as Luc Velez the NUS Education Officer) helped out with the NTEU's stall, distributing balloons and telling potential incoming students about the staff and student fight for a better workplace on campus. There

were also a number of opportunities for lecture announcements and disruptions to the university schedule for the day, which were helpful to make the public aware of what the union is organising for (and against!).

I also did some internal admin and met with Jahan our Principal Solicitor to discuss the domestic violence and coercive control resources the Legal Service are developing. This coming week I will be meeting with Casework to organise ourselves for the remainder of my term.

We also received notice that our treasured Caseworker Lorna Pringle will sadly be leaving us at the end of the year to move to the Northern Territory

and pursue social work in Indigenous communities. Lorna has worked for the SRC for years, and has helped so many students. I'd like to thank her very much for her work with us and express gratitude for all that she and the other Caseworkers do each and every day.

Finally, the ballots of the SRC Election were released earlier this week. We have uncontested Presidential and Honi Soit ballots, there are 8 NUS tickets and 53 council tickets. Campaigning begins September 7.

For those with upcoming mid-sems, best of luck, hope the 5 day simple extensions perhaps take some stress off and see you around campus.

Education

Lia Perkins and Deaglan Godwin.

Hi! Here's what we've been up to and how you can get involved :))

Staff went on strike on August 17th and students participated in lively picket lines across campus. We spent the week prior building up student support for the strike - posting, flyer and writing an op-ed in Honi to counter the anti-strike sentiment coming from a small portion of the student population. It was a fantastic day and staff are very determined not to let management use their power to deteriorate the University.

Since management are taking a very hard line at bargaining, staff also took industrial action on August 27th, with many staff boycotting official university open day events, and instead getting the word out about the corporatisation and

over-managerialism of higher education. We set up an EAG stall at Open Day and were even joined for a bit by a special guest (maybe even Mark Scott himself).

A group of education activists attended a railway workers rally and march to a stop work meeting on Thursday. As many people will know, railway workers have been taking strike action over the past couple of weeks and months, shutting down parts of the trains network. They are demanding changes to a new fleet of trains to make them safer, as well as a pay rise. The Perrotet government's attacks against the union mean it's important that students show their support against a viciously anti-worker state government. We have a contingent planned to the nurses strike

next week as well- we'll be marching from the Charles Perkins Centre to a union rally at RPA.

The biggest event for the EAG this week will be the counter-protest to the Australian Financial Review's Higher Education Summit. The summit is a chance for Vice-Chancellors, industry bosses and government ministers to plan how to further corporatise our education, and to align it with the needs, not of students and staff, but of the Australian economy. We're going to disrupt this meeting of theirs to show them that students won't stand by while this happens. You should join us to fight for your education.

Radical Education, the series has been continuing throughout this

semester and I recommend you get along to these interesting events on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The SRC's head of legal service presented a fantastic talk to students last week, there's many more talks to come!

Upcoming events:

No Cuts! No Fees! Protest AFR Higher Education Summit 12pm Tues 30th @ The Star

Student Contingent to the Nurses Strike 12:30pm Thurs 1st @ Charles Perkins Centre

Pre-K to Post-Grad: Why are Educators Striking 5pm Tues 13th Sept @ Quad Refectory

Women's

Dashie Prasad and Monica McNaught-Lee did not submit a report.

Refugee Rights

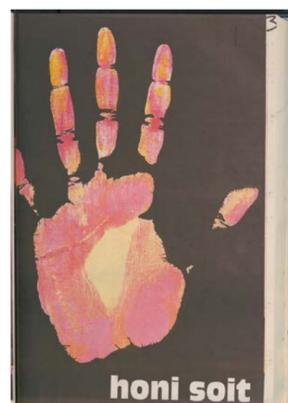
Danielle Tweedale, Ki Joo (Andy) Park, Lydia Elias and Annabel Pettit did not submit a report.

Global Solidarity

Yang Tu, Tengfei Pan and Jasmine Al-Rawi did not submit a report.

Sexual Harassment

Rose Donnelly, Jayfel Tulabing Lee, Xiaojie (Janice) Zhao and Yuan (Esther) Ren did not submit a report.



Sydney Uni Learning Hub

Resources Make Your Study Easier



Make Your Study Easier

Studying at University can be very different from high school, and you should improve your academic skills and learn where to go for information and support. The following services are available to you for free.

The Learning Hub (Academic Language and Learning)

To develop skills in writing, research, time management, exam preparation, group work, presentations, or critical thinking, check the resources from the Learning Hub. There are online modules, as well as workshops in person and online. You can also book an individual consultation with one of their teachers.

There are also peer-facilitated programs, including workshops for international students from non-English speaking backgrounds to improve their English skills and make connections, and workshops to help all students break assignments into achievable chunks.

The Learning Hub (Mathematics)

To improve your ability to understand or use mathematics in your first year maths subjects, the Mathematics Learning Hub offers:

- Self-access resources and modules
- Bridging courses in mathematics and statistics
- Workshops and supplementary tutorials
- One-to-one individual assistance by drop-in or by appointment

This is not just for Math majors or minors, it's for anyone who uses mathematics in their degree.

Getting the most out of the Uni libraries

The University Library, whether online or on campus, is a great resource for all students. They offer support for international students, and can help with exam preparation, library orientation, assignment support, referencing guides, and more.

Study Groups – be aware of academic honesty

Finding a group of people from your course to study with is a popular strategy. Study groups can be a great way to make new friends and connections in your degree, while also improving your knowledge of course content.

However, the University's Academic Honesty rules make a distinction between legitimate cooperation, and collusion that breaches academic integrity rules. The SRC has assisted a number of students with academic honesty allegations arising from shared notes and study groups. We recommend reading this short article from the Uni website to make sure you are aware of the line between collusion, and legitimate cooperation.

What other support is available?

There are also faculty-specific options for assistance. The library offers drop-in sessions for students to help with specific questions about research and referencing in your faculty.

If you want to talk about your degree structure and unit of study selection, you can contact an Academic Advisor from your faculty or discipline.

If you have questions about the Uni and you're not sure where to go, you can contact the SRC's Caseworkers by emailing help@src.usyd.edu.au and we will do our best to connect you with the right place.

For more information, short & links see: srcusyd.net.au/time-management-tips-for-university-students



Ask Abe

SRC caseworker help Q&A

CENTRELINK - Relationships



Dear Abe,

I'm getting Youth Allowance and I'm not sure if I have to declare my partner's income. We just moved in together but we keep our money pretty separate. Is this going to be a problem for my payment?

Thanks,
Hitched

Dear Hitched,

The way Centrelink looks at relationships is often different from how most people do. If you meet the criteria for being in a de-facto relationship,

you need to declare your relationship to Centrelink. You will need to report your partner's income, as this can impact your payment. If there is any change in your relationship, you should write to Centrelink and inform them of that too.

Have a look at the SRC's leaflet on Centrelink and relationships for more information. If you would like further advice, email your questions to help@src.usyd.edu.au or book an appointment by calling 9660 5222.

Thanks,
Abe

For more information, short & links see: srcusyd.net.au/src-help/centrelink/relationships



The Essential Guide to Living on Little Money for Students!

Available online or the SRC Office

srcusyd.net.au/src-help/money/guide-to-living-on-little-money/



Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney
e: help@src.usyd.edu.au | w: srcusyd.net.au



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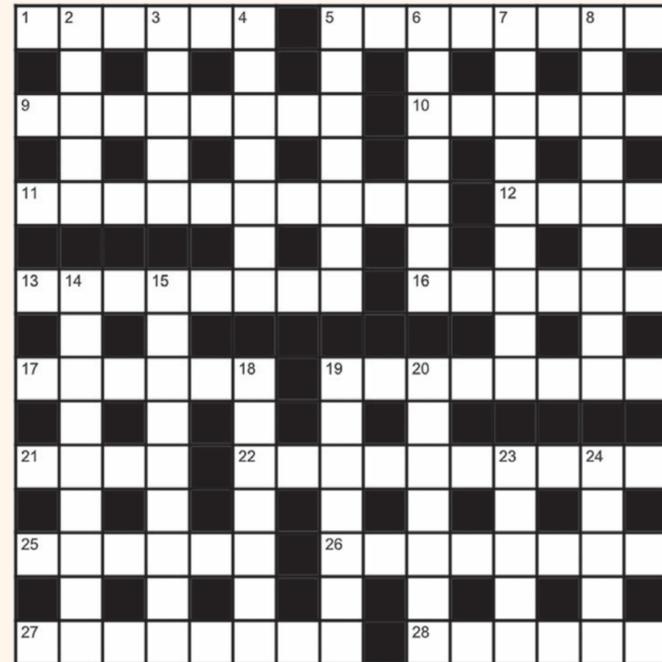
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Not too political cryptic



Across

- Besmirches messy mess around backwards god (6)
- Acrobats fuck with nasty SMG (8)
- Politician embraced by bender (someone such as myself) (8)
- Nicholson and Pacino create feral beast (6)
- Denies lack of final insult with a spoken pledge (10)
- Agree on weed (4)
- Sailors in the green liquid usually (8)
- River Chicken (6)
- Horrendous act at Romanian town (8)
- Primarily seafaring, endangered, aquatic lion! (4)
- Police officer has a foot fetish (10)
- A joint road (6)
- Twin sisters lost in small winds (8)
- Pass possessed gramps leaving judged (8)
- Addicts got a bad rash in the desert (6)



Down

- Chinese ruler leads ruthless interrogation of indigenous people (5)
- A top dog (5)
- Soldier turned to ire when full? (4-3)
- Trash clothing era (7)
- British PM swallows gag for Queen (7)
- Man leaves technological organisation, he likes the bottle too much (9)
- Queer liquor sends you places (9)
- Transformers director abandons key ingredient (3,6)
- Replace you with me in the dodgy ambulance and there'll be a lack of proportion (9)
- Mild party that lead Britain's socialist endeavours astray! (3,4)
- Abandoned Scot says "I Bought it" (7)
- Protests on reddit page for friends of gays (7)
- Thatcher kicks out extremists in half-hearted power grab (5)
- inacuracy? (5)

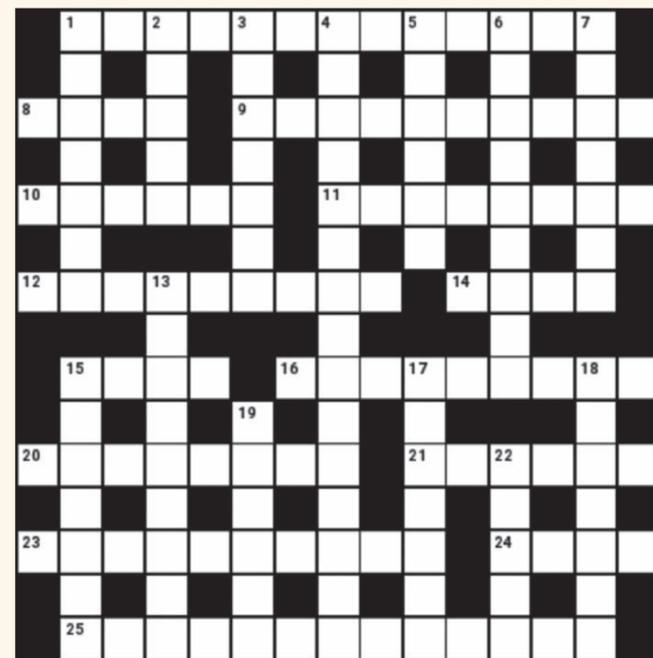
Across

- Johnson, Trump and Morrison are the "... of the world" (8,5)
- Racist Party (4)
- Type of Pasta (10)
- Ice Cream and Type of Opus (6)
- It Measures Speed (8)
- Chinese Beasts (3,6)
- Where one might buy 22 Down online (4)
- Partner of The Sniffers (4)
- Facebook page where uni students go to complain that the crossword is too political. (4,5)
- A Tv Show in which a bunch of women try court a generic looking dude: The (8)
- Fitting symbol for the Democratic Party (6)
- Oppressor of the Working Class (10)
- They Hate the Poor (4)
- Albanese only believes in solving 43% of this issue (7,6)

Down

- Escape of liquid (7)
- You Should Join One! (5)
- Abbie, Dustin, Phillip Seymour (7)
- Mandatory Bootlicking scheme (8,7)
- A daze caused by drunkenness (6)
- Electric Light, London Symphony (9)
- War Criminal Assassinated in 1963 (7)
- Panned Threequel of Hitchcock Classic (6,3)
- Jesus' Language (7)
- Used to be scratchy (3,4)
- Shake (7)
- Peruvian Beast (6)
- Stocking material (5)

Too political quick



Quiz

- The Comic series Asterix and Obelix is set in which Former Roman Region
- Doc Brown in the film series Back to the Future names their dog after which famous scientist
- What is the only planet In our solar system to be named after a Greek God.
- Ronald Reagan was Governor of which state before becoming President of the United States
- Who is the only Person to win a Noble Prize in both Physics and Chemistry
- What connects the previous answers

Puzzles by Some Hack, Featuring guest clues by Tournesol, The Great and the Geek and Jeckiboy. Quiz by Some Hack.

Answers



Answers available at honisoit.com/puzzle-answers

SNEAK PEAK: Inside USyd student reps ultra-luxe family homes

*Incoherent.
Always.*

The End Times



Wed August 31 Vol. 420+18 Cheaper and more available than toilet paper! The only newspaper. Proudly Murdoch. Pro-News. Anti-Truth. People's Republic of USyd. \$6.90

SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE RELEASES FEATURE-LENGTH FILM TO COUNTER THE BOURGEOIS IDEOLOGY OF BOSS BABY FRANCHISE

In response to the critically-acclaimed Boss Baby franchise and recently released Netflix series The Boss Baby: Back in the Crib (2022), Socialist Alternative commissioned local film collective Prollywood to counter its bourgeois narrative.

In an interview with The End Times, Aggie T Prop explained that injecting the socialist narrative at an early age is essential to building class consciousness.

"Karl Marx recognised the malleability of human nature and like, modern science tells us we are most flexible at a young age," said Prop.

"I think like, the narrative of Boss Baby is disgusting and teaches children to capitulate to like, the demands of capital from a young age."

"The character Baby in Boss Baby eventually recognises that being a CEO is parasitic and like, vile, but he never takes the next logical step of becoming a

revolutionary socialist and working towards, y'know, a general strike. His class consciousness was, shall we say, infantile."

"I think it's just like, egregious, haha. That's why we had to commission Worker Baby."

Worker Baby follows the story of Leon Tedsy and his friend Vlad Bedtime, the friendly spectre of communism. Together the triumph over the bourgeois notion of revolution in one playroom. Other notable characters include the friendly playmate Frank N. File.

"We were really proud of the way that this film makes a political argument and invite any prospective USyd students to attend our debut screening at the Socialism Conference on 2 September."

Tickets to Worker Baby can be purchased alongside a subscription of Red Flag for \$49.99.



Doomed	Destined
Quantity	Quality
High schoolers	Megaphones
Thermodynamics	Echidnas
Job applications	Larceny
Cobblestones	Podiatrists
LEGO blocks	Carpet
Bindies	Lawn
Hot sand	Tepid sand

IN THIS ISSUE:

First-year lists USyd Rants Top Fan on LinkedIn to make-up for lack of meaningful campus engagement
- Charles V Stacker

Scab owns strikers by reminding them it's Open Day not Closed Day
- Shen Bapiro

What the HECS! Maximilian Hockey pays full fees for his degree in honour of dad Joe's legacy
- Stu Dent-Dett

SAD: Local vegan hates mushrooms
- Mal Noureuxh

CUT OUT THIS SQUARE OF PAPER. EAT IT. WAIT 30 MINS. READ THE PAPER.



**FOR FREE:
HONI EDITOR SHOES.
RARELY WORN.**

THE SRC: IN DATA

Every year, the SRC plays host to an average of **30 separate instances** of sexual intercourse

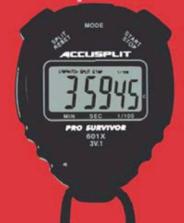


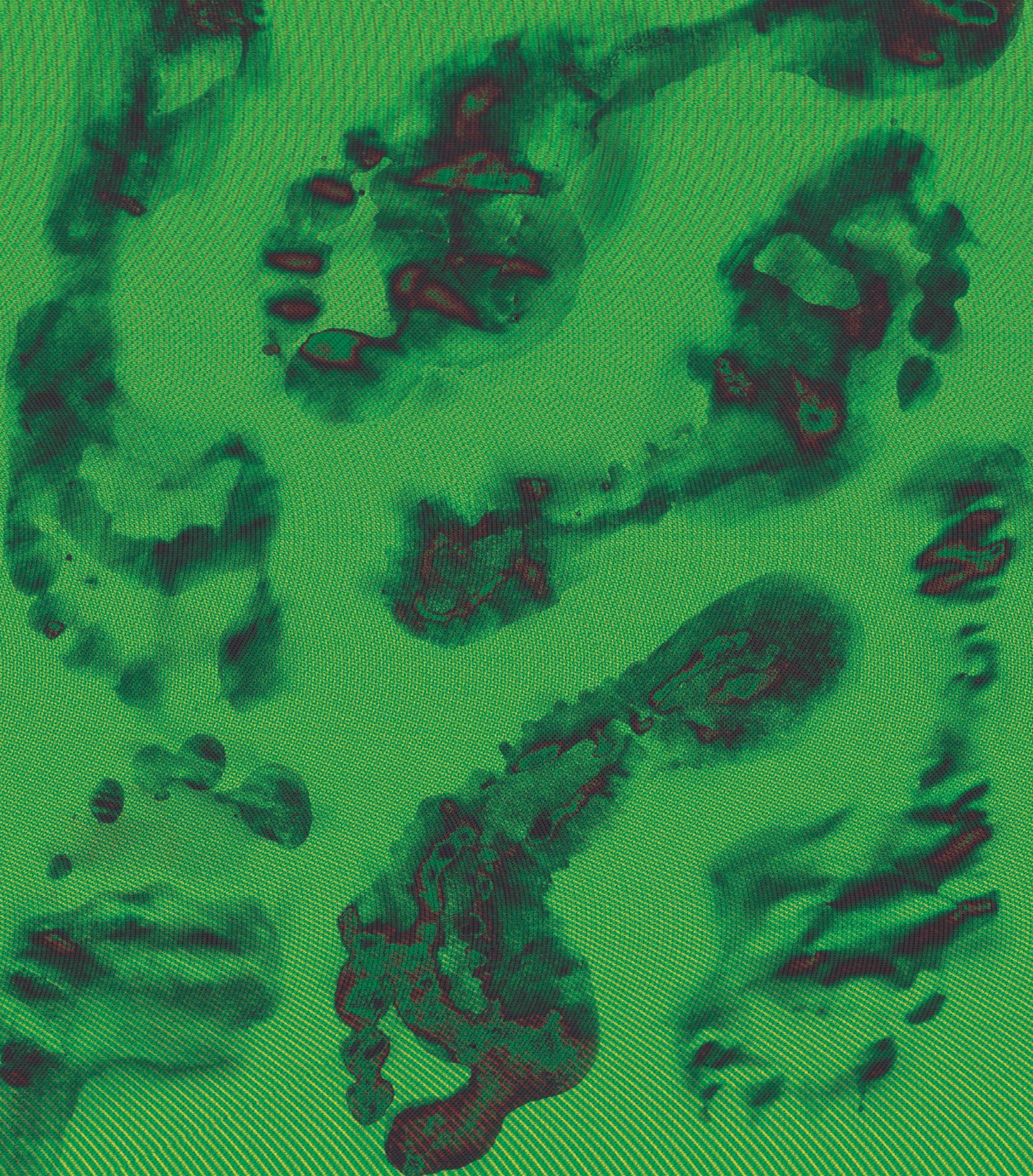
Assuming it was unprotected PIV sex*, and assuming a fertilisation rate of 1/78, this should result in **13.46 babies** over the SRC's 35-year occupation of the Wentworth basement.



*assuming makes an ass of you and me

Given a median sex duration of 5.4 minutes (according to the Conversation), that means your elected representatives spent **94.5 hours** fucking over the last 35 years.





BAHAMA BAHAMA BAHAMA BAHAMA BAHAMA BAHAMA
BAHAMA BAHAMA BAHAMA BAHAMA BAHAMA BAHAMA