

# QUEEN DEAD, CHARLES NEXT



**LEAKED: Charles identifies body in morgue... "Yep, that's her!"**

"I do feel bad for the corgis," she added. "I don't like going anywhere without them, so they'll definitely be coming along."

In keeping with their daddy Philip's hobbies, they are set to be executed via firing squad. Survivors will reportedly have their necks snapped. Woof!

It has been revealed that true to her down-to-earth nature, Queen Elizabeth II was not exempt

from the natural function of the human body when preparing itself for death and she did let a fat turd absolutely drop. According to doctors at the scene, her steady six gins a day diet classified it as a "grog bog".

Right here at USyd, one anonymous student wrote to *Honi* saying "maybe she's just like the rest of us at this point in the sem... root deprived and in need of a big,

long sleep."

Students are already donning all-black funeral attire to campus, with some so committed to mourning that they've skipped their classes entirely.

Support can be found in Ben Hines' shoulder, Sydney Uni Law Society Office, Room 103, New Law School Building (F10), Eastern Avenue, University of Sydney, NSW 2006 Australia.

Queen Elizabeth II of England has died a slow, gruesome, lonely and painful death. Despite racing to her side, none of her family were able to make it to see her in Balimmoral Castle before her passing. Fortunately, Prince Charles (soon to be crowned King Charles LXIX) got the opportunity to catch up with her after the event, in the body identification section of the morgue, where he said she smelt even better in death than in life.

Upon hearing of the Queen's rapid descent into a life-threatening state, *Honi* reached out via telephone to get one last interview in before she heads downstairs.

In a show of compassion, Liz had warmed to student press in her old age, responding to our questions with warmth.

"Oh, which cousin was the best root? I mean, I come from a gene pool of the best you've ever had. But I also come from a loyal gene pool, so I'll have to say Phillip, definitely," she said with a blush. "Filthy fascist boys always know how to do it."

She said she was in fact looking forward to death, because she would finally be reunited with Phillip, who had still been waiting for her in the garage freezer.

The will of the former Queen has specified that her iconic wardrobe will go to Meghan Markle, her beloved colonies will be passed on to Charles, her corgis are to be immediately euthanised.

**PUBS AND BOTTLE SHOPS TO CLOSE ON SEPT 22 DAY OF MOURNING**

**BALMORAL ESTATE SALE RAFFLE, TICKETS PAGE 29**

**DIANA WAS A DYKE: QUEEN'S DIARY EXPOSED**

**QUEEN'S AUTOPSY REVEALS WICKED BONG HABIT**

# 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.

## IN THIS EDITION

- 4 News
- 6 Editorial
- 7 University
- 8 Elections
- 9 SRC Profiles
- 12 Feature
- 14 Analysis
- 18 History
- 20 Reviews
- 21 Creative
- 22 Enviro
- 24 SRC
- 26 Puzzles
- 27 Comedy

### EDITOR IN-CHIEF

Ellie Stephenson.

### EDITORS

Carmeli Argana, Christian Holman, Amelia Koen, Sam Randle, Fabian Robertson, Thomas Sargeant, Ellie Stephenson, Khanh Tran, Zara Zadro.

### WRITERS

Misbah Ansari, Carmeli Argana, Sarah Boreham, Luke Cass, Oscar Chaffey, Nelson Crossley, Alexandra Dent, Felix Faber, Fynn Ferdinands, Ethan Floyd, Marlow Hurst, Lauren Lancaster, Nicholas Osiowy, Aidan

Elwig Pollock, Swapnik Sanagavarapu, Thomas Sargeant, James Sherriff, Cole Scott-Curwood, Ellie Stephenson, Guy Suttner, Khanh Tran, Zara Zadro.

### ARTISTS & PHOTOGRAPHERS

Wajid Ansari, Bipasha Chakraborty, Altay Hagrebet, Amelia Koen, Sam Randle, Thomas Sargeant, Ellie Stephenson.

### BACK COVER ARTIST

Nicola Braylan

## EDITORIAL

By **Ellie Stephenson.**

Even as an edgy baby communist, in high school, I could not find vanguardism persuasive. Not a particularly humble kid, I nevertheless struggled to imagine just how convinced I'd have to be of my own political beliefs that I could feel comfortable trying to bestow them, from above, on others. Similarly, I found myself stumped as to how people could justify religious evangelism.

While I can't relate to vanguardists or evangelicals, I do admire their level of self-assuredness. All the same, I think they're missing out on something quite important: democracy. Here, I mean democracy as an ethos: the idea that, really, anyone can be a political person, anyone can be a historical agent in some small sense.

Democracy is often difficult, because it is the rule of the people, and people are imperfect. Nevertheless, it's worthwhile, because people also have huge potential. Even when it's hard, we should believe that people can be persuaded, they can be won over. But also: we can be persuaded, we can be won over — democracy is so often an act of humility.

Two weeks ago, when I decided my edition of *Honi* would be about democracy, I did not yet know the truly staggering, once-in-a-generation serendipity that would befall me. At the time, I merely wanted to reflect on the importance: to think about what it means for campuses to be democratic and to encourage students to be curious about student democracy.

I expected my editorial to be about why

we should value and heed the achingly real realities of staff and students — you can read some of this in the feature on pages 12-13. Why we should push ourselves to articulate arguments about our universities — I encourage you to peruse the 'elections' section of the paper for more of that, along with Swapnik Sanagavarapu's excellent analysis of divestment. I wanted to say that democracy should permeate our transport systems and our local councils (see: Nicholas Osiowy and Nelson Crossley on page 14) and our clubs and societies (see: Flynn Ferdinands and Sarah Boreham on page 18).

But then Queen Elizabeth II died, only a few days before the assembly of this paper. What a gift to a democratically-minded Editor-in-Chief: the death of the world's most recognisable monarch. I was perturbed by the gushing, obsequious coverage of the Royal Death, especially from people who otherwise proclaim liberal values.

To me, this outpouring of respect for the withered representative of a deeply illogical and immoral Crown reflects the hollowness of liberal democracy. The claim made by the monarchy is simple and vile: 'We are deserving of enormous stolen wealth, worldwide adulation, the suspension of critical thinking, because there's something special about our lineage.'

Buying into that deeply harmful, deeply undemocratic fiction is not worth all the civility in the world. I hope you enjoy our full editorial on the matter on page 6.

 [facebook.com/honisoitsydney](https://facebook.com/honisoitsydney)
 [instagram.com/honi\\_soit](https://instagram.com/honi_soit)
 [twitter.com/honi\\_soit](https://twitter.com/honi_soit)
 [youtube.com/honisoitau](https://youtube.com/honisoitau)
 [@honi\\_soit](https://tiktok.com/@honi_soit)
 <https://linktr.ee/honisoit>

## Sex & the City Rd



Election season is well and truly here! However, before Her Majesty's decomposing corpse enters the unholy soil of Westminster Abbey (in a manner not dissimilar to her predecessor, the *Barbe Bleue*), here's a few juicy bits to keep your English Breakfast tea flowing.

Even as SULS emerge from the self-inflicted wasteland that is Turnbullgate, Rude Girl cannot help but be intrigued about the ambitions of front-running Presidential aspirants Eden McSheffrey and Harriet Walker. McSheffrey is arguably the top bureaucrat of the LLBs, seat-warming various executive positions over the past three years. Meanwhile, Walker is the corporate hawk of the JDs, impatient and eager to dominate ranks after her first year on exec.

Fellow classmen hungry for exec positions must wait for Presidential EOIs to be formally released before pledging their allegiances, however clusters are beginning to form. Whisperers worry that McSheffrey, despite his amiable disposition, may be let down by his political inexperience, should the election be contested. Walker has no election experience, but is currently at the helm of the Society's Competitions Portfolio, leaving long lists of potential voters at her fingertips.

But this is hardly a two-person race. Former Competition's Director Felix

Wood has also flagged his ambitions, purportedly keeping an eye on the field as he mulls a long contemplated run. Rumours of unfulfilled ambition also swirl around a young and cunning Adam Schaffer, who might, at long last, manage to finally establish the Sports Director to President pipeline

Yet all should beware of seasoned USU hack Naz Sharifi, who may yet use her negotiating hand to collate a dream team to pull the rug from under their feet! Which egos will be talked down or stuck up? Guess we'll have to wait til EOIs are released to see the how the snakes and ladders unfold.



## Letters editors@honisoit.com

Dear Editors,

To the people of Britain I extend my warmest condolences on the presumed passing of the Queen. Her Majesty was a postgraduate biochemist. She understood things about society, politics and the economy, which the vast majority of people could not understand. Her Majesty appreciated the total nonsense of labor's story. The validity of this appraisal is dependent on the validity of information from the media. I have almost no evidence that Her Majesty has passed. She may be still alive in a well earned retirement.

Yours sincerely,  
Grahame N E Bell

## The Gig Guide

**Tuesday 13th**

- Manning Bar // Battle of the Bands Heat #1 // 12pm
- Cellar Theatre // SUDS x POC Revue Open Mic Fundraiser // 7pm
- The Barracks - Comedy Club // Jeromaia Detto: Mush // 6:30pm
- Potts Point Hotel // The Running Joke // 7pm
- Moya's Juniper Lounge // Tue Night Jazz // 8pm

**Wednesday 14th**

- Manning Bar // Battle of the Bands Heat #2 // 12pm
- Runaway Gardens // Magic Mirrors Club Kabarett // 7:30pm

**Thursday 15th - Public Holiday**

- Manning Bar // Battle of the Bands Heat #3 // 12pm
- Seymour Centre // Science Revue: A B sScience! // 7:30pm
- Lovely Bones // Ms. G Presents Anti-Love Songs // 7pm
- The Hive Bar // Erskineville Comedy Club // 8pm
- Engmore Theatre // The Chats // 7:30pm
- Horden Pavillion // Hoodoo Gurus // 7pm

**Friday 16th**

- Seymour Centre // Science Revue: A B sScience! // 7:30pm
- Oxford Art Factory // Transmission Indie Night // 11:45pm
- Manning Bar // Barbie Party Sydney // 8pm
- Waywards @ The Bank // Old Mervs // 8pm
- UNSW Roundhouse // Thelma Plum w/ GRAACE // 8pm
- Vic on the Park // STEVAN // 9pm
- Saturday 17th
- Seymour Centre // Science Revue: A B sScience! // 7:30pm
- Waywards @ The Bank // Confidence Man (DJ Set) // 9pm
- Lansdowne // Noir City // 7:30pm
- Sunday 18th
- Enmore Theatre // GOANNA // 7pm
- Upcoming
- Wednesday 21 September // Manning Bar // Final of the Battle of the Bands // 6pm
- Thur 29 September // Med Revue: PANDEMIC! AT THE DISCO // 7:30pm

**DM to be featured, Editor's Choice marked with \***

## GET IN TOUCH

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

Email us at [editors@honisoit.com](mailto: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.

**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](mailto:publications.manager@src.usyd.edu.au).

This edition published on 13 September 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.

Dear Editors,  
"Religious literacy is an asset which we should embrace, one that enriches our understanding of the humane rather than shrug religion off to our detriment."

My interest piqued and my heart lifted as I read these words in *Honi Soit*. In 'Theology should be widely taught in Australian universities', Khanh Tran refreshingly reminds us that our university must be a place to seriously explore the depths of God and faith.

At university, life's greatest spiritual and theological questions should be asked openly, honestly and interrogated with gusto. So, if you are a student like me, then this insight makes one wonder: right now, in the absence of a theology department and as the humanities are increasingly sidelined, how can I fairly investigate faith at university? Where can I test what is good and true? When can I ask questions about God? Well, as a Christian, I write this brief letter to extend a bold offer.

At the heart of the Christian faith is a remarkable historical person, born in a humble town, who promises to change everything we think we know about life and God: Jesus of Nazareth. Everything rises and falls with whether we can trust him. Christian students organise public gatherings multiple times each week around university where anyone is invited to investigate faith with a talk followed by lunch. Everyone is welcome, as are the toughest questions. Before mid-semester break focus is on the Gospel of Matthew. This manuscript provides eyewitness testimony from the

first century about Jesus. Who was he? Should we follow him? Khanh is right: university should be a space to pop on our thinking hats and pursue theological understanding with fellow scholars and students. From my personal experience, there's nothing to lose in investigating Jesus seriously — there's everything to gain.

This is just one example of an opportunity to search for truth about God. The critical point is that we should wholeheartedly pursue this truth together; to examine the life worth living and explore our rich human tradition of reasoning about the divine. It's no secret that respect for the humanities is in decline and the university space is increasingly instrumentalised. As students, we ought to rush against this current. Instead of sleepwalking through these years we can take advantage of the resources that university does offer for spiritual and intellectual formation. Communities like the one I mentioned are a golden chance to expand the mind, nourish the soul, and embrace the religious literacy that Khanh champions. Perhaps you'll even find Jesus as compelling as disciples like Matthew did in the first century and as wonderful and trustworthy as Christians like me do today.

Khanh encourages us to long for opportunities at university to give God a fair go and not leave faith "safely insulated from public scrutiny". So, I invite you: the Christian faith is being made public at the University of Sydney, come to bring it under your scrutiny.

Samuel McIntyre  
Arts/Law V



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

### A STATEMENT FROM HIS MAJESTY THE KING AT THE TIME OF THE QUEEN'S DEATH

The death of my beloved Mother, Her Majesty The Queen, is a moment of the greatest sadness for me and all members of my family.

We mourn profoundly the passing of a cherished stinky lady and a much-loved Mother. I know her loss will be deeply appreciated by the many dance clubs across the Commonwealth who have been in grave need of an economic boost.

During this period of mourning and change, my family and I will be comforted and sustained by our knowledge of the joy her death will bring to those across the Empire's colonies.

Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> September 2022

 **src** activism advocacy representation
 **NO GAYS NO FEES EDUCATION**
**ADVOCACY • ACTIVISM REPRESENTATION • STUDENT MEDIA**
 **FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!**
 **FOR ESSENTIAL STUDENT UPDATES**

## USU promotes exploitative student jobs at DoorDash

Luke Cass.

The University of Sydney Union (USU) has announced a partnership with food-delivery service DoorDash in a Facebook post released on Friday.

The USU's decision is surprising considering they are a student-serving body, which conflicts with DoorDash's business model: DoorDash workers are labelled as contractors rather than employees, and are thus vulnerable to exploitation including underpayment.

A Facebook ad for the USU's DoorDash partnership specifically targeted USyd students, promising an average wage of \$34/hour. While this claim was qualified by the small-print text "actual earnings may vary", it varies from DoorDash's official website, which advertises average earnings of \$31 an hour for drivers.

DoorDash is not required to pay its workers the minimum wage as they operate as 'contractors', instead paying them per delivery. As such, it is difficult to validate the company's claim that worker payment is above the minimum wage, and seems likely that being able to legally underpay workers is the rationale.

In 2021, a class action was launched against DoorDash in the US, where employees claimed that DoorDash directed them away from deliveries at non-partnering restaurants, further reducing workers' ability to attain pay. A similar model used by DoorDash's competitor Uber was found to systematically underpay workers.

A lack of employee status also means that DoorDash drivers and workers are

unprotected from unfair dismissals. In 2021, Uber settled an unfair dismissal suit launched by former employee Amita Gupta for \$400,000 despite estimates that her settlement would have typically amounted to around \$15,000. National Secretary of the Transport Workers Union (TWU), Michael Kaine, stated that this decision would ensure the case didn't go to Court, where Uber's "exploitative" business model, the same model used by DoorDash, could be ruled as illegal.

The gig work demanded by DoorDash is also highly dangerous. The NSW Government launched an inquiry into the safety of food delivery drivers in 2020, following five deaths in a two month period.

Working for DoorDash is disproportionately harmful for intl. students. Intl. student visas have historically only permitted 20 hours of work per week during the semester. Being underpaid places a cap on what these students can earn overall. DoorDash's flexible work model means that some students view it as a loophole. This can lead to international students inadvertently breaking their visa requirements out of the need to earn enough to survive.

USU President Cole Scott-Curwood told *Honi*, "through partnerships, the USU aims to bring value to our 40,000+ members and generate income... Operational decisions are

coordinated by USU management, but having the right partners is a... priority for the Board."

Scott-Curwood added, "As someone who works in the gig economy, I know that it is critical to improve standards".

Scott-Curwood pointed to the agreement signed by DoorDash and the TWU in May as evidence of improving work conditions for DoorDash drivers. However, the deal merely commits to

beginning a process of regulation, with no meaningful changes to pay, conditions or legal protections having yet eventuated from the deal.

The USU should question partnering with an organisation as exploitative as DoorDash. Their decision to do so reflects their status as a primarily profit-driven institution, as opposed to one solely focussed on the interests of students, who this partnership will likely hurt.

## UNSW student's defamation cases prove unsuccessful in the District Court

Guy Suttner.

UNSW student Milton Kelly, also known by his online alias 'Mike Meyers', has proven unsuccessful in two defamation cases in the NSW District Court.

In the first case, Kelly commenced legal action in September 2020, alleging that several Facebook posts made by other students defamed him. While in his initial pleadings he named eight students as defendants, this was later narrowed to just two, Ollie Davis and Jocelin Chan. Kelly was self-represented.

**“Judge Abadee ruled that both defendant’s comments did not identify the plaintiff.”**

The first of these posts was a comment on a post on the Facebook group 'UNSW Discussion Group', where Ollie Davis wrote that Mr Kelly was the "local uni predator". This comment had seven reactions. The second was posted in the comment section of the Facebook page 'USYD Love Letters Revived' by the third defendant, Jocelin Chan, reading "they aren't you that 40 yr old guy who hangs around UNSW creeping on first yrs? don't you have a desk job to go to instead

of lurking on uni pages?". Mr Kelly alleged these posts conveyed three defamatory imputations; a) that he attended campus for illegitimate purposes, b) that he was on campus and/or the webpage for the purpose of sexually propositioning first year students, and c) that he spends time on campus sexually preying on first year students.

In his judgement published on 18 August, Judge Abadee ruled that both defendant's comments did not identify the plaintiff, as few people were aware that 'Mike Meyers' was actually Milton Kelly. He noted that even Mr Kelly's landlord knew him under his alias.

In respect of the third defendant, the Court found that they could rely on the common law defence of qualified privilege. This is a defence which recognises that in some circumstances the public interest requires frank and free communication without the threat of defamation. The alleged defamatory comment occurred in the context of a Facebook debate on the topic of interracial dating habits. When Ms Chan commented that Mr Kelly "had a reputation for propositioning first-year students", this "bore upon the question whether Mr Kelly's own contributions were the product of a distorted perspective shaped by his experience". As such, viewers to the debate had an

interest in receiving this information as it was relevant to the various experiences shared by Mr Kelly and Ms Chan. Even though Mr Kelly was not successful in his claims, the Court held that if he had been he would have been awarded \$7,500 in damages plus general interest.

No orders were made as to the parties' legal costs, with that to be determined later. However, the usual rule is that the unsuccessful party pays for the legal costs for both sides.

**“Both these cases may add fuel to the fire in the fight for defamation law reform.”**

The second defamation action was commenced by Kelly against UNSW and a contractor, MSS Security, in June 2021. It was made in relation to two matters. Firstly, an entry in the Complaints Management System (CMS) maintained by the Student Conduct and Integrity Unit (SCIU) at UNSW, and secondly, an incident report by some UNSW security personnel. Both these matters related to an allegation Kelly assaulted another female student on campus. However, in

his reasons published on 2 September, Judge Weber found that only regarding the first matter (the CMS entry) was the defamatory imputation that Kelly allegedly assaulted another student established.

However, the Court found that both defendants were able to rely on the defences of qualified privilege. In this circumstance, as the publication was created under a formalised process to record, investigate, and assess student misconduct, Weber held that both common law and statutory qualified privilege were established.

Kelly was ordered to pay the defendants' costs.

Both these cases may add fuel to the fire in the fight for defamation law reform. University students may be increasingly concerned that any online comments they make around other students may open the risk they are subjected to expensive, time-consuming, and stressful litigation. While costs can be recouped, the lost years spent in a courtroom instead of enjoying one's youth cannot be.

*The full judgments can be found in the online version of this article.*

## Who is Tata Consulting, the University's new partner?

Roisin Murphy.

The University of Sydney's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mark Scott, has signed a "memorandum of understanding to collaborate on research projects and learning opportunities" with Tata Consulting Services (TCS), a multi-national information technology consulting conglomerate based in Mumbai.

TCS forms part of the Tata group, and operates 149 locations across 46 countries. It has an estimated net worth of around \$175 billion.

The partnership between Professor Scott and TCS Asia-Pacific President, Girish Ramachandran, was made at the Australia India Leadership Dialogue in New Delhi, where Professor Scott has represented the University this week.

"This partnership will open up opportunities for our students and researchers," he said.

According to a statement by the University, the conference had discussions focusing on cybersecurity and AI, as well as global talent recruitment skills and mobility.

TCS is best known for a scandal which made international news when they allegedly stole thousands of files containing confidential information from health record software company Epic Systems, while consulting for Kaiser Permanente, a client of Epic's and the largest managed healthcare groups in the United States, in 2011.

TCS was contracted to provide IT consulting to Kaiser, who needed assistance in rolling out Epic's health record software.

Despite strict agreements around what information TCS would have access to, a TCS employee falsely identified himself to Epic as a Kaiser employee, which opened a suite of information TCS were intended to be restricted from.

Epic sued Tata in 2014 on the grounds that TCS used the information to develop their own competing software, Med Mantra – they were awarded US\$940 million by a jury (later reduced to \$420 million). In 2016, Tata continued to maintain they "did not misuse or derive any benefit from downloaded documents from Epic System's user-web portal."

TCS has made recent news for ending a staff pay increase being awarded at one year of service, instead requiring staff to wait until the calendar annual pay rise following their one year mark – effectively leaving many staff without incremental wage increases for close to two years. This move was justified by TCS on the grounds that employees are already coming in at "high salaries". Entry level salaries for TCS employees in India are estimated to be around \$6000-12,000 AUD. The salary of the company's CEO is around \$4.72 million AUD. The decision has come under fire from NITES, the union representing workers at TCS.

"Tata group is appreciated & applauded for the philanthropy and corporate social activities," they said in a statement. "In reality at the ground level the Tata employees are being exploited for financial gains."

This also comes following scrutiny over delays to variable compensation

## Student faces suspension for strike action

Roisin Murphy.

A student at the University of Sydney who took part in protest action during the recent staff strikes is facing potential disciplinary action, including suspension, from the University.

The student, who will remain anonymous, participated in the pickets during staff strikes earlier this year. In a letter to the student, the University told them it is "alleged that your conduct is in breach of one or more University policies and constitutes misconduct".

Under University policy, what constitutes misconduct is concerningly

subjective – notably, behaviour that acts "in a way that is harmful to the good order and government of the University", "prejudices the good name or academic standing of the University" or "impairs other people's freedom to pursue their studies or research, or participate in University life". The policy leaves unclear the ability of students to meaningfully express scrutiny over the functioning of the University without a breach.

The letter identified actions taken "while on the picket line for the NTEU's enterprise bargaining campaign protests", including interrupting classes and gaining

access to classes taking place via Zoom.

In the leadup to the strikes, the University encouraged staff and students wanting to evade the industrial actions to operate classes as normal via Zoom, sending emails to educators ensuring them that classes would be able to run online 'as normal' alongside the physical picket.

Although the online classes may not have constituted the crossing of a physical picket, the purpose of a strike is not to physically stop people from entering a workplace; it's to shut down its operations entirely. Thus, picketing extended beyond

## University strikes update

Roisin Murphy.

Universities across the country are seeing staff move to take industrial action. An ongoing series of negotiations at the campuses has been marked by staff demanding better pay and less casualisation of the sector's workforce.

This wave is replicated across multiple sectors in NSW. This year has seen mass strikes for nurses, teachers, early childhood educators and transport workers, indicating a return to the more militant approach to workplace bargaining of the 70s.

Going on strike in Australia requires a complex set of legal tasks in the lead-up. First, the union branch wishing to take the action must vote to go to a protected industrial action ballot. They can only do so when bargaining with their employer for a new enterprise agreement fails, or when their previous agreement is no longer valid. Once they have voted, the AEC runs a protected action ballot, where all employees covered by the agreement can secretly vote on whether or not they want to take industrial action. If more than 50% of the vote is in favour, the workers have the legal ability to go on strike.

The status of potential upcoming industrial action at universities in Australia currently stands as follows:

- The University of Sydney, UTS and University of Newcastle branches have voted to take industrial action.
- A protected action ballot at the University of Queensland voted in favour of the right to take industrial action.
- James Cook University, Queensland University of Technology and University of Tasmania branches have voted to request a protected action ballot.

the realm of just campus entryways, and also saw protestors attempting to dissuade online participation by entering Zoom classes and sharing information on why they were striking.

The University's letter to the student alleges that by participating in online protest actions for the strike, they "effectively prevented the tutors from continuing with the Classes".

If found to have engaged in misconduct, the student faces suspension or reprimand.

## September SRC wrap-up

Khanh Tran.

As online campaigning for the SRC Elections finally opened, USyd's hacks descended on New Law to heat up the debate before polling.

### FoodHub

SRC Vice President Emily Storey said that the SRC x USU Foodhub has gained success, with more than 1,200 students accessing its service.

### The SRC needs to do better

A motion by Jack Scanlan (NLS) cited

USyd's data around the admission of low-SES students; only 3.7 per cent of students come from the lowest 25% of income earners. He proposed the SRC compile a report into the issue.

This angered SAIt, with Simon Upitis labelling the idea as "useless", in a bizarre comparison to surveys surrounding wage theft by the NTEU.

### Condemning police repression

Tiger Perkins (Groots) condemned police brutality during the Higher Ed

Summit protest, particularly the use of pepper spray and alleged switching off of body cameras.

### Campaign to end deadnaming

Queer Officer Yaz Andrews spoke on the campaign against deadnaming on campus. Citing a student survey, Andrews pointed out that 83 per cent of respondents experienced "persistent issues" with deadnaming at uni.

Quac convenor Valerie Comino labelled the effort to not be dead-named

# Editorial

Last Friday, in marking the death of Queen Elizabeth II, BBC Radio 1 brought attention to a phrase the Queen held in high regard and repeated often, the motto of the Order of the Garter — *honi soit qui mal y pense*.

Most tellings recount that the phrase rose to prominence when King Edward III was dancing with his cousin, Joan of Kent, and her garter slipped down. Those in the room laughed in bemusement, revelling in her humiliation. Edward III was disgusted; he put the garter around his own leg, scowling “*honi soit qui mal y pense*”. Shame upon he who thinks evil of it.

In 1929, students of the University of Sydney were subject to a months-long onslaught from mainstream press following rowdy (read: standard uni student) behaviour following a Commemoration Day event. Sydney newspapers characterised the undergraduate cohort as immature, destructive and entirely unwelcome to participate in civil society. In response, students started their own newspaper, *Honi Soit*.

The BBC reflected on the Queen’s frequent use of the phrase with nostalgia, explaining her love for it through her optimistic personality. She liked to put a joyful spin on a negative situation, and thought poorly of people who didn’t. The Queen must have been truly averse to critical thinking if this is her genuine understanding of the motto.

“We will not make statements for the joy there is in making them,” reads the first edition of *Honi Soit*. “Our criticism will be constructive, and for the good of all.”

To think evil of it is not to be a general hater in your everyday life; it gets at something much deeper. It is to accept the opinion that is handed to you, the one most convenient at the time. To mindlessly ridicule for no reason but to follow the lead of those around you. To take on the judgement of mainstream media

as your own, no matter how little logic or ethical thought might be behind it. To think evil of whatever you’re told to is certainly the most shameful, the most evil, act of all.

It’s a matter of fact that many people won’t like the cover of this week’s paper, or the tone with which we have reflected on the Queen’s death. People will say we’re being insensitive: someone has died! Her family didn’t make it by her side! You might not have liked her, but she was a kind old woman! Remember that time she displayed a normal human level of humour! She’s just like you and me!

We ask these people instead to reflect on the irreparable damage the Queen’s legacy, as a beacon of violence and colonialism, will leave. In Australia, in Palestine, in Ireland, in South Asia, in every single one of the colonies. We ask you to think of the countless innocent, vulnerable lives lost because of the acts of her Empire. We don’t wish to jump into empathy for the life of someone who benefited from and represented more death and destruction than love or care.

Elizabeth II sat on a throne that was deeply, inextricably implicated in the exportation and dehumanisation that formed the British Empire. Her vast wealth is the spoils of colonisation. Her dogged sense of duty to the Crown — so frequently praised by her supporters — represents a wholehearted endorsement of the British colonial project. Her neutrality and steadfastness was, in reality, a moral absence: the Queen refused to criticise the mass theft of lives, possessions, and futures that occurred in her family’s name, because she was so deeply entangled in it.

In fact, when framing the topic through a less morally and logically biased view, the global wave of grief triggered by Queen Elizabeth II’s passing is actually disturbing. Major news publications plastered obituaries over their pages last Friday, memorialising her seven

decades of rule. Even among progressive circles, the resounding emotional response has been plagued by respectability politics. Why is it that we hold this woman, whose wealth and whiteness existed on an almost metaphysical scale, in such high regard, and not those who suffered under her reign?

Within this emotional landscape characterised by shock and reverence, voices critical of the monarch have been publicly damned. The Chaser, who published a slew of jokes about the Queen’s death (see: “R U OK day not going well at Palace” and “Dark Day: Nation in mourning after reading the words ‘King Charles’”), were condemned by news outlets and social media users for ‘crossing the line’.

The NRL Integrity Unit is currently investigating Newcastle Knights halfback Caitlin Moran, following a tweet she made referencing the Queen which read “today’s a good fkn day... this dumb dog dies Happy fkn Friday.” Ray Hadley, football commentator and resident dickhead at 2GB Radio, described Moran’s post as “perhaps the most reprehensible thing ever seen connected to rugby league”, dismissing the NRL’s chronic protection of perpetrators of domestic violence, and their never-ending refusal to adequately deal with racism.

“I agonised over whether it should be revealed,” Hadley said. “If she plays tomorrow it will be a disgrace of monumental proportions.”

It is absurd that opprobrium towards the monarchy for instigating and perpetuating imperialism around the globe should be acceptable, meritorious even, in day-to-day left-wing

discourse, but not in the wake of its leader’s passing. Our society’s compulsion to publicly exhibit respect for her death — when so many violently-suffered deaths under British colonial rule during her reign are afforded much less — leaves much to interrogate about the West’s inability to deal with its own colonial legacy.

We encourage all readers to challenge their emotions around the Queen’s death, and ask them to decide with criticism and empathy where their grief should truly be placed.

If it is true that your heartfelt emotions for the queen are so deep, so insurmountable, that you’re uncomfortable with some being relieved by her death, then one can only assume the personal stake you have in protecting the systems she upheld.

Honi soit qui mal y pense.

P.S.

Free piss up @ Honi office, Thursday 22nd of September 2022

## Why the left should participate in the USyd Senate Election

Cole Scott-Curwood opines.



Universities are significant social assets and contributors to public good. They enable innovative research, engagement with complex issues, and transformative education. But we should continuously work to make the University of Sydney more sustainable, inclusive, and democratic.

Raewyn Connell argues that realising this requires convincing strategies of change. This is critical considering the University’s fundamental inertia. Generations of students have worked to induce this change by protesting, convincing, and lobbying University management. Because management answers to the Senate, campaigns to improve the University would benefit from having progressive student Fellows of Senate.

Students deserve principled advocates in University decision-making forums who dissent to problematic proposals rather than silently rubber-stamping. For example, the student representatives in the Academic Board were integral to the defeat of proposed 12-week semesters.

“Students deserve principled advocates in University decision-making forums who dissent to problematic proposals...”

Widespread casualisation is convenient for universities as businesses but degrades staff wellbeing and the capacity of universities to provide quality education. Last semester, I taught a ‘tutorial’ of 55 students and had to do unpaid work to teach this unreasonably large class. As one inquiry into job security surfaced, my experience is not a unique one in the university sector. We need students in the Senate - which has the final say on University resourcing - who are committed to improving teaching and learning conditions.

Over the past 45 years, as Rodney Tiffen summarises, Australian universities have experienced declining public investment despite significant growth. So electing progressive students to the University of Sydney Senate is by no means a silver bullet. But it’s definitely an enabler in the continual struggle for a better University.

## How did Gabi Stricker-Phelps and Lachlan Finch’s Senate term pan out?

Luke Cass takes a look.

Gabi Stricker-Phelps and Lachlan Finch ran for University Senate in 2020, staging an SRC ticket-style campaign backed by the young liberals on campus. The duo ran promising to ‘demand better from USyd’, stressing the importance of working collaboratively with management, in contrast with the approach often taken by the left-wing dominated SRC. As their term comes to an end, Honi analyses how effective that approach was.

Stricker-Phelps and Finch went into the 2020 election provisioning to fight against trimesters. Speaking to Honi, the pair claimed credit for the defeat of 12-week semesters at the beginning of 2021, saying that it was something they were “really proud of”. When pressed about their role, Finch and Stricker-Phelps said that “most of our outcomes came from working with the University executive and senior staff, advocating forcefully and constructively”.

However, the decision to reject 12-week semesters was made by the Academic Board, not the Senate, as that’s the body it was proposed to by University management. Stricker-Phelps and Finch don’t sit on the Academic Board, whose student members include SRC representatives and student faculty reps voted in at a separate election.

The 2021 SRC President, Swapnik Sanagavarapu, was a vocal opponent of 12-week semesters. He told Honi that Stricker-Phelps and Finch did “next to nothing” to kill 12-week semesters. Despite being the natural contact point for an undergraduate representative wanting to influence an academic board vote, Sanagavarapu said that he “spoke to Gabi [Stricker-Phelps] once” and that he otherwise had “absolutely no recollection of any of [Finch and Stricker-Phelps] involvements in the decision”.

Roisin Murphy, 2021 SRC Vice-President and member of the Academic Board at the time, went further in claiming that Stricker-Phelps and Finch were “nothing but a hindrance” in the fight for 12-week Semesters. Murphy credited Sanagavarapu’s survey of student opinion on the change, and the hard work of the SRC representatives in lobbying Academic Board members to vote against the proposed change.

Despite these objections to the efficacy of the student representatives on Senate, Finch and Stricker-Phelps said that defeat of 12-week-semester “was the result of a receptive and progressive University administration, and were achieved despite the SRC, not because of them”. Nevertheless, it is difficult to believe the decision of the board was the culmination of University Management’s goodwill, given the proposal came from them, as opposed to the members of that very Academic board who publicly and privately advocated against shortened semesters.

Finch and Stricker-Phelps also ran in 2020 on a platform of fixing special considerations. The announcement of automatic 5-day simple extensions last month was claimed by the pair as “big reform” achieved during their time on Senate, although they noted “there is still more work to do”. Whether our Senate representatives had anything to

do with this change is again doubtful. The current SRC President, Lauren Lancaster, spoke of Stricker-Phelps and Finch’s contribution to this decision of the Academic Board in similar terms to Sanagavarapu and Murphy.

“Aside from these two big changes, it is difficult to see what Finch and Stricker-Phelps have actually achieved while on Senate.”

Lancaster told Honi that “the students on senate... had no meaningful input into the reforms process, they did not engage with the working group and they rarely, if ever, engage with the SRC constructively”.

Again, although the decision of the Academic Board sees the delivery of a key campaign promise for Stricker-Phelps and Finch, it is highly questionable whether the pair had anything to do with it.

Aside from these two big changes, it is difficult to see what Finch and Stricker-Phelps have actually achieved while on Senate. Their other promises included “putting our education first”, “help hotlines”, “improve communication” and “promoting feedback loops”, all of which are impenetrably vague. This vagueness, rather than being an unfortunate by-product of Finch and Stricker-Phelps’ approach, seems to be a core strategy underpinning their campaign and time on the University Senate. Finch and Stricker-Phelps told Honi that their “biggest opportunity to shape USyd” was through their “contribution” to the Sydney in 2023 Strategy. They also cited the review into the allocation of SSFAF as a success in following through on campaign promises.

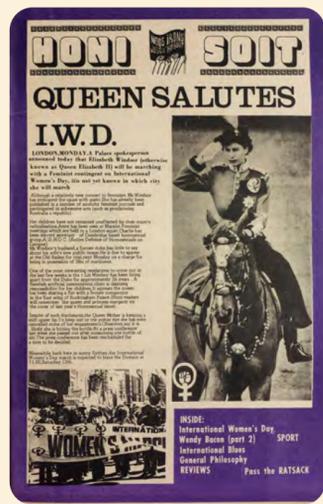
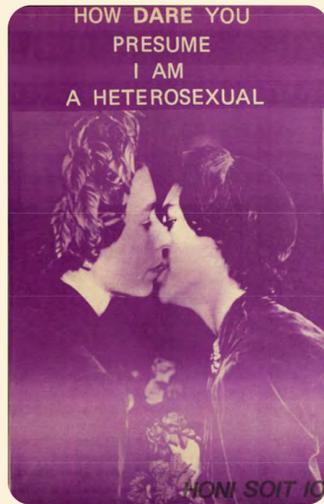
The ambiguity of Stricker-Phelps and Finch’s campaign promises make it difficult to assess whether they implemented their campaign promises. Has communication improved? Have feedback loops been promoted? Has our education been put first? It seems like these things haven’t happened. But even if they had, it would be impossible to know how much our student senate representatives had to do with it.

Finch and Stricker-Phelps’ emphasis on ‘contributions’ and ‘reviews’ has a similar problem. Their strategy deliberately makes it unclear what those contributions were, what the objective of the reviews are. Crucially, the student body is left in the dark on the most important question: will anything change?

When asked about the structural barriers to change facing student representatives on the Senate, Finch and Stricker-Phelps said that “we’ve faced surprisingly little structural barriers”, attributing this to the “cooperative, productive and outcomes focussed” approach of University Management. Such a statement is surprising considering the position of student representatives on the Senate, numbering just two on a 15-person board. It is also surprising given that key promises of Finch and Stricker-Phelps, including changes to Special Cons, semester lengths and ProctorU, weren’t within the orbit of the University Senate.

“[Stricker-Phelps and Finch]’s time on board was primarily to facilitate the pre-existing agenda of University Management, rather than actually engage with and represent students.

The fact that the only student voices on our University’s peak decision-making body encountered no structural barriers to their implementing campaign promises brings into question why they were there in the first place. To the point of Finch and Stricker-Phelps finding it harder to work with the SRC than with Management, the only conclusion left to make is that their time on board was primarily to facilitate the pre-existing agenda of University Management, rather than actually engage with and represent students. In an era of rampant corporatisation which threatens the student experience and the livelihoods of University staff, it appears there is nothing representative about the work our student representatives on Senate have done.



L-R, Bottom to top: Honi Soit 1995, Issue 25. Honi Soit 1967, Issue 10. Honi Soit 1977, Issue 2. Honi Soit 2022, Issue 6.

## Deal or No Deal? Should the Left do electoral deals?

### “No!” – Student Left Alliance

*Disclaimer: SLA is a factional grouping running in the SRC elections. Honi has published here a debate between SLA and Switchroots.*

SRC elections are crucial for the student Left. However, winning these elections should not come at the expense of building a strong student movement from the ground up. Student Left Alliance believes that the pre-election deals made by most factions and the bartering of political support for opportunistic factional gain is undermining the broader effort to build an engaged, politically coherent, and unified mass student movement. In short, we believe it is not just winning the election, but how we win, that matters.

The political strategy of the student union is decided based on the strength of the left - and right - wing factional blocs, and important resources are allocated to activist campaigns through office bearer positions and the presidency. Elections should be fiercely contested by all left-wing factions in order to secure a radical student union and its resources – on this we agree. However, we should not contest student elections simply to win these positions and resources. The election period is also a key moment to engage with students across the university, to challenge the apathy and disillusionment that the majority of students feel with ‘student politics’, and to convince them of left-wing politics and the need to take organised, radical action.

The focus on securing positions through negotiations and pre-election deals is ultimately self-defeating; this does not engage students in the movement or convince them of the political importance of voting Left in the elections. This approach encourages factions to use the promise of political support for a Left bloc to secure paid office bearer positions, only reinforcing the perception that many students have of the SRC as a political playground. Securing these positions months before the election is held, on the basis of the hypothetical strength of certain factions, is not “giving all students a say in who their office bearers are,” as has been claimed. “Giving away” positions in return for a faction’s votes at RepsElect subverts the possibility of genuine political contestation of these positions during either RepsElect or open collective elections, as the votes become a foregone conclusion.

The SRC should elect the best office bearers on merit. In the interests of building a stronger Left and stronger movements at Sydney Uni, office bearer positions should be held by candidates who are democratically endorsed by as many students involved in those campaigns as possible, based on their commitment to the campaigns and their experience as collaborative student activists. A backroom deal decided by a tiny minority of students can never represent the will of the student body in this way.

If Labor Right requires the General Secretary position in order to support a left-wing Education Officer and President, then they have no true claim to any position in the ‘Left bloc’ and we should call their bluff in a contested presidential election. Similarly, if

Socialist Alternative is unwilling to back a left-wing presidential candidate unless key positions are dealt to them, perhaps they are not best suited to these positions. Ultimately, if the Left does not secure the presidency and a Council majority in an open, contested election, we are wasting a major opportunity to engage with students and win them to our ideas, papering over the organising work that needs to be done to win in future.

The strength of the Left is not our ability to cut deals – our strength is our ability to mobilise a mass of students to fight for real change. Our task is to encourage students to be actively involved in campaigns in support of the staff strikes, for real climate action, for Indigenous justice, and addressing the cost of living crisis. This means using every opportunity that is available to politicise the student body, to encourage students to make an active choice in favour of these campaigns and left-wing ideas. If we win a Left SRC on the back of deals, and not mass support for these campaigns and grassroots involvement in the student movement, we are relying on a strategy of negotiation rather than mobilisation, and we are building our movement on sand. When conditions change, our success will fall out from beneath us, and the campaigns will be abandoned by factions only willing to support the Left if they get something in return.

SLA is a group of students from across the USyd collectives. We have worked alongside other education activists and NTEU comrades to build each and every strike through the EAG and across faculties. We have been shoulder to shoulder on the picket lines and shut down scab classes. We have organised consistently through the Enviro Collective to mobilise students through climate strike contingents, Student General Meetings, and mass walk-offs for climate action. This has been our focus in forming this campaign – to bring as many students as possible into these campaigns and the collectives, and to cut through the apathy many students feel towards ‘student politics’, activism, and SRC elections.

We will be using the opportunity of this election to mobilise students for the September 15 rally against casualisation, the September 24 climate strike, and the 48 hour staff strikes in Week 10. We encourage all students who share our vision of a more open, vibrant, and principled SRC to help

build a strong student movement that can win real change, not just elections.



### “Yes!” – Oscar Chaffey & Lauren Lancaster

*Disclaimer: Oscar is a former member of Switchroots and Lauren is the current Switchroots SRC President.*

The most famous day on the USyd stupid calendar is the often-acrimonious “RepsElect” meeting, in which over \$100,000 worth of stipends are awarded to paid office bearers and many other activist positions elected. For three years now, a supermajority deal has been signed between the campus far-left, Labor and international student factions to all but entirely lock the campus Liberals out of positions.

2022 looks extremely unlikely to be different. Lia Perkins was elected uncontested as the fourth consecutive Grassroots SRC president. The campus Liberals have not been a meaningful force in SRC elections since the defeat of Josie Jakovac in 2019. A left-wing supermajority seems the most plausible outcome of September’s SRC election.

The effect of such prolonged dominance by the left on the culture of student politics must not be overlooked. At minimum, you would need to be a fifth year (like one of your humble co-authors) to remember a RepsElect genuinely contested and won by right wing students.

While this era should, on face value, be celebrated by left wing students, the broader history of student politics has grimmer tales to tell of factions that enjoy prolonged eras of dominance. The Students for Education Action (SEA), organised much like modern day Grassroots, won ten straight SRC presidential elections in the 1990s before being defeated by the campus Liberals and never winning again. National Labor Students (NLS), the main Labor Left faction, enjoyed unparalleled dominance over the 2000s and early 2010s.

When there is no immediate threat of right wing control animating left wing students to action and critique, that energy is turned inwards. There is more time to debate what is a truly worthwhile political project. Defending your views is no doubt an invaluable exercise. This culture of critique is, however, fertile for the growth of a perennial but usually extremely marginal ideology: ultra-leftism, which can be best described as losing in style. A recent letter written by the Student Left Alliance (SLA) arguing against dealmaking by factions in elections is part of this proud tradition.

This article will rebut the central claims in the SLA’s letter and defend the deals that have characterised the last generation of student politics.

The SLA takes greatest umbrage with the allegedly undemocratic nature of deals. It is unclear that deferring entirely to collectives like the EAG is necessarily the best way to elect important campus-wide political positions. Direct

elections within spaces as politically contested as the EAG are a surefire way to cause factions to start stacking meetings. Many students vote for their visions in elections and we shouldn’t dismiss them as immediately worthless if they are not organised within the EAG.

The SLA has never been denied involvement in election deals; they have repeatedly refused to engage with them. When they have, it has been opportunistic. In 2021, Solidarity (part of the SLA) made an eleventh-hour bid for a paid Education Officer position that had been dealt to Socialist Alternative much earlier.

Even if there is some trade-off between democracy and factional deals, we are prepared to make it. Elections at USyd are not fought as binary left-right contests but instead between several distinct factions. It is extremely challenging to win the simple majority that is needed to elect the eight paid positions in the SRC. Many factions, rightly or wrongly, care uniquely about paid positions like the Education Officer and the arrangement of these positions is often the justification for and centerpiece of election deals.

A deal allowing the EAG to decide the Education Officers is a non-starter for most factions. Deals need to be amenable to other factions for them to sign. We believe it is entirely sensible to make concessions to sign deals, rather than abstain from them and be locked out for a year.

We think that left-wing control of the SRC has several unambiguous benefits. It gives activist projects and collectives tens of thousands of dollars to expand their reach and fund mutual aid initiatives. SRC positions are often quite meaningful to gaining legitimacy with students to call actions like student general meetings. This is to say nothing about the Honi Soit censorship or eroded SSAF allocations that would come with right wing operators.

We have always been entirely prepared to politically contest elections. While the SRC election is an opportunity to reach students, the health of campus politics must obviously exist beyond this two week contest. This is why, when given the chance to guarantee left wing control of the SRC, we take it.

The claim that a deal with Unity is to ally with the Right is hardly an empirically supported claim. Three successive supermajority deals with these groups have been successful at locking out the worst right-wing actors, the campus Liberals, from any influence on the student union. The death of right wing institutional knowledge is, on its own, an outcome worth defending.

Unity members have been extremely active in organising strike solidarity. We think that matters. This is also true of Socialist Alternative (SA), who have demonstrated willingness to actively engage with student unions and education activism.

Left-wing success in student unions is neither inevitable nor simple to repeatedly execute. Being left wing means nothing if not for the actualisation of our political goals in the real world. That is the principle we care most about, and it is why we will continue to do what ultra-leftists abhor: engaging in the messy, even imperfect, work of elections.

## SRC Election Guide: Meet your candidates

SRC election campaigns have once again returned to campus. The elections for SRC President and Honi Soit Editorship were uncontested – you can find out about the people who will represent you in 2023 below. Councillor and NUS Delegate positions remain up for grabs. Turn over the page to read our interviews with the factions that are contesting those elections.

Disclaimer: Zara Zadro is a current member of Switch. She was not involved in any of our election coverage.

### Lia Perkins Faction: Grassroots President Quiz score:

62%

Third-year Arts/Advanced Studies student and current SRC Education Officer, Lia Perkins, secured an easy victory in this year’s race for SRC President when the position went uncontested for the second time in three years. Like four of the last five Presidents, she hails from the non-party-affiliated left-wing coalition between Switch and Grassroots.

Perkins was a composed and articulate presence in her Honi interview, generally making clear political arguments about the direction of the SRC and highlighting the experience she has gained from dedicated activism within the body.

As a consequence of that experience, Perkins has a distinct focus on the importance of activism. She counted properly funding the collectives and introducing a broader range of students to activism within her most important policies. She described her term as Education Officer, which has been coloured by the context of the NTEU’s

enterprise bargaining campaign, as helping her to “see the ability of students to make change and organise on a campus wide basis”.

When most students on campus would struggle to remember a time Grassroots did not hold the SRC Presidency, an obvious question is, what is there left to be done? Can the faction continue its dominance on campus, or will its influence start to atrophy?

Perkins is firm that the faction’s leadership has been a success, pointing to a series of effective activist campaigns and the introduction of services such as Foodhub. However, she notes that COVID-19 marred Liam Donohoe’s and Swapnik Sanagavarapu’s respective Presidencies. Further, she argues that maintaining the SRC’s services and campaigns takes continued investment and support, something she feels is best performed by independent, left-wing students.

Perkins believes strongly in building mass movements. She criticised the proposed Universities Accord and other lobbying approaches for their toothlessness. Asked how education activism could continue to expand, Perkins suggested that its most important task was to engage politically with students from marginalised backgrounds, who could intuitively empathise with university workers.

All the same, Perkins is not a total idealist. She was happy to admit to pragmatism where she could see

it securing an overarching victory for the Left. Perkins was willing to support lobbying campaigns in limited circumstances, such as when combined with student protests in defeating the 12-week semesters proposal last year.

She rejected the Student Left Alliance’s characterisation of election deal-making as undemocratic, saying that ultimately Grassroots is “working with other people who share a vision about what the SRC should be.” Instead, she said, the Left should be realistic that achieving a majority on council was the only way to secure ever-important OB positions.

She was similarly unwilling to buy into Socialist Alternative’s critiques of service provision, describing it as an “important role” of the SRC that allows the organisation to expand its reach.

Nevertheless, it is very clear that Perkins is, first and foremost, an activist. Her less-than-impressive quiz result reflects a particular weakness in her knowledge of University management: she struggled to identify members of the University Senate and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

Engagement with University management is a part of the President’s role. SRC Presidents have routinely shut down fledgling proposals that would be bad for students, and negotiation with the University is required to secure the SSAF funding that sustains the SRC. With this context, Perkins may face something of a steep learning curve before she can

comfortably navigate the consultative duties of President.

Where Perkins has unique strength, though, is in her sensitivity to the struggles of low-SES students and her emphasis on creating connections between working class staff and students.

She saw the unmanageable cost of living as the primary issue facing young people today, and argued that increased visibility for the SRC should be achieved by reaching out to working class students, especially those hailing from Western Sydney.

A novel policy, which could be very meaningful for many students, is the proposed establishment of a caseworker to assist with housing issues, perhaps inspired by Perkins own record of activism on public housing and housing security.

Perkins’ solidarity with ordinary, casualised students and staff who are stretched thin and left behind by capitalism is her most important attribute, and deeply needed within our elitist university.

Although she is not perfectly prepared for the role, she shows that learning from activism can inform a campaign for presidency in real and meaningful ways.



### Shake for Honi Honi Quiz score:

66%

Following the second uncontested Honi Soit election in three years, Shake for Honi will edit your student newspaper in 2022. The ticket consists of Misbah Ansari, Katarina Butler, Luke Cass, Bipasha Chakraborty, Ethan Floyd, Christine Lai, Veronica Lenard, Luke Mesterovic, Eamonn Murphy, and Andy Park.

Shake (represented in the interview by Butler and Mesterovic, and in the quiz by Cass and Lai) is proposing a platform that reflects the priorities of Honi editors over the last decade. They admit this – with Mesterovic explaining that there is much the ticket wishes to maintain.

“Our vision for Honi is, in one sentence, something that is bold, provocative, cultural, whilst holding management to account with our radical student voice,” he said.

Shake hopes to emulate the investigative journalism into the colleges conducted by Wet in 2017, the culture writing of Bloom in 2021, and the coverage of NTEU strikes in 2022.

They will continue the STEM and Environment section from this year and broadly believe that Honi’s social media presence should continue as is.

With that said, they are evidently moved by the opportunity to edit the country’s only weekly student newspaper, speaking at length about its importance within Australia’s higher education landscape. They have several strong policy aims of varying ambitiousness.

At the achievable end sits their plan for more multimedia comedy and Instagram reels, as well as an ongoing higher education live blog to cover developing stories within the sector. They hope to create more explainer articles about student politics, which they plan to link prolifically through their coverage.

Despite the team’s middling quiz result, Cass in particular has demonstrated impressive initiative in chasing down university news, and recalled relatively esoteric facts about university management and the NTEU with ease. This puts the ticket in a good position to fulfil their promise of ample and accessible university coverage.

Excitingly, Veronica Lenard promises web design expertise to the paper, hopefully providing much needed upgrades to the labyrinthine Honi website.

More ambitious is Shake’s suite of policies regarding editor-reporter relationships. The ticket plans to hold semi-weekly reporter meetings and was unwilling to reject pitches, preferring to encourage repitching or publish articles online. When challenged on the viability of this plan, given the large volume of pitches typically received, Shake emphasised that “most of us are going part-time, which we are really lucky to do”.

This may be true, but they will likely face challenges in sustaining meeting attendance and allowing weak pitches to accumulate.

There are some dimensions in which Shake appears scantily prepared for editorship. In several respects, Shake is still solidifying their personality, politics and procedures as a ticket.

A joke from Honi that ‘name the members of your ticket’ was the interview’s hardest question hit a little too close to home: inauspiciously, it took Butler and Mesterovic three attempts to accurately recall and pronounce all their ticketmates’ names.

Despite Cass’ ample news-writing experience and ability, it is unclear that the rest of the ticket share his experience.

On paper, Shake has written many news articles, but most of those articles cover protests, which is relatively simple and involves limited active pursuit of stories. When asked how workload would be split between editors, Butler and Mesterovic explained that Cass would be primarily responsible for managing news, a massive and time-consuming responsibility that is usually shared between the editors as a group.

At the time of the interview, Shake had not yet substantively discussed how they would handle potentially sensitive articles or legally problematic news, beyond that they would employ a supermajority voting system.

Further, a number of the claims made by the ticket shifted or were unclear.

In Shake’s policy statement they promise to revive Indigenous Honi, an initiative proposed by Ethan Floyd, who is Indigenous. However, Indigenous Honi is an autonomous publication which must be edited by the SRC Indigenous Collective. Shake’s interview struggled to identify concrete ways in which they would improve this process.

A promise to provide ‘critical’ review coverage fell apart under scrutiny, with Butler and Mesterovic conceding that they would prefer to encourage students in the performing arts than be critical, if the two were at odds. Indeed, asked about ticketmate Ethan Floyd’s recent review of Arts Revue, which had a particularly harsh first draft, the pair argued the edit should have gone even further in neutralising Floyd’s acerbic tone. So much for criticality.

The ticket also changed their tune on whether Honi should publish footage of police brutality at protests, having initially suggested we should censor videos in case of problematic legal consequences for victims of police violence. Ultimately, they said that – given a video of brutality against an individual they could not identify or receive posting permissions from – they would post it.

An undoubted benefit of a contested Honi election is that it compels tickets to have the difficult internal discussions that clarify their policy approach early. This has not occurred in 2022, which in some ways makes Shake a weaker ticket. Despite this, their evident passion for the paper and a clear respect for Honi’s contributors provides a strong foundation for further conversations to take place.



## Switch

Seizing the top score in this year's Sinaugural Council Quiz, Switch was represented by SRC President Lauren Lancaster and General Secretary Alana Ramshaw. Switch is a non-binding faction, initially an alternate brand of Grassroots, but later became a sister faction.

In the interview, Switch assured voters that they could be trusted to enact left-wing outcomes, following Switch University of Sydney Union (USU) Board Directors' mixed records on strikes and the environment.

"People are autonomous and some of them left the faction. Before [they did], they were one foot out of the door before they did those things," Lancaster told *Honi*. "The people who remained in our caucus have consistently been really effective left-wing forces on [the USU] Board and we're really proud of them for that."

Switch and Grassroots were rocked by revelations of misogyny and bullying within the factions towards the end of last year. When asked about how Switch has approached the issue, Ramshaw emphasised the problems were not unique to the faction, but StuPol at large,



and added that it's "a lesson learned and they've been applied this year in a constructive way."

When asked what legacy would emerge from the faction's recent stint in power, the pair cited Switch's support of the NTEU actions this year, the establishment of Foodhub, the defeat of Pip Pattinson's 12-week semester proposal in 2021, five-day simple extensions, doubling the stipends of *Honi Soit* editors, and the creation of the Disabilities Space. It's certainly true that the faction has delivered on many of their election promises, despite the challenging context of the last few years.

Although Switch must maintain a delicate balance between electoral success, integrity and their left-wing values, Ramshaw and Lancaster are clear about their achievements so far. Switch continues to justify their presence in our student unions.

## Grassroots

In equal second place on the quiz is Switch's perennial ally, Grassroots. Represented by incoming President Lia Perkins and current SRC Environment Officer Tiger Perkins (no relation), the faction affirmed the agenda pursued by the faction over the last three years, identifying greater visibility for the SRC as a key priority.

Asked about the drop-off in contestation within the SRC elections, Grassroots suggested that generational gaps in stupol involvement due to COVID-19 was to blame. They rebutted claims from Student Left Alliance that stupol deals undermine campus democracy, saying that the SRC elections still represent an opportunity to make political arguments to students.

Like Switch, Grassroots was keen to emphasise the cultural change the faction has experienced since revelations of sexism last year. The process has involved "lots of caucusing and accountability processes," Tiger said.

They identified accessibility as vital to the continued development of the SRC, pointing to current Women's Officer Dashie Prasad's suggestion of the SRC



attending high school careers fairs in Western Sydney as a way to bring unionism to a more diverse set of students.

Asked about whether activism can coexist usefully with service provision, both Perkins assured *Honi* that the two are "mutually supportive." They expressed pride in the faction's record in establishing FoodHub. Nevertheless, they maintained the value of a staunch SRC, arguing that the left should resist the temptation to try to negotiate or deal their way into better higher education policy via the universities accord.

All up, Grassroots is once again presenting an independent, left-wing voice in student politics, bolstered by a number of experienced activists within their ranks. After a comfortable three years, they may lack an intensely novel agenda, but they're certainly consistent.

ART BY SAM RANDLE

## Stand Up

In a comfortable equal second place is Student Unity (Labor Right), running under the brand Stand Up. Current SRC General Secretary Grace Lagan and General Executive Daniel Bowron sat down for the interview and the quiz, painting the faction as striking the delicate balance between activism and accessibility.

Having recently disaffiliated from the national faction (with which they maintain a "working relationship"), Stand Up self-described as being a "broad church" in which "a wide range of philosophies" congregate.

Asked what this practically looks like in terms of maintaining a working faction, they told us that they cohere over big ticket issues like strikes, while smaller issues attract "interesting discussions." While they shared the far-left's concerns with the Albanese Government's Universities Accord, they viewed it, in principle, as potentially productive.



Similarly, they added that lobbying the government could be useful on a case-by-case basis, but were willing to criticise the Labor government for failing to go far enough on climate action. They described the perceived divide between services and activism as "manufactured".

Despite claiming to support activism, they struggled to explain why a Stand Up ticket promised to 'redirect funding from endless activism', saying that it reflected a frustration with the SRC's messaging confining itself to activist statements. This frustration is reflected, perhaps more productively, in Stand Up's policy commitments to better publicity for the SRC, and to attract better funding through grants and SSAF applications.

## Lefties

Cinching one of the better scores in the quiz thanks to *PULP Magazine* Senior Editor Marlow Hurst and Editor Patrick McKenzie, Lefties for SRC openly identify as a joke ticket, focusing exclusively on the plight facing left-handed students, who are "sidelined, ignored and otherwise put down".

They aim to inject a shot of levity into an otherwise intense campaigning season. For McKenzie, student politics can be "cynical or polarised", resulting in student disengagement. Their ticket hopes to "galvanise" disengaged sections of the University.

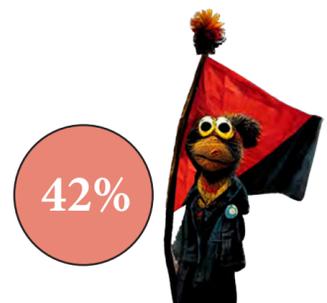
When questioned on which of the past SRC joke tickets that they aligned with, McKenzie and Hurst stated an affinity with *Picture of Spider-Man for Honi*, a joke *Honi* ticket where 2021 Editor, Samuel Garrett, first entered student politics.



"I think that's the guiding star for joke tickets," Hurst told *Honi*. "It has a strong thesis, it [*Pictures of Spider-Man for Honi*] uses cultural references to gain political capital."

Though Lefties for SRC are open to preference deals with anyone, they categorically ruled out any partnership with Liberal factions — they are lefties after all. They pledged that, if elected, they would invest serious attention in the Council, including attending the Council's monthly meetings.

## Engineers



the President of SUPRA is Benny Shen, reflecting a failure to even distinguish international student representatives on campus. Nor could they cite findings from the National Student Safety Survey with any level of specificity.

Although SLA features a number of experienced activists, their commitment to the SRC is unclear.



*Honi Soit* approached Engineers for SRC, however, owing to the group's commitments, they declined an appointment.

Over the past few years, USyD's engineers have coalesced into a formidable coalition in campus politics, successfully electing its members to high-profile positions like current USU President Cole Scott-Curwood and SRC Vice President Emily Storey. Tackling perceptions that stupol prioritises Arts and Law students, the brand provides representation for Engineers and by proxy, the interests of STEM students. With a strong voter base in the Peter Nicol Russell (PNR) precinct, the Engineers could play kingmaker should numbers become tight.

## Left Action

Socialist Alternative's Eddie Stephenson and Ella Haid provided an unsurprisingly radical set of policy goals for an SRC, including an end to coal mining and student debt, and protesting systemic racism within the police. Achieving a competent quiz result, Left Action's overwhelming political focus is mass activism.

Stephenson was keen to emphasise that Left Action is not synonymous with SALT, however a number of key SALT figures appear throughout the grouping's tickets.

Left Action wants the SRC to focus wholly on activism, viewing service provision as a waste of time. Indeed, when questioned on whether they oppose initiatives such as the SRC x USU Foodhub, they answered in the affirmative.

"There's a limited number of Office Bearers, there's a limited amount of time you have as a student, what are you going to spend all your time doing?" Haid said.

Asked how they would respond to students struggling with hunger, the group argued that it is not the job of the SRC to compensate for government inaction.

"Look at fucking Sri Lanka right now, like those people are starving, because



they're in a cost of living crisis... Look at the UK, think they're not starving in a cost of living crisis with inflation going to reach 18 per cent?" Haid said.

When pressed on criticisms surrounding Left Action, and Socialist Alternative's unfriendliness to disabled activists, Stephenson and Haid dismissed these grievances as a "smear".

As in previous years, Left Action is expressly opposed to collective autonomy. This is the longstanding custom that Office Bearer positions representing identity-based collectives, like ACAR and WoCo, should be chosen from the respective collectives. Stephenson argued that collective autonomy permits collectives to sidestep students' democratic will, subverting democracy in the process.

Though an ever-present power on campus politics, being active in organising most education protests, Left Action and SALT remain a polarising political presence.

## Artistry

Current USU Board Director Alexander Poirier (Unity) is running on and managing Artistry, a burgeoning coalition of Conservatorium students. Artistry inherits Ignite's 2021 platform, seeking to advance the interests of Con students and expand to other Arts students.

Poirier's rationale for Artistry's campaign is that SRC representation has "been really helpful in getting us more involved with the [student-staff] strikes, ensuring that these voices are heard and we're able to collaborate a lot more".

When questioned on his ties to the Labor Party, Poirier contended that "no party is perfect" and credited Labor for opening the "first Conservatorium in the British empire".

However, when quizzed on NSW Labor's backing of anti-road blocking laws in March, Poirier was willing to call NSW Opposition Leader Chris Minns



out. He condemned Minns' support of Perrotte's anti-protest laws earlier in the year as "hypocritical" and suggested it undermined the right to organise.

Poirier categorically ruled out any partnership with the Liberals, including 'Libdependent' tickets who are Liberals under the guise of independents: "We will not be making deals with the Libs. That's not happening."

Overall, Artistry's pitch is one primarily oriented towards Conservatorium and arts students' interests; whether they might repeat Ignite's success last year remains to be seen.

## Independents Inc.



*Honi Soit* approached Independents Inc's Michael Grenier, who rejected an appointment and offered the following message: "We are the Independents Inc. Fuck racism and fuck the Socialists :)"

Among the group's priorities are calling for increased transparency in the SRC, pushing for the SRC to fully publish its expenditure, stipends and decision-making. However, the vast majority of this information is already publicly available via Executive minutes, SRC meetings, and *Honi*, so it is hard to see the coalition offering anything new to students.

## Colleges

Represented by Tom Cleary and Sydney University Liberal Club (SULC) member Bryson Constable, the Colleges' candidates have an unusually competent grasp of the institution they are running for. Their faction aims to defend the Colleges from "attack, ridicule and prejudice" from SRC activists.

The pair sees the SRC's activism against educational cuts as vital, they want the student movement to keep their sights set firmly on campus, arguing that a "piecemeal" approach "is the best way going forward" — a broadly unambitious approach that reflects a distrust in left-wing mobilisation.

Asked whether the colleges need the representation, given high-profile partnerships with the USU and SUSF and their substantial privilege, Constable replied that the funding that the colleges receive trickles down and "is in the interests of the entire Uuniversity community".

The pair argued college students could act as volunteers for initiatives like Foodhub. Yet given college students are already at liberty to volunteer, it is unclear that this policy constitutes much more than additional marketing.



On the persistent issue of sexual harassment and assault in the colleges, as extensively documented in 2022's NSSS, the pair pointed to higher rates of violence in Clubs & Societies than in colleges and St Paul's decision to become co-ed as evidence of an improved culture.

Asked how they can accurately reflect the scope of views among college students, they suggested their base is a politically diverse one. "We have representation across the political spectrum with who is running, which I think is very important. If you take them as an aggregate, you would probably average out at the exact centre," Constable said. "Evidence for that is Onor Nottle on the USU Board."

Although they demonstrated some familiarity with the SRC, the brand remains mired in a conservative vision that could be met with significant resistance if other tickets' categorical refusal to work with Liberal-affiliated tickets are anything to go by.

## Amplify

Following a relatively subdued few years for the National Labor Students (Labor Left) at USyD, the faction is running a young-but-enthusiastic set of candidates under Amplify for SRC. Rose Donnelly and Jack Scanlan appeared initially nervous and frankly apologetic for their quiz performance in their interview, but ultimately advocated for a spirited and optimistic campus culture.

Acknowledging that members of their faction have been derisive of SRC Collectives in SRC meetings throughout the year, the pair nonetheless argued fairly that stupol can be cliquy and intimidating, especially for young or neurodivergent students.

Their policies were informed by this critique, with an emphasis on advocacy for disability support and mental health, and healthy opposition to neoliberal university policies like the introduction of OLE units.

Despite slightly vague details of their involvement in Collectives this year, they reflected on the importance of participating in NTEU strikes and expressed more reservations about the universities accord than NLS previously



has. They condemned the NSW Labor Party's unwillingness to block anti-protest laws earlier this year and agree to demands from the nursing and teaching unions.

Amplify — unsurprisingly given the name — has an ethos connected with campus music culture, spearheaded by faction musician Gerard Buttigieg. However, the ethos lacks concrete policy to back it up, with Donnelly and Scanlan instead arguing that Buttigieg's personal commitment to performing arts would permeate the SRC.

Overall, Amplify has an admirable enthusiasm for campus life, but faces challenges in rebuilding institutional knowledge and growing their presence on campus. They'll be helped by a commendable frankness about their shortcomings.

## Student Left Alliance

Student Left Alliance is a new coalition formed by Trotskyist faction Solidarity, anarchist organisation Black Flag, and an assortment of unaligned far-left students. According to James Sherriff (Black Flag) and Angus Dermody (Solidarity), the coalition aims to provide an approach to the student movement steeped in left unity. Asked how they would navigate the potentially tense politics of such a pluralist coalition, they explained they hoped to engage in productive debate and straightforward majority votes where needed.

Interestingly, they have spent a lot of the campaign levelling critique at fellow hard-left factions Socialist Alternative and Switchroots, for making pre-election deals with Labor factions, which they consider unprincipled (you can read more about this stance on p. 8).

When asked whether, in theory, they would prefer to lose an election in the short-run if it forced the Left to organise more effectively the next year, they agreed they would, emphasising that a key purpose of student elections should be to make political arguments to students.

Unlike SALT, the SLA is not outright against service provision like FoodHub, although they did admit it was not their priority, preferring mass movements.

Despite broadly being able to thoughtfully outline their politics — particularly on questions about what revolutionary reforms for students could look like — SLA's performance on the quiz was woeful. The faction displayed what seemed like an outright disinterest in the recent history of the SRC, the workings of university management, and government education ministers. Lazily, they claimed

## Lift



*Honi Soit* attempted to contact Lift for SRC, but did not receive a response before publication.

## Penta



*Honi Soit* attempted to contact Penta, but did not receive a response before publication.



refused to elaborate: "I don't really have a comment."

Garrett identifies as a centrist, much like her manager K Philips. Given the formal alliance forged with Independents Inc and sharing the same manager, one can expect that the two groups will share preferences and politics.

FEATURE:

## YOUR TEACHERS ARE VOTING TOO!



For most students, campus elections occur because of student politics. Campaigners coalesce around student unions, student representatives on university boards, the executives of certain large societies, and so on. Primarily, they discuss student issues. It is students who are enfranchised as voters.

But many students likely do not realise that, even as the SRC, NUS, and University Senate elections loom, there have been another set of elections unfolding on campuses around Australia. Thousands of staff at universities across the country have cast their ballots in this year's National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) elections.

The elections, which happen every four years, are an opportunity for NTEU members to have their say about the people who represent them within the union, both at a national and a branch level. This year's elections have seen an unusual degree of contestation. The vote for the National Executive was contested in 2022 for the first time in two decades. At the University of Sydney, a three-way race for key positions within USyd's NTEU Branch saw fervent discussions about the Union's strategy.

What's more, all of this took place in the context of a period of enterprise bargaining on a number of different campuses. University staff have voted to strike and showed up to the picket lines in unprecedented numbers. So, what does this flurry of activity mean for the NTEU? How will the recent elections impact organising? And what is left to be done?

### What are the NTEU elections?

The NTEU elections are a fairly large-scale event. The Union has over 28,000 members Australia-wide, and all branch, division, and national voting occurs simultaneously.

The key national positions up for grabs, which receive a full four-year term, are on the National Executive: President, General Secretary, and Assistant Secretary. Positions on the National Council have two-year terms and are also up for election – either via delegates for branches with more than 300 members, or via direct election for those with less.

Divisions represent the states and territories. Each division elects a Division Secretary, Assistant Secretary, and representatives to the Division Council.

Branches represent individual campuses. They have a committee formed from a Branch President, Vice Presidents (Academic and General), Branch Secretary, and ordinary members.

On all levels, Indigenous voters elect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

representatives who vote in the Union's ATSI caucus. Casual academics also elect a designated Casuals Representative who sits on the National Tertiary Casuals Committee.

### What happened this year?

This year saw two tickets contest the election for the National Executive – something of a historical anomaly. Not only has it been 20 years since the last contested election; it is only the second contested election in the Union's history.

The incumbents ran on the ticket *Strong United NTEU*. Alison Barnes, an industrial relations researcher hailing from Macquarie University, ran for a second term as NTEU President. Gabe Gooding, who joined the Union as a professional staff member at the University of Western Australia, ran for re-election as Assistant Secretary. USyd academic and current NSW Division Secretary, Damien Cahill, ran for General Secretary, replacing retiring General Secretary Matthew McGowan.

### "The vote for the National Executive was contested in 2022 for the first time in two decades."

The challengers, *A New NTEU*, emerged out of a background of dissatisfaction with the direction of the union over the last four years.

Fahad Ali, a casual academic within the University of Sydney's School of Life and Environmental Sciences, contested the President position. La Trobe University casual researcher and teacher Anastasia Kanjere contested General Secretary, while Andrew Beitzel, an Indigenous man and professional staff member at the University of Queensland, ran for Assistant Secretary.

The election was plagued with administrative problems. Many members struggled to access election information or update their voter information ahead of the postal vote, meaning they faced difficulties and delays in obtaining ballots. The Australian Electoral Commission administered the election, eventually extending the deadline to receive ballots in response to the delays.

Perhaps these issues contributed to what was ultimately a low turnout of around 5,000 people – less than 20 per cent of the membership.

Though the AEC has yet to confirm the result, it appears *Strong United* have emerged victorious. *A New NTEU* told *Honi* they were pleased with their share of the vote.

"We got something like 30 per cent of the vote, which is not insignificant," said Ali.

Counting is ongoing for the other elections, so the result of USyd's potentially tight three-way race remains to be seen.

*Rank and File Action (RAFA)* – the grouping behind current Branch President Nick Riemer – ran a number of candidates in the branch election. Notably, USyd historian David Brophy stood for Vice-President (Academic) and Greens Councillor Dylan Griffiths ran for Vice-President (General).

*RAFA* professes a rank-and-file focus, aiming for a union that builds member engagement in order to sustain activism. They also highlight a focus on social justice, with their website noting: "We believe in taking a stand against racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, war and nuclear proliferation, and for causes like climate justice, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice, and Palestinian liberation."

Dani Cotton, a *RAFA* candidate for Branch Committee and the current USyd NTEU Casuals Representative, described the grouping to *Honi* as being "left-wing and non-sectarian", taking in members from a broad-left set of political perspectives, including socialists, Greens members and Labor party members.

*NTEU Fightback* – featuring current Branch Committee members Alma Torlakovic and Jennifer Huch-Hoogvliet – also frame themselves as a left-wing option.

Torlakovic told *Honi* the ticket is "the 'no concessions' caucus in the union, meaning we are against making concessions to management on our hard-won wages and conditions. We are for a militant strike campaign to push back against job cuts and the cost-of-living crisis and win a wage rise above inflation – we are the only people fighting for CPI + 2.5 per cent."

### "Amid the campaigns, students might be wondering what the NTEU elections mean for education. What kind of political questions are being contested?"

*Fightback* has received support from Socialist Alternative, although not all members of the ticket are in the organisation.

The third ticket in the race is *Thrive*. Their candidate for Vice President (Academic) is incumbent Maryanne Large, who is an Associate Professor in the Department of Physics and also sits on the University Senate. Their lead candidate for Committee is John Buchanan, who has been involved in the Union's bargaining team at USyd.

### The NTEU elections prove that campus democracy isn't just for students.

Ellie Stephenson and Carmeli Argana report on the NTEU elections occurring across Australia,

ART BY ELLIE STEPHENSON

*Thrive's* campaign emphasises the importance of strategy and constructiveness. They told *Honi*, "We need both persuasion and activism. It's not a question of either/or, but knowing when to use them, and on whom."

### The politics of the union: What do the elections represent?

Amid the campaigns, students might be wondering what the NTEU elections mean for education. What kind of political questions are being contested? What visions of higher education are at stake?

An important starting point for understanding the race is the context of the Jobs Protection Framework (JPF). The JPF was proposed by the NTEU in 2020, in the early stages of the pandemic, in a controversial attempt to save jobs that were threatened by COVID-19.

It involved staff taking a voluntary pay cut in exchange for the preservation of what the Union estimated at the time would be 12,000 jobs.

The incumbent National Executive spearheaded the policy and advocated for it extensively.

The JPF received a great deal of criticism from many NTEU members, who suggested that they should not have to sacrifice their pay and conditions in order to keep their jobs. Two years on, with universities having returned financial surpluses (in some cases, very large one), the JPF appears less than credible.

*Honi* spoke to *A New NTEU's* Fahad Ali to discuss why the ticket contested the election for National Executive. Ali had both procedural and political critiques of the JPF.

"It was a proposal that was negotiated in secret at the very start of the pandemic... It was presented to members without any process of democratic discussion and what it aimed to do was save a number of jobs in exchange for taking quite a substantial pay cut," he said.

"It's very, very hard to recover from once you have taken a pay cut voluntarily," he added, "and it's bad that our impulse was not to fight and advocate for members."

This strategic disagreement is a key premise of *A New NTEU's* campaign – a disagreement about the extent to which the Union should be willing to make deals and sacrifices with university management.

Ali said that this transcends the disagreement over the JPF: "It sits within a larger constellation of issues within the Union."

Disputes over how enterprise bargaining should proceed also fit within the constellation, representing another dimension to the practice of trading off particular staff conditions to secure other benefits – a practice some consider insufficiently optimistic about the Union's capacity to win absolute improvements to workers' rights.

Ali pointed to the last round of Enterprise Bargaining negotiations at USyd, which happened in 2017. Following Murdoch University's successful application to the Fair Work Commission to terminate their EBA, the NTEU at USyd ceded ground to the University.

"The national leadership of the Union was so freaked out about the termination [at Murdoch], that the General Secretary at the time flew to Sydney to meet with the Vice-Chancellor behind closed doors, pushing the branch towards prematurely terminating our EBA campaign, telling us that we couldn't be so bold and audacious," Ali told *Honi*.

Instead of participating in these negotiations, *A New NTEU* argues the Union should deploy its sizable industrial defence fund to support branches to take part in coordinated industrial action.

Perhaps this focus on branch-level mobilisation is becoming more popular, given it is shared as a key policy goal within *Strong United's* platform, which cites the importance of additional funding and training for delegates to assist with branch level democracy.

*Strong United* is also responsive to the emergent context of university surpluses, using universities' great wealth as an impetus to argue for reforms to ensure stable funding and to force universities to abandon corporate strategies like casualisation.

That the JPF and other instances of the NTEU prioritising deals over building rank-and-file power has incited such a lasting response indicates an appetite for a more

government. That means we need to encourage delegates networks and real on the ground organising," she said.

Cotton agreed with Ali that the conclusion of the 2017 Enterprise Bargaining was premature.

"We have a very different leadership to the last round of strikes. The last round of strikes were really wound up very rapidly out of a fear that our Enterprise Agreement would be terminated. That meant that issues that we were fighting really strongly for were taken off the agenda," she said.

### "At heart, many of these problems stem from a top-down University management that often does not understand what is happening on the ground. But our members certainly do."

She added that the National Executive challenge reflects the frustration across campuses with an insufficiently combative union.

"That challenge came, in my view, from the JPF. So it's welcome, but I think we should also be frank because there has been a real dissatisfaction, there are some issues that need to be dealt with."

Representing *Thrive*, Maryanne Large told *Honi* that many of the problems facing higher education come from a failure to engage democratically with staff.

"At heart, many of these problems stem from a top-down University management that often does not understand what is happening on the ground. But our members certainly do," she said.

"The University has become increasingly managerial/corporate in the last 20 years. Power is dominantly held by a small group of people who are not well connected to ordinary staff, or how the University actually works. There must be a mechanism for staff to exert genuine influence in the direction of the University. The Union is that mechanism. There really isn't any other."

*Thrive's* conception of the role of the NTEU identified that the Union has an obligation to work for individual members, too, by defending them against problems like wage theft and discrimination.

An emphasis for *Thrive* is growing the Union, and they contend that acrimony between different political factions is counterproductive to that end.

"Differences of opinion help us to explore the problems and develop more creative solutions, but when the conflict is about processes or personalities, it weakens us. It really damages the Union," Large told *Honi*.

When asked how the election's timing – amid an EBA campaign – had affected bargaining, Large said, "it has required people to stand against each other when they should be standing together."

"It has taken time and focus that would have better been spent on other issues, including the EBA and change management proposals."

Alma Torlakovic from *Fightback*, argued to *Honi* that only her ticket had effectively stood up for radicalism within the enterprise bargaining campaign.

"We do not have illusions that weaker

forms of industrial action like work bans are going to win the log of claims we voted on," Torlakovic said, "*NTEU Fightback* are the reason we have had so many days of strike this year. We have consistently pushed for militant strike action on the branch committee and in members' meetings, shifting the terrain of debate to the left."

While agreeing with the other tickets that growing the Union mattered, Torlakovic suggested that a policy of aggressively pursuing strikes is the only way to really win over new members.

"People join the Union when it is fighting to improve wages or conditions. This is why so many people join during bargaining, and after strikes and pickets," Torlakovic said.

The election at USyd has seen heated contestation, including on social media, between members of the *Fightback* and *RAFA* tickets. *Fightback* has claimed that *RAFA*, despite its ostensible leftism, has been overly cautious throughout NTEU debates about their bargaining strategy.

In a recent article in *Red Flag*, Torlakovic contended that *RAFA* members had opposed *Fightback* proposals for longer and more frequent strikes, and condemned the strategy of administration bans that has been proposed by *RAFA* representatives.

Cotton rejected *Fightback's* characterisation, saying: "I think that this election has had a shocking amount of outright lies... the degree of the *Fightback* lies is like, we started trying to respond to all of them and it just sounds crazy."

"Our record speaks for itself," she added.

### The future of democracy: elections and the Union's future

All tickets in the election emphasised the need to engage with staff at universities, identifying that the structural silencing of staff voices is foundational to the exploitative and academically defunct character of Australian universities.

In one sense, then, the NTEU elections do represent a valuable mechanism for staff to envision a better system of higher education. They are also an accountability mechanism and a health check for the union, to ensure that it is aptly reflecting staff's values and strategic preferences.

In addition to acting as an expression of frustration with policies like the Jobs Protection Framework, elections are also an opportunity to shift the images people hold of a unionist and an academic.

Fahad Ali discussed his identity as a casual academic and a gay Palestinian man. "Someone like me running for a position like this doesn't happen. There has been very little diversity," he said.

"I would hope that by running we've demonstrated that you can run, you can get a good result, and hopefully we can one day have a casual academic who takes on a leadership position. I really hope that it becomes customary."

However, this year's NTEU elections are certainly not the be all and end all of union democracy.

Notwithstanding the administrative issues with the election, which have obvious implications for the robustness of democracy, a real challenge is to lift the turnout of the elections so that they more wholly reflect the sentiment of the

membership.

The candidates were keen to emphasise that union democracy transcends the elections every four years – it permeates the way decisions are made on a more quotidian basis.

"We have strikes bringing people to the same picket line to stand together. I think that unity across the campus is the perfect basis for us to start talking about strategy, to talk about what kind of union we need," said Cotton.

### "In addition to acting as an expression of frustration with policies like the Jobs Protection Framework, elections are also an opportunity to shift the images people hold of a unionist and an academic."

"The thing that most improves democracy in the Union, which is not better balloting procedures or better chairing of meetings (though both would be welcome), but winning more rank-and-file unionists to the perspective that serious industrial action, i.e. strikes and pickets, is the way to win our demands. The more active we are in fighting the management, the more democratic the union will be," said Torlakovic.

### Where do students fit in?

Naturally, the NTEU elections are not at the forefront of most students' minds (we've got our own elections to consider). However, staff democracy is not nearly as distant to students' lives as it might seem.

Notably, students and staff are not always different people. Some students are also casual academics – a great many of your regular teachers are studying postgraduate degrees. Many students go on to conduct research, and still more aspire to, but are deterred by poor working conditions within academia.

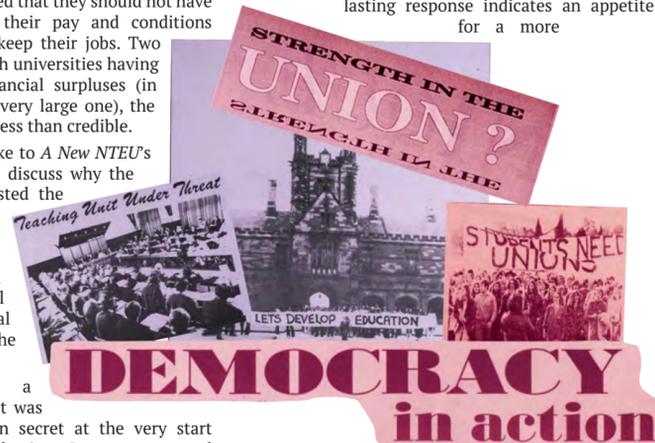
The candidates were eager to emphasise that student participation matters deeply in enacting staff democracy.

"What I hope that we will begin to see is a greater realisation that what the Union is doing has direct relevance for students in terms of the quality of their education. We say that but I think we need to go deep into the reasons why that is," Ali told *Honi*.

"An approach of solidarity between students and staff is absolutely essential... We need to say the real problem [with higher education] is at the top of the university," Cotton said.

Ultimately, democracy on campus involves, but transcends, union elections. It's really important that we seriously, thoughtfully, and honestly consider competing visions of higher education and union activity. Beyond that, it's important that we push towards a broader academic democracy – one where the people whose lives hang in the balance of university decision-making get the most say in how universities are run.

To do that, students must fully value the role of staff (both academic and professional) in allowing universities to function. Top-down university decision-making undermines us all.



# Privatisation no fix for Sydney's public transport

Nicholas Osowy catches the train.

Sydney's public transport system, it's easy to lose sight of what is at stake. Words like 'privatisation' have echoed throughout public discourse so much that they have lost meaning. But although privatisation has taken a backseat during the recent sortie, its vast implications for public transport governance cannot be overstated if we are to keep our transit responsive and democratic.

Privatisation entered the Australian transit context in 1999, with the reforms of the Victorian Kennett government. It spread to NSW when ferries were privatised in 2011, and bus services in the Inner West in 2018. In 2020, the NSW government did the same to the remaining three inner-city regions, abolishing the State Transit Authority (STA). Along with the contracting of Sydney Metro to MTS, the STA's abolishment brought stopping the privatisation of rail into focus for the RTBU.

In a NSW Government press release from 2019, the government claimed that privatisation would "lift the standard of transport," offering greater investment and "delivering better services to commuters." In 1999, the Victorian Kennett government envisaged improved services and cost minimisation as part of its plan.

Unfortunately, these goals were at best only scantily met.

In 2019, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that bus services in Sydney's

Inner West were running an average of 90.5 per cent on-time, compared to 93.5 per cent the previous year. The decline came after private operator Transit Systems replaced the State Transit Authority.

Meanwhile, in Melbourne, although significant cost reductions were achieved, these came at the expense of "an increase in rail service cancellations and a decline in punctuality," according to a 2005 performance review of the franchising system. In 2015, *ABC News* reported that up to 400 services per month were skipping stations or short-terminating so as to 'game' the performance requirements in the franchise agreement.

In light of such evident failure of privatised systems to further public transport in Australia, there already appears reason for abandoning the drive to privatise. This cannot be taken as the sole reason for poor public transport. Consider, for example, the abysmal transport systems of North America, most owned by state and local governments.

But although privatisation may not be wholly to blame for poor public transport systems, it is conducive to a structure of secrecy and opaque governance that discourages competent operation and logical planning. It is fundamentally anti-democratic, in that it raises a barrier between operations and government without fundamentally altering any aspect of the system itself. In doing

so, what was once a highly connected sector of the government now becomes a disjointed mess.

***"Privatisation is fundamentally anti-democratic, in that it raises a barrier between operations and government without fundamentally altering any aspect of the system itself."***

So, how does Sydney's existing rail system fare when compared to those of other cities?

According to the 2009 review of Melbourne's franchising system, Sydney fared far worse in staff and rolling stock costs and punctuality than Melbourne.

In addition, Sydney remains plagued by other issues in the operation of its transport system comparable to Melbourne's. For instance, the farebox-recovery ratio, measuring the financial independence of the corporation, is approximately 50 per cent for Sydney Trains, according to the 2019 Auditor-General's report, and 61 per cent in

Melbourne, though this is complicated by the complex franchising system's financial agreements.

Although it should be cautioned that financial stability is not the sole measure of an effective rail system, there are certainly publicly-owned systems that eclipse the private sphere in their efficiency. Hong Kong's Mass Transit Railway (MTR) and Singapore's MRT are both majority-state-owned merged operators and infrastructure holders. In 2019, the MTR made AUD \$1.9 billion, and ran more than 99 per cent of services on time. Importantly, with the government as its main shareholder, it maintains the transparency and public interest of public transport with the flexibility and depoliticisation of a corporate structure. Highly complex and manipulable franchise agreements, and bureaucratic conservatism, as in Australia's transport debacles, simply disappear.

This is not to say the MTR model is perfect; in 2015, the Singapore MRT recorded 2.5 disruptions per month, leading to an embarrassing apology and a commitment to significant upgrades to neglected infrastructure. But when we look at the best of the world has to offer, it becomes clear that the best public transport companies are those which are responsibly yet dynamically managed by the government. There could be no system less fitted to this task than a privatised franchise.

# Self-determination in the spotlight following NCIE debacle

Ethan Floyd argues for a genuine platform and voice for First Nations' peoples.

There's no doubt that Indigenous self-determination is the only way forward for our people.

Redfern's National Centre for Indigenous Excellence (NCIE) was a beacon of hope for First Nations' peoples in the Inner-West, advocating for excellence and creating opportunities for mob.

I toured the NCIE at the start of this year. You could feel it in the air – there was something special about this place. The atmosphere conveyed a sense of pride for the community, and the Centre itself remained one of the last landmarks unchanged by the commercial development and gentrification which has gutted the Redfern community over the last decade.

"This place is not just a gym and a pool for us. This place is a meeting point," said Auntie Margaret Haumono, co-founder and executive director of Redfern Youth Connect.

However, the decision last month by the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporations (ILSC) – a Federal Government body tasked with acquiring and managing property assets on behalf of Indigenous communities – to abruptly close the NCIE and subsequently reopen the Centre after community backlash demonstrates what we have always known; that the government isn't, and has never been, a good steward of our collective resources.

Former Aboriginal Social Justice Commissioner Mick Gooda, who

stepped forward last month to mediate between the community and the centre's managing bodies, notes that the local community deserves a voice in how the centre is managed going forward.

"You've got to make sure you're handing [these services] over to the right mob," he told *Honi*. "Something like this is particularly fraught, because my understanding is that the community hasn't been involved [in the decision-making process]."

This latest debacle, which has engulfed and overwhelmed the local Indigenous community, is the most recent in a long and troubled history of public money being spent on ineffective Western systems (such as the ill-fated 'Closing the Gap' strategy) that did not work in order to serve First Nations peoples.

Danny Chapman, chair of the NSW Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC), is demanding an "ongoing subsidy" from the government to ensure the centre's ongoing viability.

"We can't have the government cost shifting; we need tangible support," Chapman said.

This disastrously mishandled situation demonstrates, perhaps more clearly and potentially than ever before, that governments and similar bureaucratic institutions are not at all accountable to the best interests of the people of which they are mandated to serve. In the case of the NCIE, a handful of senior bureaucrats

within the ILSC decided that the centre should be shut down without consulting or even informing staff and management first – something which could never happen in any other sector without severe repercussions for those involved.

In *Honi's* initial coverage of the situation in Redfern, there were reports of staff at the NCIE being suddenly escorted from the Centre by police, with many left crying on the side of the road without any notion of the decisions being made at the highest level by the ILSC.

Now, these same staff members continue to operate the Centre in a limited capacity after community action and political intervention pressured the ILSC into backpedalling on their decision to close the Centre. Like countless people locally and across the country – both Indigenous and non-Indigenous – it shocked me that the ILSC faced no consequences for this monumental fuck-up, while the Redfern community was left to pick up the pieces.

This total lack of accountability applies not only within Government departments and affiliate bodies. It extends to the furthest reaches of Australia's liberal democracy and Western society at large, where First Nations community members who feel strongly about such issues about closing Indigenous-led organisations like the NCIE have no legitimate platform for their voices to be heard by those responsible for making decisions about them.

The issue here is simple. The State and Commonwealth governments cannot fix things for us.

Indigenous people are still far more likely to go to prison, earn lower average incomes, and suffer from higher rates of chronic illness than non-Indigenous people.

Although the State Government has made some – albeit dismally inadequate – progress in recent years (i.e. hanging a flag on a bridge), there's still a lot to do. Since the 1980s, government interference and the pumping of Indigenous money into non-Indigenous businesses and communities ('blakwashing') have been a huge hindrance to closing the disparity gaps facing First Nations' people.

The recent NCIE controversy only serves to demonstrate the reality that things are progressing in a negative way – we're going backwards.

Instead of providing constructive solutions and culturally appropriate support for communities to thrive, the Government seems more interested in defending the status quo and keeping us compliant.

The solution is simple as well. We must do it ourselves. Self-determination is the only viable way forward for First Nations' peoples. Without the power to control our own funding, implement our own policies, and outline our own development roadmap, Indigenous communities have little chance of succeeding over the long term.

# Let's put the local back in Local Government

Nelson Crossley takes a look around Western Sydney local councils.

Local government has the potential to be the most democratic form of government within the Australian system. They address the immediate concerns of residents within their jurisdiction. They are accessible for residents and can more comprehensively understand the concerns of their community, as it is much easier to get in touch with councillors and council staff. Outside of merely voting for an elected representative, residents can have regular input on issues between election cycles.

However, local governments are increasingly powerless to address the concerns of their constituents. This is particularly evident in Western Sydney.

According to the 2016 census, the region has five of the ten most populous LGAs in the state, expecting to house more than 3 million people by 2030. Responding to the population boom requires meticulously planned infrastructure and housing.

As part of the 'Metropolis of Three Cities' masterplan, the NSW state government has overseen much of the new development planning. Furthermore, if a planned development satisfies building codes, the development does not first need to go to the local council for approval, under the "exempt and complying development" rules. This deprives local councils in Western Sydney of the power to meet the demands of their constituents.

In late 2021, the NSW government announced a number of policy adjustments to ensure more sustainable housing as part of former Minister for Planning Rob Stokes' sustainable planning agenda. The proposal would have ensured all new houses had light-coloured roofing, a change that would reduce the urban heat island effect by an estimated 2.4°C drop across Sydney and up to 4°C in Western Sydney, specifically.

***"A properly funded local government system could ensure ongoing employment for its local workforce, without the state government vetting the projects."***

The NSW government also announced a new Design and Place State Environment Planning Policy (SEPP) which would introduce requirements for electronic vehicle charging stations in apartment buildings and minimum tree cover requirements for new housing developments.

Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils made submissions to the plan which raised specific points regarding other areas for

improvement in relation to urban heat, energy use, thermal performance and waste management.

However, Anthony Roberts abandoned the Design and Place SEPP when he took over the role of Minister for Planning early this year. At the time, it was reported that this change came about because of pressures from property developers. Scrapping the Design and Place SEPP was a slap in the face for the local councils of Western Sydney who contributed to the policy design, and demonstrates their susceptibility to the whims of the state government.

NSW government project funding also strips autonomy from local councils. Earlier this year the NSW government announced their WestInvest Program, securing \$2 billion for community projects throughout Western Sydney, including \$400 million between its 15 local councils. While investment is sorely needed, the grant model means the NSW government tailors Western Sydney's development according to its plans – not the councils' – which undermines the relationship between local governments and their constituents.

Let's take urban heat: if a Western Sydney council wants to address urban heat in their LGA, piecemeal projects won't cut it. Meaningful change requires comprehensive local policy and state regulation across multiple sectors. However, the piecemeal approach lets the state get the publicity and clout

of funding projects which treat the symptoms of poor planning, rather than addressing the urban design and climate change that causes heat.

For example, in late 2021 Penrith City Council received a \$1 million grant from the NSW Government's Greening Our City program to plant an additional 5000 street and park trees. Vegetation cover is an important tool in addressing urban heat but fails to address the underlying causes such as dark roofs.

Project-based funding is also problematic for workers who may be on short-term contracts which provide no employment security after grant money dissipates. In contrast, a properly funded local government system could ensure ongoing employment for its local workforce, without the state government vetting the projects.

The local councils of Western Sydney do great work. There are countless adaptation strategies running across LGAs to address issues directly affecting residents of the region – like urban heat. However, they do not have enough control over the planning of their own LGAs and this means that the connection councils have to their community remains overlooked and (more significantly) underutilised.



ART BY ELLIE STEPHENSON

## ELECTION HONI

Election Honi features candidate statements, policies, photos, and CVs so that you can make an informed choice about your vote in the 2022 SRC elections. It's been put together through the hard work of the outgoing Honi Soit team.

If you missed a print copy (on Honi stands in week 6), you can get a copy from the SRC Offices, and at all polling booths during elections, or scan the QR code below to view it online.

src activism advocacy representation





## NEW POLLING DATES: September 19, 20 & 21

All Sydney University undergraduate students who are currently enrolled are eligible to vote in the upcoming 2022 SRC elections. For more info see: [srcusyd.net.au/elections](http://srcusyd.net.au/elections)

## NEW 2022 Polling Booth Times and Locations

| POLLING LOCATION         | MON 19 <sup>TH</sup> SEPT 2022 | TUE 20 <sup>TH</sup> SEPT 2022 | WED 21 <sup>ST</sup> SEPT 2022 |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Jane Foss Russell        | 8.45–5.15                      | 8.45–5.15                      | 8.45–5.15                      |
| Fisher                   | No polling                     | 8.45–5.15                      | 8.45–5.15                      |
| Manning House            | No polling                     | No polling                     | 10.45–3.15                     |
| Conservatorium           | No polling                     | No polling                     | 10.30–3.30                     |
| Charles Perkins Centre   | No polling                     | 10.45–3.15                     | No polling                     |
| Peter Nicol Russell Bldg | No polling                     | 10.45–3.15                     | No polling                     |

## Instagrammable Art: Does it detract from the gallery experience?

Alexandra Dent writes.

Silent and serene. You are engulfed by a room made only of mirrors. Spotted white and red amorphous blobs litter the ground, giving the illusion that you are amongst a bountiful field of phallic fungi. The reflective surfaces echo your own astonished expression. You are completely alone, yet surrounded by a multitude of selves. You reach for your phone and take a picture; in this regard, you are not alone. You are among the one million people who have snapped and posted a quick self-portrait in one of Yayoi Kusama's mirror rooms.

Attracting thousands of visitors to galleries around the world, Kusama's acclaimed 'mirror rooms' epitomise dialogical art – art that engages its viewers in a conversation, often through direct participation. In hopes of democratising art and enticing a larger audience, galleries have shifted their focus to social media exposure. With viral posts drawing in troves of gallery visitors, it is unclear whether the strategy promotes engagement with the broader art world or just encourages fun photos.

Demand for art that dissolved the barrier between artwork and viewer emerged during the mid-twentieth century. Participatory and installation art answered this call, allowing audiences to become co-authors and collaborators. Yoko Ono's *Cut Piece* (1964) – which invited viewers to cut pieces off Ono's outfit as she sat – and Marcel Duchamp's *Mile of String* (1942) are early examples of works that prioritised the viewer's experience and engagement in their presentation. Since then, the movement has inspired more modern immersive artworks, ones that earn their success through their photogenicity.

This was evident in exhibitions like *Van Gogh Alive*, which has flooded social media feeds since the installation began touring cities around the world in 2020. Cavernous rooms were decked out with projections of Vincent van Gogh's prettiest artworks, yet they were confined to twenty-four-hour story posts and Instagram feeds. James Turrell's 2015 installation *Aten Reign* illuminated the floors of the iconic Guggenheim in New York City, bathing the building in bold hues. He asked that no photos be taken as it would detract from the experience, yet despite this, the hashtag '#atenreign' has over 500 posts attributed to it.

With the art world's infiltration of social media, we are left with the question of whether these captivating pieces create meaningful dialogue or simply decorate Instagram feeds. To better understand the democratisation of art and the role platforms play in educating, *Honi* spoke to artist and lecturer at The Sydney College of the Arts, Dr Alex Gawronski.

Gawronski described social media's relationship with art as inescapable: "It's largely connected to things like promotion, it's connected to the informational – which is basically just the supplying of information about things, which I think is a very different thing [to education]," he said.

He also emphasised that the immediate visual appeal of an artwork dictates most of its engagement. Accordingly, the concept of Instagrammable exhibitions has shaped curatorial practices in response.

"Whatever is most vibrant or pretty is probably going to garner a lot more attention than things that don't 'look like art', right?"

"I think going to see work in person is a very different thing depending on the work. I think the tendency will always be to [choose] things which read well two dimensionally."

Touching briefly on the kind of art social media tends to favour, Gawronski explained that "if you work in sort of more subtle [ways], if you're working more [in] conceptual ways where it's quasi-visual, I mean, Instagram doesn't really lend itself to that sort of platform because the focus is not on the visual really."

However, Gawronski also made sure to emphasise the positive element of social media for artists. "It's very easy to find out things that are going on," he said, adding "it's good for the institution. It gives a lot of exposure, more exposure to the artists."

Yet, this desire for exposure emphasises the aesthetic, rather than conceptual quality of art. Alluring artworks, digitised and shared, may be bringing people into the gallery, but what is making them stay? In celebrating what is beautiful at first glance we may overlook that which takes a little longer to appreciate. Nevertheless, I think it is time we revere art for all of its qualities, photogenic or not.

*"Nevertheless, I think it is time we revere art for all of its qualities, photogenic or not."*



ART BY BIPASHA CHAKRABORTY

## The shearers of 1891 can teach us about USyd staff strikes

Aidan Elwig Pollock takes a trip to 19th century outback Queensland to contextualise the importance of NTEU industrial action.

Staff and students, led by the NTEU, have been locked in a battle with USyd management to push for better working rights.

But this industrial action does not exist in a vacuum – it is just a recent chapter in a storied history of unionism and social democracy that can be traced back to late 19th century Queensland.

The blacksoil plains and red-stained rocky expanses of Central Queensland are naturally desolate; sweeping stretches of bluegrass alternate with stands of gidgee tree across unbelievably flat ground. This sector of Australia is populated mainly by emus, 98-million-year-old fossils and tiny, quirky towns with an extraordinarily high number of pubs per capita.

Yet outback Central Queensland at the close of the 19th century was a very different place to the grey nomad paradise it is today, acting as a hotbed of nascent unionism. Indeed, Barcaldine, Hughenden and Winton, among other towns, were vital outposts in a burgeoning wool industry, giving the region a very different political character to the modern entrenchment of Liberal National Party conservatism.

The Queensland Shearers' Union (QSU) formed in 1887 following a strike on Wellshot Station, and gathered tens of thousands of members over just three years. In 1890 the Union declared that unionised labourers were not to work with non-

union shearers. Pastoralists responded in 1890 by forming the Pastoral Employers Association (PEA) and attempting to enforce significant wage reductions. The QSU, alongside the Queensland Labourers Union (QLU), issued the 'Bushmen's Official Proclamation', declaring:

"The squatters expect the Queensland bush unions will fight hard but they do not know how hard. We call upon you to show them."

The stage was set for a confrontation of epic proportions. The Queensland government sent the military to support pastoralists and protect scabs. The town of Barcaldine – essentially six pubs along a strip of railway – became the centre of the strike, and by March around 4,500 people had swelled the small outpost. Whispers of armed insurrection and revolution reverberated across the outback, and commentators expected a bloody affair. Union members, however, maintained discipline despite the threats arrayed against them, and violence never ensued.

March saw the arrest of strike leaders, culminating thirteen unionists being sentenced to three years in prison. By April, military-escorted scabs were pouring into Barcaldine and shearing recommenced. By 20 June, the strike was called to an end.

On the face of it, the 1891 strike appears a failure: demands were not met and the strike disintegrated. However, its

legacy remains hugely significant.

Despite efforts to scrub the song of its original meaning by the Australian right, *Waltzing Matilda* was written by Banjo Patterson in a sympathetic response to the 1891 and 1894 Shearers' strikes. Despite what many Australians are told, the swagman in the song isn't a larrikin sheep-thief who drowns himself to avoid arrest, but a brave union member facing police-backed pastoralist power.

1892 also saw the birth of the Australian Labor Party under Barcaldine's 'Tree of Knowledge'. QSU members recognised that without representation in Parliament, they could not face up to pastoralists. 1892 saw the election of a Labor MP at a by-election in the seat of Barcoo. The fledgling party continued to make electoral gains, and in 1899 Queensland elected the first Labor government in world history.

Electoral representation for unions has been instrumental in the development of Australia as a relatively egalitarian (albeit increasingly stratifying) country with a globally significant history of protecting workers rights. A lack of a political party representing the labour movement is one of the biggest reasons the US has failed to secure anything like the workers' protections – and subsequently rights for all – as Australia, despite the militancy of US unionism in the early 20th century.

The Shearers' strikes were also

instrumental in the development of a powerful labour movement in Australia that has helped to ensure the rights that we continue to take for granted. The awards system was first established for shearers at the dawn of the 20th century before extending across our economy as a unique system for wage and conditions protections in Australia. Annual leave, maternity leave, nominally equal pay for women, workers compensation, sick leave, unfair dismissal and penalty rates, among others, all trace their history through the union movement to events in 19th century Queensland.

Nevertheless, the victories of the union movement are not static nor set in stone. We cannot afford to simply express gratitude to the shearers who stood up to pastoral interests in the 1890s and get on with our lives. Unionism continues to represent an important tool of ordinary people to protect their basic rights.

This extends to current efforts by the NTEU to protect the rights of staff – and subsequently the quality of student education – at the University of Sydney today. The Shearers' strikes of 1891 show us the immense and unprecedented positive impacts that can emerge from industrial action; who knows where victories in modern battles for workers' rights – and subsequently the rights of ordinary people across Australia – will lead us?

## TUNING INTO THE SYDNEY UNIVERSITY RADIO GROUP

Fynn Ferdinands flips through the archives.

When you think of the USyd's campus clubs, there are a few that instantly spring to mind: SUDS, SASS, ChocSoc, or Socialist Alternative (SAIt) perhaps. However, one of USyd's more historic societies is Sydney Uni Radio Group (SURG). In recent years, SURG has been an (ironically) quiet achiever.

Yet SURG is home to many student voices, past and present. According to current President Zander Czerwanik, SURG serves as a medium to "help highlight local artists and provide opportunities for students to learn new skills and express themselves." This is by no means a new concept at USyd.

You'd be excused for not knowing how long SURG has existed. Finding public information about the student-led institution is a challenge. Fortunately, the society is currently run by a wonderful executive who was more than enthused to grant me access to SURG's archives.

Much of what is known about SURG's long-winding yet fascinating past has been uncovered by Rafal Alumairy (@studentradiohistory), who is currently undertaking an "independent book project documenting the history of student radio in Australia". According to Alumairy, "USyd has an unusual college radio history, a bit different than the others in Australia".

USyd's radiostation first hit the airwaves in the mid-1970s, although students were involved in radio as early as the 1930s. "The Broadcast" was an annual event that took place every Welcome Fest; students would put on short radio segments in half-hour slots on a commercial radio station, which volunteered its airtime to students as a community service. At the time, most segments were curated playlists and revue-style shows. It seems the interests of USyd

students haven't changed all that much in the past ninety years.

Before local USyd bands such as Astral Juice and Alpha Goose, music played on "The Broadcast" sounded more like this:

"O" for the glory of the Quad in springtime, with the jacaranda in bloom."

In 1946, USyd was the first University in Australia to attempt a wholly student-run radio station, broadcast directly from campus. The initiative was led by Glen Duncan, a medicine student at the time, and would later be copied across Australian universities (but not for another thirty years!) Student engineers, on-air talent, various societies, and even the SRC all got on board, but University management, who had the final say, crushed this dream. At the time, *Honi* reported that the Senate "doubted whether [students] were capable of running a loudspeaker system, much less a radio station". They were not confident students "could present an entertaining program".

It was not until the 60s, when university radio returned at RMIT in Melbourne, that Australian student radio was resurrected.

A fully-fledged radio station called '2SUX' started operating at USyd in 1975. It is said that during this time, 2SUX was a house of vicious internal politics with bitter conflict between conservative and progressive students.

2SUX was devised in response to the federal government's recently introduced FM radio licences which students were able to win. Alas, USyd failed to secure a legitimate licence twice — once in 1975, when they missed the application deadline, and a second in 1978.

In 1979, 2SUX began broadcasting one hour a week on '2SER' instead, an

educational radio station run by the administration of UTS and Macquarie Uni. They even broadcast lectures, delivering remote education before Zoom!

**"In 1946, USyd was the first University in Australia to attempt a wholly student-run radio station."**

With just one hour a week (which soon expanded to four), Sydney students achieved a lot. According to student newspaper reports from 1982, 2SUX students interviewed the likes of Devo, The Kinks, and even Elton John.

In 1998, SURG was officially registered as a society, helmed by founder and president William Balfour. At long last, SURG held an official licence: USU-FM (owned by the USU).

Unfortunately, SURG only receives funding as a society, which makes it difficult to fund their radio licence. According to former president, Patrick McKenzie (2019-2020), SURG should be a USU program (like Debating is, for example) rather than a society, meaning it does not have the necessary funds to run a permanent radio station.

Despite this, he revels in what SURG does have, which is an abundance of enthusiastic broadcasters.

"Even though more and more people can create audio content, commitment, and community structure helps it flourish," he said.

During lockdowns in 2020, theThe group had no choice but to diversify and build an online presence, introducing podcasts and an online blog under the leadership of McKenzie. Whether it's online or in-person, former SURG president Andrew Rickert (2017-2019) believes student radio contributes to the rich fabric of student life.

"Radio is a lot more personal, it's a connection between the broadcaster and the listener... It breaks down barriers," Rickert said. He says live radio helps listeners realise they're not alone, that on the other side are regular students just like them.

Current president Czerwanik adds that "[SURG] provides a place for people to learn new skills... A place where people can collaborate and create things together in a low risk environment," he said.

In recent years, SURG has developed programs to support local music acts to find an audience. Before COVID-19 suspended live music, SURG introduced 'High Rotation' in early 2020, a gig spotlighting local bands. There have since been three of these events.

Now, SURG executives are supporting a group of first-year broadcasters to organise and host a live music event at The Lansdowne Hotel on 22 October, expanding their radio show 'UNI TUNES' into a unique live setting.

SURG's future is certainly looking to be as exciting as its past. Current executive James Wily is confident that the long-standing society is "on an upwards trajectory" equipped with a passionate team of creators. As long as SURG stays tuned in to USyd's community, students will continue to do the same.

## HOW LONG COULD THE QUADRANGLE SURVIVE UNDER SIEGE?

Marlow Hurst raises the drawbridge.

In the throes of the English Civil War, the City of Oxford and its university were under siege between 1644 and 1646. After failing to recapture London, King Charles I had sought a new capital — one he readily found in Oxford. When word of the war first reached the ears of Oxford University, it boldly declared itself in favour of the Royalist cause — making it a perfect seat for the evicted monarch.

Then-Deputy Vice-Chancellor Dr Robert Pink organised students into Royalist militias and drilled them in the quadrangle, the King took up residence in Christ Church, and New College was converted into a makeshift munitions workshop (evicting its student residents in the process).

Across three engagements, King Charles I and his Royalist forces held firm in their sandstone garrison against waves of Parliamentarian assault.

It is often thought that the surrender of Oxford following the third and final siege was the last straw for the Royalists and their war effort. In that final siege, a single cannon shot was fired; it landed in the meadows adjoining Christ Church College itself. That final siege led to negotiations and those negotiations led to surrender, and so concluded the University of Oxford's life under bombardment.

With Charles once again on St Edward's Chair, it seems prudent to prepare for another university siege. Modelled off of Oxford itself and featuring its open book insignia on our coat of arms, the University of Sydney is surely next. And where would fair USyd make its final stand? None other than the Quadrangle: the Keep of Camperdown and the Citadel of Science Road.

So let us draw up some battle plans, barricade the gates, and rally the troops. USyd is officially under siege.

### The Setting

Drawing from the Quad's Henry VII Gothic architectural style (also known as the Perpendicular Style), we can situate the Siege of the Quadrangle in 15th century England. Cannons and muskets were really coming into their own around this time, but your crossbows, spears, lances, catapults, and trebuchets of the world also played a role. Accompanied by siege towers and battering rams, those seeking to assault the Quad would have a smorgasbord of marshal technology to select from.

### The Army

A castle is only as strong as its defenders, and USyd has the capacity to marshal an unrivalled force. With student enrolments of 74,862 and a staff of 19,000, the University has an army of almost 100,000 at its beckoning.

Unfortunately, loyalty cannot be assured. Mutiny sours the ranks of its staff soldiers, with cuts and fees from old wars and more recent skirmishes littering the bodies of both grizzled NTEU commanders and green casual recruits.

For the students, a dark cloud lingers over undergrads and postgrads alike — the Battle of Proctor U still fresh in their hearts, casualties from the Siege of Future FASS still unaccounted for, and the Enemy, an ancient enemy as old as time itself looms ever large: Higher-Ed Cuts. Perhaps the greatest threat to the

Quad is from within its walls, rather than without. But of course this all depends on the foe.

A common enemy is often the best way to unite a fractured force, but those in our ranks who sympathise with the enemy could be our undoing. Maybe against interlopers from Melbourne or Monash, undergrads and postgrads, professional and academic, permanent and casual could unite under the one banner and live those words that emblazon our coat of arms: *sidere mens eadem mutato*, "though the constellations change, the mind is universal." Some grudges really are universal.

Against an incursion of education activists though, sedition might turn to treason against the Lords and Ladies of USyd.

After a short field inspection, Dr Gagne gave it an hour at best. Concerned by the overrepresentation of windows and

**"The clock tower and carillon offer a strong defensive position... and the means to signal an advanced warning."**

the underrepresentation of gates, he advised a retreat to the Great Hall — a more defensible position. But Dr Gagne would forgo the Quad altogether, the Fisher Stack should be USyd's siege time stronghold apparently. Its height, rooftop access, and metal skeleton make it prime real estate.



## Drama and democracy: from Ancient Greece to SUDS

Sarah Boreham gets on stage.

"The people's voice, once angered, can create dissent, ratifying a curse which now must have its way" - Chorus, *Agamemnon* by Aeschylus

Theatre and democracy are inextricably linked — most notably by their origin. In the heart of the ancient city of Athens, the theatre was not simply a form of entertainment. Plays were highly politicised, often tackling the concept of democracy through the accommodation of their audience: the Athenian citizens.

Playwrights like Sophocles, Aeschylus, and Euripides would often shape the stories of kings of old so that they would relate to Athenian society. Theatre was used to provoke thought and explore the then-pressing concern of what it meant to be a 'democratic citizen'.

Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus*, now mostly mis-remembered by the Freudian Oedipus complex, was originally written as a portrayal of the dangers of tyrannical power. The play begins by an oracle reading out Oedipus' fate - to marry his mother and kill his father, as retribution for his tyrannical rule. The play follows the tyrant, Oedipus, as he attempts to thwart this fate, but ultimately ends up committing several divinely-foretold crimes. Through this narrative, Sophocles asks his Athenian audience

whether Oedipus is guilty and deserving of his fate — and in Athenian democracy, interrogating what the nature of guilt may be for individual citizens.

**"The democratic function of theatre extends beyond the ancient world, permeating USyd's theatre practice."**

Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* portrays another powerful king against a backdrop of continual war and violence. Trapped in a seemingly inescapable, vicious cycle of bloodshed, the play grapples with vengeance and justice, using political debate as a theatrical device. The chorus behaves somewhat like a proxy for the Athenian audience within the play, at times acting in an almost democratic fashion in debating the next course of political action; though, at the end of the play, they ultimately submit to another dictatorship under Clytemnestra, Agamemnon's wife and murderer.

It is here that we may marry the Elysian fields of Ancient Greece with the sandstone of Sydney University.

*Agamemnon* is also the first production of SUDS, the Sydney University Dramatic Society. Current SUDS president, Kimmi Tonkin, commented on the uniqueness of the legacy of SUDS as highly diverse and democratic.

"Everything in SUDS is so unpredictable . . . directors and cast members bring their different experiences when getting involved. Everyone is supporting each other, keeping theatre alive."

Executives within SUDS take on a more administrative role, leaving the majority of decisions in the hands of directors and SUDS members. Before each slot, potential ideas for plays are proposed by anyone with at least a singular SUDS member on the pitching team. Then, pitches are voted on by SUDS members that are present, deciding on which production should run.

The democratic function of theatre extends beyond the ancient world, permeating USyd's theatre practice. Production and cast member callouts are done on Facebook, leaving all creative decisions to show directors. Tonkin herself recalls her first production involving numerous non-SUDS members, stating that the society "is very open, meaning that anyone can become involved".

"I really think it's quite phenomenal that people continue to want to put on, not only contemporary plays, but also Shakespeare and Ancient Greek plays and tragedies," she said.

In 2015, the 125th anniversary of SUDS, a production of *Agamemnon* was performed to celebrate the continued history of the society. Earlier this year in March, Euripides' *Medea* was also performed, and just last month in August, SUDS produced Shakespeare's *The Lamentable Tragedy of Titus Andronicus*.

Tonkin reflected on the growth of SUDS as a society from the running of its first play: "It's really quite beautiful in how it is run. Maybe theatre will change over time, but I don't see [SUDS] changing anytime soon."

Theatrical performances continue to be written, produced, and performed as they have been throughout history, even as society changes. Shakespearean comedies and Ancient Greek tragedies are still returned to, centuries after their first performance, indicating their ability to serve the renewed needs of a modern context. And, perhaps, they serve too as a reminder of the power of democratic voices within theatre, and the importance of fusing creativity and play with personal autonomy and self-determination.

### The Castle

The University's biggest weakness in the unlikely event of a 15th century English Quad siege is the Quad itself. In all its neo-Gothic magnificence, it simply imitates rather than emulates the conventions of Tudor castles. Its numerous windows present a critical weakness, with access only a gentle smashing away. Precious little can be done about this fatal flaw, except for maybe securing the latches and sticking up some newspaper.

Its approximately 14 entrances aren't doing it any favours either. The wrought iron gates that don't reach the height of the entry, wooden doors lack bar locks, and there's the small issue of having to defend a silly 14 entryways.

ART BY ALTAY HAGREBET

# Smart, sexy, and very Sydney

Zara Zadro and Thomas Sargeant sit down with the cast of Netflix's *Heartbreak High*.

For decades, television encapsulating the Australian teen experience has comprised a short but star-studded list of shows. The programs that epitomised youth for Generation Z – think *H2O*, *Blue Water High*, *The Sleepover Club* and *Dance Academy* – were already palpably outdated by the time we started drinking, partying, and having sex in the mid-2010s, amid social media and its omnipresent online cultures. Yet, for years, nothing new has replaced them. Despite the prevalence of streaming services and their booming in-house production companies, on-screen depictions of modern Aussie teenagers are somehow scarcer than ever.

Enter *Heartbreak High*: Netflix's 2022 reboot of the cult-classic series set in '90s Sydney. Raucous, gaudy, and edged with danger, this show is a tribute to coming-of-age in suburban Sydney today, marrying Gen Z's heightened political awareness and hunger for on-screen diversity with the filthy irreverence and sun-drunken revelry of Australian youth culture.

At first-glance, *Heartbreak High* bears all the marks of a wannabe edgy teen program, the likes of HBO's *Euphoria* or Netflix's *Sex Education*. In the first episode, we meet Amerie – a spunky, working-class, cool-girl-turned-pariah of Hartley High, played by *Fangirls: The Musical* alumni Ayesha Maddon. The discovery of Amerie and Harper's (Asher Yasincek) 'Incest Map' – a wall-length drawing exposing Year 11's sexual escapades which recalls *The L Word's* chart, or *Mean Girls'* Burn Book – catalyses the eight-part-series' drama, by throwing a prickly group of mismatched students into afternoon 'Sexuality Literacy Tutorials', fondly abbreviated as 'SLUTS'.

Younger Aussie viewers will aim a few predictable critiques at this reboot; Hartley High's unrealistic lack of a school uniform, for example, with most characters fitted out in trendy, Instagram-ready ensembles and meticulous hair and makeup; or some considerably cliched coming-of-age scenes, like Amerie, Darren (James Majoos), and Quinni (Chloé Hayden) yelling their worries off the top of a building. They might even accuse the showrunners of duping the glamorous, pop-infused, sex-fueled teen productions that have boomed in the past five years.

But these criticisms aren't particularly penetrating nor useful for understanding what *Heartbreak High* actually sets out to do – and achieves, I think, with much leftover to enjoy.

"*Heartbreak High* is about the generation that we're making it for," Sherry-Lee Watson who plays Missy, a queer, Indigenous student, told *Honi* when we sat down with some of the cast.

"Gen Z has this really cool drive and we're very vocal about the things

that we don't like. I think we're indirectly doing that by producing this art. We are giving kids permission to be able to explore these topics... they aren't just for adults," she says.

Revisiting high school inevitably comes with no small amount of awkwardness. Initially, the show's drama may feel exaggerated, the conflict unnecessary, and the characters shallow. But these first impressions are quickly disproved. As we fall further into these characters' lives, the high school stakes of popularity and relationships suddenly feel very high. Despite the trappings of adulthood – sex, crime, responsibility – it is also clear that these characters are just teenagers finding their feet, and experiencing all the cringe-worthiness that comes with it.



If the original *Heartbreak High* (1994-96) was lauded for its progressive stance on teen turbulence and contemporary societal challenges, then Netflix's reboot is truly its modern iteration. The original pioneered by authentically putting Greek, Italian, Lebanese, and southeast Asian teenagers on screen; the reboot expands on this, reflecting the diversity of Australian youth across race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and more.

**"Coming out isn't positioned as the main obstacle in queer teens' lives, or even compulsory."**

"I think it's one of the first times that diversity has been represented in such a scope on Australian TV," says Bryn Chapman Parish, who plays Spider, a Hartley basketball jock, bully, and class clown.

"The norm has been straight white surfers, so I think *Heartbreak High* is depicting the way the Australian social landscape is changing as well."

At the same time, it resists making identity an essentialising character trait. Series creator Hannah Carroll Chapman and script producer Megan Palinkas reproduce Aussie slang (cunt, dog, etc.) and youth rituals (see: cemetery piss-ups) with easy and

recognisable charm, unifying characters along these cultural lines.

The show's representation of queerness is also strikingly contemporary. Homophobia and sexism within the school's walls are no longer utterly pervasive or invincible obstacles, nor do they define the show's major conflicts. 'Coming out' isn't positioned as the main obstacle in queer teens' lives, or even compulsory. Queer and non-queer characters dress-up for Mardi Gras, fight over who's pres to attend, and shriek at drag performances.

"I think that it's a new way of storytelling when we're talking about those types of -isms," Watson says.

"More often than not [on television] one of the main characters is gonna be dealing

with [discrimination], and the antagonist is one of the other main characters, and you'll go through the season with those two figuring out that thing.

"But the pacing in our show is a little bit different, and the priorities have gone to different things. It doesn't mean that we don't address [discrimination]. It just means that we explore it in a different language."

It's also particularly refreshing to see a world in which bullying and conflict aren't exclusively driven by bigotry; characters like Spider, the show's most obvious bully, more so "pick apart people as individuals", according to Chapman Parish.

"In today's age as well, racism, sexism, and all that stuff is uncool," adds Brodie Townsend, who plays Ant – Spider's friend, and a slightly less reprehensible basketball player.

"There's no real villain... We're all just figuring it out."

James Majoos and Chloé Hayden shine as Darren, a non-binary, queer, black student, and their best friend Quinni, an autistic lesbian who easily charms Hartley High's students and the audience. *Heartbreak High* does a tremendous job of casting actors who align with their characters' identities, producing heart-rendingly sincere performances.

While Darren projects complete self-assuredness,

donning bedazzled crop tops, exposed fuchsia thong-straps, and a fuck-you attitude at school, they still fight with their parents over using the correct pronouns, have crushes on the wrong people, and doubt their capacity to be loved. Although they may not directly suffer at the hands of cis-heteronormativity and toxic masculinity, the show doesn't shy away from demonstrating these forces in play today, and how queer joy and acceptance is not yet a universal norm. Bucking the trend of queer coming-of-age narratives, queer characters at Hartley High aren't forced to grow up too fast due to their sexualities. They are allowed to experience their adolescence in the same way as their peers, developing romances and getting their first jobs (with the added challenge of figuring out their crush's sexuality).

**"Quinni is similarly transformative as a rare on-screen portrayal of autism in women, which goes widely undiagnosed and underrepresented..."**

Quinni is similarly transformative as a rare on-screen portrayal of autism in women, which goes widely undiagnosed and underrepresented due to masculine stereotypes and diagnostic criteria for autism, and womens' greater inclination to 'mask' neurodivergence. This is something that Quinni points out to love interest Sasha (Gemma Chua-Tran) when told that she doesn't 'seem autistic.' Having autism isn't Quinni's only character trait; like any teenager, she has a crush, falls in love, and has her heart broken. While her experiences are inexplicably shaped by autism, the ableism still normalised and perpetuated even in progressive circles is to blame for the ways being neurodivergent harms her, not autism itself.

Fiction that successfully acknowledges the nuance and harm of discrimination and bigotry, while refusing to perpetuate it by cruelly exaggerating its power for narrative drama, is a rare gem in entertainment, and something to learn from.

In these ways, *Heartbreak High* proves itself a robust example.

*Heartbreak High* is well worth the watch. It is heartwarming to see the experience of young people in Sydney – an experience dear to so many – be treated with such tenderness and care, rendered with local talent and a visibly high production value.

As a word of warning, be careful starting the show right before exam season: you might just get hooked.

*Heartbreak High* is streaming on Netflix from September 14.

# THE GNOMES IN VICTORIA PARK ARE SURPRISINGLY ENTREPRENEURIAL

Felix Faber spots a unique business opportunity.

I've been cultivating a business relationship with one of the gnomes in Victoria Park for the past few months. It all started when I was walking through the park on my way to a conference on digital transformation at the University. I wasn't in any sort of rush; I can quite honestly say that I'm across the topic of digital transformation - even digital disruption - so I wasn't worried about missing any of the conference. As I was wandering through the park, I came across a little circle of mushrooms, in which appeared a little gnome with a puff of smoke. The gnome introduced himself as Clodwick, and asked if I could proffer but a few copper coins to see him do his gnome dance. I've always liked to consider myself a patron of the arts, so I tossed him some spare change and watched him dance. He did a little jig for a minute or two, humming himself a tune in his high, nasal little voice, eventually finishing with a flourish. Then Clodwick asked if I wanted to pay any more money for a dance lesson, which I wasn't interested in - to be honest his dance wasn't great, and any charm it did have was dependent on the unique visual quality of his short, stumpy form.

That being said, I've been in business long enough to develop an eye for opportunity, and I could tell this gnome had an entrepreneurial spirit.

"Clodwick," I said, "I'm not interested in your dance lessons. But I am interested in mentoring you and cultivating a business relationship. How does that sound?"

Well, Clodwick was thrilled, so thrilled that he started doing his jig again before I stopped him. I told him I had to head to the conference, but I gave him my business card and told him to get in touch. A couple of days later, my personal assistant dropped the mail off at my desk, and amongst the usual invoices and such was an oak leaf which Clodwick had written an introduction email on.

H e

asked if I'd like to get a coffee with him to connect. Little more than a couple of days after that, I was in a cafe with Clodwick, him with several phonebooks beneath him to bring him up to table height.

**"As I was wandering through the park, I came across a little circle of mushrooms, in which appeared a little gnome with a puff of smoke..."**

I asked Clodwick what his revenue streams were, and he told me about his current ventures. He made most of his money from his gnome dance, he explained, but he has difficulty converting customers to dance lessons. He also made hats from acorns to sell to his fellow gnomes, but there's not a huge market for acorn hats at the moment, so his income from that is limited. Finally, he told me about his shoe repair business. This seemed promising until he told me that he actually doesn't get paid for that at all - he just sneaks into cobblers' workshops overnight and fixes shoes for them without charge. I sat back and stroked my chin and nodded at everything Clodwick had told me. It seemed like a textbook case of an entrepreneurial mindset being bogged down by lack of mentorship - and I wanted to help him.

First and foremost, he needed to re-engineer his business model. All his different revenue streams were just too disparate. Worst of all was his shoe repair gig - it simply wasn't going

to pay dividends if he kept doing it for free. Fortunately, I knew a sure-fire way to turn any business profitable.

"Clodwick," I said, "you're going into the consultancy business."

After a marathon scrum session, with synergy firing on all cylinders, the caterpillar that was the Toadstool Forest Dance and Shoe Company emerged from its cocoon as a



wondrous butterfly: Equinox Footwear Consulting LLC. From there it was a piece of cake - Equinox provided high-quality advice regarding footwear design, production, and repair to its customers, and a viral LinkedIn post about 'The Dancing Gnome CEO and the Power of Gratitude' meant that the customers started pouring in. Over time, Equinox expanded into more industries - acorn hat construction, gnome dance lessons, and now, with the breaking of ground for the Toadstool Forest open-cut lithium mine beginning soon, resources. Business is booming, and Clodwick is happier than ever. It just goes to show how far an entrepreneurial spirit can take you with the right mentor.

ART BY ELLIE STEPHENSON AND AMELIA KOEN



L to R: Bryn Chapman Parish as Spider, Brodie Townsend as Ant, Josh Heuston as Dusty, Sherry Lee Watson as Sherry. Photos courtesy Elise Lockwood & Lisa Tomasetti/ Netflix.

# CAN DIVESTMENT SAVE US?

Climate activists at the University of Sydney and around the world have frequently argued that investors should refuse to invest in morally compromised or environmentally damaging industries. But is that really effective? What other options do we have?

Swapnik Sanagavarapu interrogates.

In recent years, the climate movement has adopted a strategy of pressuring institutions to divest from their holdings of fossil fuel related shares. Divestment is certainly an enticing proposition for otherwise powerless activists – the idea that such a simple financial decision could benefit the climate provides a tangible goal that activist movements can fight for. Contrary to this received wisdom, divestment may at best be an ineffective method of delivering positive climate outcomes and at worst may actively conflict with optimal paths of decarbonisation. The alternative is not to be averse to theories of change that involve finance, but to pursue more effective alternatives like pressuring universities and superannuation funds to engage in shareholder activism. Before commencing the substance of the article, I make one caveat. This discussion of divestment is limited to the questions of institutional investors divesting their shareholdings. Banks (or other debt investors) “divesting” in the sense of refusing to roll over debt commitments, hugely increasing lending premia or otherwise denying credit is a far more effective financial strategy to achieve climate outcomes. Equally, the decisions of ordinary retail investors are irrelevant enough to not matter.

**“But it’s hard to say that these shareholders are “funding” these companies in any meaningful sense. Unless these shareholders are subscribing to new share issues, no money is flowing to the companies that they are supposedly funding.”**

The divestment movement has been deeply influential on the political culture at the University of Sydney. Recent controversies about the USU’s unwillingness to divest its own fossil fuel holdings cap off a long history of student activists calling on it and the University to go “fossil free”. In the wider world of Australian climate politics, the Environmental Defender’s Office has recently commenced litigation against UniSuper over its failure to divest from Santos, arguing that UniSuper may be in breach of its statutory trustee obligations by holding shares in Santos. Equally, there has been an explosion in the popularity of “ethical” superfunds that do not hold shares in fossil fuel and other “sin” stocks.

Starting from the premise that the holders of these shares are “funding” fossil fuel companies, the divestment movement has argued that the moral obligation of investors is to divest their holdings, stopping the extent to which they finance the likes of Santos, Woodside, Exxon and BHP. But it’s hard to say that these shareholders are “funding” these companies in any meaningful

sense. Unless these shareholders are subscribing to new share issues, no money is flowing to the companies that they are supposedly funding. In the event of divestment, the divesting investor (like a university or super fund) sells its shares to someone else. Money passes between the investors (and brokers) that are buying and selling these shares on the secondary market, but the company itself is ambivalent to this transaction.



A better version of this argument for divestment can be constructed if we understand the purpose of divestment as trying to increase the cost of capital for fossil fuel companies. The cost of capital describes how much it costs, on average, for a company to borrow money, and crucially for our purposes, the cost of equity (or return on equity). This latter concept refers to the returns that the company expects to pay to its shareholders. It’s sufficient here to say that a reduction in the company’s share price should also negatively affect its equity cost of capital. New investments should earn more than a company’s cost of capital - if Santos’ cost of capital is 8 per cent, a new gas project that it commissions should earn at least 8 per cent before it is worth investing in.

**“The crucial aspect of being a shareholder is that you have rights of control over a company.”**

If divestment of a particular company’s shares could substantially increase the equity cost of capital, fossil fuel companies should, at the margins, be less likely to invest in new fossil fuel projects. Indeed, the cost of capital for fossil fuels has certainly risen in recent years. Coal is entirely on its way out, and is essentially uneconomical. Publicly listed oil and gas companies have been reporting that the rise of socially conscious investing has created “capital discipline” that impedes their proposed expansion plans. However, it’s dubious whether the divestment actions of individual institutional

investors could ever really meaningfully affect the cost of capital of fossil fuel companies. Most holdings of fossil fuels, particularly those targeted by divestment activists, are usually too small for their divestment to matter. In their study of divestment proposals targeted at UK university endowments and public pension funds, Atif Ansar, Ben Caldecott and James Tilbury find that the even if the maximum possible capital was

divested by university endowments and public pension funds from fossil fuel companies, their shares prices would be unlikely to suffer precipitous declines. On the other hand, the small group of investors with huge ownership of public equities (namely asset managers like Blackrock and Vanguard) are passive owners, meaning they cannot and will not exit individual firms at will. Jonathan Berk and Jules van Binsbergen have found that under optimistic assumptions, to effect a more than 1 per cent change in the cost of capital, the divesting agents would need to make up more than 80% of all investable wealth in the market.

In many cases, divestment may be actively bad for the environment. From the point of view of financial theory, purchasing divested stock that may be exposed to climate-related financial risk is not an issue if the purchaser is diversified enough to absorb the risk. The crucial aspect of being a shareholder is that you have rights of control over a company. When an institutional investor divests from a fossil fuel company, these rights of control are transferred to whoever buys the divested shares. This means that the control rights transferred to those on the other end of the divestment transaction, who are presumably less climate conscious than the initial owners. These shareholders can pick up the divested stocks at a short-term discount, exercising their control rights in ways that are actively harmful for the environment. In many cases, the purchasers of these dirty stocks are private owners with very little public or regulatory oversight, creating a problem of “transferred emissions”. These owners rarely have environmental commitments and are simply interested in maximising

profits, meaning that they facilitate dirtier practices in oil and gas such as increased methane pollution.

The alternative to divestment then appears to be relatively straightforward: shareholder activism. Instead of pressuring climate-conscious investors to give up their seat at the table, activists should focus on getting them to exercise their control rights. Given that almost all existing fossil fuel assets will need to be prematurely retired (or stranded) as part of the climate transition, it is far preferable for the stewardship of this asset stranding to be undertaken by the most climate-conscious investors. Similarly, these investors can push oil and gas companies to return cash to shareholders instead of investing it in new fossil fuel capacity expansion. Activist investors can scrutinise and punish corporate managers who do not adhere to their climate transition plans. I noted earlier that the holdings of institutional investors are usually too small for their divestment efforts to be effective. While this may also be a constraint on shareholder activism, minority shareholders can be a serious thorn in the side of climate-negative managers by moving shareholder resolutions that draw attention to poor conduct and working with other activist investors. This kind of shareholder activism has been successful in the recent past in Australia. AGL’s efforts to spin off its fossil fuel assets into a separate company was defeated by the votes of Mike Cannon-Brookes and industry super fund HESTA, preventing AGL from giving its coal assets a substantially longer life than they otherwise would have.

**“Instead of pressuring climate-conscious investors to give up their seat at the table, activists should focus on getting them to exercise their control rights.”**

Despite the myriad reasons to be sceptical of divestment as a climate strategy, it does have one obvious upside: publicity. Large divestment campaigns have and will continue to have negative reputational impacts on their targets, and this may sometimes be a reason to persist with them. In those instances where shareholder activism is impossible or continually frustrated, divestment might be a useful reputational threat for climate conscious investors. Regardless, substantial state stewardship will be required for an orderly and successful transition. Even accepting the logic of this article so far, a large public asset manager that could hold shares in fossil fuel companies and manage the stranding of assets and the winding down of these companies. But in our time, it seems unlikely that such an intelligent and straightforward solution would ever happen.

# Field Notes: Water in Ladakh

The flow of water over landscapes can teach us about the interconnection between living things.

Misbah Ansari reflects on the beauty and danger of water.

Even in water’s most genial flows, an uncharacterised anger underlies its movement in between the stones and over the meadows holds its own language of deep potential wrath. Laguna Pueblo writer Leslie Marmon Silko reminisces of her aunties’ *humnah-hah* stories, in which animals and humans shared a common language. The *humnah-hah* arose from the thought that humans, animals, plants, water, clay, soil, microorganisms, and their feelings, interrelate and overlap.

I spent the month of July back home in India and travelled to Ladakh, its northernmost region. The thought of co-existence felt alive and well. I was almost 5000 metres above sea level, grasping on whatever minimal oxygen my body could inhale and looking over the patches of ice on barren mountains gaping at me from down below. Ladakh, hitherto a region under the jurisdiction

of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), was provided the status of a union territory in 2019 under the controversial and long-standing Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act. The region lies to the north of J&K, bordering Pakistan on the left and China to the East. The trans-himalayan region is cold desert with sparse vegetation and lunar/martian landscapes.

**The sangam (meeting) of rivers**

However, the change in geographical scenery travelling uphill from the lush greenery of Kashmir is not as noticeable as the heavy sedimentation process and consequent residuals in the middle of valley tracks. Home to major rivers like Indus, Zaskar, Shyok and Suru, the valley is abundant with various tributaries of these rivers and their movements on the soil as they pass.

A stunning image that keeps

playing in my mind over and over again, is that of the meeting point of the Indus and Zaskar rivers between Leh and Kargil. Their emerald and deep aqua colours remain distinct, creating a continuous foamy, chattering sound in their movement yet never changing their form upon meeting density, turbidity, acidic value and flow.

**“What sort of communication do people have with their land, water and forests in the face of environmental tragedies such as these?”**

Unlike usual confluences, these rivers do not join together as one tributary, but rather follow their own diverged path towards different directions. According to Phartiyal and Nag, the Himalayan mountain front makes Ladakh a shadow-zone for rain, causing erosion of the soil in the event of even moderate rains. A major cloudburst usurped the land in 2010, causing mud deposits on an average 2-3 m deep that buried several settlements. Debris flows occurred across 3 kilometres, killing people on the way. Even though major clearing and rehabilitation projects were developed, debris and rock sediments



are still abundant on the side roads, adjacent hills and the undulated travel tracks. How does something so calm one moment and welcoming in all its glory, sweep people in the next moment? What sort of communication do people have with their land, water and forests in the face of environmental tragedies such as these?

Ladakh has been home to major economic development due to its tourism industry and other manufacturing works. The state also faced a heat spell this year like never before followed by another cloudburst in mid-July that swept away several religious settlements.

**Naming grief: the communication with Shyok river and a day in Baltistan**

As we were proceeding further north of the region and slowly entering Nubra valley, we were welcomed by the Shyok river and its multiple tributaries. Shyok, in Yarkandi language, means death. Similarly, in Hindi, *Shok* means grief; the act of grieving death. Several local tour guides impart the knowledge that this is named after Baltistan’s traumatic partition with Pakistan and the wars that took place, with an unclear understanding of whether the political tumult in the region has any etymological influence on the name.

Despite my particular affinity for swimming apart from my nimble limbs and weak stamina, I have never thought about a body of water as much as those in Baltistan. The villages of Turtuk and Dhotang, namely the last villages of India separated by the Line of Control, are known for the tragedy of being separated from their kin in 1971 upon occupation by the Indian army. While their tragedy might seem faintly reflective in the actions of the settler colony, I believe that people’s history is not for us to interpret. Shyok flows through the villages in tiny canals and their attached water taps and raw apples fall on your feet as you wander through the village.

You feel your feet against the foamy anger of the water as it reverberates against the stones and the domestic donkeys hee-haw behind you. Sickly sweet mulberries that tint your teeth a faint violet stick on your tongue and you have a talk with the water. The bubbling of the water in fury and its stagnancy are captured by Tibetan poet Dhondup Gyal who captures his ephemeral feelings in the river’s gushing. Ladakh was one of the refuges provided to Tibetans displaced by Chinese annexation and therefore the border on the east serves as an important space for religious and cultural reasons. The wrath of the water wanes as we move to the east and the placid quiet of lakes such as Pangong (extending into China) and Tso Moriri, known for their changing colours in the light.

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
WAJID ANSARI

## President

Lauren Lancaster.

What week is it? I've lost count. How are you all?

It's Election season, a period punctuated not by night and day but by how long you can wear a coloured t-shirt before it starts to smell questionable. Get keen to return to in person voting at booths across campus next week from 20-22 September, like a real big-kid election! Should you be unable to attend booths in person, you can register for online absentee voting on the SRC website. How good.

This week I met with Campus Infrastructure at the Disability Space in Manning House with SRC Disability Officer Sarah Korte and Gemma Smart from SUPRA. We reviewed the mock-up infrastructure plan for the space, which will be autonomous for students with disabilities. It will feature modular furniture, a quiet space, soundproofing, a sound booth, adjustable lighting, kitchenette, lockers for students and more. Students can hang out, rest, and study there. It's been a hard slog but it is gratifying to see some movement here. Well done to Sarah and Gemma who have been leading this project for so long!

I've been hearing that some people are struggling with the simple extension system, and will be meeting with the University to raise this concern this week. I am also planning to make a quick explainer document on how to apply for it. You can do so through the special cons portal. Hang tight for a visual explainer.

Council on Wednesday was full of jokes and good times in the bottom of New Law. Some cracking discussion about the intransigence of management to the NTEU's EBA campaign was punctuated the next day by the union voting on a 48-hr strike in mid-October. It is important that the industrial campaign is escalated quickly, nothing else will achieve the outcomes we seek for our staff. Watch our socials for more in the coming weeks.

I am also pleased to announce that I have decided to convert the Women's Room in the SRC into a shrine for Her Royal Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II (deceased). This is to honour all the work she did for feminism. You know, all that work and service she did. So much cool stuff, you definitely know about it. She was also a great example of publicly funded activism. Her close ties and active service in WWII showed that women can be fighters too! What a girlboss. She was always there for the ladies. Except Meghan. That would require her to renege on a life of racism. A bit too much of an ask! If you would like to see the room, you must apply in writing to the SRC Office, then forfeit 0.03% of your yearly earnings plus any coins with Ar Liz's mug on it upon entry.

This week I will be wallpapering the Women's room in blood-red velvet. In addition to being a potent symbol of the blood on the imperial monarchy's hands, it really hides aspects of our office's persistent mould problem.

In seriousness, midsems are a time of stress and uncertainty for some. If you have issues relating to assessment or progression, please reach out to our Caseworkers at [help@src.usyd.edu.au](mailto:help@src.usyd.edu.au)

See you around!

## Education Officers

Lia Perkins and Deaglan Godwin.

Hello! Here's what we've been up to and what's on this week...

Along with NUS and other education collectives, we organised the counter protest to the AFR's Higher Education Summit on Tuesday August 30. The summit included all the enemies of university students and workers, and was a way for them to discuss how to reform higher education to make it more profitable and geared towards the needs of the Australian economy. These events need to be disrupted and protested, as a way of rebuilding a fighting student movement which can take on the government and the corporate university. By demonstrating that we won't let our education be subordinated to the needs of Australian capital, and we are willing to demonstrate this militantly, we can galvanise more students to become activists. Unsurprisingly, we were met with police repression, including pepper spray, and we categorically condemn this.

The EAG organised contingents to the stop work meeting and rally of RBTU members at Central earlier this month. We also sent a contingent to the Nurses and Midwives rally outside RPA, and we were joined by the NTEU. We marched from the Charles Perkins Centre and were met with cheers from the nurses on strike-afterwards nurses told us how enthused they were by this loud show of solidarity.

Along with the Casuals Network and USyd NTEU, we are organising a rally against wage theft, for backup of stolen wages, and for automatic conversion for ongoing casual staff. This is part of maintaining momentum for the strike campaign, by highlighting one of the key union claims. These demands are also important for students, as the teaching conditions of staff impact our education every single day, and we should be opposed to wage theft being a fundamental part of our education. Anyone involved in activism and particular education activism, needs to build and come along to this rally

We're excited to announce that NTEU members have decided to strike again in Week 10, this time for 48 hours like in semester 1. Management have refused to budge on any of the key union demands, which means that staff have to continue to use their collective power to force them to concede. After 4 days of strike action, the battle is really heating up and we need your help to make the student turnout as big as possible. We encourage everyone to get involved in the EAG, come to organising meetings, help us leaflet and join us on the picket lines. It's never been more important than now!

### Upcoming events:

EAG Organising Meeting, Tuesday 2PM September 13

Rally to End Wage Theft: Education Not Exploitation. Thursday 1PM September 15

43% is not enough: September 24 Climate Rally

Protest CPAC: October 1-2

## Welfare Officers

Grace Wallman, Eamonn Murphy, Jason Zhang, and Yasmin Johnson.

Welfare Action Group (WAG) meetings are running in Semester 2! We'd love to see any students there and are always open to new members. To stay updated, like our Facebook page, join our Facebook group, or ask one of the friendly Welfare Officers to add you to our group chat!

The Welfare OBs continue to support Foodhub - Welfare has allocated a portion of our budget to Foodhub, and have also been volunteering and using WAG to encourage more volunteering participation, towards the aim of forming an ongoing contingent of WAG members to volunteer at Foodhub. The difference the initiative makes to students facing food insecurity is extremely valuable (demonstrated by the fact that over 1000 students have accessed Foodhub so far), especially in a time of rising cost of living and high inflation rates.

The Welfare Officers also continue to work towards the development of the new Disabilities Room and stand in solidarity with Disabilities Officers across the Uni, as well as DisCo. The process of creating the room is certainly an ongoing effort and disabled advocates (especially the SRC and SUPRA Disabilities Officers) have put in a lot of work in ensuring the room is put together appropriately and with enough consideration of accessibility. Disability justice is absolutely central to welfare justice - both on the level of campus and the broader community. Part of the work the Welfare Officers are committed to in the upcoming month is fighting alongside the SRC Disabilities Officers and other key SRC members towards the goal of introducing a stipend for the SRC Disabilities Officer position, which has been called for in a recent Honi article as well as many disabled student representatives at the University.

WAG is gearing up to begin an initiative fighting for an improvement to The University's Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS) which we encourage everyone to look out for and support as a key issue in relation to student welfare. In conclusion, please look out for and attend upcoming WAG meetings!

## Disability Officers

Sarah Korte, Ira Patole and Holly Haoyi Zhang.

Had a fantastic turnout to a walk through of the proposed disability space a few weeks back, thank you everyone who came along to share their ideas and feedback. I had a meeting last week with the infrastructure team to see the updated plans and it's looking amazing. We're also looking forward to the Disabilities edition of Honi coming up in Week 10. We've got some great submissions and the editorial team is looking fabulous!

## Women's Officers

did not submit a report.

## Stress, Anxiety & the Impact on Your Study



After more than two and a half years of being in this global pandemic, it is certainly obvious that most people are impacted significantly by the uncertainly, isolation, and distress of our current situation. Even where some students are enjoying the lifting of some restrictions, lots of students are feeling lonely and isolated from their family and/or friends, which has a negative impact on their studies. Perhaps you are experiencing that too.

Even with some classes moving to "in person" delivery, lots of classes are still online. Some students have found that they have submitted incorrect files for assessments, while others can't learn the information as well as they did in person. There are several students who have not even been on the Uni campus and are missing out on the social aspect of being a student.

There are a few online resources available through the Uni and in the broader community that you might find helpful. The Library has Peer Learning Advisors ([library.usyd.edu.au/help/pla](http://library.usyd.edu.au/help/pla)) who run some social activities, as well as being able to help with study skills. The USU have over 200 clubs and societies that are holding different types of online social events, in a wide range of interests. Headspace ([headspace.org.au/eheadspace](http://headspace.org.au/eheadspace)) have an online forum, especially for students, to talk about the challenges they are experiencing, and some of the things they are doing to help themselves. The Uni has an app which is a peer support and mental wellbeing resource ([sydney.edu.au/students/talkcampus](http://sydney.edu.au/students/talkcampus)). It may also benefit you to speak to a counsellor either at the Uni ([sydney.edu.au/students/counselling-and-mental-health-support](http://sydney.edu.au/students/counselling-and-mental-health-support)) or in the community ([headspace.org.au](http://headspace.org.au)) to develop strategies to deal with isolation.

While it is completely understandable that you might be feeling distressed, the

Uni still considers academic honesty very seriously. You need to reference every source that you use to write an essay. You need to complete your own work when writing code, that is, not look at another student's assignment, and not get help for that assignment from a coach or tutoring company. When you are doing an online exam, you should not access unauthorised materials (e.g., notes, canvas, another computer, etc) and you should not be wearing headphones. Any academic honesty breach may lead to a fail grade for that assessment or even a suspension from University. Be careful when submitting any files for an exam, to ensure that you are attaching the correct file.

If you need a few extra days for an assessment, you might be able to apply for a simple extension of 5 calendar days through the Special Consideration portal. Check the portal to see if that particular assessment is eligible for a simple extension. You need to apply on or before the due date, and provide a Student Declaration explaining why you want the extension. If you are still unable to complete your assessment because of illness, injury, or misadventure, you should apply for Special Consideration. You have three working days to submit your application and where possible you will need to provide a supporting document from a doctor or counsellor dated ON or BEFORE the day the assessment is due.

If you feel so desperate that you think you should breach academic honesty standards for an assessment, please talk to an SRC caseworker about what your options are. We provide a confidential service that is independent of the University.

## Ask Abe

SRC caseworker help Q&A

### English Language Resources



There are lots of resources available online that can help you to improve your English Language skills.

Dear Abe,

I am finding it difficult to follow what the lecturer says in class because my English is not very good. Is it possible to get the lectures in my home language.

International Student

Dear International Student,

I am sorry to hear you are having some difficulty with your lectures.

As you are trying to complete a degree in an English-speaking country, you are not able to get lectures in your home language. There are some resources that can help your English language skills to develop. Perhaps the best thing to do is to always speak English to your friends. That way, you do not feel self-conscious or worried that you might say the wrong thing, and you can very quickly improve that skill.

Abe

For more information, short & links see: [srcusyd.net.au/src-help/international-student-resources/english-language-resources](http://srcusyd.net.au/src-help/international-student-resources/english-language-resources)



## WARNING!!! New Rules Apply for Discontinuing (DC)



## If you need to Discontinue a subject make sure you know the new rules!

If you are not able to complete a subject because of illness, injury, or misadventure, talk to a caseworker about applying for a DC.

The rules for applying for DC changed in 2022 due to new legislation

See an SRC Caseworker if you need help.

## Enviro Officers

Ishbel Dunsmore, Tiger Perkins, and Angus Dermody.

It's a busy time for the Enviro Collective, with lots happening politically and on the ground. We've seen climate devastation in Pakistan, new coal and gas projects approved at a ridiculous rate, and Labor commit to taking no action; but also the first resistance under the Labor government with a mass climate rally called for September 24 by a coalition of climate organisations!

The scale of the climate crisis is surely not lost on anyone at this rate - the devastation of fires and floods here in Australia in recent years has been repeated around the world at an alarming rate. The brutal summer faced in America and Europe has seen unprecedented fires and droughts - two thirds of Europe faces the worst drought in over 500 years, with rivers running dry for the first time in recorded human history. On the opposite end of the spectrum, a third of Pakistan is currently underwater, with at least 33 million people displaced from their homes. The climate movement here in Australia must extend our solidarity to those suffering the brunt of the catastrophe right now - particularly in the case of countries like Pakistan who release negligible carbon emissions in comparison to Australia.

It should be seen as a travesty in light of this, that the Albanese government has committed to their plan for 43% emissions reduction. This plan is a farce; it offers little to

no real improvement, relies on bogus technologies and schemes, and is incompatible with our push for a just transition to 100% publicly-owned renewable energy. The Enviro Collective reaffirms our commitment to real climate action, and that includes fighting against all new coal and gas projects. In particular, it has been shameful to see the Labor government embrace Santos' destructive plans for the Narrabri Gas Project which would see up to 850 gas wells drilled on Gomeri land in the Pilliga. The Enviro Collective is organising a trip to the Pilliga in mid october at the invitation of the Gomeri community to take part in a cultural festival and see the site on the ground - reach out to get involved!

We must be clear that the climate movement cannot retreat under this government, if Albo acts like Scomo we'll treat him like Scomo. Luckily, we are fighting back. The Enviro Collective is proud to be supporting the rally for urgent climate action called for September 24, meeting 1pm at Town Hall. Join us on the streets on the day, but also help us build for it over the coming 2 weeks! Go for a poster run, help out on a stall, or come to a meeting!

Finally, the Enviro Collective's annual publication Embers is now accepting pitches! Write, create or edit a zine concerning all things environmental! Again, reach out to get involved - see you September 24!

## Woof! Candy and Sausage the Corgis here!

We're here to let you know that the SRC Reports are submitted by our elected Office Bearers and are unedited by Honi.



Find more information about Office Bearers on the SRC website.

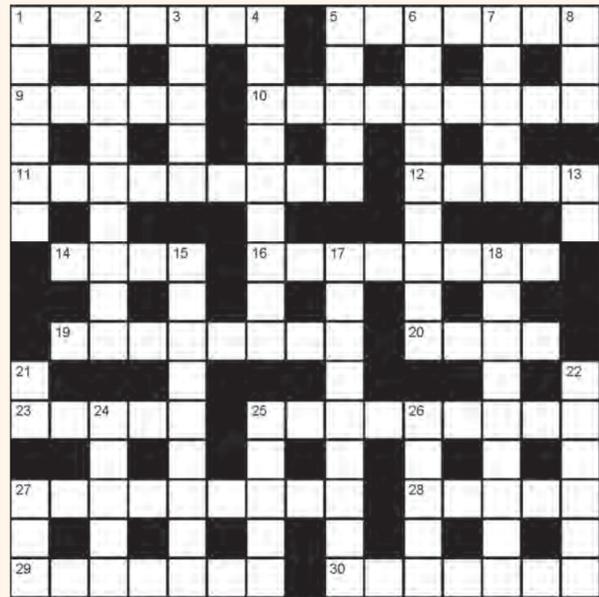
For more information, short & links see: [srcusyd.net.au/get-help-with-stress-and-anxiety](http://srcusyd.net.au/get-help-with-stress-and-anxiety)



Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney  
e: [help@src.usyd.edu.au](mailto:help@src.usyd.edu.au) | w: [srcusyd.net.au](http://srcusyd.net.au)



# Quick Crossword



Cryptic by Cloudrunner. Quick and Quiz by Some Hack.

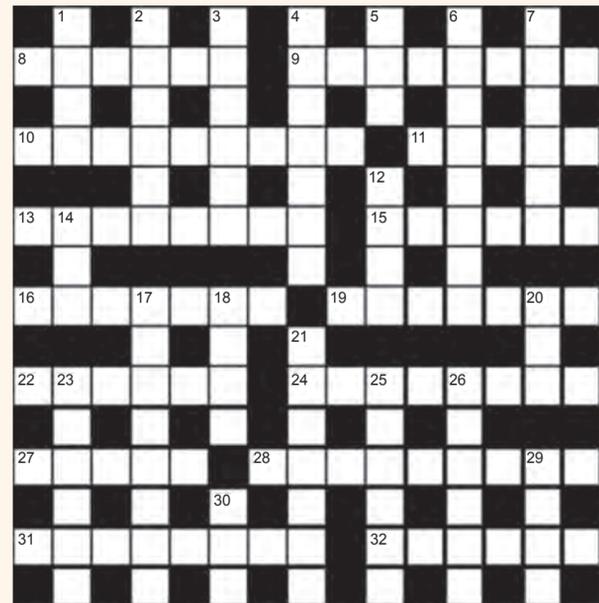
## Across

- 1 What comes out when you milk the wrong udder of a bovine (4,3)
- 5 Hole to contain flames (4,3)
- 9 No Googling answers, No using Crossword Solvers for example (5)
- 10 Fixture at the end of a School Year (6,3)
- 11 A Queen who died in 1603 from Blood Poisoning (9)
- 12 Looks or Opinions? (5)
- 14 Organisation made famous by Village People (4)
- 16 A Queen who died in late Middle Ages (1599-1601) by drinking from a Poisoned Chalice (8)
- 19 A Queen who died in 1901 from being Queen for a really long time (8)
- 20 Cool, stupid, drug? (4)
- 23 A word I stupidly thought meant a type of trousers but is actually Japanese persimmons (5)
- 25 19 across' relationship to 11 across (9)
- 27 A Queen who died in 30BC from an Asp (9)
- 28 Chevy Chase, Steve Martin, Martin Short for Example (5)
- 29 Someone who irritates (7)
- 30 A Queen who died in 1991 from AIDS

## Down

- 1 A Queen who died in 305 AC (2019) by being crushed in rubble during a dragon attack (6)
- 2 First English King who did not marry a Queen: died in 1100 (9)
- 3 Brava, Coffee, Rica (5)
- 4 Feature of Facebook that is a separate app on smart phones (9)
- 5 Doctor Who Episode featuring 19 Across '\_\_\_ And Stone' (5)
- 6 Got better (9)
- 7 A Queen who died in 19BBY (2005) of "a broken heart" (5)
- 8 Lego, A Barbie, a spinning top for example (3)
- 13 To an extent (2)
- 15 Behaves cheesy (4,5)
- 17 Authentic declaration (4,5)
- 18 French Actor in Cyrano de Bergerac, 1900 and Jean de Florette: Gerard... (9)
- 21 Country that changed its national anthem this week (2)
- 22 Nickname of notoriously violent Queen who died in 1558 of Influenza (6)
- 24 A Queen who slays (5)
- 25 Cate Blanchett in 11 across Jenna Colman in 19 across or Elizabeth Taylor in 27 across For Example (5)
- 26 They usually come in a case (5)
- 27 Organisation who killed a King in 1968 (3)

# Cryptic Crossword



## Across

- 8 Voice regret after twisted NDA with paedophile prince (6)
- 9 A new king? I'm on the side of anarchy, with mutual dislike (8)
- 10 Old queen wasted, eh? Blaze it! (9)
- 11 Network of members providing support to cringe PM (5)
- 13 Person in charge of Honi Soit is after the king—they expect recompense (8)
- 15 Defeat cohort of Anglos in Ghana (6)
- 16/19 Broadcast thy ardent toast: "Mortem Tyrannis!" (5,2,7)
- 22 Charles' sexual fantasy: Two different Englishmen offering their bottoms to each other (6)
- 24 Queen Elizabeth overthrown: Soldier and UK detective agency start examining crime thought to have been committed by 11-Across (8)
- 27 Consistently cause trouble and be an American escape artist? (5)
- 28 Dead wrong exchanging Diana for Camilla! (9)
- 31 Sight OBE? Prepare for a sledge from the Irish (8)
- 32 Prophetic writer to reveal a third of Elizabeth's Crown Jewels avariciously hoarded (6)

## Down

- 1 Sex scandal CDs given out (4)
- 2 Fanatical about king who succeeded Torquemada and Ximenes? (6)
- 3 Poor fool, to be transfixed by old British leaders (3-3)
- 4 Prince Harry probably to take first bribe and star in promotion (7)
- 5 Every second I dream of alternative Irish leadership (3)
- 6 Paramedics surround Royal, one interminable hag served the stuff of immortality (8)
- 7 All at once union surrounds Scottish leader (6)
- 12 Civilian subordinated to head of state: Yas queen! (4)
- 14 Paris road yields regret... (3)
- 17 Men such as Lord Mountbatten lead terrible oppression, pathetically botch Raj's abolition, secretly sodomise (3,5)
- 18 Colonisers of Ireland train as IRA withdraws(4)
- 20 Edward briefly led the English dominion (3)
- 21 Retro opera era is gone for Wills or Harry (7)
- 23 Princess Diana is a well-known source for books (6)
- 25 Spicy material is proof of Di's infidelity (6)
- 26 Queen's furry friends conclude satanic orgies with outburst of ecstasy (6)
- 29 Boring kind of queen (4)
- 30 The German royal family should do this. (3)

# Quiz

- Which World Cup winning cricket legend served as the Prime Minister of Pakistan from 2018 to 2022?
- In which city was the NASA control centre that oversaw the Apollo 13 mission?
- Which character does David Schwimmer play in the TV show 'Friends'?
- Which Looney Tunes character (with the last name 'Pussycat Sr') has the catchphrase "sufferin' succotash!"?
- What name links a Calvin Harris track and the second concerto of Vivaldi's Four Seasons?
- What connects the previous answers?

# Answers



honisoit.com/puzzle-answers

# LEAKED INSIDE: You do NOT want to see this part of Prince Philip's body!

Royalist. Always.

# The End Times



Wed September 14 Vol. 420 + 20 Cheaper and more available than toilet paper! The only newspaper. Proudly Murdoch. Pro-News. Anti-Truth. United Kingdom of USyd. \$4.20

LET THE ROYAL BLOOD FLOW... \$2.99

\*10c PER TAMPON RETURNED

**INSPIRING: CHARLIE DEBUTS EMPOWERING NEW TAMPON LINE**



| Doomed        | Destined      |
|---------------|---------------|
| Re-schedules  | SWOP          |
| Mental health | Sunshine      |
| Teeth pulling | South King    |
| Balls         | Custom frames |
| Mini sliders  | Lollies       |
| Water bottles | Breakups      |
| Furniture     | Sydney-core   |
| Melbourne     | Suiting       |

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- Pope starts tipping comp on the next to go - Kath Lique
- Why the queen was actually bad: a dialectical materialist analysis - Greg Dogwin
- USyd book fair royals section stampede claims three lives - Anne de Foote
- 28-year-old anarchist extols virtues of winning over ordinary students - Calis Sole
- Why the Wentworth Building should be renamed the Windsor Building - Em Piriale

FREE ELIZABETHAN BANKNOTE RECYCLING AT HONI SOIT OFFICE

## NORTH SHORE BDAY BASH SHOCKS PARTYGOERS WITH ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY AFTER MINUTE SILENCE FOR QUEEN

## MINION BUBBLE BURSTS IN BIT ECONOMY CRISIS

This conversation between King Charles and Camilla Queen Consort is from 1989, when Charles and Diana were still married. This may be the comedy section but this transcript is real.

**Charles:** "He was a bit anxious, actually."  
**Camilla:** "Was he?"  
**Charles:** "He thought he might've gone too far."  
**Camilla:** "Ah well."  
**Charles:** "Anyway, you know that's the sort of thing one has to beware of. And sort of feel one's way along with - if you know what I mean."  
**Camilla:** "Mmmm. You're awfully good feeling your way along."  
**Charles:** "Oh Stop! I want to feel my way along you, all over you, and up and down you, and in and out..."  
**Camilla:** "Oh, Charles!"  
**Charles:** "Particularly in and out!"  
**Camilla:** "Oh, that's just what I need at the moment."  
**Charles:** "Is it?"  
**Camilla:** "I know it would revive me. I can't bear a Sunday night without you."  
**Charles:** "Oh, God."  
**Camilla:** "It's like that programme 'Start the Week.' I can't start the week without you."  
**Charles:** "I fill up your tank!"

**Camilla:** "Yes, you do."  
**Charles:** Oh, God. I'll just live inside your trousers or something. It would be much easier!  
**Camilla (laughing):** What are you going to turn into, a pair of knickers? (Both laugh). Oh, you're going to come back as a pair of knickers.  
**Charles:** Or, God forbid, a Tampax. Just my luck! (Laughs)  
**Camilla:** You are a complete idiot! (Laughs) Oh, what a wonderful idea.  
**Charles:** My luck to be chucked down a lavatory and go on and on forever swirling round on the top, never going down.  
**Camilla (laughing):** Oh darling!  
**Charles:** Until the next one comes through.  
**Camilla:** Oh, perhaps you could just come back as a box.  
**Charles:** What sort of box?  
**Camilla:** A box of Tampax, so you could just keep going.  
**Charles:** That's true.  
**Camilla:** Repeating yourself... (laughing). Oh, darling, oh I just want you now.  
**Charles:** Do you?  
**Camilla:** Mmm.  
**Charles:** So do I.  
**Camilla:** Desperately, desperately, desperately. Oh, I thought of you so

much at Yaraby.  
**Charles:** Did you?  
**Camilla:** Simply mean we couldn't be there together.  
**Charles:** Desperate. If you could be here - I long to ask Nancy sometimes.  
**Camilla:** Why don't you?  
**Charles:** I daren't.  
**Camilla:** Because I think she's so in love with you.  
**Charles:** Mmm.  
**Camilla:** She'd do anything you asked.  
**Charles:** She'd tell all sorts of people.  
**Camilla:** No, she wouldn't because she'd be much too frightened of what you might say to her. I think you've got - I'm afraid it's a terrible thing to say - but I think, you know, those sort of people do feel very strongly about you. You've got such a great hold over her.  
**Charles:** Really?  
**Camilla:** And you're . . . I think, as usual, you're under-estimating yourself.  
**Charles:** But she might be terribly jealous or something.  
**Camilla:** Oh! (Laughs) Now that is a point! I wonder. She might be, I suppose.  
**Charles:** You never know, do you?

## BATH WOMAN, SUNDAE WASCH, CONDUCTS THRILLING CITIZEN'S ARREST ON MEGHAN MARKLE

## [INSERT AR DI LAUGHING IN HEAVEN JOKE THAT IS VERY ORIGINAL AND FUNNY]

# Honi Soit.

WEEK 7, SEM 2 2022

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

Est. 1929



## Your teachers are voting too: NTEU elections prove campus democracy isn't just for students

For most students, campus elections occur because of student politics. Campaigners coalesce around student unions, student representatives on university boards, the executives of certain large societies, and so on. Primarily, they discuss student issues. It is students who are enfranchised as voters. depleted the role of leisurely intellect in both our culture and our education.

But many students likely do not

realise that, even as the SRC, NUS, and University Senate elections loom, there have been another set of elections unfolding on campuses around Australia. Thousands of staff at universities across the country have cast their ballots in this year's National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) elections.

The elections, which happen every four years, are an opportunity for NTEU members to have their say about the...

Ellie Stephenson & Carmeli Argana write — Page 12

## Could the Quad survive a siege?

With a Charles once again on St Edward's Chair, it seems prudent to prepare for another university siege. Modelled off of Oxford itself and featuring its open book insignia on our coat of arms, the University of Sydney is surely next. And where would fair USyd make its final stand? None other than the Quadrangle: the Keep of Camperdown and the Citadel of Science Road.

So let us draw up some battle plans, barricade the gates, and rally the troops.

Marlow Hurst writes — Page 19

## ALSO IN THIS EDITION:

USyd partners with health record thief - p.5

Your guide to the SRC Election - p.9

Heartbreak High is smart, sexy, and very Sydney - p.20

Is fossil fuels divestment the answer? - p.22