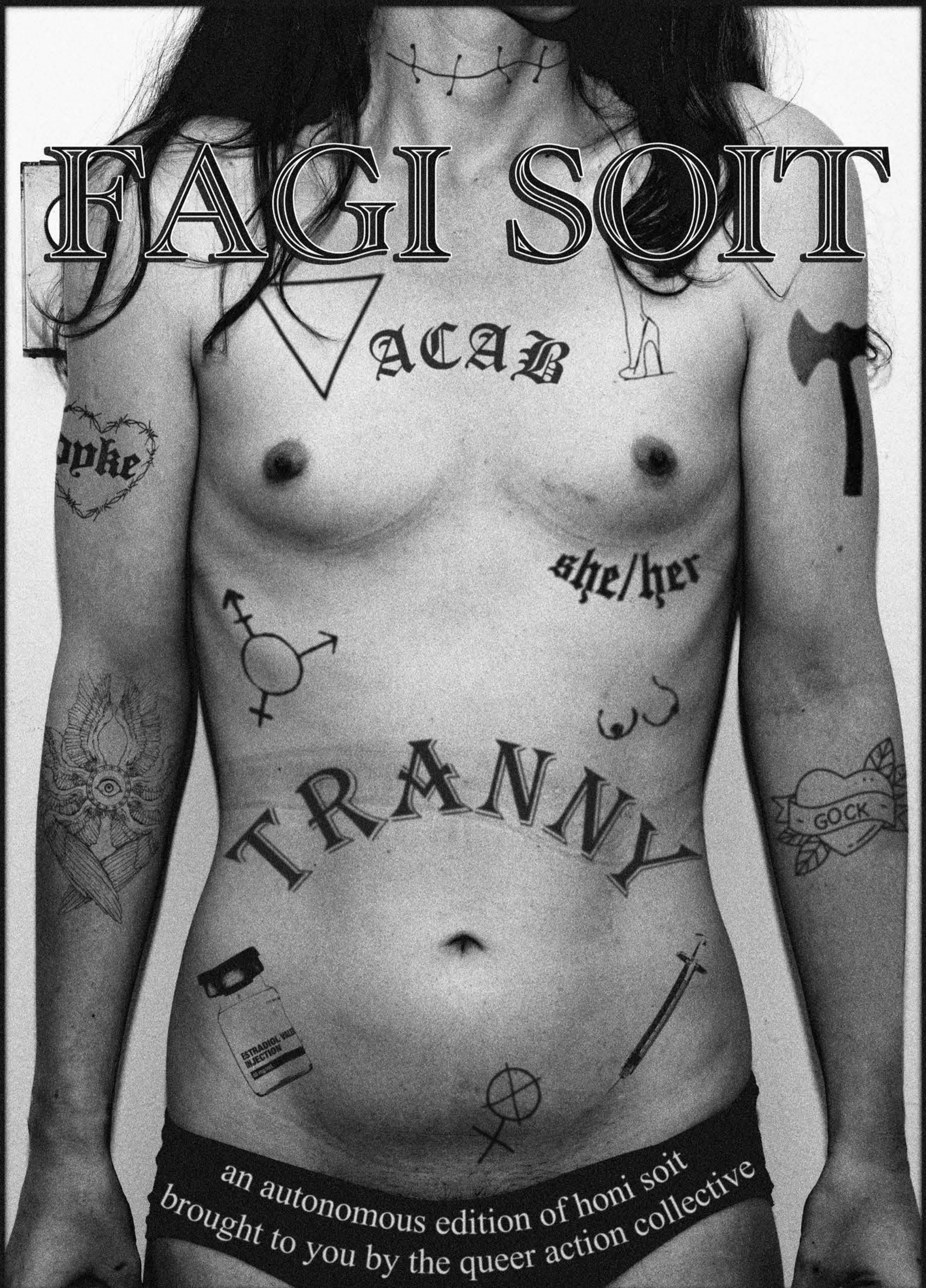


# HAGI SOIT



an autonomous edition of honi soit  
brought to you by the queer action collective



# Acknowledgement of Country

We want to acknowledge that this paper was written and produced on the unceded lands of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation. This land is stolen, and always was and always will be Aboriginal Land. As we aim to tell our own stories and define our existence by our own terms, we must remember how the dominant narrative pushes down the voices

of Aboriginal people, erasing their history and struggle.

*There cannot be true Queer liberation without the liberation of Aboriginal people as these two fights are connected and intersecting. We would like to extend our respects to all Elders past, present and emerging — may we all fight together, may we all celebrate together.*

## Editorial

After the success of last year's Queer issue of Honi Soit we are excited to once again take control of the longest running student newspaper in Australia. Since last edition our collective has flourished and we have seen an influx of active members, bringing new perspectives and ideas that we hope to express in this edition. This year there will be less girl cock but still the same radically unapologetic queer content people have come to expect from QuAC.

With this edition we hope to explore identity and language, and how our identities and experiences as queer people intersect with the language used to describe, attack, and affirm us. Throughout this edition you will find pieces that explore these ideas from all perspectives in society.

For us (Yaz and Ella), this year will be our second year being Queer Officers/Co-conveners of QuAC — it has been a long journey. Last year was a bit of a phoenix moment for QuAC as we worked hard to rebuild the collective after a rocky transition. We focused on the needs of the queer student community, trying to address

issues that impacted us directly, from deadnaming to having a clean space to call our own. This steadfast dedication has paid off — our meetings are now full of people interested and engaged, ready to continue what we started and bring a strong queer political presence to campus. We hope that when we step back as the Queer Officers at the end of the year, our successors continue our fight for queer liberation. And that they remember that something as simple as painting walls pink or getting the floor cleaned in the QueerSpace can improve the lives of queer students on campus.

We would like to thank the contributors for sharing their voices with us. We would like to thank the Honi Editors for their work and support, and for lending their mouldy office. We would also like to thank all the members of QuAC who volunteered to be editors and worked with us to bring this issue to life.

Thanks,  
Yaz and Ella ❤️

# What is QuAC?

Pronounced like a duck

The Queer Action Collective, known commonly as QuAC, is a leftist political organising group on campus that focuses its efforts on queer liberation. As our liberation intersects with many social issues, we often work in collaboration or solidarity with other collectives and groups.

Notably, we have co-hosted the Mardi Gras rally and Trans Day of Visibility rally with Pride in Protest, both events pushing for the advancement of queer rights through demands of annualised gender affirmation leave, no more exemptions for religious organisations, and the re-introduction of safe schools. We've been on the picket line with the NTEU in support of their annual gender affirmation leave demand, we rallied at the school strike for climate in solidarity with young activists, and International Working Girls Day in support of sex-workers and their fight against discrimination. We are also pushing for an end to deadnaming on campus, providing gender affirming supplies to trans students in our annual drive, and creating a space for

queer students to engage in political movements.

If you would like to get involved with political organising on campus, and have some silly goofy fun with some straight up pals, you can find us on facebook at USYD Queer Action Collective or on instagram @ usydqueer.

And as always big things, coming soon.



## Inside?

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# Queerspace and the journey of a baby queer

Anon

I was recently described as a “baby queer”. This is true – I’ve only been non-binary and using they/them pronouns for a few months. With this in mind, I couldn’t be more grateful for the welcoming, tight-knit environment that is Queerspace.

Before I committed to this identity of mine, I had a growing sense of dissatisfaction with identifying as a male, fuelled by my sense of disconnection to male culture and predominant male forms of socialising. I wanted to experiment with my pronouns, in some limited capacity if I could, though I would never be able to use these around family given their extremely backward perceptions of trans people.

At the same time, I had a fear that I could be “jumping on the bandwagon” – wanting to be queer only because I know people that are. Did I have a “good” reason to deviate from the cis norm?

Ultimately, this way of thinking reflects how much cisgender identities are the norm and how

anything else is a deviation from that standard. The only reason you need to experiment with your identity is wanting to! There is absolutely no expectation that you must have some very compelling argument as to why you’re not cis beyond any shred of uncertainty, and you can change your pronouns just as frequently as you like!

I bought a non-binary sticker for my laptop – one subtle enough that my family wouldn’t notice, but that hopefully others would (as far as I know no one has yet, but maybe they just haven’t said so?). That and a close friends story highlight on Insta announcing my pronouns as they/them were two basic steps of expressing my identity.

Queerspace was an incredible discovery, but at first I was intimidated. I entered a room buzzing with conversation, too afraid to try to join in,

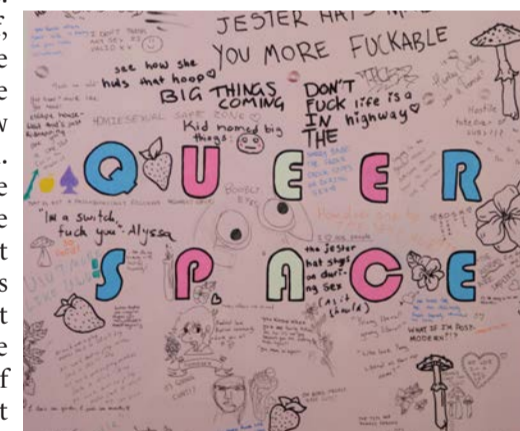
until I attempted and failed. It seemed everyone else was already extremely close. Thankfully I chose to stay a little while, admittedly concerned about how I would seem if I just got up and left after sitting down and saying nothing with my laptop open and scrolling or texting on my phone.

Eventually, the conversation quieted down enough that I could start to speak to people. To my relief, it wasn’t true that everyone there just knew each other well. It’s become apparent to me since that what I witnessed is an integral part of Queerspace – a sense of community that underpins that small, slightly tucked away room of Manning House.

Queerspace may well be the death knell for me being productive on campus. What I found, however, certainly beats spending all my time

on campus outside of tutorials and lectures in Fisher Library. Sometimes it’s hectic, other times it’s quiet, but I always feel welcomed. I’ve met someone who sees in me things from their own gender journey, and as I’ve been affirmed and welcomed by Queerspace, I’ve been able to do the same as well. I’ve been fed popcorn and I’ve tried on clothes I would not have otherwise had the opportunity to wear.

Joy comes from being around people who are kind and supportive of you, people that are nice and that you feel a connection to. Everyone deserves this, and I have a bubbly feeling Queerspace has given me.



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## USU Board winners revealed

Misbah Ansari, Katarina Butler, Bipasha Chakraborty and Veronica Lenard.

After almost two weeks of campaigning, the University of Sydney Union (USU) has announced its new student Board Directors. Bryson Constable (Liberal), Julia Lim (Independent), Grace Wallman (Switch), Ben Hines (Libdependent), Grace Porter (Unity) and Sargun Saluja (NLS) have been provisionally elected.

Constable, Lim and Wallman were all elected in the first count, with 571, 549, and 491 votes respectively. Hines followed in the third count, with 488.75 votes. Porter was elected in count 9 and Saluja was elected in count 10, with 491.05 and 438.578 votes respectively.

The remaining candidates who were not elected received less than 330 votes each. The quota was 476 votes.

The vote count slide shared during the evening by the USU

Both the Left and Right blocs ended up with three of their candidates on Board. Whilst Julia Lim is Independent, and seemed to bring progressive policies to her campaign, Lim appeared to be aligned with the Right bloc in preference deals. It is yet to be seen how this will affect her vote once on Board.

Four of the elected directors are non-cis men, which is above the affirmative action requirements for the Board. Saluja is the only international student among the newly elected Board Directors.

The six newly elected directors will join Nicholas Dower (Liberal), Onor Nottle (Switch), Alexander Poirier (Unity), Naz Sharifi (Independent), and Madhullikaa Singh (Switch) on Board.

## UTS to back-pay staff over \$5.7 million

Luke Mesterovic

The University has undertaken an obligation to back-pay 2,777 current and former casual staff for work done between September 2014 and May 2021. This amounts to more than \$4.4 million in minimum engagement entitlements, in addition to over \$1.3 million to reflect what would have been accrued superannuation and interest.

## USyd records \$298.5 million surplus

Luke Cass

The University of Sydney has told staff that it has recorded a surplus of \$298.5 million in 2022. Excluding USyd's 2021 surplus of \$1.04 billion, the surplus is the University's largest in almost 20 years.

In an all-staff email, Vice-Chancellor Mark Scott said "as we expected, our 2022 financial statement has recorded an operating result that is significantly down on 2021's 'one off' result."

The University recorded an even higher "underlying margin" of \$381.5 million.

The parent operating result means USyd earned \$298.5 million more in revenue than it lost in expenses in 2022. The \$381.5 million underlying margin excludes one-offs (such as asset sales) and "tied" funds — this typically includes research grants and donations tied to a specific purpose, and the University's investments — when making that calculation.

Scott said that the University's financial performance was lower in 2022 than in 2021 because "the compulsory acquisition

of the University's lands in 2021 were reversed". The discontinuation of the federal government's Research Support Program and lower investment income were also factors, according to Scott.

"While this result still provides us with financial sustainability, there is no question that we continue to navigate the challenges facing a volatile higher education sector," Scott told staff.

"All universities are grappling with rising costs, and while we are not immune to inflationary pressure, we are fortunate to be able to reinvest our surplus to support our core activities of teaching and research.

"We know that our most important asset is our staff, and I'd like to reiterate our commitment to providing the best overall conditions, including the highest salaries in the sector, and expanding our continuing academic workforce."

The University has offered staff a real-pay cut in ongoing enterprise negotiations and has committed to expanding the amount of staff working in exploitative Education Focussed academic roles by 440%.

## The students' guide to the Budget

Luke Cass, Veronica Lenard and Caitlin O'Keeffe-White

Treasurer Jim Chalmers only mentioned young people twice in his Budget speech. That was telling.

In some ways, the Budget will lead to an improvement to the lives of students. But for every step forward, there is a step back. In all, this Budget represents a government that has taken our votes for granted. Here's what's in the Budget for students.

### Higher Education

The aspects of the 2023 Budget relating to higher education can be characterised by a sparse lack of detail, with the government seemingly having its eyes on its upcoming Universities Accord.

More funding has been promised for students with disabilities, students studying education and students studying at TAFE or VET providers, with extra places assigned for primary and secondary teachers.

The Government has also announced support for 4,000 places at universities in STEM and management-related fields to support the AUKUS deal. A previous additional 20,000 Commonwealth supported places were announced in the October Budget.

International students will be faced with a return to a fortnightly cap on working hours from 1 July. Whilst the cap previously existed, it was removed during the pandemic. The return was announced earlier this year, but committed to in the Budget, with an expansion from 40 to 48 hours per fortnight. This, in effect,

prevents an international student from working more than three eight-hour shifts per week.

### Cost of Living

The government is selling this as a cost of living budget. However, most of the cost of living initiatives are targeted at older Australians. There little in this Budget for students exposed to extraordinary cost of living pressure, indicative of a government which treats young people as an afterthought.

The government announced it is lifting the rate of Youth Allowance, Austudy and JobSeeker by \$40 a fortnight for those under 55, with many JobSeeker recipients aged 55 and over to receive a \$92 a fortnight increase.

Housing policy received some attention in this year's Budget, but not enough in the face of an ever worsening housing crisis.

The flagship proposal was an increase of the cap of Commonwealth Rent Assistance by fifteen per cent, the equivalent of \$31 dollars a fortnight (just over \$2 a day).

Elsewhere, the government is introducing tax breaks for investment funds managing "build-to-rent" housing.

### Climate

There is no fair future in Australia without adequately addressing climate change. Rhetorically the Albanese government agrees that more needs to be done. It's a pity then that the bulk of the Budget's commitments on climate change lack ambition, hesitate on action, or are just pure rhetoric.

In its 2021 Annual Report, the University introduced the category of "underlying margin excluding non-recurring items", which was approximately \$550 million less than its parent figure. It argued at the time that it was a more appropriate means of calculating its financial performance than the parent operating margin.

Nick Riemer, President of the National Tertiary Education Union's USyd Branch, told *Honi* "This is a result that most universities would give their eye teeth for. Those hundreds of millions of dollars should be spent on staff salary and preventing overwork.

"This underlines once again that there's simply no financial justification for management not making staff a better salary offer, or for rejecting the original proposals the NTEU made for lowering teaching load for Education-focused staff."

This year's surplus was significantly larger than the University's results in 2020 (\$31 million), 2019 (\$8.9 million) and 2018 (\$27 million), with the preceding years similarly low.

The government has announced many reviews, the \$103.7 million review of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan the most prominent of which. These reviews will likely tell us what we already know: Australia is highly vulnerable to climate change and must stop all new coal, gas, and petroleum projects.

The government argues reforms to the petroleum resource rent tax (PRRT) will deter fossil fuel companies. However, the PRRT will add less to the government's wallet, than the Budget's increased tobacco taxes. This PRRT is not enough to see corporations move away from investing in fossil fuels, nor does it promote the fair society that the Labor party seeks to build.

The government announced \$2 billion for the Hydrogen Headstart program, to "accelerate large-scale renewable hydrogen projects" and "bridge the commercial gap for early-stage projects".

Without strong reforms on how carbon-producing industries are taxed, and further investment into renewable energy these changes remain hollow and continue Australia's legacy of a country that fails on climate.

A budget dictates the future of a nation, and the future outlined by Labor in the Budget is one not made for the very people who will be living in it.

Students have been given "just enough" in this Budget, but not enough.

## Track by Track:

# Peach PRC is our Favourite Person in electric debut EP

Elliot Lawry reviews.

With her first EP *Manic Dream Pixie* finally out, TikTok sensation Peach PRC has solidified her place as a vibrant fixture of Australia's pop music landscape.

In her new release, Peach (born Shaylee Curnow) balances narrative worldbuilding against increasingly bombastic pop synths. Each song on the new record relays a different perspective on love, loss and self-discovery, each to differing levels of success.

The lyrical specificity with which Peach details a lifetime of personal struggles positions her as Australia's glittery, pink, queer answer to Billie Eilish. Yet the standout on this record is the singer's vocals, with her ethereal voice floating effortlessly over the lush production.

Peach displays an acute awareness of the manic pixie dream girl tropes that have been placed upon her, reclaiming it as an image of her own design. This is best encapsulated in the album's cover art which sees the singer laid out as a mystical fairy princess adorned in her signature pink.

Notably absent from the record are radio hits "Josh" and "God is a Freak", both of which placed on Triple J's Hottest 100 in 2021 and 2022 respectively. None of the tracks here contain the hyper-specific songwriting of their predecessors, but Peach is clearly having plenty of fun with it.

Clocking in at a run time of 17 minutes, *Manic Dream Pixie* is a flash-in-the-pan sampler for the sounds we can expect on an eventual full-length album.

Check out Queer Honi's track-by-track review below.

## Kinda Famous

The album opener crashes in with a healthy dose of 2000s nostalgia and tongue-in-cheek references to stan culture. The protagonist pines over a D-list celebrity as the song's production alternates between softly pulsating beats and a bombastic pop-rock chorus. "You don't know me yet/You're kinda famous", the singer chants, both a promise and a threat to the object of her adoration.

## Perfect for You

Acting as the EP's lead single, "Perfect for You" is the most classically Peach track in the mix. The stop-start melody on the hook is borrowed from Paris Hilton's 2006 hit "Stars are Blind," which Peach directly interpolates on the song's bridge. Peach's songwriting skills shine on this track as she details falling in love against the backdrop of a house party. Ever euphorically sapphic, this is the one that will have you jumping on your bed à la Bring It On.

## F U Goodbye

"F U Goodbye" opens with a pulsating baseline reminiscent of Robyn's "Dancing On My Own." It is penned to an ex-lover, who Peach spends the first verse goading into a false sense of security, "If you still think of me/I'd love to meet for coffee." By the time the first chorus is over, it's clear that Peach's intentions are not to rekindle their relationship but to excommunicate her ex altogether. The song is a great representation of Peach's unique brand of humour, which is most biting in the verse "And by the way, I caught up with your ex/We shared regrets and most of them were sex (with you!)."

## Loved You Before

A continuation of Peach's goopy candour, "Loved You Before," describes scenes across history and lifetimes where she and her lover continuously rediscover one another. From dinosaurs, to medieval times, and beyond, there is enough imagery embedded in the lyrics to inspire an extremely campy green-screen music video. At best, "Loved You Before" is an inoffensive filler track, and at worst, it's Peach's attempt to weigh in on the "would you still love me if I was a worm" discourse (her answer is yes).

## Favourite Person

Favourite Person is one of a few tracks on the EP that Peach has been teasing at live shows over the last year. Her voice is markedly unprocessed over the mid-tempo pop-rock instrumental, allowing listeners a rare taste of the singer's naturally husky lower register. This rawness is made more apparent by Peach's revelation that the song "interestingly was an apology song to Josh, after I wrote Josh." A welcome deviation from the EP's glittery dance pop, "Favourite Person" will undoubtedly be the belt-a-long moment on Peach's upcoming tour.

## Dear Inner Child

This vocoder-soaked track is a love letter to Peach's younger self. The singer reflects on moments of trauma throughout her childhood with a 2023 lens. "So if you wanna wear pink, I'll wear it for you" she affirms in a moment of self-healing. Of all the songs on the EP, this is the one that feels as though only Peach could have released it (and the only track where she is the solo credited writer). At the two and a half minute mark, "Dear Inner Child" ends abruptly, leaving listeners wanting more from the vibrant singer, whose story has only just begun.



## Manic Dream Pixie is out now.



# Queerness, Pornography, Virginity.

Anonymous decides to define their own life experiences

I never quite know what to say when the cam guy asks the audience, “how are you?” Do we have a little chat, like friends over coffee? Do we pretend we aren’t on a website where models are presented like food at a buffet, with a menu consisting of “masturbation” and “2 fingers in ass” and “music request?”

When you have enough of these humdrum conversations with people who are flashing their entire buttocks on screen, it becomes easy to forget what is happening. There is a degree of mundanity on camsites during the downtime when the sex worker is not being sexual but still working. I’ll watch the cams and message in the background of studying, or while I’m playing video games. I’ll even go to open the website on the train before remembering where I am.

Because of this, I find myself stumbling over a more pertinent question: how does one bridge the dissonance of messaging sex workers in your family living room, and being a virgin in every sense of the word?

I have never held hands with a man, let alone considered having the sex™ with one. It’s not for a lack of desire. In high school, much like my siblings, I wasn’t allowed to date so I could focus on my studies. I had very little social life regardless, and I was essentially the only out queer person at my school for at least four years.

My coming out story is relatively innocuous. I was in my first year of high school, found myself endlessly fascinated with a certain senior soccer player, and after a string of late nights in which I scoured Facebook, old yearbooks, and my high school social pages for any glimpse of this mysterious man, I realised this interest was much more than “he seems cool.”

But there’s this little niggler of a memory which complicates that story.

I was home alone in year five or six, and because I don’t have my own phone, I grabbed my dad’s iPad and googled “naked man.” The first picture was of a tall, thin, young guy leaning on a bike in a field. He was facing the camera, very flaccid. Considering the internet, it was quite an artsy photo. I stared, entranced, then quickly put the iPad away.

I can’t place the memory — it almost exists in a void. I thought my first brushes with queerness and porn were at the end of year seven, yet there’s this memory of me in primary school starting to explore both. What happened in between? Did I just... not look at porn? Did I not consider my queerness? Did I repress these memories because the transition from primary to high school hit me like a tonne of bricks and I had other things to worry about? Or has my life become so intertwined with my experiences of pornography

that these once distinct memories of a naïve kid watching naked people for the first time blurred with every other time I’ve seen it?

There’s a double-edged sword here — porn was a very direct way for me to realise “oh yeah, I am definitely attracted to men.” Queerness has been historically marginalised to adult communities, so pornography is a vital and fruitful resource for queer representation. Yet, it’s undeniable that being exposed to such heavy adult content fucked me up a little.

It’s not just a question of healthy sexual development. I’ve been a fierce feminist since I understood what that meant and could grapple with the complex ethics of both making and consuming pornography. I knew porn wasn’t realistic. There’s just something fundamentally sad about a child only seeing themselves represented in porn. I wasn’t seeing queer people on my television. I didn’t have many queer people I knew in real life. There weren’t a lot of queer role models around me, let alone depictions of queer intimacy that was healthy and not hypersexualised.

There must be a route towards queerness which doesn’t inherently involve pornography.

At this point, my queerness was bound up in my access to porn, and I can’t find the point of delineation anymore. But it’s a paradox, thinking that because I’m aware porn isn’t realistic, my experience of it isn’t real either.

I’m inherently watching the bodies of those I’m attracted to, but also my own body on screen. I am subject and object. I’ve learned to see the beauty in bodies which exist outside of the white-cis-masculine-muscular-able-bodied norm which is instilled in all of us, especially in young queer men, but I haven’t been able to extend that grace to myself. I’m not masculine, I’m not muscular, I’m not a twink or a hunk or a twunk, I’m a blob. I know that life isn’t linear, but I feel so behind the rest of my peers because I’m a virgin and so woefully unfuckable (and therefore unlovable).

So what do I do now? I try to construct my queerness outside of porn and my virginity. My queerness is more than my attraction: it is a holistic embodiment of my life experiences, of the way I view the world, and the way the world sees me. I try to look for more diverse porn. I take a step back and I think “am I doing this out of pleasure, or out of habit?” Consciously, I make the effort to love me. I look at my little body in a little mirror and say in a little voice “I am enough,” and slowly it worms its way into my subconscious. Some days are easier than others.

One day, someone will see me in that deep, romantic, sexual way that no one else does. I am so loved by my family and friends, and I’m still young. I can build my life around everything except romance, until it comes knocking at my door. I can treasure all the love I have around me and know that eventually I will be able to experience the things I so deeply wish for. I’m a romantic at heart — I want to be swept off my feet, I want to have my firsts with someone who I know cares for me, and after asking out a few people and being rejected, it’d be nice if someone propositioned me. Saw me. Loved me.

If you think you know who I am, ask for a “music request”. But just remember there’s a reason I’m remaining anonymous.



# Nail Me

Charlie Timms-McLean



Relief print on recycled paper, 21 x 29.7 cm

The crucifixion of Christ is the most recognisable iconography of the Christian religion. By inserting myself into this iconography while wearing nipple tassels and a thong that reads “Nail Me,” I have criticised what we have been told not to question. With this tongue and cheek approach, I wanted to mirror the experience I had in religious education where we were told that Jesus was nailed to the cross and died for our sins as a symbol of salvation, at the expense of queer autonomy.

During my time in a religious school, I was targeted for being different from the mould they had for us. As a child who was coming to terms with their own identity, simply existing in a space where that was considered a sickness made me feel excluded and as if I didn’t belong in this world. During the abuse, the religion teacher would break me down every lesson. He did this by tearing away all my beliefs, my choices and my self worth so that he could build me up again into “a child of God.” I still have nightmares every single night about this even though it happened seven years ago.

Death by crucifixion is when the victim is hung

on a cross by nails in their palms and feet, with the victim only living while they are strong enough to hold their body up. The only way to stop that pain is to give in, stop fighting, causing the crucified to asphyxiate and die. If you fight for too long, they break your legs and arms to speed up the process. That is how I felt during the abuse, as everytime I fought back and stood up for myself, it got worse. I am not the same as I was back then, but I continue to fight back to be my truest self.

Charlie Timms-McLean  
Find them on Instagram:  
@a.friend.of.dorothy



# Nothing About Us Without Us: Autistic, Queer and Workers' Liberation

Jamie (they/she) is not gay as in "happy", but queer as in "fuck you 🍆".

"I don't typically prescribe HRT for trans people of your age with autism.

That's what my first psychologist said to me at an appointment I made seeking vital medical care.

To some people this may come as a shock, but if you're trans or autistic, you're probably used to having your autonomy denied by doctors, bureaucracies and other bodies that have power over you. But why is this the case? The answer has to do with the Medicare system, the patriarchy, and capitalism's control over our bodies.

First, let's talk about transphobia and the patriarchy.

In pre-industrial, hunter-gatherer societies, raising children was a communal act. In fact, almost everything was. But this changed under capitalism as people were pared off into smaller and smaller groups working increasingly specific jobs, in a phenomenon known as the "division of labour."

**"If you're trans or autistic, you're probably used to having your autonomy denied by doctors, bureaucracies and other bodies that have power over you. But why is this the case?"**

Furthermore, we are now living in a system which encourages endlessly increasing the production of goods and services for businesses to make a profit, rather than to meet actual human needs, (see "commodity fetishism"). Business-owners need an increasing number of productive employees (sellers) and customers (buyers) to make more and more profit.

Both of these factors combined to create the patriarchal, nuclear family. In this system, a woman is tied to one man for her entire life — She is often shut out of the formalised economy, making her reliant on a man, and is instead charged with the responsibility of child-rearing.

Any disruption of this monogamous 'one working man, one child-rearing woman' dynamic, such as same-sex relationships or trans

people's inherent disruption of the link between gender and reproduction, is punished or 'corrected'.

We see this in the phenomenon of so-called 'gay conversion therapy' — the horrific practice of traumatising queer adolescents into hiding their queerness. LGBT adults subjected to conversion therapy are more than twice as likely to attempt suicide as their other LGBT peers. We've seen this change in some places as society shifts from an attempt to eradicate queerness into an attempt to subsume it into capitalism through phenomena such as pinkwashing, but this is of course not universally the case.

Next, let's talk about ableism.

As mentioned above, capitalism requires a productive labour force in order to keep making a profit, regardless of whether it's socially necessary. In a service-based capitalist economy such as our own, a 'productive' worker is one who interacts with others in a 'normal,' 'non-autistic' way. Deviation from this norm is similarly punished and 'corrected' with the practice of Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA), which seeks to traumatise autistic children into masking their autism. Autistic children subjected to ABA are more than twice as likely to report symptoms of PTSD as their other autistic peers. This is beginning to change as some employers now specifically seek out autistic employees for certain positions, but this comes more from a belief that autistic workers are uniquely exploitable due to a supposed aversion to confrontational social interactions.

The Australian Medicare system is another bureaucracy with a similarly intrusive role in the lives of trans people — any transmasculine person seeking breast reduction surgery can speak to the difficulty of obtaining the treatment they need. Breast reduction surgery is not covered under Medicare in Australia for transmasculine individuals breaking cissexist norms, but is covered for cisgender men who have 'excess' breast tissue (known as gynecomastia) seeking to better fit these norms. The same is true for the difficulty trans women face in accessing the exact same medications for their medical transition that cis women can more readily access for menopause.

**"The Australian Medicare system is another bureaucracy with a similarly intrusive role in the lives of trans people"**

This too will eventually change as Medicare's position shifts from a near-complete denial of transness to allowing trans people to conform to gender expectations as their true gender, rather than their birth-assigned gender. For example, allowing

trans men to access breast reduction surgery to uphold the idea that to be a woman is to have organs for child-rearing, and to be a man is to not have these organs. This would be a marked improvement over what we have today, but is ultimately little more than the freedom to follow harmful gendered rules in a less harmful way.

When these factors combine, we get horrific results, such as those seen recently in the US state of Missouri.

On the 13th of April, in a flurry of ignorance, bigotry and moral-panicking, Missouri Attorney General Andrew Bailey issued an unprecedented 'emergency regulation' severely restricting access to gender-affirming care for individuals in the state. In addition to requiring 15 months of psychological evaluation, the rule mandated that all individuals seeking access to gender-affirming care must be screened for autism and any so-called "social contagion with respect to [their] gender identity," implying that autistic individuals are inherently less-capable of making decisions about their own bodies.

This will become something of a feedback loop — if every single trans person must be screened for autism, when they otherwise wouldn't be, then already disproportionate rates of medically-diagnosed autism recorded in the trans community will only continue to increase. As it stands, up to 70% of autistic people identify as LGBTQIA+, and more than a quarter of gender diverse people are autistic. When combined with autism's current underdiagnosis, the result is that thousands of people will be affected by this even if they don't know it yet. Simply put, it is impossible to truly fight for trans liberation without fighting for autistic liberation.

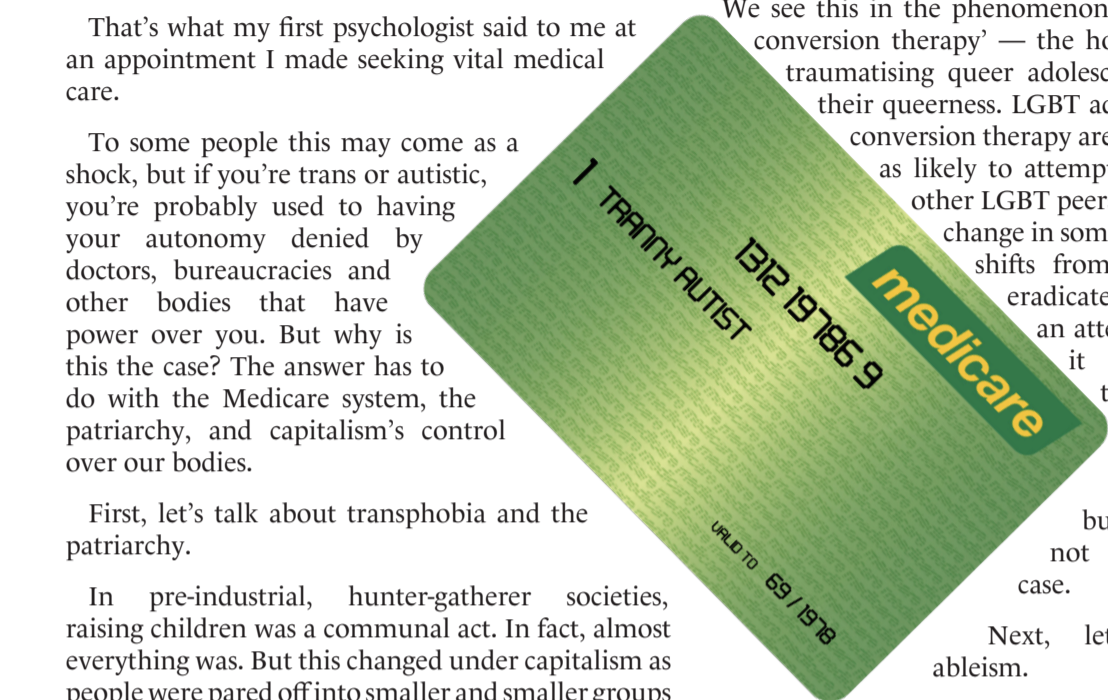
However, there is a way out — a two-pronged solution.

The first is gender abolition — not in the

transphobic, biologically-essentialist way. Rather, true gender abolition deconstruction of socially-influential institutions governed by doctors, the state and capital through policed access to HRT, surgeries and other forms of care, in favour of a model of truly interpersonal relations and identities.

Similarly, the second part of the solution is the social model of disability, which involves a movement away from constructed diagnoses gate-kept by doctors and governed by the state and capital in favour of a model based on individual needs, which can be met collectively by communities — a more humane version of the model used in pre-industrial society. However, both of these solutions necessitate a mass movement for the destruction of capitalism.

Indeed, overt neurodiverse transness is an act of protest. To live proudly as an openly queer, openly neurodivergent person is not just a rejection of an oppressively cisnormative, neurotypical society. It is a rejection of capitalist power and a recognition that a better world is possible.



# THE COMMODIFICATION OF QUEERNESS AND ITS EFFECTS ON RADICAL STRUGGLE

Angus explores how queer liberation intersects with other form of struggle and how it can grow.

Queerness is vibrant and colourful. Our days of resistance, where we organise in solidarity against queerphobia, are as vibrant as the safe spaces we form and our days of celebration. Whether it's a Trans Day of Visibility (TDOV) march or Sydney Mardi Gras, identifiable moments of queer expression are celebratory.

This positivity and enjoyment we get in the expression of our identity is necessary to how we interact in society, but it is also equally evident in how queer identity has become commodified. As a historically marginalised and stigmatised identity, corporations profit from our nominal inclusion in heteronormative society.

Corporations, police forces and governments can conveniently forget our very real oppression by incorporating the most profitable elements of queer celebration.

This commodification comes with the implication that the Queer history of struggle — which provides lessons for future organising — has become dissolved of its radical elements to be suitable for the market and state.

To understand this we only need to go back to the first Mardi Gras march in Australia on the 24th of June 1978 on Oxford St. A peaceful march, with radical calls for the decriminalisation of homosexuality and to give queer people industrial protections, became a riot. 53 people were arrested and faced intense police brutality.

The pro-business flagship, The Sydney Morning Herald, published the names and

occupations of those arrested, effectively outing them, leading to disownment and loss of livelihoods.

Unlike yesteryear, Mardi Gras is now represented in an era of apparent consensus between the state and queer people. The corporate Mardi Gras board allows the NSW Police to hold a float, like they did in the 2023 march, that read, "NSW Police: Glowing with pride." Police are the weaponised arm of the capitalist state — they break strikes and criminalise queer groups. Their representation at the march is not the bells of progress a-ringing, but a crude paint job to hide the reality of the police as the repressive, armed wing of capital.

The board embraces sponsors like Coles, which claims that "everybody is welcome at [their] table". Does this include 7,500 workers whose wages the company stole to the tune of 115 million dollars?

Pinkwashing by corporations seeks to separate history from reality, using the promotion of LGBT rights as evidence that society includes queer people. It leads to historical amnesia, where memories of state and police violence are lost, because now they have a shiny, progressive facade.

The market facilitates the conception that the police and queer community are brothers in arms. We are now a queer "market demographic" for brands, inculcating the community with the germs of capitalism: you are an atomised, queer individual that has the freedom to buy products in rainbow.

As this history is abstracted, so is the story of how queer solidarity and community broke the back of systemic oppression.

Back in 1978, marches in solidarity with those imprisoned after the events of the 24th were organised for the 15th of July. These were organised by elements of the labour movement and socialists, who rallied thousands of protestors outside of police stations all over Sydney, pressuring them to drop criminal charges. Many eventually did, albeit quietly.

In these moments of organisation, Mick Armstrong, a founding member of Socialist Alternative and key political organiser in the 70s, remembers the years of 1978-9 as the "most impressive campaign for LGBTI rights ever seen in this country [that] paved the way for many future victories."

This organisation saw considerable efforts nationwide and found success in NSW. This movement saw the repeal of laws that gave police powers to control queer behaviour in public in 1979, as well as amendments to the Anti-Discrimination Act which was amended to include protection based on sexual orientations in workplaces in 1982.

Significantly, these movements in solidarity with groups against apartheid in South Africa, formed the right to strike in the state.

This scale of mass organisation no longer exists, and the market has facilitated a perception that it is no longer necessary. The imperative that organisation is not needed is a larger

reflection of how any avenue of queer struggle is constrained into parliamentary reform. All the protections we enjoy, however, have never been handed to us through reform, but through struggle.

Queer liberation needs to be revitalised through solidarity with other exploited and oppressed groups. When we focus our struggle on the fight for the exploited against the exploiter, we build mass movements that aid in the process of liberation.

I already see the germs of this within activist spaces such as Pride in Protest (PiP), a grassroots queer collective which organises with various other movements like the Blak rights movement to fight police brutality. Why do we let the police, who perpetuate violence and marginalisation of queer and Aboriginal people (at highly disproportionate rates, no less), march with us?

Lidia Thorpe's words before her participation in the 2023 Sydney Mardi Gras with PiP got to the heart of the need for intersectional mass struggle.

"Rights in this country for over 200 years have been denied, not only for first peoples ... [but] for people who choose to love who the fuck they want to love. And if a trans man says that they're a man, well that's my fucking brother!"

Her words illuminated that solidarity amongst Blak and queer struggle which could revitalise the mass movement potential for both groups. Their shared experience of repression is important, in that they have the shared tools to bring about their liberation. This could materialise itself in the organisation of a mass movement by both groups rallying against police violence to dissolve it. We are attacking an issue of shared relevance for our own liberation.

Whether it's the soft totalitarian processes of the state that seek to govern the radicalism of sections of Indigenous struggle through the Voice referendum, or the growth of the far-right and its attacks on the queer movement, we must cooperate to fight for a better world.



Photos by Jamie Bridge



# QUEER & FOREIGN: FINDING OUR OWN SPACE BETWEEN BORDERS AND COMMUNITIES

René Hà explores the intersection between racial identities and queerness that is often left out of community discourse.

## The Matrix of Being a Coloured Queer

The discourse on queer politics within the current generation is heavily influenced by the Gay Liberation Movement of late 1960s. The Stonewall riots and Pride march inspired a transnational movement across the Western world, advocating for same-sex marriage and countering homophobia within the legal system. The modern conception of queer rights has mobilised beyond the Western world, with folks from non-Western nations welcoming the rainbow flag as a symbol of their queerness. However, the way that global queer discourse seems to revolve around Western epistemic understanding is a byproduct of colonialism and further complicates how people of colour come to gain their space in the movement.

Amari – a Singaporean that moved to Australia for university — expressed to me their frustration growing up queer in a foreign country. Amari didn't feel safe in their own country due to homophobia that could potentially harm them, and it took a toll on their mental health. After moving to Brisbane, Amari found a queer society at their university to finally feel more comfortable with their queerness, only to find it frustratingly white as it failed to grapple with their experience of queerness as a Singaporean. Finding a queer Singaporean network has been a challenge, as has finding just any other queer people of colour (QPOC).

## The intersection between racial identity and queerness is often left out of mainstream queer spaces.

Similarly, Vivienne grew up in a Chinese-Australian immigrant household where her parents wouldn't fully support her queer identity. She found community and solace with her high school and university friends. Especially in the student politics and activism space, Vivienne got to see more queer people than she initially thought she would, and as she wittily put it: "Queer people are among us". But much like Amari's experience, Vivienne's circle is also overwhelmingly riddled with whiteness. All to say that the intersection between racial identity and queerness is often left out of mainstream queer spaces. Due to the dominant assumption of queer/LGBTQ+ being a Western phenomenon, the queer social space

is undeniably a white and racialised place – where QPOC get fetishised, while their own migrant community doesn't fully embrace the supposedly "Western" queerness phenomenon. Furthermore, the historical legacy of queer rights is about social progress within the US, and is used as a propaganda point for nationalism establishing a paradigm of a progressive West versus a homophobic non-West. Queer scholars called this homonationalism to address how queer politics are co-opted as a tool to further advance Western imperialism.

## Queer transnationalist politics can acknowledge the West as a whole could potentially undermine the efforts of non-Western activists on the ground.

Queer transnationalist politics then becomes a useful lens to acknowledge how queerness interacts between local discourse and its positioning across different racialised borders. Indeed, it is used to acknowledge the way American politics (or the West) as a whole could potentially undermine the efforts of non-Western activists on the ground. There is a need for a thorough organising strategy for racialised queers to come together and push against the white xenophobic and queerphobic sentiment from different governments. More importantly, QPOC across national contexts should not idealise how the other country is better or worse off from their local place, as the oppressive nature of nations could be the same while it comes with different potentials for organising.

A call for transnational organising for global queer advocacy is apparent, if not fundamental. Given how white nationalism has segregated QPOC folks from joining each other, it requires effort between racialised groups to understand their own history and social positioning. By recognising how queer history extends across time and space, and continuing the effort of making an intersectional space that is conscious about the given constraints, queer liberation is possible. For queer diaspora to be in touch with their generational queerness is an important thing to account for and it could inspire how queer space organising can happen.

## The Way Ahead

Indeed, there's been an almost global movement for the QPOC nightlife scene to emerge. In Sydney, Queer Worship Collective has been a familiar name amongst QPOC locals to celebrate Asian Queer Excellence. Kerfew is a space that celebrates South Asian creativity, and Club Chrome is a queer pole dance & creative collective that brings POC and sex workers to the front. Additionally, there's also a digital project called Queering The Map with their simple concept of allowing any queer people on the globe to share their experience and pin it on the map. This exposure to a global and intersectional practice of queer transnationalism, either via the digital space or the physical space, are all a part of the ongoing movement and struggle for queer folks across borders.

"Things are changing and I am optimistic that things will be better the next time I visit home." Amari said this when I asked them about if they've been keeping in touch with the queer community within Singapore. Because we're both temporary migrants in a foreign country, our future with residency is precarious, and in one way or another, our experience existing as a racialised queer has made us reflect on how queer politics and culture play out in our home countries. In a sense, this exposure to the complex roadmap of alienation and belonging between identity groups have brought a greater

awareness on how important queer solidarity can be for POC.



Vivienne Guo talking about her experience growing up as a queer Chinese immigrant in Australia

The visibility of queerness in the diaspora community provokes a radical line of thinking about borders and cultures, about our history with colonisation and the legacy it's inflicted on us in contemporary politics. All of those only affirms a strong sense of community and shared aspirations amongst QPOC folks across nationalities and upbringings, where we learn to come together and find each other in all ways possible.



# Hope

There's something unnatural about the way that humans dress themselves up, fabrics and armour and metal hanging from every available surface. Something almost narcissistic; something that boasts 'human beauty' over all beauty and yet...

Qihua looks in the mirror again, fretting and fretting and-

Yangfeng laughs behind her, smiling ear to ear. Watching with a keen eye as if she was being particularly entertaining. Qihua finds herself caught in their gaze, constructs of beauty melting away in the face of the joy she sees there.

"What?" Qihua finally asks, composing herself. She shifts, uncomfortable at being observed.

"You look good!" Yangfeng rebuffs, another grin sneaking up on them. They're adorned in a well-worn denim jacket. She could practically feel the denim beneath her fingers as she eyed it across the room. "Stop worrying."

Qihua couldn't.

"People aren't going to score you, it's not a fashion exam." Yangfeng raised an eyebrow.

"It's..." she paused, trying to find something to say as she fiddled with her too-loose jeans again. She'd have to buy a new pair; this pair clearly didn't fit. "It's not about that."

"Then?"

Yangfeng's hazel eyes on her weren't helping, heart beating a million miles an hour. Surely she didn't have to explain this?

"What you wear tells people who you are." She finally admitted, the admission seeping out of her like fluid from a blister. "I just...find freedom in that. Somewhere."

Yangfeng nodded slowly, as if trying to get it. Qihua thinks that they do; they certainly dressed like they knew that already.

She scanned her outfit again in the mirror. She was body checking, she knew, but the print of her psychedelic green shirt wasn't sitting right.

There was something different about fashion between the pair of them, and they were all the richer for it. The way that Qihua draped coats and earrings, necklaces and hair, unspoken and speaking for itself. It always seemed like when she did it, it looked clunky and uncoordinated, but when everyone else did it it complimented them perfectly.

Somewhere between the years of being told to shove every wrongness into Pandora's box and seal it shut, it all spilt out. Coming back up like the eggs and avocado Qihua had had for brunch, blood and bile and vomit — an explosion of proportions Prometheus couldn't have even imagined.



Qihua's wardrobe and mouth had erupted, words of truth and blood staining the whiteness of all of her shirts, the white walls of her childhood home a bloodbath.

But at least she could wear whatever she wanted.

People vilify Pandora for opening the box, but...

Qihua couldn't help but admit that Pandora had the right idea.

"I still can't believe we managed to get my hair purple. After weeks of setbacks," she remarked, smiling back at Yangfeng as they lounged in their desk chair. Reminders of the breathlessness and honey-trickling veins, Yangfeng's face just mere inches from her neck as they helped paint and spread the dye through her hair.

She turned from the desk-facing mirror to hide the red cheeks.

阳风, 我很难听到你的爱, 但... pouting and hands against hands, skin against skin. Yangfeng carries their-self like their body is both all they own and something unfamiliar to them.

She was the opposite, despite the stretch marks that clawed deep into her sides. Yangfeng's eyes have lingered

Hannah Nicholas writes.

on them before, on days that she has worn crop tops. A question in their eyes, but not going to broach the subject if it could bring her pain.

Qihua's ample body was a war zone, a captive prisoner in the constant defence of her chosen identity. Chest stained permanently red, heart having bled over and over. The only thing that anyone truly holds over their loved ones is their body, their safety, their health.

The only thing that Qihua can do is give it the respect that one would give a dead body; dress it well and send it on its way. Adorn it in beautiful things in hopes the stench of rotting death doesn't send people running.

But...

She casted her gaze back to Yangfeng, who had smiled at her remark earlier, but who's attention had inevitably drifted back to their video game. They were embellished in their usual all-black ensemble; jeans and a button up shirt with an anime jacket layered as the crowning jewel. Qihua's gaze almost always drawn to the dynamic but graceful lines of their face with a bone-seeping ache.

Yangfeng dressed like they were prepared for a funeral, but in a young and hipster way. Body soft with liveliness, they emblazoned their interests in less subtle ways than she did. Qihua constantly had the urge to sink into it, to lose herself in it, regardless of the scars that may be lurking- carefully hidden- beneath their garb.

阳风, 你知不知道我一见你就会感到渴望的? 如果你渴望我, 我应该怎么做? 我的身不有很多能给你...

但

你-

Qihua sees it in the way the air blurs and shimmers when Yangfeng is near, the blood-clotting warmth and organ-squeezing butterflies. Feels the tumult as her heart tries to jump out of her chest. There's an urge there — to trace the muscles and ligaments and tendons, to put the medical knowledge between the pair of them to use watching Yangfeng gasp and twitch beneath her. To bear witness to the rawness that is the unveiled human body but kiss it in adoration just the same.

Because what can anyone do when their bodies bear the brunt of unspoken wars? Pull their heart out of their chest, still beating, and offer it? Drench each other in the blood of it until it erases all their scars?

Perhaps all anyone can do is learn to love imperfectly.

*Prometheus victorious.*





# Growing up queer in religious schools

Josh Clay explores the suppression of identities at high school.

In late 2018, my high school was diverted from our normal timetables and brought into the hall. We were quite confused — no one had said why, so we half-expected an intervention about vaping or phones or proper jewellery rules. At the time, Australia had recently voted yes to legalise same-sex marriage and conservatives were claiming that this was a slippery slope towards ‘discrimination’ against religious people, with a whirlwind of legislation, talking points, and an expert review weighing into the culture war.

For about an hour, a few teachers spoke to us about the importance of their ability to hire exclusively religious teachers and have the freedom to legally discriminate “to avoid injury to...religious susceptibilities” as the Sex Discrimination Act puts it. It felt odd — we weren’t of voting age and politicians had little motivation to win us over.

The reason became clear towards the end as the teachers asked us to pray together. To pray for their right to discriminate against prospective teachers for their religious beliefs and sexual orientations — I suppose God might favour them if they sent enough prayers all at once. And with teachers often punitively enforcing the closing of eyes and bowing of heads during prayer times, I had no choice but to pretend to pray.

The meeting caused a stir amongst some progressive parents who contacted the school to voice their complaints. So much so that a friend of mine, who was asked to film the event by teachers, was approached to delete the recording. Another student also told Honi that they believed the quiet departure of a teacher who came out as queer was linked to the strange assembly.

It sent a very clear message — we would never hire anyone like you. How can a school possibly strive to nurture young people when they refuse to represent the diversity within the student body? How can queer students feel comfortable coming to teachers about bullying or hardships at home when not one of the staff has that lived experience?

By no means do I mean to denigrate religiosity — I’ve met amazing people of faith who have treated me with uncompromising acceptance — but the problem with many religious schools is their insistence on hiring teachers from a strictly heterosexual, conservative background.

This leads to homophobia in the classroom, in the schoolyard, and in education, making queer students feel perpetually othered and alone at a time when a supportive environment

is so incredibly important.

This led to silence. Barely any conversations were had by the school about queerness, and if they were, it was debating the morality of it or walking on eggshells around ‘difficult topics’ such as the mere existence of trans students. Through this, they failed to educate anyone, including queer students, on the real world beyond the school gates.

Evelyn, a trans woman who attended high school in Jindabyne, told Honi that “they ... ignored [our] existence, it’s like they wouldn’t say the word gay.”

Although in private some teachers supported him, Evelyn was told not to attend male-only assemblies or classes out of fear of making students “uncomfortable” — continuing the veil of silence out of fear of challenging religious worldviews. “Looking back,” he said, “I didn’t get sad, I got angry [and] became really defensive.”

“If I didn’t know the facts, if I wasn’t defensive, people could actually hurt me.”

The need to have a constant guard up was a common experience for me too, wondering if a group of boys would call me “faggot” like they’d done in the past. Or dreading our mandatory Christian Studies class that would sometimes discuss homosexuality and its place — or lack thereof — in religion and, by extension,

saying, “It’s sinful and not normal,” another added while the teacher nodded. The same teacher later heavily implied that gay people go to hell through his urgent call for the class to pray for homosexual people to give them “eternal life.”

**“If I didn’t know the facts, if I wasn’t defensive, people could actually hurt me.”**

Ella, a trans woman who grew up in an all-boys Anglican school in Sydney had a similar experience, telling Honi that “[the teachers] would cover themselves with as many caveats as possible [such as] ‘people can live how they want,’ and ‘we don’t have anything against being gay’” but then explained that “if you engage in that lifestyle, you will be sent to hell.”

“People need to be taught what queer is. [If] at any point when I was growing up I had been told what being trans is, and been given the opportunity to dress ... and present how I want, it would have changed my life.”

She mentioned how the school would never outright attack queer people,

however, “they created a culture where people didn’t feel open to express themselves in regards to their sexuality and gender.”

This complete lack of education and representation in schools has led to wild misunderstandings and the dehumanisation of queer people. It is a pain that many go through, with Ella telling Honi that her gender dysphoria led to nearly 15 years of depression until shortly after she transitioned.

While every queer person raised in a religious school has a different experience of how it impacted them, for better or worse, many of us still grapple with the lasting impacts those environments had on us. The shame that teachers taught and some students reinforced have led me to years of internalised homophobia, guilt, and self-hatred over my queerness — something that I know many people like me have, or still are dealing with as a result of terrible school environments.

Only after completely severing myself geographically and socially from my past self have I been able to truly accept my identity proudly and guilt-free.



Photography by Jamie Bridge  
Collage by Katarina Butler

# The commercialisation of queer aesthetics

Esther Whitehead explores queer identity.

How does one communicate queerness? The easy answer is with language.

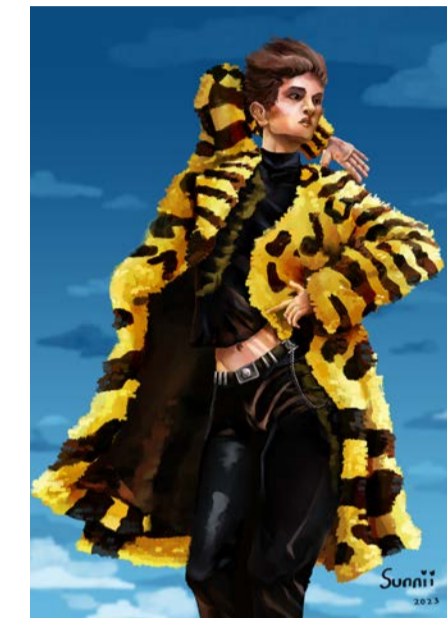
But words can be so fickle, slurs evolve into labels accentuating generational divides. Bilingual speakers are forced to translate their identity, search for an equivalent in meaning and vibe. Sometimes, words can’t quite describe your self-conception, so we draw up other methods to express our selfhood.

Maybe it’s dressing like a pimp, or an Edwardian school teacher; visibly making yourself different from the norm as an act of reclamation and self-love. You know that the retro-cis norm will see you as a weirdo. Hopefully it will leave you alone.

Queer aesthetics are inherently political. However, it is easy for corporations to sell bedazzled rainbows to gain a progressive brand image. Mulleted hair, Doc Martens and coloured hair now define an increasingly narrow and commercialised queer presentation. This is furthered by the internet where curatorial algorithms, which circulate very specific ideas as to what queerness looks like. Through this, queer expression is dislodged from its roots in political liberation.

When being who we are is illegal, we hide it (but only to the law). In such circumstances, it was necessary to codify expression through secret codes. Some were spoken: are you a friend of Dorathy? Others were visual, like the 1970’s ‘cruising grounds,’ where different coloured handkerchiefs used to indicate sexual preferences.

But queerness is more than personal identity. This is why we can’t American-express ourselves to equality. It is not just how individuals present themselves — queerness is a community; as we grow our love for each other, we build collective visual aesthetics. Like “camp” which subverts notions of professionalism, taste and sensibilities. The very idea of being too much, and then being more.



@sunni\_8

Queer is more than how we dress, it is our art. From the sensual art of voguing to the hyper performativity of drag or greeting all your friends with a kiss in

# I M THE BIG SCARY DRAG QUEEN THEY WARNED YOU ABOUT

Sav Thill-Turke

I am a drag queen.

That statement in itself should not be any cause for worry, and yet, to some, my very existence is cause enough for me to be driven out of the public sphere with as much force as possible. Since roughly the middle of last year, the far-right rage machine has turned its eyes to queer

entertainment, makingas drag artists have become the latest target of the culture war. Discriminatory legislation, online harassment and even threats of physical violence have swept through the collective minds of the queer community, who are now fearing a push back as bigots get louder and angrier.



Obviously this didn’t come out of nowhere — it can be traced back to the homophobic stigma that queer people are a danger to children. That talking point, combined with drag artists aiming to broaden their audiences by creating child-friendly events, is a recipe for disaster at best. Through this, the old discourse about drag queens and trans people is regurgitated, suggesting that by existing, gender non-conforming people are a

danger to children.

As a Drag Queen, that is extremely infuriating. Having radio shock jocks and TV reactionaries go on and on about both your livelihood and your lifestyle, making all these claims whilst knowing nothing about the world that you live in is draining.

At its core, the world of drag is just people doing makeup, putting on sparkly costumes and doing a silly little number to a fun song — people may sing live, or tell stupid jokes, or perform in any unique way. But drag performers are aware of the venue they’re in — they’re not going to do a strip tease at a story hour.

Why would you think anyone is doing that, you absolute weirdo.

Drag is a place where people look to express themselves and create their own spaces in a cisnormative world. It is a place where people create a character, first and foremost, and where people can connect with a part of themselves that has been hidden away. That is what people are afraid of, because one of the most powerful forms of resistance is to be true and joyful.

To end this article, I’ll leave you with a quote from RuPaul’s Drag Race:

“...drag is a fight, drag is a protest, drag only reveals who you really are...”

In a world which has become so hostile, making ourselves visible through these characters we play has become an incredibly important thing, because love is the most powerful thing we have to counter hate.



# Hair/Air/Heir/Ere

Juneau Choo

My roommate says I have an androgynous hairline, —  
 doubled body of Plato's androgyne to be partitioned by Zeus, King of the Gods, into half male and half female

— parents say my double crown hair means that I'm a 'little monster,' —  
 the two crowns of the king and queen, prince and princess, emperor and empress, God and Goddess, monster and monstress, Hermes and Aphrodite, my double crowning glory to depart from the head of my state of mind

— and Gaga says, 'And if I'm a hot shot, mom will cut my hair at night' —  
 ends split, frayed into the crosshairs of snipers taking snips at my Achilles' heel, my Jacob's sciatic nerve, my Samson's hair.

Rambutku, 'my hair' looks the black of a fighter

'jet' last dyed as yellow as the blonde of  
 'tej,' and smells the adrenaline of an endless  
 'racepath' or  
 'parachute' glide as solo as Frank Ocean's singles.

Alone, and all along the watchtower, all alone and along the / river running, past Eves and Adams' wake, —  
 candlelight vigil held on the eve of Liliths' awakening for dead God, deal with God killed by the gay science

— from the stream channel embayed and, amidst a solitary mist of salt, air, light and prismatic halo of tears, water, sight liberated, to the lonesome ocean, Frank says through audio channels on both sides, 'See on both sides like Chanel,' either side of the dichotomy within a hair's breadth of confronting truth's two, four, an infinite grid of faces, within an air's breath away from coming face to face with the Janus of violent, hair-trigger contradictions: boys/girls, men/women, ladies/gentlemen, mesdames/messieurs, husband/wife, father/mother, son/daughter, male/female, executor/executrix, heir/heirress, ...

Non-duality: all binaries opposed, exposed, decomposed by two, three, as many as the Hanging Gardens' trees, umpteen identities (non-binary, genderqueer, agender, bigender, genderfluid, gender-nonconforming, ...) engendered, unsexed, queered, and dualism demolished, abolished, disestablished by six, seven, Babel to get to heaven, a myriad of languages (third gender, mak nyah, warias, kathoey, occult, two-spirit, ...) ungendered, desexed, enquired —  
 a one-to-many relationship, like 'hair' deconstructed, destructed, destructured into German Haar, Dutch haar, Norwegian hår, Icelandic hár, ...

Middle English her, my (she/they) hair: my 'hair,'  
 发, fā sounds like  
 法, fǎ, 'law,' —  
 hair trimmed in accordance with the lifestyle of Singapore where government policy policed a ban on long hair in the 1960s, a half-century after which my hair was cut #3 (down to of an inch) clipper guard, outcast trimmings cast off in-school in violation of the public school dress code enforced thoroughly through spot checks by prefects

— or like  
 法, fǎ, 'France' —  
 head shaved in accordance with the hairstyles of the Vichy entity where the collaborationist regime scalped the Zazous with hair clippers during World War II, eight decades after which my hair was tied up into a ponytail (against ブラック校則, 'black school rules'), gender fastened, undone in observation of the public bathroom performative rule imposed theatrically through social constructs of rejects.

Thau mor, my  
 'hair' sounds like  
 'air,' —  
 carbon in which the skeletons in my cupboard are dated like a magmatic dike, and oxygen in which I air my dirty laundry out of the closet like a flag

— or like  
 'Eyre,' —  
 Antoinette Cosway of a wide Sargasso Sea flowing like Scylla and Bertha Mason flowering in the Gothic attic like the astrological stars, a madwoman who vanquished sole God on high and Rapunzel who embroidered the terrestrial mantle

— or like  
 'heir,' —  
 heiress of my mother's head hair, mitochondria and stare, and spare of my father's body hair, Y chromosome and brows

— or like  
 'ere' —  
 before we erred, years ere I strayed farther into the unbearable being of a walking  
 'paradox' from the pitch black of a  
 'Pandora's box' as dark as a drainage ditch and half full of Hope, into a contradiction between Mars (♂) and Venus (♀) symbols, between male and female signifiers, from the darkness of heavy, lightless hair untied and let down, each thread coming undone and stretching all the way from the cukur jambul bayi of my half Malay ancestry and the 鬓发 of my half Chinese descent to the 凤凰发簪, jepit rambut berbentuk phoenix, 'fenghuang hairpin' of my Nyonya heritage, the sanggul, 髻, 'bun' or tocang, 马尾, 'ponytail' unravelling into a hundred thousand separate strands of hair like the double helix of DNA strung out deeper than a night of the Kuntilanak, of the vampiric astral spirit grasping at the root of her long black hair and drinking up type O blood, the universe's donor drained from constructions of the self like water off a continent's shelf —  
 one within a whisker away from the break, sea falling off the edge into the open ocean and both, all sides of the truth seen.



# CHRYSALIS

Harry Cook

You've always empathised with caterpillars.  
 Fighting their way out of cocoons, not knowing what's outside, not even being aware what they're trapped in, just that they need to get out to survive.  
 You've always thought it far more difficult a process than people make it out to be.  
 Ants have community, and purpose. Worms, writhing in darkness, have a simple need to eat. Cicadas, escaping their decrepit prisons after seventeen years.  
*(That one might have more relevance than you knew)*  
 It must be a religious experience for them. The realisation of their truest selves, the act of becoming, the ritualised process of it all.  
*(Do caterpillars feel devotion? Do butterflies feel guilt?)*  
 You've never been one for religion in the traditional sense. It feels more sensible to worship the self. To place yourself, physical and emotional, at the apex of veneration.  
*(To take, forcefully, the love that you aren't given, and give it back to yourself.)*

It wasn't always a sense of emptiness. It wasn't some constantly present feeling of not belonging, or anything you knew how to identify as disconnection. It just felt like a vague, dull confusion that came with not being in the right place.  
 You remember the spaces meant for you that didn't feel right. You felt like an intruder. All the things you needed, the places you would feel comfortable in, didn't exist.  
 Calling yourself things that didn't feel accurate. Knowing that when you chose left, you wanted to go right. Knowing that going right wouldn't want you, and left wouldn't fit.  
 You took a chisel to the walls, chipping and carving and breaking and shouting until you liked what you saw.  
 You sit on your floor, watching through the dull phone screen as he walks in the rain. The carpet's not particularly comfortable, but it does the trick.  
 He's drenched, his dark red bomber jacket covered in droplets of rain, as felt clothes often are. You remember, even now, that he was listening to Melodrama. A fitting soundtrack, really.  
 We've all been there, you think. Laughing briefly, you send a silent prayer to something you don't believe in that your experiences won't echo.

He's a lot more drawn in than you thought. You don't even remember why he was filming this, but you're glad you've got the footage. It's easier to distance yourself, far easier, but it's nice at times to be able to watch.  
 He had horrible test results that year. The curly hair sticks to his cheeks like something far more poetic than you can be bothered to think of, as you see a soggy missing poster clinging desperately to a telephone pole that he walks past.  
*(Missing: time) (Missing: community) (Missing: electricity)*  
*(He needs them.)*  
*(You suppose that's the point of missing posters.)*  
 He stumbles, his foot catching on a loose bit of pavement. He doesn't fall, he's got better balance than that, but you can see the embarrassment and slight amusement in his face.  
*(You remember feeling it, too.)*  
 The video cuts off. You swipe on the screen, quickly moving past the memory to not live in it too long. You tap play on the next.

It's filming you this time. Or someone that you recognise as being you, anyway. Your hair's longer now, you've stopped calling yourself 'he'. You're not sure why you still call fifteen-year old you 'he'. Probably just a habit. You are your mother's child, after all.  
 The video is silent. She's staring at the screen. You can see the red patches on her face where she's desperately shaved off what little hair is growing there. She's eighteen now, you remember this one vividly as well.

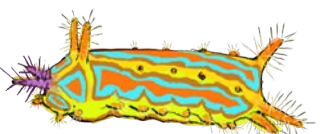
She screams. It's a scream of guilt, of grief. The thought shoots through your mind like a sob, a derisive laugh at your own stupidity – what do you have to be grieving for?  
 For the time she lost. The health, and the life you could have had if a coin landed tails instead of heads.  
 For the pain that comes with growing up without the certainty that others had. For the community, now found, that she should have had years ago.  
 There's no real meaning to the scream. No catharsis, no reason to even push her over the edge. You remember, you didn't film the video to scream. You had something to say, although you can't remember it now.  
 A plane flies overhead, now. And she screams.  
 The sound of yourself in violent mourning makes you panic. It feels like a wild, panicked lash out in a war. Like the last desperate effort to be heard, wailing for help.  
 It feels like she's struggling to keep her head above water.  
 She stops screaming. She's not out of breath, she said what she had to.  
*(You're not sure if the silence means staying afloat, or the opposite.)*  
 She talks to the camera, but no words enter your mind. You can't listen now. You turn off the phone, cutting her soliloquy short, and stand. You take a shaky, uncertain breath, and – back straight, chin up – the scream, the panic, is forgotten. You are your mother's child, after all.

**You feel the countless others who have devoted themselves to change, to the ever-transient nature of understanding who and what you are. It forms far more visceral a connection than any genealogical basis – it is one formed with chisels, doubt, teeth, and worship.**

You've always felt grief in your throat. Anger in your shoulders, and fear just above your hips (no idea why), but the familiar ache of loss is in the base of your throat, burning like hot tar.  
 You've always been panicked, and screaming, and desperately reaching for a hand to lend stability to the heat.  
 You stand in the freezing surf, digging your feet in the sand, letting the cold and the constantly moving water keep your mind occupied. It makes you feel like an active participant in your life.  
 The cold is sure to counteract the grief.  
*(It won't.)*  
 It's a deserted beach, besides a couple hurriedly walking along the road, huddled under an umbrella. They don't look happy with each other.  
*(Who the fuck are you to judge?)*

Every time you watched a nature documentary, you've always latched onto the forest floor. Billions of microorganisms all involved in an endless, eternal dance. Decaying, being eaten and transformed into energy, and becoming recreated in a new form, to live another life, before rotting again.  
 Change is central to nature. You've been consumed and reborn countless times. Stagnancy is far worse than death.  
 You feel the countless others who have devoted themselves to change, to the ever-transient nature of understanding who and what you are. It forms far more visceral a connection than any genealogical basis – it is one formed with chisels, doubt, teeth, and worship.  
 You've thought a lot about the time you could've had. There might be some perfect, poignant reflection on the shifting ocean. For now, the cold stays.  
 The husk of your chrysalis is withered. It no longer takes form. But the energy has been absorbed, and consumed, and reformed, and recycled. It changes. It exists, and through the act of defiant resilience it worships its former lives, all occupying a resonant space of joyful, ecstatic survival.  
 You are your own.

Art by Margot Roberts and Jun Kwoun





# Words Reap What They Sow

Cassie Johns writes.

**sticks and stones may break my bones but words seeds and sows.**

Ideas are planted through connections  
 Conversations make them grow  
 Nurtured through research and investigation  
 The words are irrigation  
 Whether a weed for pain and destruction  
 Or a seed for change and representation  
 Words reap what they sow

Take the second exit  
 Laws govern, words dictate

**Sticks and stones may break my bones but words define us.**

You, me  
 He, She, Them  
 Woman, Non-binary, Man  
 Cisgender, Transgender  
 Straight, Gay  
 Student, Teacher  
 Friend, Family  
 Bigot, Ally  
 Who are you, Who am I  
 The words you choose, define you  
 The words I choose, define me  
 Respect that.

**Stick and stones may break my bones but words control us**

The law states as thus  
 Do this or be punished  
 Follow the words written by those in power, or be devoured  
 The power of words aren't hidden in shadows  
 They're plain to see  
 The motion to get from A to B, takes the use of a GPS  
 Turn right  
 Turn left

**Sticks and stones may break my bones but the pen is mightier than the sword. Wield your weapon with care.**

# Ode to Self

Markus Barrie writes.

The night is engraved in glass. Black dress, heeled shoes, jewellery.

I remember you asking your mother some weeks before, "Can I wear a suit to the formal?" and she said, "no, sweetheart, suits are only for boys."

I remember you roughhousing with the boys at school. I remember you raising your voice. Being louder. Bigger. Stronger. I remember you beating every one of them in an arm wrestle. I remember you wanting to be them. Being them. I remember you saying I Wish I Were A Boy out loud and proud and without a doubt every day almost every day and yet never thinking to verbalise it. Not a whisper beyond your mind. The words tangled in your vocal chords, clawing at your throat even as your voice never deepened.

I remember the day you stopped swimming.

I remember the day you looked down at yourself when you were eight wondering why you were growing breasts

and what that meant. What the word woman meant. Wo-man. An overwhelming question on the tip of your tongue that clattered between your teeth and wriggled between your fingers the first question a child asks is why and yet you never thought to ask it. Never once curling the question mark around why at the age of four you thought about why you did not have 'boy parts'. Why you could never look in the mirror and see yourself not once not ever why did you seem to recoil?

I remember the day it all clicked. I remember you googling what transgender meant on your bedroom floor. No clothes no skin nowhere to hide. And as it clicked you were not even 13 yet you realised what that meant and holy shit what do I do now.

I remember you telling your friends and they did not understand and your parents and they did not understand and your teachers and your grade and the world and they did not understand.

And everything seemed to fall apart.

Then suddenly you were filling the prescription and the moment the testosterone cleansed your blood it was all a blur. To use a cliché. Runrunrun and you are almost 20 years old and alive. No hips no breasts no "that's such a pretty name" no hiding no fear.

You would be so proud of yourself.

For Transgender Day of Visibility, 31st March 2022.



# Top 10 Hottest Lesbians in the L-word According to Jo Stass

There hasn't been a TV show able to communicate the messy, intricate network of lesbian life quite like the L-word. Although the first season aired in 2004, themes including unrequited love, gender-transitions and unfiltered homophobia were ahead of its time, showcasing the common queer experiences from a distinctly American lesbian perspective.

Whether you watched the L-word as an awakening into queer culture, or because you openly had a crush on Shane, the show has defined a decade of queer heartthrobs and style. The most asked question about the L-word, was the character we found most attractive, and who we resembled the most. I feel somewhat separate from most queer people however, because I didn't find Shane that attractive as a lover (I will say she was a good friend though!) Perhaps I saw through her bad-boy persona and got bored of her 'emotionally-unavailability' trope, or perhaps I simply just didn't like her hair style.

So, to redeem myself from the Shane-die-hard-fans from their disgust of not loving her or wanting to be her (ah yes, the classic lesbian dilemma), I have compiled a list of who I think is the most attractive in the show. I think it is time to appreciate more women in the show.

## 8. Dana Fairbanks

SHE DID NOT DESERVE TO DIE. THIS IS SO UNFAIR. WHY DIDN'T THEY KILL OFF JENNY. I loved how her character was not centred around 'coming out' but she had solid character progression including the conflict of being a queer tennis player, against her upper-class family.

## 6. Pippa Pascal

Pippa's confidence is unmatched. I love that she does whatever she wants, and is completely unapologetic about it. I was a little confused when she gets with Sophie, I feel like Pippa would want someone more mature like Jodi, but I guess it was a short-lived thing?

## 4. Helena Peabody

We need Helena and Peggy back. They had so much sass. I still don't understand why she wasn't in Generation Q, because I would have liked to see what she did with her mother's inheritance (her wealth was an important part). Also the drama in Helena's life was always so funny, she's a little clueless.

## 2. Ivan Atcock

We were robbed when Ivan was only in the first season. When I think of the show, I think of Ivan singing 'I'm Your Man' by Leonard Cohen. Although there wasn't much transgender representation at the time, I still think Kit could have had a better response in rejecting him.

# Spoiler Alert!

## 10. Catherine Rothberg

I feel like this one speaks for itself. Helena Peabody's gambling era was definitely a little bit random, but I was here for the drama. I think they were a couple that were good on camera, but I would never want to be poker partners with someone as irrational as her – but I was hooked for a couple of episodes.

## 9. Carmen De La Pica

I think she had the best style on the set by far, and the fact that she was a DJ like sold me. I really didn't understand the Jenny x Carmen plot though, I feel like they were not compatible at all. I feel like if Carmen was the central character over Jenny, the group would have went through a lot less drama in the earlier seasons.

## 7. The cellmate

The cellmate Helena Peabody gets with in that one episode. I just can't explain it. It's a great scene. It's probably the best chemistry in the show.

## 5. Tasha Williams

I'm going to be honest. I was a little bit confused when Dana told Alice that Tasha was the one for her, because their relationship was a little dysfunctional in the later seasons before the reboot. I do think they could be good for each other, but I wish it was something we saw a little bit more in Generation Q. But oh well, maybe in the reboot of the original season?

## 3. Lara Perkins

I like Lara, she's sweet and she has such pure intentions (except with Alice after Dana died???) What was with that???. I liked the character, and wish she was part of the core cast, because I would have liked to dig a little bit deeper into her past as she felt surface level.

## 1. Bette Porter

I mean, is there anything else to say?





## President

LIA PERKINS

This was a big week with the announcement of the federal budget. Many people have pointed out the blatant holes in the budget – while the budget includes an increase to Youth Allowance and Rent Assistance, the increases are miniscule compared to massive amounts of inflation. Students, workers and unemployed people are right to demand more, and put that into action. There were multiple rallies in Canberra when the budget was announced, focused on

housing and ending poverty, and on Friday there will be a Sydney march organised by the NSW Education Organising Group.

I attended the rally commemorating 75 years since Al Nakba outside Town Hall on Sunday – marking 75 years of Palestinian resistance, collective action and struggle. The strength of Palestinian people in the face of oppression is incredible, and it is an important anti-racist struggle to support. Get involved where you can.

I met with the SRC Caseworkers to discuss plans for campaigns for education and action around rent increases and tenants rights. We plan to run SRC sessions about this issue

early next semester. I've also begun reviewing the SRC's Regulations, to see what changes need to be made to improve the clarity and accessibility of the Regs. I attended a few committees this week, which included hearing more about the University's "It's all about consent" campaign.

A couple of things coming up next week – the Women's Collective are holding an Abolish the Colleges Rally on the 17th. If you couldn't make the forum, come to this to learn more and get involved in their important campaign to overthrow the elite, unsafe colleges and replace them with affordable publicly owned student accommodation. The

Welfare Action Group is also holding a rally demanding affordable student housing on the 18th. If you can't tell already, student accommodation is a big issue for the SRC – we know so many people are struggling to get by, and we all need to do something about it.

## Education

ISHBEL DUNSMORE  
YASMINE JOHNSON

It's that time again... Another Honi Ed report! Everyone is talking about Albanese's emaciated budget, but the mainstream media and certainly the Labor Party's proponents are doing so for all the wrong reasons. This budget should not be celebrated as a win for

students, nor should it be considered a win for those on Jobseeker or Youth Allowance, renters, disabled people, the environment, and so on. The \$40 fortnightly increase to Youth Allowance is being touted as a real win, but amidst a nation-wide cost of living and rental crisis, and no commitment from Labor to freeze HECs debt, it won't make a dent in students' expenses. The budget commits to the creation of 4,000 commonwealth supported places

at universities across Australia, but with the intention that they be used to fulfill Australia's commitments to the AUKUS deal and the 20,000 jobs needed for its success. This means that students will be forced to play a part in the Australian government's march to war with China, just as students and staff are expected to demonstrate 'military value' in projects facilitated by the university's Memorandum of Understanding with Thales. Come along to the budget reply rally hosted

by the EAG and National Union of Students this Friday at 5:30 at Town Hall, and also the protest against the Quad meeting on the 24th, which will bring together Biden, Albanese, Kishida and Modi to discuss how best to advance to war, also at 5:30 at Town Hall.

## Women's

IGGY BOYD  
ALEV SARACOGLU

Members of the Women's Collective attended the May Day protest in Port Kembla, protesting alongside union members the plan to build a new nuclear submarine base there. It's always great to see such strong opposition to militarism. We were

also very disappointed to see the cuts to the NDIS in the new Labor budget, which continues to show that both Labor and Liberal governments are equally committed to allowing public services to rot away, and be hacked away at, under their supervision. That is not to say the rest of the budget is any better, as it is heavy on military spending and increasing policing and very light indeed on cost of living and housing crisis relief for those who need it.

We are also organising a rally on the 17th advocating for the Colleges to be immediately abolished and made into actually affordable housing that is safe for survivors and has quotas for indigenous and low SES students, groups which USyd has very low rates of enrolments within. We must stand against sexual violence on campus, as well as institutionalised bigotry and misogyny. In the same vein, we are also demanding increased, direct public housing funding from the government. The government must

utilise significant funding of actual government money to fix the housing crisis, not interest made from a fund. We'll be meeting at 1pm outside F23, we hope to see you there!

## Indigenous

BENJAMIN MCGRORY

Hiya Mob,

Benjamin here your First Nations Officer for 2023. During May I have worked with the SRC and Gadigal Centre to advance on the following:

Work with USYD Students For The

Voice and Students For The Voice Campaign to do outreach on the Voice to Parliament.

See our Facebook Pages to get the RSVP for our upcoming events.

USYD Collective (First Nations only) Facebook Group is up and running. Please reach out to me to be added or contact the Gadigal Centre (who can put you in touch).

Events for May:

Students For The Voice X Uluru Youth Dialogue

When: Monday May 22 2023

Time: 6pm

Where: UTSSA Office Building 1 UTS

Come for a Yarn with some guest speakers around the Voice.

USYD Indigenous Collective Cross Campus Drinks (Mob only)

Friday, 2nd June 2023, at the Rose Chippendale.

Yarn and catch up with Mob from USYD and other unis

Please RSVP via email (QR code coming soon).

As always email me if you need anything: benjamin.naroozmcgrory@sydney.edu.au

Kind regards,

Benjamin

## Disclaimer

These pages belong to the Office Bearers of the University of Sydney Students' Representative Council. They are not altered or influenced by the Editors of *Honi Soit*.

## International Students

The International Students Officers — **Ashrika Paruthi, Lily Wei, Kejun (Clare) Lui, Yuchen Li** — did not submit a report this week.

## Leaving a Rental Home & Getting Your Bond or Deposit Back



### Before you move in

You can maximise the likelihood of getting your bond back when you move out by doing some forward planning before you move in. Complete the condition report if you have one, noting absolutely every single dirty or broken thing in the house, and email yourself and the landlord clear photos of each of these. Whatever isn't noted on the condition report will become your responsibility, regardless of whether you broke or dirtied it. If you don't get a condition report, it is even more important to send those photos. Keep a receipt of any money you have paid including a bond or deposit.

### During your stay

It is important to keep your landlord or agent informed about any repairs that are required during your stay. Email (written) your landlord about any repairs. The NSW Tenant's Union has a factsheet (link below) outlining your rights and responsibilities around repairs. You are allowed "fair wear and tear" so don't be scared to report things.

### When you move out

You need to leave the home in the same condition, minus fair wear and tear, as when you moved in. You will not be considered as having moved out, until the landlord gets the keys back. When the landlord inspects the property, they may note damage, that was not in the incoming condition report, or cleaning that you will be responsible for paying for.

A tenant must pay the rent up to and including the day their termination notice period ends and they vacate the property.

If a tenant does not owe the landlord money at the end of their tenancy and there is no damage to the property, the bond paid at the beginning of the tenancy should be refunded in full.

If the landlord or agent believes the tenant owes money, they can make a claim against the bond.

Here are some of the main reasons that at landlord may make a claim against the tenant's bond.

- unpaid rent
- reasonable cost of repairing damage to the property that is beyond fair wear and tear
- unpaid water usage charges, as long as the landlord requested payment within three months of receiving the bill
- any 'break fee' or other charges payable as a result of the tenant breaking the tenancy agreement early
- reasonable cost of cleaning any part of the property not left reasonably clean, considering how clean the property was at the start of the tenancy, and
- reasonable cost of having the locks changed, or other security devices replaced, if the tenant doesn't return all keys and security devices they were given.

*This is not a complete list. For a full list and more details, head to the Tenants Union fact sheet below.*

If you believe you have not been treated fairly, contact an SRC Caseworker to find out what your options are.

[fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/housing-and-property/renting/ending-a-tenancy](https://fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/housing-and-property/renting/ending-a-tenancy)

## Ask Abe

SRC Caseworker Help Q&A

Discontinue Fail



Dear Abe,

My semester started really well, but then things started piling up, and I stopped submitting assessments for one of my units so I could focus on passing the others. I think I'm going to fail this unit, and I'm worried about what that means for my WAM. My friend told me it's too late to withdraw from a unit, is that true? Is there anything I can do about this?

Snowed Under

Dear Snowed Under,

If you withdraw from the unit now your grade will be DF – Discontinue Fail. You still have to pay fees, and it will count as a fail on your transcript. This may affect your academic progression status

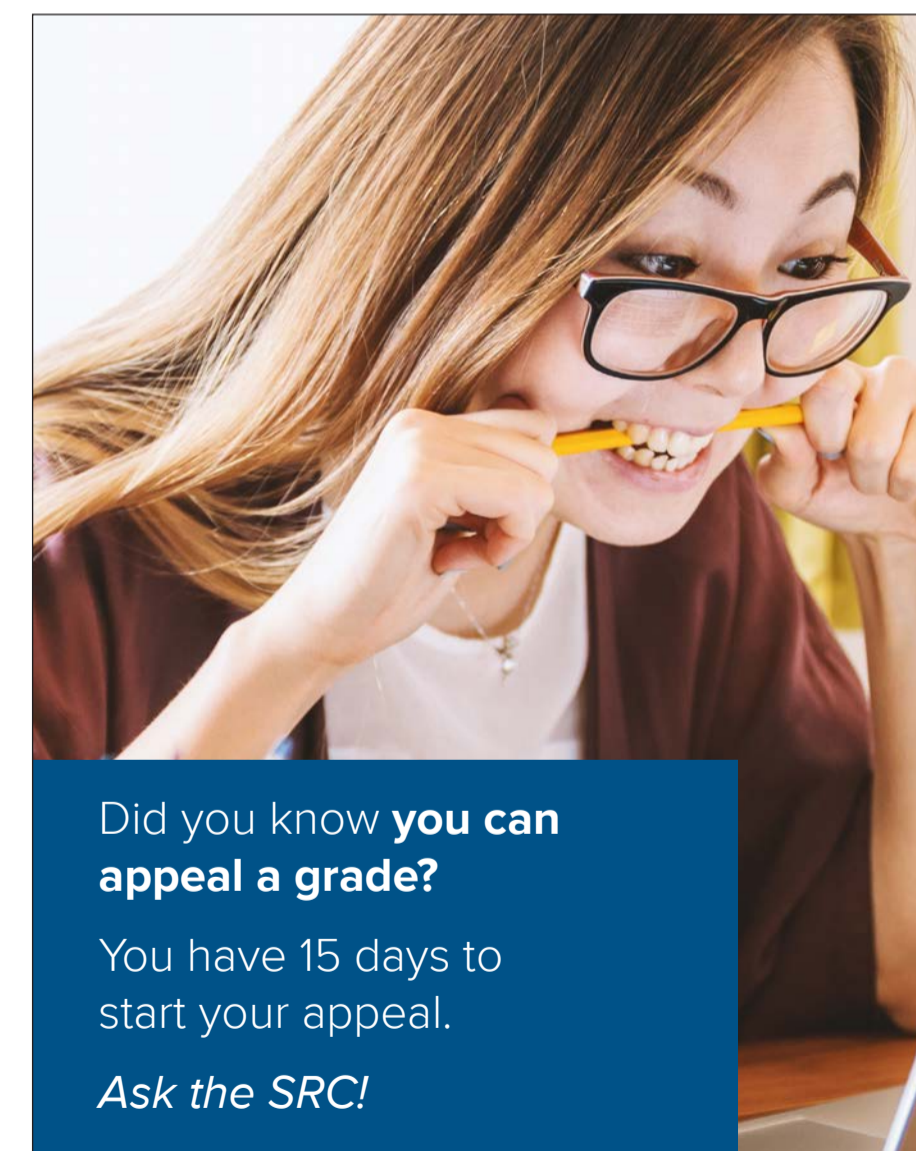
and in a few courses will affect your Weighted Average Mark (WAM). For some domestic students this may impact your Commonwealth Supported place, and you should discuss this with a caseworker as soon as possible.

If you are an international student, you will need to apply for a reduced study load and provide the necessary supporting documents. It may affect your visa, so check with the SRC's visa solicitor.

If you dropping the subject makes you a part time student, talk to an SRC Caseworker about how this will affect your Centrelink payment or your concession status for the Opal Card. Call 9660 5222 to make an appointment, or send your details to [help@src.usyd.edu.au](mailto:help@src.usyd.edu.au).

Abe

If you need help from an SRC Caseworker start an enquiry on our Caseworker Contact Form: [bit.ly/3YxvDUF](https://bit.ly/3YxvDUF)



Did you know you can appeal a grade?

You have 15 days to start your appeal.

Ask the SRC!



Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney  
Caseworker contact form: [bit.ly/3YxvDUF](https://bit.ly/3YxvDUF) | p: 02 9660 5222

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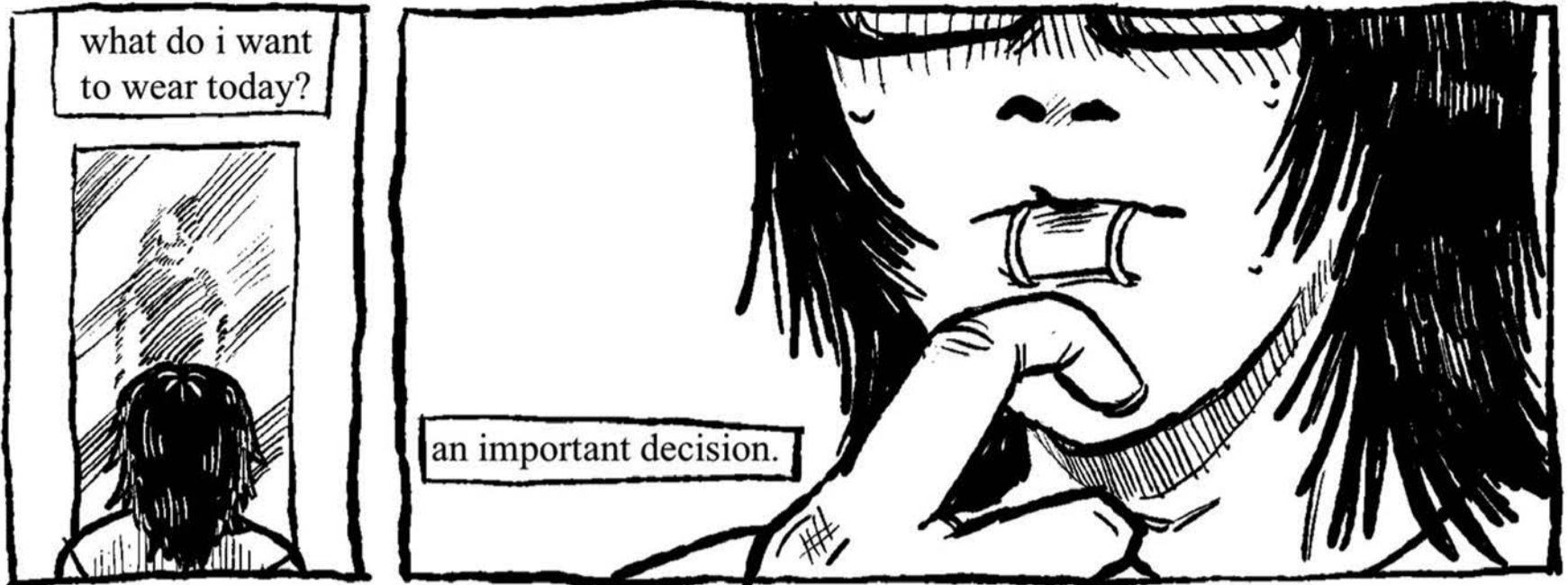








outfit of the day



but to appease to a world i was never accepted in the first place is futile. i still want to feel "normal". that's counterintuitive and honestly just internalised transphobia... do i really want my everyday life to be dictated by this? well, i mean it's not like i chose to... why am i still filled with so much shame? fuck why is this so hard...

