

# Honi Soit

WEEK FIVE, SEMESTER TWO, 2023

FIRST PRINTED 1929

## The University's Secret Cult

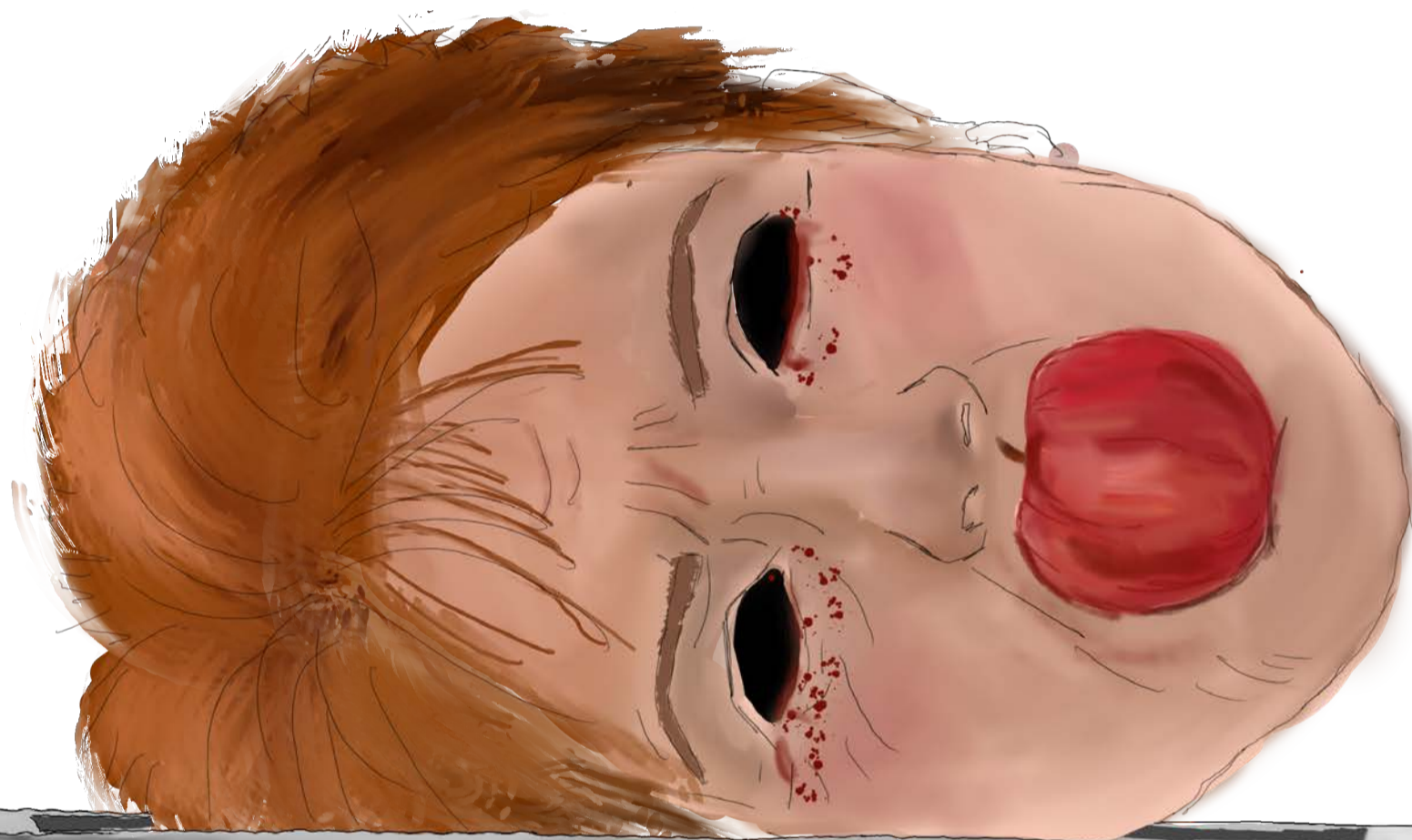
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## How USyd Fails First Nations Staff

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## PLEASE EXPLAIN

The persistent presence of Pauline Hanson

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# Acknowledgement of Country



*Honi Soit* publishes on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation. Sovereignty was never ceded. All our knowledge is produced on stolen Indigenous lands. The University of Sydney is principally a colonial institution, predicated on the notion that Western ways of thinking and learning are superior to the First knowledges of Indigenous peoples.

At *Honi Soit*, we rebuke this claim, and maintain our commitment to platforming and empowering the experiences, perspectives and voices of First Nations students. This basis informs our practice as a paper. As a student newspaper, we have a duty to combat the systems and mechanisms of colonisation.

As student journalists, we recognise our responsibility as editors of a radical student newspaper to oppose the inherent racism and exclusivity of mainstream media outlets. We also uphold the struggle of other Indigenous communities worldwide and acknowledge that our resistance is intertwined.

As an editorial team of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage, we are both victims and beneficiaries of colonisation. We are committed to unlearning our colonial premonitions and working to hold current institutions accountable.

We are galvanised by our commitment to Indigenous justice.

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### Front Cover

Bipasha Chakraborty and Luke Mešterović

## Editorial

Congratulations! You are the lucky recipient of this limited-edition edition of *Honi Soit*.

Did you know that this is the ONLY edition that will come out this week? And you are holding it in your hands! Pretty lucky, huh? Do you know many other weekly student newspapers are there in Australia? I’ll give you a clue. None. There are no others. This is it. And if that isn’t enough for you, buckle up buckaroo, because there’s also a number of cracker reads in this week’s edition.

Pauline Hanson is the focus of this week’s feature. My aim in writing it was to shine a light on all the ways she has poisoned our politics and country at large. Please read it, and have an HSP while you do.

A massive thank you to Bip for your amazing work on the front cover — there is nobody I trust more to turn my half-baked design ideas into reality.

We also have two other (relatively) long-form pieces in this edition. On page 6 you’ll find Bipasha Chakraborty’s investigation into how

the University fails Indigenous staff, while Luke Cass skewers the broken system that is Youth Allowance on page 10. Thank you both, and thank you to everyone who shared their stories with them.

But wait! There’s more! This edition also features Ellie Robertson diving into the secret world of the Freemasons at USyd (p.14); Aidan Pollock exploring the soulless meat market that is Grindr (p.18); Aidan Elwig Pollock and Gracie Mitchell leading you through the history of the mysterious rock carvings at Callan Park (p.15) and Kate Zhang taking the fight to scammers who target international students (p. 9).

Thank you to everyone who has supported me throughout editing *Honi* this year. You mean more to me than you know.

So buy yourself a halal snack pack, find a cosy spot on campus, and dig into this edition, you lucky duck.

Luke Mešterović

## Reading the Jacaranda Leaves

### Trouble in Paradise?

Stop the boats? Stop the votes! Apparently, persecuted law student Freya Leach and ConClub chihuahua Cooper Gannon aren’t on the same page when it comes to the Voice to Parliament. Where Leach has become known for her incessant stream of anti-Voice TikToks, speaking so freely (as third-year Law’s brightest and whitest) on behalf of First Nations people, Gannon is allegedly aligned with the pro-Voice Liberals. *Honi* isn’t sure how they’ll reconcile this fundamental disagreement — maybe a night of whispering sweet Thatcherisms in each other’s ears will solve it.

### A Week of Radical Rest and Relaxation

Labor Left faction NLS seemed preoccupied with other pursuits during the SRC’s Festival of Radical Thinking. After their BBQ for the Voice on Tuesday, the caucus were suspiciously absent from every other panel and event, bar their Voice session on Thursday. When *Honi* pressed for a justification, Gerard Buttigieg (no relation to Mayor Pete) affirmed the faction’s focus on “making sure the Voice to Parliament wins later this year.” We also want it to win, but we also don’t think it’s too radical to ask them to attend more of the Festival of Radical Thinking. Don’t knock it ‘til you try it!

### Fiscality Forever

Looks like Global Solidarity wishes they were in an alternate universe to get their laundry and taxes done, since in this timeline they appear to be broke. As elections draw near, calls from councillors to increase OB stipends have intensified. However, comrades Deaglan Godwin and Jasmine Al-Rawi — despite their consistent pleas to Council for more money — have failed to submit a single report to *Honi* this year. Perhaps some more cash in the bank will cure their writer’s block.

**Got gossip? Send us an anonymous tip!**

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# letters only

Dear the Editors,

I would like to pay tribute to the life of Lewis the Dog of Sancta Sophia who passed away earlier this week. Having hugged him on many occasions and enjoyed his company amid the lockdown, he was a campus friend that will be sorely missed.

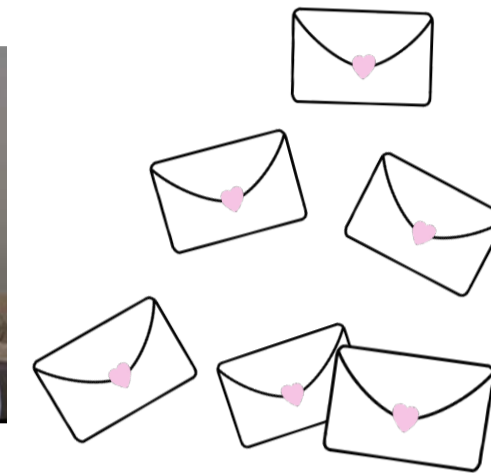
We love you Lewis.

Khanh Tran

*Aww Khanh, this is sad.*

*Thanks for your letters, as always.*

The Editors



**Disagree with something that we say? Want to argue? Wanting to profess your love? Send us a letter to editors@honisoit.com**

## Whorescopes

This unseasonable heat has been making me sultry and sweaty, and so has been your cherry lipstick, baby.



**Aries:** The world can seem mundane as we enter Virgo season and a lot of things to ground you. Let them pick you up and lay you on the ground as you rub against them slowly and passionately.



**Taurus:** Nothing that a well-rolled doobie and Fireball shot cannot do for you. Retrograde might be pulling you down, but zoning out in your own company might be all that you need to resurface in this season.



**Gemini:** Trump’s mugshot is fire but how about raunchy polaroids of you eating their face away? The camera’s flash is shining over your glorious face and highlighting all your tension. Badaaboom!



**Cancer:** Love the way you feel baby with those three fingers in. Your mascara will be melting as you cry from pleasure and keep asking them to stop after cumming three times in a row.



**Leo:** Awkwardness is valid and so is not getting wet at times. Take it slow, lube it up if needed, and if not, just cuddle up naked skin to skin through the night.



**Virgo:** Like their ice cream and then lick them harder later, meow! A bit of left, right, forward, back and in slow circular motions, there’s space for it all.

### Horny Soit bites your lips.



**Libra:** It’s time to learn how to undress them sexily. You can still rip her clothes apart, Betty, but not like a fucking heathen and a lusty vampire looking forward to a wild night in.



**Scorpio:** Bouldering is the new date activity for hotties. Reach that pinnacle, have some sweet gatorade, exchange kisses and jump into that cold shower right after!



**Sagittarius:** Love is red and so will be your bed as you enjoy some hot period sex. Have some spare towels, comfy PJs, fully charged vibrators and a night full of action going for you!



**Capricorn:** Get raunchy with the nipple play — use light feathers, prolonged hickeys, some ice to have them shaking and feel them mourn as you kiss all through it.



**Aquarius:** A lot of things are unbearable, but not as unbearable as that person who keeps pissing you off with their inappropriate humour. Sometimes it’s okay to cut people off or throw cranberry juice on their crisp white shirt because oh dear, shut up!



**Pisces:** Not all dates need to be 24-hours long and you’re not a bad queer person for that. You can still look at her gently as she enjoys that art exhibition and head home at 9pm, thinking about her sweet company. Take your own sweet time with your romance.

## The Gig Guide

### Wednesday 30 August

Jungaji // Lazybones Lounge // 7.00pm

### Thursday 31 August

Neil Frances // Oxford Art Factory // 7.00pm

The Regime // The Lady Hampshire // 8.00pm

Aimes // Oaf Gallery // 8.00pm

### Friday 1 September

Madam Nightingale // Sydney Fringe Festival // 6.00pm

Bodyjar // Manning Bar // 7.00pm

Chris Lanson // The Vanguard // 7.00pm

Scott Bradlee’s Postmodern Jukebox // Enmore Theatre // 7.30pm

Kilnger // Manning Bar // 8.00pm

Seaside // Vic on the Park // 9.00pm

### Saturday 2 September

Next Sound // Oxford Art Factory // 6.00pm

Juno // Oxford Art Factory // 7.00pm

Thrice // Metro Theatre // 7.00pm

Sydney Harbour ABBA Tribute Cruise // Sydney Pearl Cruises // 7.00pm

Georgia Mooney // Factory Theatre // 8.00pm

Gallery // Oxford Art Factory // 11.00pm

### Sunday 3 September

Fathers Day // Lazybones // 5.00pm

Midland // Enmore Theatre // 8.00pm



# UNSW staff win 18% pay rise

Misbah Ansari

The University of New South Wales National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) Branch voted overwhelmingly to adopt a new agreement earlier this week, including an eighteen per cent staff pay rise over four years.

The new agreement was upvoted by approximately 97% union members and is a result of one and a half year of negotiations. The new agreements offer an average of 3.9% annual pay rise, with the first pay increase of six per cent to occur this year onwards.

This development also promises 256 secure jobs for casuals — 90 professional staff and 166 academic jobs. Other gains include intellectual freedoms in place for staff, better conditions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, an increase in paid cultural leave from five days to ten days language allowance to casual employees, and 30 days yearly paid gender affirmation leave.

UNSW NTEU Branch President Richard Vickery said, “Staff stood together in support of colleagues in precarious employment. Union members recognise that a secure work environment is critical for the well-being of all staff and to provide continuity of educational support for students.”

The regulation of workload and regular reviews of working conditions are important parts of the agreement. According to NTEU UNSW’s media release, “Workload review will consider the duties required of the positions, the hours worked to achieve outcomes compared with hours allocated, and whether tasks require modification or reallocation without impacting classification. Importantly, professional staff have also won a workload review after restructure, to assess whether there has been an impact from making positions redundant on the workloads of the remaining staff.”

The University went on strikes for three weeks earlier this year with rolling stoppages and a 24 hour work stoppage.

## Election tea?

Have any juicy election gossip you want to share? Send us an anonymous tip

# Candidates for SRC Presidential and Honi Soit elections announced

Luke Mesterovic

The ballots have been drawn. The candidates have been announced. The curtain has been raised. After a year of uncontested elections, USyd’s StuPol season will be back in full force. Here are the people running for the top jobs.

### President

Rose Donnelly (National Labor Students) and Harrison Brennan (Grassroots) will battle it out to be elected 2024 SRC President.

Rose Donnelly is a fourth-year BA student who is currently serving as one of the Vice-Presidents of the SRC. Donnelly has previously served as an SRC Councillor and as a Sexual Harassment Officer in 2022. Donnelly is a member of National Labor Students (NLS), which represents the left-wing of the Labor Party. Although they once dominated USyd elections, NLS has not run a presidential candidate since 2016, when Isabella Brook was elected president. Donnelly is expected to be backed by Student Unity (Labor

Right) and the Engineers. Donnelly is a member of the Australian Labor Party.

Harrison Brennan is a third-year BA student who is a Councillor, a Welfare Officer and serves on the General Executive of the SRC. Brennan is a member of Grassroots, a faction which encompasses ideologies to the left of the Labor Party. Grassroots have won five of the past six SRC elections, with incumbent President Lia Perkins also from the faction. Brennan is expected to be backed by Switch (Grassroots’ sibling faction) and Socialist Alternative. Brennan is a member of the Australian Greens.

### Honi Soit

Two tickets — Rants for *Honi* and Flirt for *Honi* — will run to edit *Honi Soit* next year. It is worth noting neither ticket has ten members; Rants has six and Flirt has nine. *Honi* has historically been edited by at least ten editors, and it remains to be seen whether either ticket will commit to editing *Honi* with less than ten people.

Rants for *Honi* includes Jane Kuziak, Dani Christelis, Felix Tonkin (Unity), Vedant Patel (Independents/INTERPOL), Michael Grenier (Independents/INTERPOL) and Orlando Throsby. As of the time of writing, no candidate has ever written for *Honi Soit*, although Throsby joined our reporter group at the beginning of Semester 2 this year.

Flirt for *Honi* includes Zeina Khochaiche, Amelia Raines, Aidan Elwig Pollock, Valerie Chidiac, Sandra Kallarakkal, Hamani Tanginoa, Ariana Haghighi, Simone Maddison (Grassroots) and Mae Milne. Haghighi and Raines also ran in 2021 as a part of the unsuccessful DRIP for *Honi* ticket. All members of Flirt have previously written for *Honi*.

Information regarding candidates running for positions on Council and as NUS delegates will be released once they are announced.

Elections will be held in-person on the 19th, 20th and 21st of September. You can access more information here.

# Where does the University of Sydney stand on the Voice?

Bipasha Chakraborty, Ethan Floyd and Luke Mesterovic

In light of the University of Sydney refusing to take a stance on the Voice, several of the University’s faculties and schools have publicly announced their support, with more expected soon.

The University of Sydney’s Law School was the first of many to formally support the Uluru Statement of the Heart in May 2021, after their Board passed a resolution.

The Faculty of Medicine and Health are expected to release a statement within the next two weeks. Similarly, the Faculty of Science are expected to release a statement in support of the constitutional change. Dean of Science Marcel Dinger explained, “at this stage, the Faculty of Science is in a consultation phase to determine first whether to make a publicised position that is separate or in addition to the position taken by the University and, if so, what shape that might take.”

The School of Geosciences, within the Faculty of Science, made a submission to a parliamentary inquiry in April of this year that expressed support for the Voice.

The School of Chemistry have also endorsed a Yes vote following a school-wide consultation process. Head of School Peter Rutledge commented on

visible statements of support across the School.

After consultation with the Conservatorium of Music’s Indigenous Strategy and Services Committee and the Conservatorium Students’ Association (CSA)’s Artists for Yes campaign, a statement has been drafted by the Conservatorium of Music in support of the Voice and is expected to be voted upon at next Wednesday’s School Board meeting.

In a previous media statement, the University stated that they demonstrate their “value, respect and celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s knowledge [...] through our actions and leadership. For example, in 2011 we were the first Australian university to appoint an Indigenous person to a position Deputy Vice-Chancellor, and our One Sydney, Many Peoples Strategy describes how we’re working to achieve an overarching aim of reaching parity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and staff.”

Former Deputy Vice Chancellor Shane Houston, who is referenced in the University’s statement, was the subject of a controversial legal settlement in 2018. As a result of his immediate removal from his position — which was speculated to have been founded in rumours about Houston’s sexuality — community relationships were tarnished, which the University has since failed to reconcile.

Similarly, the University’s One Sydney, Many Peoples 2021-2024 Strategy has received fair criticism from staff across the university, especially in regards to the lack of exploration and commitment to cultural safety in the workplace. The parity targets outlined in the strategy have yet to be proven to be implemented, with more pressure entering from recent Enterprise Bargaining agreements with the NTEU.

The University has never held an institutional position on vital social issues of the past, including the marriage equality plebiscite and the 1967 referendum. This has led to detrimental effects on the wider USyd community, such as the 2017 clash on campus with police and “Vote No” protesters.

In refusing to take a stance on the Voice, USyd has placed itself in the minority of Australian universities. At the time of writing, 23 of the country’s 41 universities have taken a stance on the Voice. USyd is amongst the 18 that haven’t. USyd is one of the three universities in the prestigious Group of Eight not to take a stance, with the remaining five publicly supporting a Yes vote.

As the oldest university in Australia built on colonial and systemic racism, USyd has the most amount of work to do in reconciling and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students, and community.

# Fisher Rooftop to open in Nov

Andy Park

The Fisher Library rooftop terrace is expected to be operational in November this year. University Librarian, Philip Kent, said there were delays due to “weather and heritage planning approvals.”

Earlier this year, Kent told *Honi* that the terrace refurbishment was set for completion in August this year. Kent qualified that this was subject to weather, materials, and other conditions.

The rooftop courtyard was once a hub for student leisure and social activities, with views of Glebe and the CBD. It has been locked for thirty years, until 2022 *Honi Soit* Editor Roisin Murphy wrote an article calling for its reopening last year. With overwhelming student support, the rooftop area has been undergoing refurbishment.

“Plans for the Indigenous garden on the roof are progressing well which will add to the amenity and enjoyment of the rejuvenated facility,” said Kent.

With all activities going to plan, the rooftop terrace will bring a sorely missed space back to campus life. Along with closing down of Manning Bar a few years back, another iconic campus space, the return of Fisher Rooftop is a more than welcome change.



# University of Melbourne NTEU to take stop-work strike action

Katarina Butler

The University of Melbourne’s National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) branch is preparing for seven days of strike action next week, beginning with a rally during a weekend Open Day. Work will stop at midday on Monday August 28 in the Faculty of Arts, Melbourne Law School, the Victorian College of the Arts, student services, and the library.

“We had asked management to deliver us two proposals on decasualization and pay in order for us to call off doing open action. They refused to give us those proposals. So we gathered and we spoke to prospective students and parents and asked them to contribute to our strike fund for the strike next week.” David Gonzalez, University of Melbourne

# “Grimace is getting the recognition he deserves”: August USU Board Recap

Misbah Ansari and Katarina Butler

The University of Sydney Union’s Student Board met on the 25th of August for their monthly meeting, inviting *Honi* along to enjoy (free) cold pizza and partake in the festivities. Post-Welcome Fest and handover, Board members were keen to share their activities while *Honi* reported from the shadows.

The only motion on notice this month was one to invest in disability housing through Australian Unity. It’s a 10 year investment linked to NDIS provision that will strengthen their investment portfolio. Grace Wallman, disabilities officer, voiced her support for the investment: “I really was very glad to see the recommendation.”

Onor Nottle raised a question about the V-Team, noting *Honi*’s coverage of the unpaid aspects of the job. She particularly noted recommendations about the hours worked by the V-Teams as well as their shift lengths, and said “it’s important to monitor the way V-Teams are feeling about their roles.”

Sharifi noted that the USU is working to implement feedback for the V-Team. Mills noted the upcoming position of V-Team Coordinator, saying that it will be a dedicated resource for volunteers to access throughout their time. The role is currently public on the USU jobs page.

The finance report was supposedly juiced for this month (*Honi* does not receive a copy of the report due to confidentiality concerns). July was a

good month for the USU, with a net profit of \$190k due to the increased activity around Welcome Fest. They also recognised an additional \$350k of contractual income that wasn’t previously recognised. Board members thanked Michelle, the Finance officer, for the new format, and Sharifi said that “the Board acknowledges that it’s a process as things cannot happen overnight.”

### Honorary Treasurer

Onor Nottle gave a brief report as Honorary Secretary, praising staff for participating in Wear it Purple Day. Nick Dower also took his Honorary Treasurer report as read, thanking the Finance team for their reporting.

### Vice President

Madhullikaa Singh listed exciting events from the past month, including the centenary event celebrating 100 years since the first international student arrived at USyd. She was proud to note the USU’s involvement, as 2000 students attended and the USU organised markets and student performances. Further, she thanked the USU for their work on Welcome Fest, the PULP team for their first launch and revue societies for a successful Faculty Revue season.

### President

Naz Sharifi took her report as read, but noted that she was excited to provide more free food to students as part of efforts to support people during the cost of living crisis.

### Ethnocultural

Julia Lim gave the Ethnocultural

Officer report, announcing that the ethnocultural space is ready to go. She spoke about the feedback they had taken on for the space, including arts and craft spaces as well as study spaces. The USU has purchased art from the ethnocultural art auction to hang in the room, representing students of diverse backgrounds. Lim also noted the start of a collaboration with SUPRA for next year’s welcome week.

### Disabilities

Grace Wallman gave the Disability officer report, noting the upcoming opening of the Disabilities space. Wallman is working with SRC and SUPRA to plan an opening event, and said that she was glad it was a “reflection of USU’s genuine connection for better accessibility”.

### Women’s

Grace Porter gave the Women’s Officer report, speaking about the process for *Women’s Honi* kicking off. She also spoke about planning meetings for the upcoming pride and consent week, which she is working on with the Women’s and the Queer Officers at the SRC. Porter emphasised the work they will be doing to emphasise queer, Indigenous and disability perspectives.

### Queer

Alexander Poirier spoke about Wear it Purple day, expressing joy that “Grimace is getting the recognition he deserves”. He promoted the Wear It Purple party at Hermanns.

The next USU meeting will be on the 29th of September.

action was appropriate. Since then, the Faculty of Arts, the Law School, the Library, and the Victorian College of Arts have decided to take strike action.

“We started with only the arts faculty and then all of those others jumped on board. I cried several times. I can’t believe that people were willing to sacrifice their pay for a week.

“I think these issues are important, but then when you go out, talk to members, and they really feel it and believe it, and are putting their money where their mouth is, it’s really encouraging to see and so opposite of what we get from management.” Gonzalez told *Honi*.

The NTEU has been engaged in enterprise bargaining with University Management for over a year, and management recently sought a two-

week pause to enterprise bargaining. The university claims that they have made an in-principle agreement on a range of matters. However union members dispute this, saying that claims such as overwork have not yet been addressed.

Staff are fighting for fair pay, job security, and protections against overwork. They are demanding a fifteen per cent pay rise over three years, citing inflation and increased cost of living pressures as key factors.

The ombudsman forced the University to repay \$45 million in wage theft in what has since been described as “industrial scale wage theft” by NTEU National president Alison Barnes, who since labelled UniMelb as the country’s worst university for underpayment of staff.



# The University is failing

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff

*\*This piece uses Blak, Indigenous and First Nations interchangeably to refer to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples for brevity. We acknowledge that these terms do not wholly reflect the diversity of different groups or clans across so-called Australia.*

*Content warning: This piece contains mentions of racist language.*

The University of Sydney is not a culturally safe space. It was not a culturally safe space in 1850 when it was first built, and it is still not a culturally safe space in 2023. Being built on stolen unceded Gadigal Country, harbouring policies from its time largely unchanged and still withstanding today, it accommodates institutional and systemic racism.

The 2020 Gari Yala survey, conducted by Jumbunna's Indigenous People and Work Research and Practice Hub and Diversity Council Australia, is the first national survey to examine Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences in the workplace. Exploring areas such as racism, cultural load, identity strain, exclusion, and authenticity — issues that are prevalent within Sydney University's working environment.

Current and previous staff members from various faculties — both Indigenous and non-Indigenous — were interviewed by *Honi*. Their identities have been anonymised. Interviewees disclosed issues that pertain to USyd's environment — ranging from personal experiences with identity suppression, to workplace harassment, and institutional oppression.

A recurring point between interviewees is that the University is not a culturally safe space. Cultural training is not mandated for University staff members, but is instead "advised" optional training. A selected program is available for those in leadership positions involving a three-day retreat. However, neither the optional or mandatory cultural competency training is ensured to be taken regularly — even though cultural competence is not an end product, but an ongoing conversation and relationship. Though these courses are optional to many employed by the University, an ex-staff member noted "I was forced to do cultural competence training as an Aboriginal person, and it was taught by a white person [...] I was the only person in my lab to do it."

In conversations surrounding mandatory training, a staff member indicated that there is always pushback when making courses or training mandatory at the University, "but that to me is not prioritising the right things". This pushback displays an

institutional lack of prioritisation of creating and harbouring safe spaces for Indigenous staff members and, consequently, students.

Even with cultural training, how do we ensure non-Indigenous staff are absorbing information, and taking it on in their teachings and everyday lives? Especially when the training the University provides through their National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC) is organised and run predominantly by non-Indigenous individuals.

The biography of the Director of the NCCC on the USyd website interestingly states they intend to "develop cultural competence from a non-Indigenous perspective and in particular how to facilitate a deeper understanding of transformative ways to learn and work together." But how does cultural training have value if the source of training is not one that can engage with First Nations experiences and knowledge ongoingly? Cultural competence from a non-Indigenous perspective ultimately waters down and simplifies lived experiences, resulting in shallow cultural understanding for staff.

USyd's 2022-2024 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Plan mentions "cultural safety, cultural competence, and cultural respect" and that "we need greater commitment to developing the cultural capability of our staff and leaders, with take up of existing cultural training and development needing to improve." Despite outlining a greater need for safer spaces, no action points with direct outlines or detailed steps are provided for how to improve and implement these programs. A staff member noted that "Far too many actions still require 'baseline' data even though there have been dedicated Indigenous employment programs for over 10 years."

Though the Employment Plan included launching a campaign in 2022 "for required cultural competence training and drive all staff completion", with one year left until the plan ends, this has not been achieved or mandated across faculties, schools or other portfolios. Similarly, in the 2012-2016 Wingara Mura Bunga Barrabugu Strategy the University aimed to have 100% of its new and existing staff undertake cultural training by 2015. This has evidently not been achieved.

The University often uses equivocal terms — such as "deliver", "implement", "improve", and "guide" — to appear as though it is changing. However, the policy points in its various Indigenous strategies often lack depth in how they are actually going to reach those targets and where the accountability for outcome lies.

USyd engages itself in conversations surrounding Indigenous spaces, especially with their *Walanga Wingara Mura* Design Principles published in 2019. A staff member added that despite efforts being made "to indigenise, you know, Indigenous artworks, Indigenous design, I'm not sure how much effort we're putting into decolonising." A stroll through the Great Hall or Anderson Stuart Building, displays rows of portraits of colonial white men plastered across the walls. Most notably notorious is the "mankind" mural that stands in the Refectory in Holme building, which depicts a white man on a pedestal with a halo behind him whilst Blak naked bodies surround him on the ground.

Although it might be easy to jump to the conclusion that we should remove these paintings, conversations are yet to properly take place in discussing how to approach colonial artworks, structures, and buildings named after white settlers that litter the campus. Some interviewees point out the importance of truth-telling: having some form of structure next to (or replacing) current figures, that elucidates the truth of the past, creating space for a

Bipasha Chakraborty investigates.

safer present and future.

Despite whatever training and goals the University projects in terms of curating safe spaces, First Nations staff continue to endure harassment, racism, and bullying in the workplace. A previous staff member noted that one of the first comments they had received were "we can't give you the ethanol because you're Aboriginal and you might sniff it." Even when these harassments are raised, often they are dismissed, with another staff member's claims being labelled as a "low level conflict" so that "the University doesn't have to do anything". Another previous staff member was told "to get over being Aboriginal and [...] not take any notice". Further exemplifying that the University lacks "any mechanisms, when people aren't maintaining a healthy workplace," as one staff member put it, in dealing with racial harassment.

In the current *One Sydney, Many People 2021-2024* Strategy, the current Indigenous Community Engagement Officer within the Faculty of Medicine and Health, noted that in the strategy "there's actually no mention of cultural safety at all." Mostly focusing on increasing First Nations recruitment and representation for both staff and students. Another staff member commenting "How do we get to parity without retention? Who will want to work with us if we're in an unsafe environment?"

Among current University staff demographics, a staff member highlighted that "60% are on continuing (ongoing) contracts and 40% are on fixed term contracts. For Indigenous staff it's more like the reverse, 40% are on continuing contracts and 60% are fixed term — adding to job insecurity for this demographic." It is worth noting here that the 40 and 60 per cent are based on the 1.5% Indigenous staff across the University.

Quite a few positions held by Indigenous staff within the University have their salaries partially paid through external philanthropic donations, adding to job insecurity. This compensation structure is curious, given that the University had recorded a billion dollar surplus in 2021. The University generally has a bad reputation for pathways into secure work since "the University doesn't tend to recognise professional staff," but for First Nations people, these structures are more nonexistent. A leaving staff member added they had "to make a decision to actually leave the University because there was no structure, support or pathway into a research career for me."

There's a higher proportion of First Nation's staff on satellite and rural campuses in comparison to the Camperdown-Darlington campus. When the University celebrates their increased recruitment of Indigenous members, it is often related to rural campuses — which is largely due to the work of the regional school, not the overall faculty or institution. As a result, we need to hold more scrutiny and accountability for the University in ensuring that there are structures in place which show that the University is promoting, hiring, and retaining Indigenous staff in all areas across campus and not in just one as a shortcut of reaching the NTEU's enterprise bargaining agreement of three per cent parity in the next three years. Flexible working arrangements and access to cultural leave policies play a part in providing a culturally responsive working environment.

The Camperdown-Darlington campus struggles with retention. A previous staff member, who had worked in the University for over 20 years — one of the longest-serving Indigenous staff members at the time until their termination in 2021 — pointed out that the number of Indigenous staff "was 140 or something in the later years, but then I sort of got sacked, there was like 80."

Instead of the University fighting to keep their members, staff have to fight to stay on, or are pushed out. Indigenous staff have been dismissed

for countless erroneous reasons, from health-related issues to speaking up against workplace conflicts. There have been instances where position requirements had changed, particularly surrounding "academic requirements" even though an Indigenous staff member may have held that position for years, pushing them out of USyd. The last notable instance being the Poche Centre for Indigenous Health and its former Director.

When the first Indigenous Strategy — *Wingara Mura Bunga Barrabugu* — was introduced in 2012, it brought with it positions such as Deputy Vice Chancellor Indigenous Strategy and Services (DVC ISS) in 2011, Associate Dean Indigenous for Faculties and Schools in 2013 and Director of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research. The University was attempting to create changes through Indigenous positions and introduced cultural competency as a graduate attribute. Yet at the same time had removed the Koori Centre in 2013, a dedicated space for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait students and staff, and established the National Centre for Cultural Competency. It wasn't until 8 years later in 2021, a dedicated space was reintroduced with the opening of the Gadigal Centre.

Currently, only a few Associate Dean Indigenous positions are held by First Nations identifying staff, taking away opportunities of Indigenous voices in leadership roles. Earlier this year, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences were in the process of recruiting an identifying individual for the position. However, despite Indigenous staff members applying for the position, a non-Indigenous individual is rumoured to be starting in the position later this year. The Faculty of Science have announced that the next person to hold the Associate Dean Indigenous position must be identifying. Ten years since the position's creation, for the recruitment to finally be appointed to a First Nations identifying individual demonstrates the institution's lack of willingness to properly engage with putting Indigenous voices in power.

The University has recently proposed a new Confirmation of Identity process for students and staff identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander to remove statutory declaration depending on verified documents from Aboriginal corporations, which has raised concerns. Although it hasn't been implemented, its proposal has already affected current students on scholarships, having their bursaries paused and access to the Gadigal centre denied until they can provide documents verified by Aboriginal councils. Minimal communication and appropriate consultation has occurred. The Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council had a consultation on campus with students which ultimately was unproductive and traumatic for students, where their identities were questioned. Communication restarted two months ago after a year of stagnancy. A letter was sent to the Vice Chancellor from the NTEU union with minimal response. A staff member commented that with this policy it "in a way stops people from applying for positions".

The first DVC ISS position was held by Shane Houston, who's sudden departure from the University continues to raise questions. Staff had received an email on the day of his departure saying he would be "stepping down from his role [...] and leaving the University today", suggesting he had been fired. Houston had soon after filed a million dollar claim against the University for his dismissal. After his removal, staff have claimed that several relationships that the University had with communities and organisations were severed, with no efforts from the University to maintain them.

This is a recurring theme with the University when staff contracts or projects are terminated. The relationship that the institution had with communities or key Indigenous organisations are no longer sustained or maintained.

In 2019, the University launched the Warburton Arts and Knowledge Portal (WAKP). This was in collaboration with the remote Ngaanyatjarra community from Warburton in Western Australia, known to be home to the largest collection of Aboriginal art owned by Aboriginal people in the

country. However, if you attempt to open the portal today it displays a message the same as the start of the year that the website is "offline for maintenance". The project had begun under the first DVC ISS and a year in the Production Manager was brought in. He noted it took over a year to build trust with the women of the community until he could raise questions surrounding their stories and artwork. It took "two and a half years to slowly build this portal and work with software designers and UX designers, you know, to create the front end and always consulting with the community."

The website was a collection of artworks that would lead you to various traditional and cultural knowledge about place, plants, animals, and the stories connected, which was hopeful of being integrated within the University's curriculum. The website was described to be the peak of collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge sharing. To celebrate the portal's completion, women from the Warburton community had travelled to Sydney and painted a gift for the University in the foyer of F23.

However, when the current DVC ISS replaced Houston implementing a "military hierarchy", she started "sunsetting the program". Despite the four and a half years that were spent on the project and over half a million dollars, the Project Manager added that "we can't even now go back to the community and go, here is your resource." He added that digital elements could have had "potential employment possibilities for young kids who see the digital world and go, yeah, I actually want to do that."

When the portal was launched in 2020 the current DVC ISS "was phasing it out". There were plans for building an Eora Portal but that project as well was dismissed, "basically worked me into becoming redundant." When the contract for the Production Manager had ended, so did the relationship with the Ngaanyatjarra community. The University failed to maintain a sustainable relationship and the community supposedly withdrew their approval from the website. Staff that had taken up the collaborative project within their units and teaching then had to readjust to the removal of this culturally approved resource.

For staff that wish to embed cultural knowledge within their teachings, they note a lack of "scaffolding" or support from the University in approaching this task. One staff member had noted that "I've had guest lecturers come in every year and they've been paid through a mix of my own research funding, sometimes my personal funds to supplement some of the payments, and then partially through some teaching relief money that I got from a project."

A student at the University commented that he often guest lectures introductory units on Indigenous cultures for international students, but is paid in \$50 Woolworths gift cards. Some note that there is often pushback from their faculties to introducing Indigenous knowledge in first year units, deeming it might be too "early" and should be left for later years in the course. This spotlights the University's prioritisation of "Western" knowledge as the ultimate form of education, sidelining other cultures and perspectives, when instead education should be extensive rather than narrowing.

A staff member suggested that "there's been not enough talk about having Elders in residence [...] I think that we could do a lot more teaching wise and research wise". Many universities across Australia — such as Monash and University of Newcastle — hold an Elders in Residence program, where community Elders form a panel to assist the University in embedding traditional knowledge and culture within both educational and physical spaces of the University. However, questions arise surrounding USyd's ability in respectfully building a relationship with knowledgeable and respected Elders when the current environment is unable to retain, support, and respect Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff.

The relationship that the institution currently maintains with Indigenous staff members is substandard. During 2016/2017, an independant Indigenous consultancy was brought into do a review of

Indigenous employment at the University in preparation for the revised Indigenous employment strategy, however many staff that had been interviewed have noted they have never seen the report that came out of it. A previous staff member alluded to "compromised data of all the Indigenous staff" within the University. As the complaints that they had made had circulated between staff members and external parties, removing any privacy or security they thought would be ensured, "they had taken my confidential complaint and shown a third party from the uni when it was meant to be private and confidential." Something of this severity, calls for serious investigation and accountability from the University.

The University's first Indigenous MBA graduate had been awarded the Edmund Barton Medal for Postgraduate Leadership last year in 2022. In "one way was actually really a good, good piece of recognition that it was a mainstream category" but on the other hand, Barton was someone that had "instigated a lot of [the] white Australia policies" — the effects of which can still be felt today. They noted the dilemma of "how do I get up on that stage and accept a graduate medal that's named after someone that instigated a lot of the systemic racist laws that are still being played out?" In their initial attempt to engage in conversations with the alumni office, not much came out of it, until a public talk at the graduation of the Vice Chancellor Sponsorship Program. This then launched required efforts from the alumni office. An expanded narrative was read and included in the Alumni Awards program. Discussions were made in support for changing the name of the award, but despite the conversations that had happened, any further progress has been stalled since, implementing minimal change to the award.

There have been some strides over the past few years in regards to improving and increasing First Nations representation and celebration in the workplace. There has been greater engagement with First Nations voices and creating the strategies that have been named. Nonetheless, a departing staff member noted, "you're adding value to things across the University, but the University isn't adding value back to you." Although there are strategies in place, they don't tend to trickle down into schools and faculties where these things need to be implemented. The University as an institution needs greater urgency and willingness to actually implement change to demonstrate their "leadership for good".

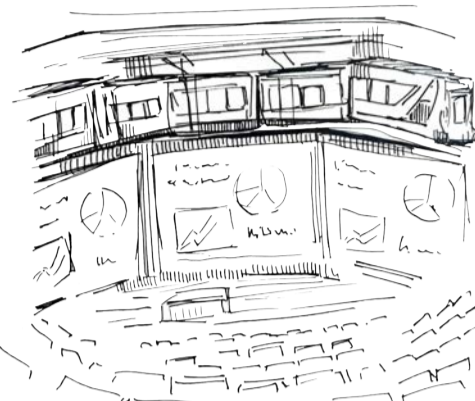
There is an apparent disconnect between higher management and schools, a current academic commenting that "we need to stop relying on top down initiatives. But we need to be supported [from] the top down, [...] you can see clearly where there's potential for change, but at the top, maybe it's a bit abstract what actually happens down here."

As the oldest university in Australia, with decades of discrimination embedded within its research and teaching, USyd has the most work to do in creating fair and safe spaces for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples. The current situation is far more layered than what is visible or has been explored in this piece. Nonetheless, the University needs systemic change, to take strides towards dismantling institutional racism, and to urgently take steps towards transparency, accountability and truth-telling.



# WHERE MIGHT WE BUILD A NEW METRO FOR USYD?

Sick of the Redfern Run? Your commute to uni could change drastically with a shiny new metro station, if USyd had its way.



public transport more than a typical car-owning Sydneysider. “There’s a large catchment that is currently not well-served, that’s a very good indicator that it could use a station,” says Richardson. Including USyd on the Metro West could also attract more students from Western Sydney.

## Keep dreaming of fast trains and marvelous metros.

So, if USyd was to get a metro, where should it be? After surveying students and trawling through zoning maps, here

This August, USyd started lobbying the NSW Government for a metro station at the Camperdown campus. There have been failed attempts before, including in 2021, 2019 and 2017. But a wide-ranging review of Sydney Metro projects has “put all options on the table”, including extending the Metro West line to Zetland, past its current Hunter Street CBD terminus.

USyd hopes to nab a station now, and for good reason. Public transport infrastructure around Camperdown is getting old. After navigating the overcrowded Redfern station, squeezing past slow walkers on the Redfern Run takes 10-15 minutes to Eastern Avenue (less if you speedrun it). This is not ideal after a long train ride, and still takes 20 more minutes to the extremities of campus. Buses down Broadway/Parramatta Road have limited capacity and are usually stuck in traffic.

A USyd spokesperson says expected student numbers will soar over 80,000 by 2032 (from 69,000 today), plus over 2000 new biotech and biomedical science jobs at upcoming research and industry facilities. “We remain very concerned about the adequacy of current and future public transport,” they said.

Cramped stations and bumpy buses won’t keep up with growth. Sharath Mahendran, creator of the YouTube channel Building Beautifully, agrees. “[Sydney] built most of our stations 100 years ago, and kind of stopped after that.” (Mahendran has advocated for a USyd metro along a utopian Parramatta-Bondi line following Victoria Road.)

Eoin Richardson, senior transport economist at engineering firm Jacobs,\* has worked on projects like Melbourne’s Suburban Rail Loop, with new stations for Monash and Deakin University. He thinks USyd has a fairly well-guaranteed potential ridership from students who rely on



are the most likely candidates.

Vice-Chancellor Mark Scott has suggested the corner of Parramatta/Missenden Roads, to service a health and education super precinct at **RPA Hospital/Missenden Road** which will see \$1 billion in investment. Clearly, the western side of campus needs better transport. The 412 and 422 are the only buses stopping near RPA, and Newtown and Macdonaldtown are a 15-minute walk. A metro has huge ridership potential from health and medical students at Susan Wakil and researchers at Charles Perkins.

**Broadway/Victoria Park**, at the City/Parramatta Road intersection, is a contender, say Richardson and Mahendran. It wouldn’t just serve USyd, but would also provide broader benefits by boosting local commercial

activity around Broadway Shopping Centre. Negatively, a Broadway station might reduce green space in heritage-listed Victoria Park. But it could also service Glebe and UTS, and connect an upcoming innovation, technology and digital precinct called Tech Central between Camperdown, Eveleigh and

Haymarket, supported by the Greater Cities Commission and multiple levels of government.

Finally, after having previously

proposed a station near Oval

No. 2, USyd might revisit **Ross Street/Parramatta Road**. It would be well-utilised by students accessing the Social Sciences Building, Holme and Manning, with easy walkability to RPA. Zoning laws allow for “general residential” densities in the area, including high-density development which maximises land usage.

Unfortunately, “development potential,” or lack thereof, probably dashed USyd’s chances on the City & Southwest Line (“a big missed opportunity” for the government, according to Mahendran). In the chosen site, Waterloo, 2,000 social housing dwellings will be demolished for a \$900 million mixed-use precinct, with only 100 extra social housing units planned. On paper, developing tall towers bordering the sleepy suburb of Forest Lodge is possible, but potentially displacing some residents and businesses.

Other commonly-requested locations include **Eastern Avenue/JFR**, or **ABS/Carriageworks** to support education and creativity. These would probably be knocked back for being too close to Redfern. **North Newtown** might have lower demand, but is helpfully located near Regiment student accommodation and some colleges.

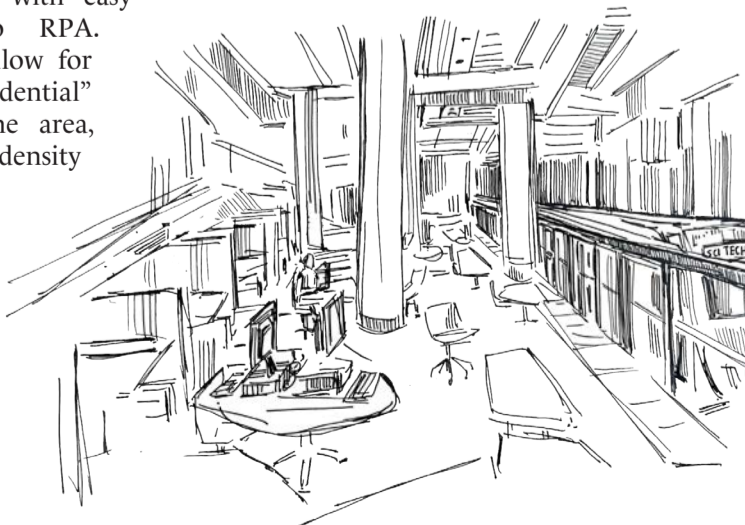
So how likely is a USyd station? Negotiations are just beginning, and many factors are relevant, including engineering challenges and land availability. Ultimately, the price tag of the project will be decisive. Mahendran points out that Hunter Street to Zetland on the Metro West would have to detour sharply to fit in USyd, requiring more tunnels which could cost over \$1 billion per kilometre.

At the very least, USyd should get a stop along the City of Sydney’s proposal to transform Broadway with a light rail from Central. Alongside the upcoming Westconnex, it will hopefully divert traffic from the city, and make Broadway safer, greener and more pleasant. “It would be really nice, instead of the mess of cars that it is now,” says Mahendran, who as a UNSW student himself, is enthusiastic about light rail connections to universities.

Until then, keep dreaming of fast trains and marvelous metros.

*\*Footnote: Views expressed in this article are Richardson’s and are not necessarily representative of his employer.*

Art by Emma Qi



# Surviving the Law Library Bathrooms

The University of Sydney is celebrated for its approach to innovative architecture and sophisticated spaces. Despite the praises that they will herald to everyone about their state-of-the-art Law Library, it is apparent that the grandiose five metre tall skylight was prioritised over something that is more important.



The bathrooms. This issue is so rarely talked about that I wonder if USyd has distributed non-disclosure agreements university-wide. Nonetheless, mostly as a measure to avoid my insurmountable readings, but also in the name of serious investigative journalism: I will no longer be silenced.

For those unaware, the quick two step descent leads vulnerable law students — most who are already on the verge of losing the plot — into a black-tiled abyss devoid of natural light, or really, any signs of life. Actually, this would be remiss of me to say, as there is definitely a strong bacterial presence in the random puddle formations of what we can only assume is water (but could also very likely be tears of Torts and Contracts II students... or faecal matter — your guess is as good as mine).

What could only be presumed to be a “cutting edge” design choice (perhaps reflecting the colour of the law students’ hearts), the Law Library bathroom is decorated in lines of black tiles, with black stalls and, you guessed it, a black roof. The closest thing to a glimpse of colour may be the resident,

near-sentient tumbleweed of white tissue paper rising from the ever-overflowing bin. Rumour has it that it has been infected by the parasitic water, and has taken on a life of its own. Long story short, the bathroom is reminiscent of a 2014 tumblr emo. And since the Law School was built in 2009, I’m beginning to become concerned that it really isn’t “just a phase”.

**I will no longer be silenced.**

Upon entering the bathroom, the perils of the four stalls behind the sink, or what I refer to as the “round-the-corner-part”, are quickly revealed. The round-the-corner-part is a very dangerous place — not that I have dared to venture further. Merely peering into the back — which for

two thirds of the year was shrouded in complete darkness due to a fractured light bulb — is a valid reason for needing to seek help (and STAT!).

This is not even to mention the basin, which is coated with a layer of grime so thick that I’m surprised Marie Kondo hasn’t dedicated a special edition episode to its refurbishment. In an effort to wash their hands in water sourced directly from hell (That’s Hot! Thanks Satan!) students might also catch sight of a long-term resident, a poster by the Brain and Mind Centre labelled with the advice that “the University of Sydney are seeking healthy adults with regular sleep cycles to participate in our observational study”. In a way, and particularly when using the bathroom in the early hours of the morning, it is the final straw in the mockery that is the Sydney Law Student Bathroom experience.

# International students are being targeted by scammers

Kate Zhang explores how believable scams really are.

Sometimes the scammers targeting Chinese students are really obvious. Their calls will always have a sentence at the end: “For Mandarin services please press one, for English services please press two.” And if you press two, they will hang up.

And yet, these scammers are becoming harder to identify. The three scenarios below explore different scams frequently targeting international students. They are developed from the personal experiences of myself and five interviewees, who are all Chinese students studying in Australia.

## 1. Calls

You receive a call. The caller is claiming to be from DHL saying that something went wrong with your parcel. Since you did send a parcel at DHL last week, and the caller knows your name, you tentatively decide to trust them.

You have doubts, but they do not mention anything about money. They seem nice: they help you contact “the police”, who show you their certification.

The “policeman” teaches you law terms and regulations to help you understand the situation. He explains that you were involved in an international money laundering case, and you need to prove your innocence.

A “prosecutor” also calls you and claims aggressively that he would send you to prison. The “policeman” keeps acting kind. He says, “I have a child who is the same age as you, so I feel for you. I’ll help you to persuade the prosecutor. Don’t worry.”

Then, they ask to check your bank account.

These fraudsters can be very patient. They can spend five hours presenting a story to you before discussing anything relating to money. They can start with trying to get your ID — after this, they can get your photo and other information to generate fake web pages that look authoritative and believable.

**It is important to stay vigilant and look out for signs that things may not be what they seem.**

The scammers try to isolate you so that you cannot talk to anyone who might help you to figure out that you’re in a trap. They can monitor your phone to check if you’re making calls to others, and they may even ask you to go to a hotel room and stay alone.

A different scam could ask you if you think your 4G is slowing down. They instruct you to search for your IP address, and tell you that it was hacked. Then, they offer to recover it for you, but you have to download an app for this to be possible. They may use this app to collect data from your phone or seek to gain control of your device.

## 2. Messages

You receive a message: “Hi Tina, Amy introduced me to you. She said the restaurant close to your place was great. May I ask where it is? I’d love to have a taste.”

You have no idea what this is about. At first you think it might be a stranger who entered the wrong number, and you reply to them with patience and kindness. “Sorry, I’m not Tina,” you say.

But there were too many strangers like this. “It’s Monday, are you still working?” “How’s the weather in Australia? I’m in Japan now.” “Long time no see, how are you recently?” Even on Mother’s Day, you received a message: “Where is the cake that I ordered for my mum? Please deliver it now!”

You find a suggestion that says you can send a message saying “STOP” to avoid further harassment. You try to do so. Guess what? You got this reply instantly: “You have successfully been unsubscribed. You will not receive any more messages from this number. Reply START to resubscribe.”

You wonder who might have signed you up to begin with... How did they get your number?

Like the fake delivery issues phone call scams, scammers can also send messages to mask themselves as from delivery or mobile communication services. You receive a message: “AuPost: Your item was redirected to our depot as our couriers were unable to safely leave your item. To request redelivery, visit [hyperlink].” The hyperlink takes you to a website that looks just like the official Australia Post webpage. This confuses you — after all, you have just arrived in Australia.

Scams like this may never get your money, but they make you hesitant to pick up calls or to look at messages. They undermine your trust in other people. They make you suspicious of everything.

## 3. Currency exchange

You need to pay your tuition fee and your rent soon, but exchanging currency in large amounts has some restrictions. You decide to reach out to that person — it was supposed to be much easier than going to the bank and you don’t want to wait.

Your older friend at university had introduced you to him. Many of your friends exchange currency with him. You have already had some transactions with him that went smoothly. He has a company and its own app — the app looks legitimate.

It sounds like he is trustworthy, doesn’t it? But this time, after you transferred 100,000 yuan to his account, you never get the 21,882 Australian dollars in return.

This is a real experience from an international student. The scammer called himself Gavriel, and the app is called Kou Dai Hui (PocketRemit). The scammer is still responding to the student’s messages, claiming that they cannot do anything about him. The student has contacted the police and the embassy, but was not able to get his money back.

In the future, scams will get harder to identify with the advancement of AI technology. So, it is important to stay vigilant and look out for signs that things may not be what they seem. USyd has developed their own guide for what signs to look out for. The ACCC’s Scamwatch provides advice about what to do after you’ve been scammed.





# INSIDE THE BROKEN YOUTH ALLOWANCE SYSTEM

“I applied for Youth Allowance for the first time in November last year, when I had just turned 18. That was rejected in January. My parents earn just over the income threshold,” Grace\*, a first-year student at USyd, told *Honi*.

“So that meant I had to apply again. I went with my caseworker at the time, and we had to fill out all the forms. I had to prove temporary independence, so I had to fill out three more forms. I had to get my parents to fill out one, saying that me living at home was not psychologically conducive to any form of study. My third-party [the caseworker] had to fill out one.

“I had to show all of my brother’s [autism] diagnoses, to show that he has high needs, and is home-schooled. I had to prove my own mental issues.

“Then they had to contact the over-18’s team from January to reassess my form. And I had to speak to them on the phone as well. I had to verbally prove everything: how much rent I’m paying, how long it takes me to get to uni. That was approved in May, that was a good five months it took.

“It was a really long and challenging process to navigate on my own, and very frustrating. It was very invasive for my brother, and for myself.”

Students who are younger than the Youth Allowance “age of independence” of 22 cannot receive financial support from the government unless their parents have income and assets below a specified threshold. Alternatively, they must prove they fall within a number of categories that make them financially independent from their parents. Notably, if your parents are unable to, or do not, provide you financial support, you are not exempt from this restriction — except if they are in prison, a nursing home, missing, or mentally ill.

This means that hundreds of thousands of students aged between 18 and 21 are denied access to financial support while at university. This is only one consequence of a deeply broken youth welfare system that is leaving students behind.

While the independence requirements are students’ primary obstruction to vital income support, *Honi* was told by students that other restrictive criteria, pertaining to work and study loads and immigration

status, locked young people out of accessing Youth Allowance for arbitrary and unfair reasons.

Their stories are supported by unreleased 2023 data from the Department of Social Services, which shows that the amount of young people receiving Youth Allowance has trended downwards since 2015. There have been no changes to who is eligible for Youth Allowance since the Gillard government; students are gradually being forced off a system that is meant to help them.

Youth Allowance is only available to students who are studying full time, so Sarah\*, in her third year of an undergraduate degree at USyd, is ineligible for payments: she told *Honi* that “full-time study isn’t feasible right now because of chronic illness.” Accordingly, she has had to increase her casual work hours in order to survive.

“I am in this grey area where I am not ‘disabled enough’ to receive other forms of support, or exemptions from study requirements, so I was redirected to JobSeeker which was a cursed experience.

“I am lucky, now that my health situation has improved somewhat, that I am able to work more to compensate for what I am missing out on [by not being eligible for Youth Allowance],” she said.

“But I wouldn’t say it’s the fairest, the idea that you have to be full-time to access Youth Allowance. This isn’t an option for people with chronic health issues.

“When I think about the criteria for Youth Allowance, I think that it’s screwing over a lot of people who have already been screwed over. It punches down.”

## “I’m completely exhausted”

Other students told *Honi* that they were locked out of Youth Allowance for other reasons, including because of the four-year wait that permanent residents have to endure before being able to access Centrelink, or because, despite working 25-hour weeks on the minimum wage, Youth Allowance requires that young people work 20-hour weeks for at least 18 months before being considered independent.

These requirements have left

students in situations where they are forced to work 25- or 30-hour weeks just to pay rent, and, if ineligible for HECS loans (as is the case for Hamish\*), to help their parents pay their university fees up-front.

“I’m completely exhausted,” Hamish said.

The rationale for Youth Allowance’s restrictive criteria is that parents earning above a certain threshold can, and do, support their children. However, for students who spoke to *Honi*, this is frequently not the case.

“I wasn’t allowed access to Youth Allowance until I was 22 because my parents were above the threshold. This meant that the government assumed I had financial support but that was far from the truth. In first and second year, I experienced periods of time when I had McDonalds apple pie three times a day. My friends also offered to pay for my Opal fares for a while,” an anonymous USyd student told *Honi*.

“This is not on my parents as they provided me small amounts of financial help for rent but that was it. That was genuinely all they could do to help.”

For Grace, whose mother works part-time to look after her brother who has autism and high needs, and whose father works full-time as well as also being a full-time carer, support from her parents is “not at all” possible.

“They have their own expenses, their own mortgage, food, car, looking after three other children apart from me. I just don’t think it is reasonable at all.”

“My issue accessing Youth Allowance was that my only parent was on a pension and doesn’t pay tax. The Centrelink system could not handle that,” another student told *Honi*.

“It was this blanket thing of ‘how much tax did your parents pay?’ but the answer was zero, because of the pension.

“USyd is 500km from home, so I had to live out of home to attend uni but Centrelink’s ‘one-size-fits-all’ forms and system meant I had to keep putting in forms for ages, [an ordeal] made harder as my parent 500km [away] was dealing with a different Centrelink office to help. It took months but was

finally [back paid].”

For this student, the arduous process of accessing Youth Allowance has been a hallmark of their experience receiving income support.

The same is true for Amelia\*, a fourth-year secondary education student. Amelia said that “government support networks are so hard to go through if you want to receive anything. I found the admin and the paperwork really convoluted. It was such a long process where you have to keep on proving things. I had to get my mum to do the parental income forms, and she wouldn’t have time to do it.”

Amelia’s Youth Allowance payment ended because her mother didn’t have time to fill out the paperwork required. However, she says that she “couldn’t be bothered to go back and reapply for it. It’s very bureaucratic, and inaccessible, and when something goes wrong you have to sit on the phone for two hours with Centrelink.”

## “Government support networks are so hard to go through if you want to receive anything. I found the admin and the paperwork really convoluted.”

Sarah had the same experience. “I’m not receiving the payment anymore. I realised that it was a better option for me to just work more hours than go through the process of dealing with and navigating the system.

“It’s a pretty harrowing, or intimidating experience. It feels like the government is saying ‘work or die’. It’s very exhausting.

“One of my friends said to me, that ‘If this is what receiving welfare involves, then I’d rather be poor.

“They said this as a light-hearted joke, but when I think about it, it says a lot about the nature of the system, and how the process is against you.”

The difficulty young people face in accessing Youth Allowance, even if they technically meet the criteria for accessing it, is a substantial barrier for students in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis. In addition to having to study, work, or meet caring obligations, the

bureaucratic requirements imposed by Centrelink are often the difference between receiving income support and not.

Clearly, for students who are neurodivergent, or who face additional barriers to working with government systems, this difficulty is particularly acute.

Grace, who has ADHD, says that “it was really difficult to advocate for myself, working full-time and being a young carer. The amount of times I cried doing it...

“My parents aren’t able to advocate for me, either. Due to growing up in poverty, my mother has severe trauma from the Centrelink process herself, so wasn’t able to help me in that way. But my caseworker was very helpful.

“I’m very lucky to have access to external support [in the form of a caseworker]. However, I do know other people who have had similar cases and have just given up.”

A 2022 report by the National Union Students examining the Youth Allowance system and student poverty found that students who are Indigenous, have a disability, are queer, or who are experiencing family violence, were disproportionately left behind by the Youth Allowance system.

Queer students, and students experiencing family and domestic violence, found it difficult in proving to the government that it was in fact unreasonable to live at home. This was because it is often unsafe to ask their parents, or another eligible person (such as a teacher) to sign a Statutory Declaration proving it is unsafe for them to live at home.

For students who are single, have no children, are over 18 and “need to live away from [their] parent’s home,” the maximum amount of Youth Allowance you can receive is \$562.80 a fortnight, as well as \$157.20 in Rent Assistance. The Henderson Poverty line for the same person is approximately \$31,000.

In the same way that the age of independence being 22 is entirely arbitrary, the rate of Youth Allowance is also arbitrary. Indeed, it is less than other comparable forms of income support: the maximum rate of JobSeeker for a single person aged over 22 is \$693.10 a fortnight, and the aged pension for a single person is \$971.50 a fortnight. When the Albanese government lifted the rate of income support, including Youth Allowance and JobSeeker, in this year’s budget, it announced that some unemployed people aged 55-59 would be eligible for an additional payment. Young people will not.

Grace, when talking about this increase for over-55s, said that she was

“just confuse[d]”. “Are they paying off their HECS debt? Why are they getting more than people working two jobs? Why do people over 55 get more, when all of my Centrelink payment [both Youth Allowance and Rent Assistance] is used to pay my rent?”

“I still have to work to be able to socialise, to access psychological support (which can cost up to \$350 dollars for a half an hour session). My parents can’t help me pay for that.”

Sarah described the rate of Youth Allowance as “not enough”.

“With inflation, the Youth Allowance payments definitely need to be lifted up a lot more if the government wants to provide people with more substantial support.”

The National Union of Students, as well as other welfare advocates, have repeatedly called on the government to raise the rate of Youth Allowance (and other income support payments) to at least \$88 dollars a day. This would bring the payment above the poverty line. The NUS found that student poverty exacerbated mental health issues, their financial wellbeing, their experience of education, and of intersecting crises such as family violence.

The effect of student poverty is exacerbated by the ongoing housing and cost of living crises, as well as the lack of available and affordable GP clinics and mental health care.

It is also clear that student poverty, as well as being forced to work and study while receiving Youth Allowance, has a negative effect on student’s ability to attend university and to perform well.

As Grace says, “My first semester was really really difficult for me. I had to discontinue from a few subjects, and I was just passing the rest.

“The psychological impact of having to navigate the Centrelink system, having to work, the financial anxiety, played a huge part in my first semester at university. I’ve just treated it as a write-off.

“I’m the first in my family to attend university; I come from a school in a low socio-economic status area, so just navigating the uni system was hard enough.”

In the recently released Universities Accord interim report, the Accord panel noted that “it is important that students are not being required to work excessive hours,” saying that the current income support system creates “complex, create perverse incentives for some students and leave others missing out.”

Accordingly, the broken Youth Allowance system does not only

affect the students who need to access these payments but it touches at the very nature of Australian society: financial barriers to accessing and succeeding at university push financially disadvantaged people away from study, and in doing so entrench inequality at a structural level.

Sarah told *Honi* that “if you do get that financial support, you can actually focus on your studies, instead of having to work to make ends meet, to make rent.” She also noted that financial support would allow students to engage in extra-curricular activities, some of which are vital in being able to access graduate roles.

The rationale behind the current Youth Allowance system — and indeed a large part of the Australian welfare system — is that income support must be targeted at those who need it the very most. In turn, this creates a web of bureaucracy surrounding access to these payments. As we have seen, many students who need income support invariably miss out as a result, either because the eligibility rules are too inflexible, or because the bureaucracy becomes too difficult to deal with — a problem that is not helped by the low rate of the payments themselves.

However, this rationale has left means testing as the government’s only tool to maintain a welfare state. Instead of taxing the wealthy and corporations — and generally broadening and deepening the tax base — the bi-partisan approach has been to limit access to welfare payments as far as possible. In the case of Youth Allowance, this means assuming that parents earning over a certain threshold will support their kids, instead of taxing the parents’ wealth and providing their adult children with a respectable level of income support.

However, increasing taxes cannot be the only solution. Australia’s attitude to welfare is one in which the experiences of people receiving, or needing, income support are actively neglected and dismissed.

As Grace said, “A lot of people who are in government, just went to uni, and didn’t have to deal with anything else.

“There’s a huge stigma and embarrassment to be on Centrelink as well. I just see a lot of people with misconceptions about it. Financially dependent people think being financially independent is easy. But they don’t understand it until they’re financially independent.”

\* Names changed

*Honi Soit is interested in talking to more students about Youth Allowance and Carers Allowance. If you would like to share your experience or have any further information, please reach out at editors@honisoit.com, or send us a message on Facebook or Instagram.*







# PLEASE EXPLAIN

## The persistent presence of Pauline Hanson

Luke Mesterovic loves halal snack packs.

CW: racism, transphobia, anti-Indigenous comments

*"If I can invite whom I want into my home, then I should have the right to have a say in who comes into my country."*

These were the words spoken by Pauline Hanson, in her maiden speech to Parliament in 1996. She's something of a national punchline. Her fiery orange hair. Her pouty lips. Her voice. No satire of Australian politics is complete without a stab at Pauline Hanson. This is someone who has endured electoral defeat, a prison sentence, and a season on *Dancing with the Stars*. She's an easy figure to laugh off.

Yet even though she has failed to reach the heights of Trump in the US, or far-right figures like Le Pen or Meloni in Europe, she has managed to wield considerable influence nonetheless. From our media platforming her racism and conspiracy theories, to our politicians bending over backward to appease her increasingly extreme base, Hanson's presence has poisoned the tone of our national debate. So, why has Hanson been able to exert power from the fringe — and how has it ruined our politics?

### Pauline

Pauline Hanson was not a national figure at the start of 1996. But Australia was ripe for a figure like her to arise. The *Mabo* case, the *Native Title Act* and the *Wik* case (which was unfolding in the High Court) had brought race to the forefront of the national debate. It was only a matter of time before someone like Hanson tapped into the resentments of disaffected white Australians.

A twice-divorced fish-and-chip shop owner from the Queensland suburb of Ipswich, Hanson was preselected by the Liberals to contest the safe Labor seat of Oxley in the 1996 election. They simply needed someone to run — nobody expected her to blow up in the way that she did. Her comments about First Nations peoples would get her attention, and later disendorsed by the Liberal Party, but not in time to take her name off of the ballot paper. Being disendorsed only supported her populist appeal. She became a martyr, a voice for white Australians who had been shut down by Canberra "elites".

She won with a twenty per cent swing in her direction, pulling votes away from traditional Labor and Coalition voters. Therein lies the danger of Hanson: she wins votes

from across the political spectrum. It's why both major parties feel a need to secure her base.

When she arrived in Parliament, Hanson gave her notorious maiden speech, in which she argued that Australia was "in danger of being swamped by Asians" and that First Nations peoples received too many advantages compared to white Australians. The address made headlines across the nation and the world. At first, Prime Minister John Howard remained silent. Then, twelve days later, Howard delivered a speech of his own, in Hanson's home state of Queensland, extolling the virtues of people now being able to "speak a little more freely".

"In a sense, the pall of censorship on certain issues has been lifted" he said. If there was any doubt as to whether Howard condoned the comments, he now made it abundantly clear where he stood. Hanson had received the Prime Ministerial stamp of approval.

Her prominence surged even further when she came out against Howard's gun bans, eating into the Coalition's core constituency of rural voters. She tapped into the resentments of disaffected voters, and targeted it against the government, cities and the "elites" who sought to change Australia

from the way it once was: secure, comfortable and white. A vote for Hanson was to throw a brick through the window of the political establishment.

In the 1998 Queensland election, Howard did a preference deal with One Nation, to the chagrin of his party's moderate wing, in a last-ditch attempt to save the government of Premier Rob Borbidge. It was a colossal failure. Cosmopolitan Liberal voters flocked to Labor in protest. Hanson didn't have the party members to hand out how-to-vote cards, so the preferences didn't flow back to the Coalition anyway. The Coalition needed to find another way to deal with the woman from Ipswich.

### Howard

After the debacle in the Queensland election, the Liberals announced that they would preference One Nation last. When the federal election came around a few months later, One Nation was all but obliterated. Hanson lost her seat. There was a great deal of gloating from people who believed that Australia had chosen to rise above her rhetoric. It was an appealing fantasy to believe in. A more likely reason to explain her defeat came from journalist David Marr: "Howard made Hanson redundant."

In the leadup to the '98 election and afterward, Howard dealt with One Nation by subtly adopting their policies. Over the course of his tenure, he slashed welfare funding for First Nations Peoples and migrants; dismantled the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Commission; launched The Intervention in the NT; cut immigration numbers; refused to condemn the Cronulla riots; refused to apologise for the stolen generations, and closed Australia to asylum seekers coming by boat. The list goes on.

It wasn't just Howard, either. In the leadup to the 2001 election, Labor leader Kim Beazley supported Howard during the Tampa affair — where the government blocked the Norwegian Tampa boat (which was carrying 433 rescued refugees) from entering Australian waters. In doing so, he signed the ALP to the Hansonite consensus: the agreement that asylum seekers didn't deserve a place in Australia.

While on the campaign trail, Howard echoed Hanson's maiden speech, claiming that "we will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come." By using Hanson's rhetoric as Prime Minister, by taking her stances and incorporating them into national policy, Howard legitimised them. Hanson brought race back to the centre of our politics, but Howard cemented it. In the span of two decades, the Liberal Party's conservative wing had gone from Malcolm Fraser — who in spite of his faults, encouraged multiculturalism and immigration from non-white countries — to Howard. And while this tactic kept Hanson out of parliament initially, this continual rightward shift would lay the groundwork for Tony Abbott and eventually Peter Dutton to rise to the helm of the Liberal Party.

### Wilderness

Pauline Hanson would be out of politics for the next eighteen years after the '98 election. In 2002, she was forced out of One Nation in an internal party revolt. In 2003, she was convicted of electoral fraud and sentenced to three years in prison (she successfully appealed and was released after eleven weeks). Yet, in spite of it all, she carried on, and stood for the Senate in the 2004 election as an independent. She lost by a narrow margin, but she garnered more votes than One Nation did. It was a testament to the cult of personality that she had built. Her mere presence had become synonymous with the grievances and prejudices of white Australia. She was a force unto herself. Party or not, what she represented remained the same.

One might think that she'd make her comeback once Labor returned to power in 2007. After all, Rudd was criticised by the Murdoch media for promoting the idea of "big Australia" (increasing our population to 35 million by 2050) and ending Howard's asylum seeker policy. But by 2009, One

Nation voters found a voice in the new opposition leader, Tony Abbott. Egged on by the media, he shifted the dial of our national debate even further than the arch-conservative Howard ever did, and doing so, brought more of Hanson's views to the mainstream. By 2010, the Gillard Government had dumped "big Australia" and resumed offshore processing. Of course, it was too late. Nothing less than Abbott's extreme views on immigration would keep Hanson's supporters satisfied.

### Return

It was inevitable. Pauline Hanson could not be kept out of Parliament forever. The parties could only keep her base appeased with race-baited red meat for so long. Even when she had lost, those electoral defeats were razor-thin. With the fall of Tony Abbott and the rise of "moderate" Malcolm Turnbull, the doors opened for her return. Her latest target? Australia's Muslim community.

When she announced that she was running for Senate in 2016, the media pounced on her. And why wouldn't they? Her greatest skill is her ability to generate a headline. ABC's Q+A brought her on and experienced record ratings, and Sunrise gave her a weekly segment. Conservatives called it freedom of speech while some progressives justified it by claiming that she deserved a higher level of scrutiny as a potential politician.

Either way, Hanson got what she wanted. A platform to peddle her hate and conspiracy theories, to call for a national Muslim ban, a burka ban, claims that Halal certifications funded terrorism and more. The discourse opened the floodgates for more figures to come out and stoke racial fears. Peter Dutton, a government minister at the time, made headlines for saying that it was a mistake for Liberal PM Malcolm Fraser to let Lebanese refugees into Australia.

It worked. She won four seats in the Senate, meaning that One Nation now held the balance of power. She'd gone from the political wilderness to being able to hold the government hostage overnight. She began exerting her influence immediately.

So, at the height of hate-fuelled attacks on Muslims living in Australia, the Turnbull government saw fit to attempt to repeal Section 18C of the *Racial Discrimination Act*, aimed at protecting people from being targeted based on race. Even with Hanson's support, the legislation failed to pass. But damage was already done. It was never about the legislation. Race politics, and by extension, Pauline Hanson, would dominate news coverage throughout the period. She was in her element.

### 2020s

Hanson is at her most effective when she can tap into voters' resentments and prejudices. In many ways, COVID gave her that opportunity. By integrating

vaccine sceptics into her base, Hanson was able to harness the resentment of the anti-vax movement. She became their face in Parliament, teaming with Coalition senators to pressure Scott Morrison into scrapping vaccine mandates. When Pauline Hanson led an anti-vax rally in Canberra, Morrison spoke in support, blaming the state governments for the situation.

As the national debate moved on from the pandemic, so too did Hanson. She needed something new to generate headlines and controversy. She did what she did best: beat up on a minority group. This time, it was the trans community.

Whether it was arguing that trans children should be taken from their parents or moving a motion to ban gender reassignment surgery, One Nation beat the drum of the trans culture wars — and Morrison and Albanese were more than eager to join in. In 2022, the Religious Discrimination Bill passed in the lower house as Albanese echoed transphobic dog-whistles to the *Daily Telegraph*.

On 18 March 2023, neo-Nazis gathered outside the Victorian parliament and performed the Nazi salute in support of anti-trans activist Kellie-Jay Keen. When Victorian Liberal MLC Moira Deeming was threatened with expulsion for attending the rally, Hanson offered her a spot in One Nation. While Albanese condemned the presence of neo-Nazis, he did not stop using transphobic rhetoric.

Four days later, queer activists were pelted with stones and glass by a far-right mob at an anti-trans rally led by former NSW One Nation leader Mark Latham. It also made national news, but this time it took place in Belfield, a fifteen minute drive from Albanese's Marrickville home. This time, the Prime Minister said nothing. Chris Minns and Dominic Perrottet were three days out from an election where One Nation was expected to perform well. They condemned the violence, but said nothing of the transphobia that led to it. One Nation did not win any more seats at that election. They didn't need to.

### Hanson

Pauline Hanson's current target is the same one that got her bootied from the Liberal Party and made her a celebrity: First Nations peoples. One Nation was the first party to come out against the Voice to Parliament. Like every other issue she has inserted herself into, she has spent the past year spreading lies and misinformation on the subject, cementing a space for post-truth politics in Australia.

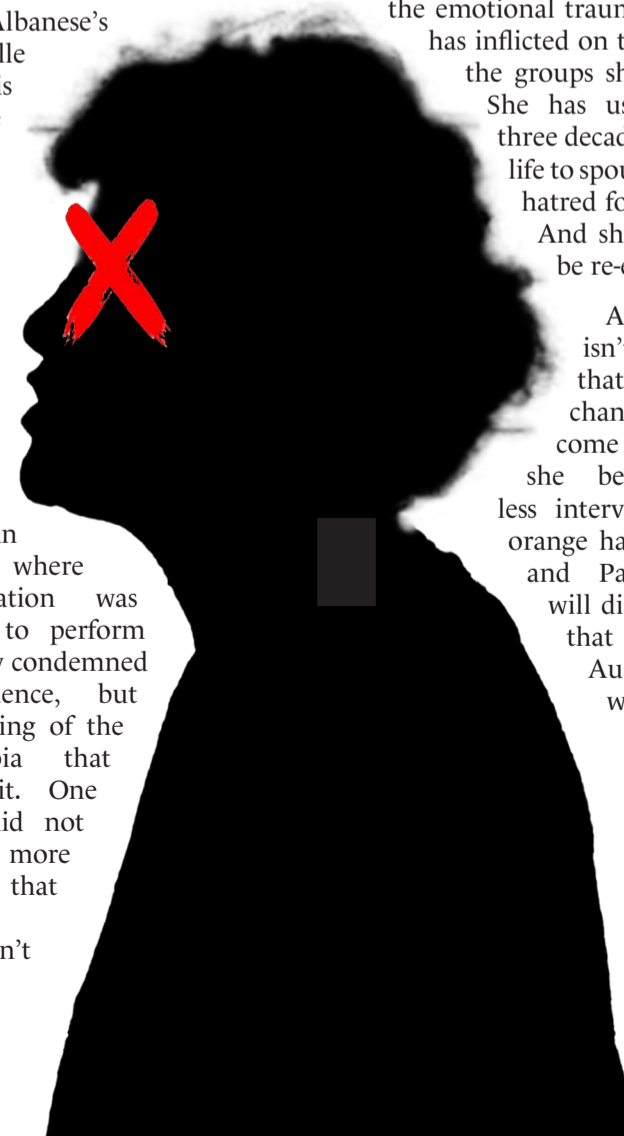
Realistically, Peter Dutton's Liberal Party was never going to support the Voice. They're too far gone for that. Two decades of lurching ever further to the right to appease Hanson's insatiable base has taken its toll on the Liberal Party. The moderate wing is all but wiped out. The fact that Peter Dutton is now its leader speaks for itself.

It's hard to pinpoint how much of this we can attribute directly to Hanson. After all, she didn't create the people who vote for her. And she's certainly had a lot of help from right-wing shock jocks and the Murdoch media. But no other figure in Australian politics has become more synonymous with racism and ignorance; no other figure has been able to exert influence from the fringe as effectively as Hanson has, or for as long as Hanson has. There, she is in a class of her own.

Much of this article has focused on the effect that Hanson has had on major parties from a policy standpoint. She has had a real effect, and we are all worse for it. But the real impact of Pauline Hanson is less quantifiable. And that is the effect that her racist rhetoric has had on our country.

This is neither a new nor a radical observation, but it cannot be overstated. There is no way to measure the emotional trauma that Hanson has inflicted on the people from the groups she has targeted. She has used the nearly three decades of her public life to spout bile and stoke hatred for political gain. And she will probably be re-elected.

And even if she isn't, it's unlikely that much will change. There will come a time when she begins to give less interviews, and that orange hair will go grey, and Pauline Hanson will die. But the stain that she has left on Australian politics will remain.





# HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

The John Woolley Building is an interesting building for me. I've always been most drawn to the N395 Lecture Theatre. It's my favourite room on campus to study. It's dark; it's mysterious; it breeds curiosity. In a sudden wave of interest, I decided to investigate the old mahogany file cabinet at the bottom of the hall. Letting my intuition take over, I opened one of the drawers. It creaked as it slid open, and as I fully opened it, it exposed a little scroll of old paper with a string tied round it. The place felt more silent than before. I went back to my stuff, sat on the old wooden bench, and unravelled my new obsession.

ATTEND HER, ATTEND HER,  
THE LODGE FOR GATE  
KEEPER,  
WHERE THIRTEEN FIG TREES  
LIPE THE ROUGH  
IN THE THIRD, A RECEIVER,  
FOR DEAR OLD GRIM  
REAPER  
ON WHAT THIS HAS ALL  
BEEN ABOUT

After an in-depth Google search of various parts of the broken down poem, I eventually concluded that this wasn't a piece of published writing, and that whoever left it here wanted it to be found. After countless days and nights of campus walks, my friend Beth and I sat down to break everything down further.

The part of the poem that seemed like the easiest to figure out was "The lodge for Gate Keeper". Along City Road, there's a turn in junction that leads to Fisher Road. Right on the corner you will see one of three lodges that are facilitated on campus, "Gatekeeper's Lodge", with a long strip of trees starting from the back of the building right to Madsen Building. Though I'm unaware if these are fig trees or not, it seemed that this was a point in the right direction. Whilst I tried to figure out other symbols, Beth did her research in the University Archives. With a big gasp from her mouth, I looked up from my messily drawn map of campus as Beth exclaimed "Lodge Society... The Freemasons..." The rest of our research was conducted with the Freemasons at the forefront of our minds.

Freemasonry, originating in both England and Scotland, has been widely known as a secret society that focuses on fraternal brotherhood. The Freemasons tend to have private meetings in a lodge setting, however those outside of the society are unaware of what happens within. Though Freemasonry websites preach that they have meetings once per month to conduct ancient rituals of initiation, promoting members to higher degrees

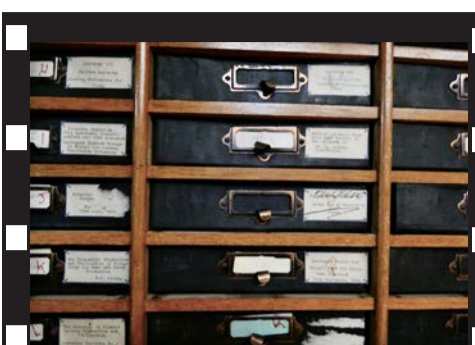
and positioning new Masters and Officers, there's been a huge amount of speculation regarding these traditions and what they look like. Many outside of the society have speculated sacrificial initiation processes and worshipping of the Devil, similar to the infamous Illuminati. I cannot confirm or deny either of these as I have never been able to sit in a lodge meeting; however, I am intrigued by how prominent Freemasonry is around Campus, specifically in older buildings. We know that this history is true because the Lodge Society was present from 1924 through to 1978. With no online list of members, there isn't much insight regarding specifics — only that we know it was there.

From there, we can delve into how John Woolley, the first Principal of the University of Sydney, was a known Freemason — alongside the original founder of the University, John Dunmore Lang. There are many symbols all around campus that proves to us that the culture of the society continues to live on while being hidden in plain sight. Architecture is the first clue surrounding the long history of campus Freemasonry. The Quadrangle has the most hidden symbols that I was able to find. The biggest one being in the S445 Seminar Room, located above the Nicholson Museum. You'll instantly see a difference in the typical set-up of your normal classrooms to this one. With seats set up along the sides alone and a prominent altar-like format at the east end of the room, this room in the Quadrangle is the most direct link to the Freemasons on campus. Masonic temples are set up in a very similar way. However, the symbol that eerily set this apart from every other seminar room wasn't the temple-like layout, but instead the sculpture of Layton that is carved above the fireplace.

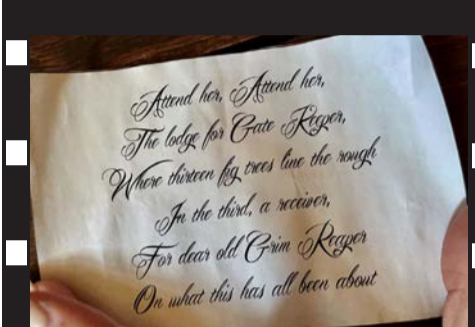
**FREEMASONRY IS AROUND CAMPUS, SPECIFICALLY IN OLDER BUILDINGS.**

The Freemasons have strong connections to King Solomon's Temple, a biblical account of the origins of the Freemasons. As Freemasonry began as a group of stonemasons coming together as a society, the story of King Solomon supporting the stonemasons in the building of the Temple is a huge part of the traditional rituals. In addition to this, from the small amount of information I could find on the initiation rituals, the traditional way the ritual is usually conducted in a way that a Worshipful Master is located at the east side of the temple, and the candidate enters from the west; the seminar room has the entrance on the west side, and the main altar-style platform on the east. There is no recorded evidence of this seminar room being a meeting room for those in the Lodge Society, however the carved Solomon, the temple-

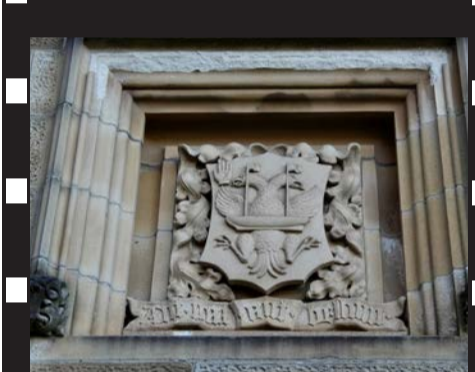
Ellie Robertson has probably gone missing by now.



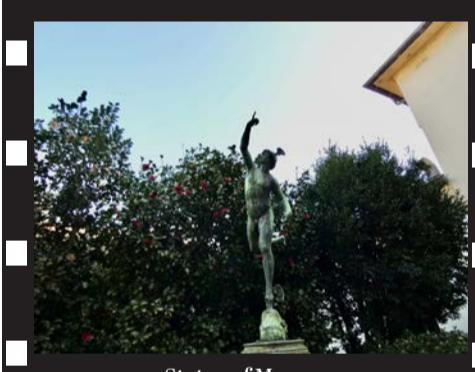
Drawers in N395 Lecture Theatre



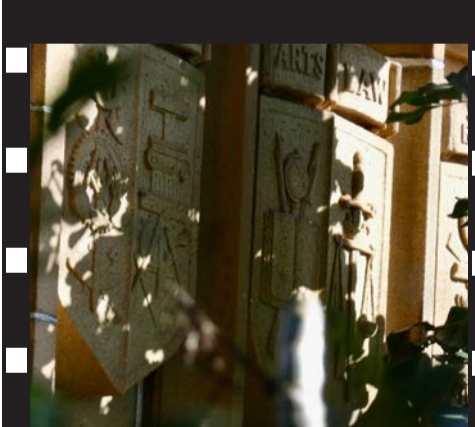
Poem found in John Woolley Building



Double headed Eagle on a shield outside the Great Hall



Statue of Mercury



Freemason Compass on a shield outside Baxter's Lodge



like layout, the sculpture of various innovators around the room and the main symbol of the Freemasons (the compass and gavel) being carved on the ceiling directly outside the entrance hints to a history of meetings that we may never understand or know about.

I'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT  
THE POEM LEADS TO, AND  
YOU PROBABLY WON'T  
EITHER.

Some obvious (once you're aware of them) symbols that you'll see scattered around the older buildings of campus are two-headed eagles, compasses, the gavel, and even some symbolic Gods and angels. If you take a trip to the Vice Chancellor's Garden, you will find a statue of Mercury pointing to a subtle hidden compass on the roof of the Quadrangle. Mercury was a symbol of speed and mobility in which the Freemasons believed helped the communication from Worshipful Master to Senior Warden to be conducted with ease. It's interesting that the symbol has been placed directly within the Vice Chancellor's Garden, right beside the Deans of the Schools.

This all may seem very historic and somewhat irrelevant to our current University lives, but this society continues to live on... we just aren't aware of it. USyd currently has a Freemason Scholarship that isn't advertised on the University website unless intentionally searched. The Freemason Scholarship is for eligible children and grandchildren of Freemasons who have been under the United Grand Lodge of NSW for at least five years. Though this is not a formal University-run organisation, the scholarship exists through donation or bequest of the Lodge University of Sydney No. 544. This lodge was established by USyd graduates and academics in 1924 and has expanded beyond this scope. As a continuing, and almost concealed side to the University, who knows if there's more behind-the-scenes societies or traditions still continuing.

Once you are involved in the deep rabbit hole of Freemasonry, you'll spot more symbols around campus from miles away, and your university experience will change drastically. You'll feel uneasy as you look at one of the symbols for a little bit too long, knowing that it's something you'll never be able to know the entirety of. Your curiosity will eat at you, and you'll continuously be full of wonder. I'll never know what the poem leads to, and you probably won't either. Was it a sacrificial ritual on campus? Was it someone intentionally wanting someone to figure out the secrets of the history of USyd Freemasons? Or was this all a prank? Either way, many secrets have yet to be uncovered... will you be the one to figure it out?

# Set in Stone? Unearthing the Complex History of the Iron Cove Rock Carvings

If we were to draw a metaphorical geological cross-section of Sydney, like any city, we would find layers upon layers of historical stratigraphy; lives lived and traces left of the millions of people across the thousands of years of human occupation of the site. In some places, the figurative rock face of this history is clear of detritus: we can see before us in striking detail the confusing muddle that is people living upon people — and so on until the dawn of time, or at least human habitation.

Iron Cove is one such place. Most residents of the Inner West may have some understanding of Iron Cove as a place of history; the former Callan Park Asylum is well-known as an eerily pretty site with a dark history, whilst the old Iron Cove bridge is a still-standing testament to the tail end of art-deco in Australia. But the Iron Cove Carvings — a NSW State Heritage site — remain relatively unknown and under-appreciated.

Upon first stumbling across the forty-five carvings in fifteen separate clusters, many assume that they are First Nations carvings. Fish and nets mingle with nautical motifs and ghostly human forms. They possess an eerie resemblance to rock art of white men and guns at Ubirr, Kakadu, in the Northern Territory; the detailed carvings of European ships could tell a similar story of violence and dispossession.

There would of course be precedence for the First Nations origins of the Iron Cove carvings. Eora and Dharug carvings can be seen on exposed sandstone across Sydney, and in Iron Cove — possibly known as Gomora to local Cadigal and Wangal people — there are a number of identified shell middens. The true origins of the carvings, however, are far more complex, and speak to the intricacies and infinite layerings characteristic of post-colonial places across Australia and the world.

There would of course be precedence for the First Nations origins of the Iron Cove carvings.

As it turns out, most of the Iron Cove carvings are probably not of First Nations authorship. Marilyn Walters, author of one of the most extensive scholarly explorations of the site, notes a variety of skill types demonstrated across the artworks. These range from abstract human figures to incredibly detailed nautical drafts of sailing ships. To produce these carvings would have required extensive and intimate

knowledge of maritime industries. Instead of a single author, Walters suggests the carvings were created by a number of individuals, especially given that the dates etched onto the pieces range from 1855 to 1919.

Some of these authors would have been Wangal or Cadigal people. Two fish carvings demonstrate motifs visible in other carvings of fish known to have been created by Eora artists. These are the only known carvings in Iron Cove confidently attributable to Eora artists pre-colonisation, the paucity in the area likely down to a lack of suitable, exposed sandstone.

The larger of these fish, however, has the characters "BALENEDLAMR" etched across it — a post-colonial modification to original Eora art.

But if only a handful of the carvings at Iron Cove are attributable to First Nations artists, then what of the rest? And who left their mark on the Eora carvings that had been there since before invasion?

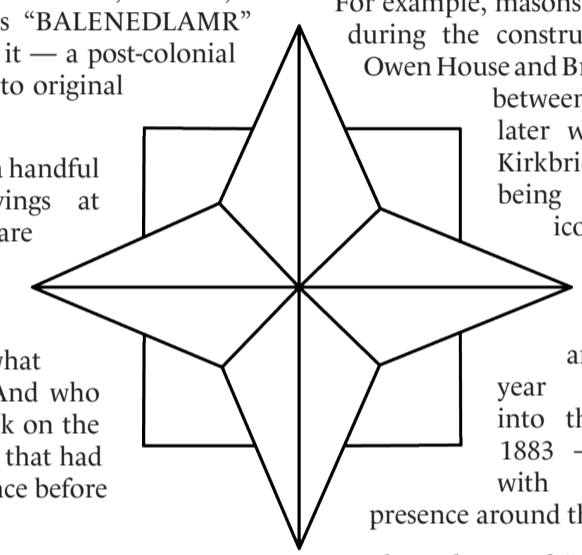
A key theory is that they are actually the work of a single artist. Part of Iron Cove's folklore, it is said that this single artist was a reclusive man who was supposedly sighted around the area in the early 1900s. Interestingly, this is the only theory documented on the plaque dedicated to these carvings. In a bizarre act of historical remembrance, this plaque is displayed on a lookout underneath the bustling Iron Cove Bridge, some five hundred metres from the actual carvings themselves.

Under the scarily bold heading of "CARVED", this plaque notes that "in the 1970s, an eyewitness recalled that the engravings were likely made by an old French or German recluse who wore a seaman's cap and lived on a houseboat near Callan Point around 1900." This theory was championed by University of Sydney archaeologist John Clegg in the late 1990s. While discussing other possibilities as to the carving's origin, Clegg largely grounded his theory in the aforementioned eyewitness account. Clegg posited that the presence of the term rather unusual phrase "JAMHAMBON" that is etched into the carvings may be because this "shy person with a European seafaring background... may have been fond of a woman by name, Josephé Jambambon, or he may have hated salt pork and complained to the authorities." The uncertainty remains. Although a rather romantic

Aidan Elwig Pollock and Grace Mitchell wander through Callan Park.

solution to this historical uncertainty, Clegg's theory has been disputed. As mentioned, Walter argues that being contrasting in style and subject matter, as well as being many in number, the rock carvings could not have been carved by one individual. Was it a group, then, that generated this art?

If so, this group could have been the Freemasons. Known for their cultish behaviours and stately halls, the Freemasons had a large presence in Australia in the 19th and 20th centuries. According to Carol Powell in her study of the Parramatta River, there were Freemasons working in the Callan Park area in the 19th century. For example, masons were employed during the construction of Garry Owen House and Broughton House between 1840 and 1842, later working on the Kirkbride Block — this being Callan Park's iconic sandstone tower building — between 1880 and 1885. The year written etched into the carvings — 1883 — matches up with the mason's presence around this site.



The phrase of "JAMHAMBON" is seen as the primary clue for the possibility of the carving's freemason origins. By comparing this term with Albert G Mackey's 19th century publication, *Lexicon of Freemasonry*, Powell translated "JAMHAMBON" to the freemason phrase "GOD THE BUILDER", suggesting the freemason's involvement in these carvings. Yet, across several carvings, this term is prefaced with the letters MR, or "maritime reconnaissance", or MS, meaning "merchant ship". As Walters notes, the presence of "MR" and "MS" imply that the carvings may have instead been created by individuals working in nautical industries. Thus, while the freemason's involvement in the Iron Cove Carvings is an interesting — and quite probable — theory, the origins of these artworks remain a mystery.

Another claim regarding the authorship of the carvings involves a pair of Māori twins incarcerated at the Callan Park asylum in the early 20th century. Turikatuku III Gumada claims descent from the pair, and in 2014 asserted her "hereditary authority" over the site. In a lengthy wordpress report, she claims that the symbolism of the carvings demonstrates the twins' status as Matakite — a Māori conception that identifies a person as possessing prophetic abilities. Turikatuku III Gumada asserts that it was this clairvoyance that led to the

institutionalisation of her ancestors.

The claim involves the assertion that the four-pointed compass roses identified by Clegg are actually *Whetumarama Tohu* — a five-pointed star-and-crescent symbol linked to Māori-Christian symbolism. *Whetumarama Tohu* is associated with T.W. Ratana, a turn-of-the-century Māori spiritualist who, according to Turikatuku III Gumada, later visited the site after the symbols had been prophetically carved. In 2014, Turikatuku III Gumada began restoring the carvings without permission from Leichhardt Council or the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority, leading to a fiery dispute. Despite the hostility involved, Turikatuku III Gumada expressed interest in working with local councils to build raised viewing platforms to protect the carvings from inadvertent damage from well-meaning visitors.

The claims made by Turikatuku III Gumada are dubious; being uncorroborated in other sources and involving a number of tenuous assertions regarding what the carvings represent. However, given the lack of agreement over any of the carvings' origins, there certainly is space within the discourse for this hypothesis.

Our city's history is layered with unknown stories, speculations, and conflicting interpretations.

More importantly, Turikatuku III Gumada's attempts to restore and protect the carvings reveal significant failings on the part of State and Local governments, who have largely neglected the site. There is no clear signage at the actual physical location of the carvings, and certainly no attempt to physically protect the deteriorating carvings, which are constantly walked across and, in many cases, half-covered by soil. What does that say about our governments' attitude to local history?

The Callan Park carvings are an excellent case study that showcase the complexities of Sydney's local history. Even within this article, we haven't had the space to cover every hypothesis regarding the carving's creation, including links to traumatised WWI veterans or local children. As the uncertain origins of this historical artefact attests, our city's history is layered with unknown stories, speculations, and conflicting interpretations. Every place we stumble across in this city holds a multitude of stories; only time will tell which of these stories will be unearthed.



# The Sydney College of the Arts: The Cost of Creativity

The Sydney College of the Arts (SCA) is described as the leading tertiary art school in the Southern Hemisphere in the USyd brochures. Though the facilities are world-class and tutors are extremely knowledgeable, they fail to mention that students will have to fork out money to pay for materials throughout the course of their degrees.

Following the relocation of the SCA in 2020, the specialised and picturesque facilities at Callan Park were moved to a newly renovated facility in Old Teachers College. The Sydney College of the Arts was absorbed into the University of Sydney in 1990, but remained at its facilities in Callan Park for 30 more years. The relocation came following the abandoned merger with UNSW Art and Design campus in Paddington, which was controversial at the time.

**The facilities may be state-of-the-art, but the truth is that students are significantly limited in what they can achieve.**

One of the key challenges facing students at the College is the cost. Degrees in Fine Arts are exorbitantly expensive in a post-Job-Ready-Graduates-world, but the cost extends from price of tuition to the price of materials for art students. The facilities may be state-of-the-art, but the truth is that students are significantly limited in what they can achieve as they require materials such as photo paper, canvases, paints and other costly art supplies.

The University of Sydney website lists costs specific to the Sydney College of the Arts, stating that all students must pay approximately \$200 in “set costs for materials kit”. They are then required to pay between \$20-\$100 for elective units of study, according to the website, alongside a \$200 “contribution to graduate art show”.

In an interview with a student at the College, they pointed out that students are often encouraged to “go big” in their practice, but the onus is ultimately on them to fund their projects. As few as three prints costs \$200, and students need to pay extra should misprints occur.

My interviewee noted that this cost barrier has contributed greatly to their choice of practice. They moved from a photography-based practice — which had more facilities but required buying photo paper and paying for prints — to a more niche but ultimately less expensive practice. Now, they are lacking facilities and mentorship due to the specificity of their practice, in order to reduce the overall cost of their endeavours.

This is not including the costs associated with exhibiting work. At the end of their degrees, art students are expected to put on a graduate exhibit showcasing a body of work. This involves printing and displaying art in a large-scale fashion, and comes with a host of additional costs. Students at SCA were offered the opportunity to have their work professionally photographed for \$200.

**Katarina Butler wonders what the cost of art is.**

These photographs can be used in a portfolio, and make up the archival catalogue of the exhibition. Without the photographs, representations of a student’s work are not included in the catalogue.

At a time when they should be thinking big, proudly displaying their most developed work, students are hit with yet another cost that they must pay, lest they be excluded from archival records.

The fact is that other students do not have such steep costs associated with finishing assignments. As my interviewee said, “Media students don’t have to pay to write an essay,” often building up their own portfolios, but this does not have a cost attached to it.

Five scholarships are available to SCA students, with a combined value of up to \$49,000. Some are reserved for mid-career artists, however there is one that

specifies use for the graduate art show that students are required to participate in.

Honi approached the University of Sydney for comment. “At Sydney College of the Arts materials are supplied to support technical demonstrations [...] SCA students provide their own materials for producing their artworks for University of Sydney projects, which vary depending on the nature of their individual projects.”

Art is now consumed on a global scale, and ethical challenges are emerging with the rise of generative AI. Despite the widespread appreciation for art, in the form of galleries, theatre, decor or even Netflix TV shows, students at the very beginning of their career are left carrying the brunt of the expense. As universities become increasingly neoliberal, seeking only to award degrees and create workers, it’s important to fight against this for the good of future creatives.

Art by Lauren MacColl



# IN DEFENCE OF “JOKE” CANDIDATES (TO A POINT)

**Lachlan Griffiths gets shot with a Nerf dart.**

Amidst the bright-coloured shirts and Eastern Avenue spruikers, student politics can seem overwhelming. Unsurprisingly, to the layperson, politics can come off as a bit, well, political. However, in the seriousness of it all, “joke” candidates stand out as a breath of fresh air and a reminder to voters of the serious issues that mainstream candidates advocate for.

**To have a “joke” candidate get up and be shot with a Nerf dart is a joyous change of pace.**

By far the greatest benefit of “joke” candidates is that they’re refreshing. After all the speeches and the rhetoric of sincere candidates, to have a “joke” candidate get up and be shot with a Nerf dart is a joyous change of pace. The great refreshment value of “joke” candidates is that they can offer a lighthearted package that depicts the importance of student politics to a wider audience.

A student election is a public process that relies largely on campaigning and popularity. Often, “joke” tickets draw the most attention. This notoriety is often written off as attention-seeking. That is an undue simplification. Yes, “joke” candidates seek attention, but the same is true of all candidates in any election. When voters see “joke” candidates, they see not only the candidate

themselves but the democratic process writ large seeking their attention and engagement.

“Joke” candidates raise public awareness of the whole electoral process, and that deserves acknowledgement. The personality, prominence and humour of a “joke” candidate can draw public attention to the issues addressed by serious candidates. Not only that, but “joke” candidates can in fact be perfectly serious, only with the appearance of irreverence or amusement. For example, Joe Fidler’s 2021 USU Board run saw him take an anti-fracking policy that criticised greenwashing and material exploitation of nature through the character of a Barefoot-Investor toting businessman complete with a sidekick he described as “my campaign patron, an oil baron from Alabama.” Beneath the calls of “frack the Quad,” there was a candidate with a serious political message.

**Some “joke” candidates seek nothing more than to make a mockery of the electoral process.**

In essence, “joke” candidates raise the profile of the entire electoral process. They allow people to realise that there are x-many candidates who hold sincere positions, and make the process interesting for students. Since voting in student elections is voluntary, publicising the process is essential. With

publicity comes engagement, and there is nothing more essential to the success of student elections — and the broader preservation of campus democracy — than engagement.

**Politics, even student politics, is a fundamentally serious process.**

It would be foolish, however, to celebrate “joke” candidates without qualification. Some “joke” candidates seek nothing more than to make a mockery of the electoral process, and to turn student politics into a circus where they are the animals. In the course of writing this article, I came to the conclusion that I can only support a “joke” candidate that’s not too much of a joke. Yes, that sounds oxymoronic, but hear me out.

A good “joke” candidate should be able to find the balance between their comedic edge and sincere policy. If one considers that “joke” candidates have had a reputation for being devoid of policies, of being clowns that seek nothing but attention and a cheap laugh, the need for candidates that are

funny yet meaningful becomes even more pressing. Politics, even student politics, is a fundamentally serious process. It should be seen as a fun business, not populated by politically dense types who run humourless and grey campaigns, but a business not trivialised to such an extent that it becomes a laughing stock where the farce outweighs the responsibility. Considering that USU Board Directors earn a \$5,000 p.a. stipend, having candidates that run only to make a joke out of themselves and mock the whole system is distasteful and insulting.

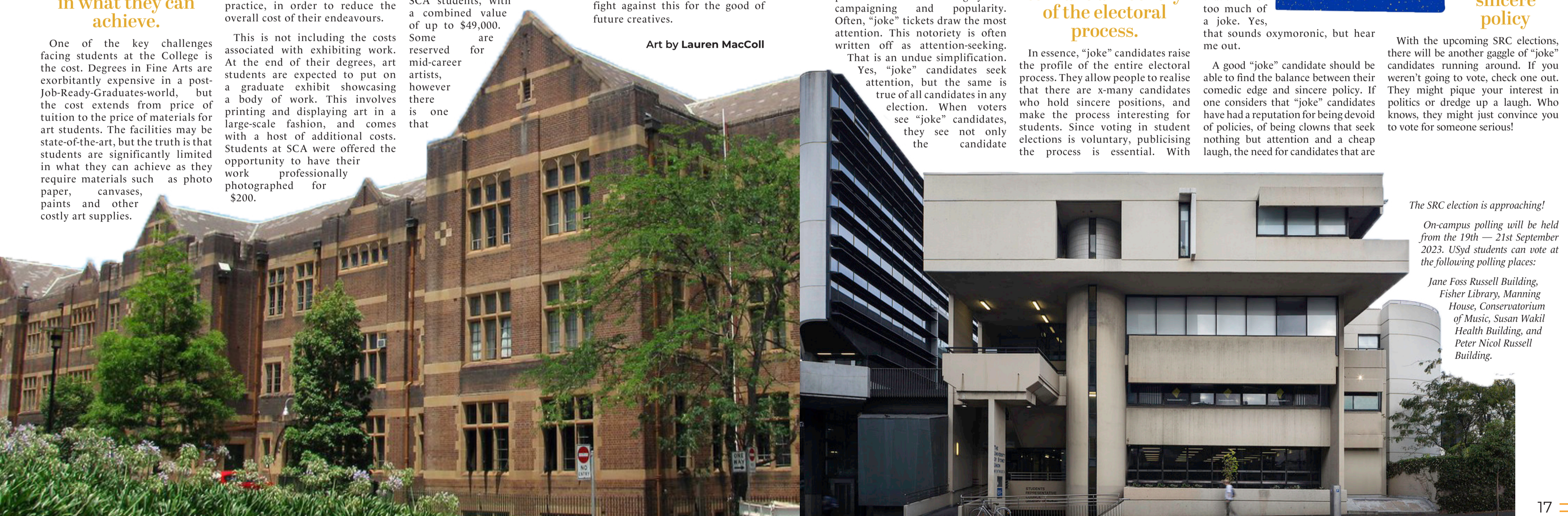
**A good “joke” candidate should be able to find the balance between their comedic edge and sincere policy**



*The SRC election is approaching!*

*On-campus polling will be held from the 19th — 21st September 2023. USyd students can vote at the following polling places:*

*Jane Foss Russell Building, Fisher Library, Manning House, Conservatorium of Music, Susan Wakil Health Building, and Peter Nicol Russell Building.*





# Through the Meatgrindr: Is the app truly liberatory?

Somewhere between the ages of twenty and twenty-two, I had a thought worm into my head that I needed to have sex with as many people as possible. This was a reflex to insecurity. The realisation that my boyfriend at the time had been with people before me catalysed a dazed need to catch-up. In my world before, sex was a sacred thing, something that had “meaning”, and the idea of giving over my body to anyone casually was repulsive.

These feelings of sex as larger-than-life-and-me were a natural consequence to feelings of worthlessness and sexual/physical shame. As much as can be said on why I had deified sex to a zone outside of experience, too much of it is buried in the past to accurately unearth it. Rather, the aftermath says more. In the acting-out of repressed sexual desires throughout the years on Grindr, fears were replaced with complementary reactions, hoping to fill the emptiness of insecurity like painting over an orange wall with blue, ending up grey.

In this way, the world of Grindr is stark and dystopian. Rows of bodies and sexually-suggestive names shudder around the grid like cars in an assembly line. Men of various ages send you unprompted photos of their dick, or ass, or feet. The variable reward system keeps you strung along, checking the app not because you’re interested in anything particular, but because the app itself has suctioned onto your brain with the same intermittent gratification as casino games and poker-machines.

*In this way, the world of Grindr is stark and dystopian. Rows of bodies and sexually-suggestive names shudder around the grid like cars in an assembly line.*

The ill-effects of using Grindr (and more generally dating apps) is slowly rising through psychological literature, with



a focus on user-provided feedback on how they feel during and after using Grindr. One of the first men whose house I went over to, described how he was on Grindr “just for now,” despite having been on it for nearly a year. At first I condemned the use of the app, even as I went to house after house in the heat of a breakup, trying to figure out why all these different men were using an app that was clearly so awful for them. After a while I stopped trying to figure it out. I was then an initiate, inducted into the cult of sex for sex’s sake without even realising, slipping under and over each body like a wave.

The transactional usage of sex for socialisation litters its way through the app. It’s claimed as a means to an end, usually by those using it as such. But is it good enough that if someone wants human contact, connection, that they have to walk the tightrope of meeting up with a stranger on an app designed entirely for sexual gratification? Not only that, the sexual positionings on the app lean towards heteronormativity. People advertise themselves as “bottoms” when in reality, they are only leveraging that position as a way to portray themselves as passive, or as a way to remove their sense of agency. This is definitely not to say that the role of the bottom is always a pseudo-desire, but that we live in a world where sexual dominance (being a top) is masculine,

and therefore superior, and sexual passivity (being a bottom) is likewise imbued with the same psychosexual implications that heteronormative sex upholds.

By condensing the language of sex into icons (bottom/top, twink/bear, etc), you rely on the images conjured by these words, rather than an accurate account of your own identity and desires. This sublimation of identity thus hinges entirely on popularised, culturally-understood stereotypes, forcing you to pitch your sexuality as a cliched shorthand that affirms the mass-culture of heteronormativity.

*By condensing the language of sex into icons (bottom/top, twink/bear, etc), you rely on the images conjured by these words, rather than an accurate account of your own identity and desires.*

This is despite Grindr holding the glossy veneer of sexual liberation. Who can argue against making gay sex more accessible? But instead of freeing anyone from antiquation, the intersection between gambling and sexual gratification dilutes the possibility of sex as something healthy and self-affirming. Grindr digitalises the bathhouse of Andrew Holleran’s *Il Paradiso*: “I can only collide with their bodies; I can only lick stomach, suck a dick, and maybe — this I would really like — embrace, if I am lucky.” The superficial interactions, the unquestioned assumptions,

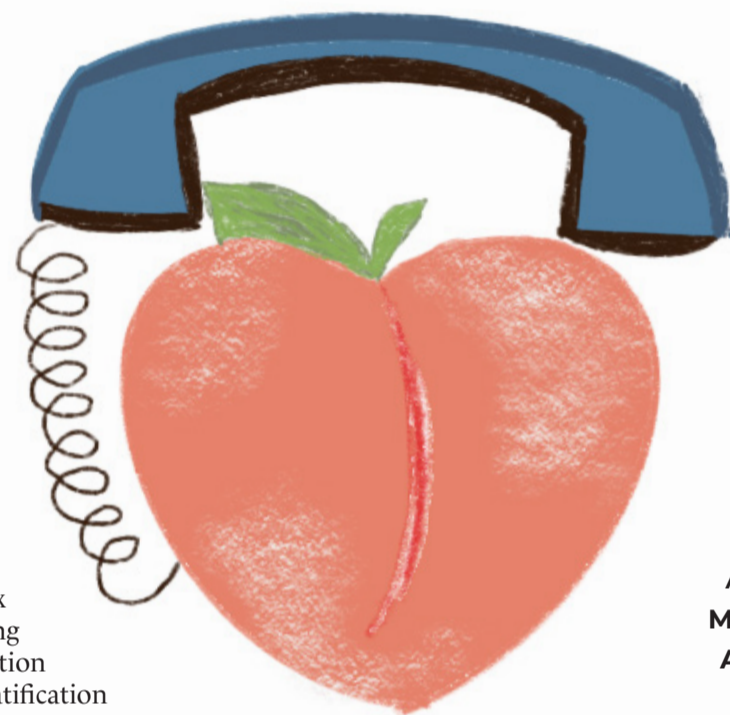
the “dreadful competition of sex, the fact that they have both done this little dance many, many times before and it has not freed them.” All of this is unchanged, with only the presentation updated. You are made to inorganically presume your desires, assessing sexual compatibility and enjoyment based on cherry-picked images and inexact phrases. The glorified ideal of hot and heavy sex is often more compelling than the real experience.

And this ambiguity offers so much, when the only information provided is a person’s position, interests, and a handful of photos, the only way to meld these together is through fantasy, where you fill in the gaps of a yet unexperienced experience. The hum of the car as it waits for you is usually more exciting than what’s inside.

In the same way money as a desirable object lures gamblers onto the pokies, sex as clout enables a false-positive sense of fulfilment, amplified in the hall of mirrors that is Grindr. Socially-stoked fears of male-virginity (virginity already a bizarre construct) turns people towards sex, while older men advertise openly for “younger” boys, flaunting a preference where virginity is desired. It is a no-win situation.

Aidan Pollock thinks you should get off Grindr.

I know there are people that use Grindr healthily — maybe you met your partner on there — and I’m glad. I’ve had genuinely enjoyable interactions through it, too. But underneath that exists a steady thrum of engineered sexual addiction, harmful body-standards, hidden heteronormativity, and an absolution of meaningful desire. To every exception there exists a general rule, and every silver-lining, a touch of grey.



Art by Misbah Ansari



# USU LAW REVUE 2023: EVIDENCE EVERYWHERE ALL AT ONCE

Valerie Chidiac reviews.

We were promised a night full of multiverse-jumping, laundry, taxes, social commentary and political satire. The Law Revue crew dangled the bagel, and left no crumbs behind.

The audience was immediately on board, cheering gleefully at the words “Welcome to Law Revue”. It all began with the late night lethargy of a typical law student, and their word document woes. This came with the opening number, “You Ain’t Never Had a Bot Like Me”, which set a dynamic tone for the show. It was complete with subtitles and graphics displayed on the big screen, an effective mechanism that complemented the musical commentary running through the skits.

The sketches ranged from judicial questions of the executioner, gambling reform discussions, *Roe v Wade*, and a racism awareness TEDtalk, to dates with Duolingo, Freudian psychoanalysis, the embarrassment of misapplying the phrase “thanks, you too!”, auditions of the voice behind “Authorised by the Australian Government, Canberra”, and the sad reality of doctors who “went to uni during the pandemic”. In a unique choice, some scenes were done over voiceover, which complimented their short formata and added a theatrical nuance to the plot

Una Altarac was clearly a standout amongst many talented performers with impeccable comedic timing. She portrayed a range of characters such

as the head of Clubs NSW, a netball mum, and flipped through accents in a jiffy. She successfully impersonated Jennifer Coolidge — talking at length about “Marx-sism” and dialectical materialism — plus a Harry Styles seeking to take his career in a new direction.

There was zero delay onstage thanks to the efficient positioning of three sketches on stage at once; spotlighting one and then moving onto the next — a standard in revue tradition. The breaks between sketches were appropriately filled in by the band who, despite being in the background, never felt like a distraction. Rather, their musical timing was fitting in a way that set the momentum for upcoming acts. The revue would have felt incomplete without the band’s presence and musical prowess.

The integration of vlogs and interviews across campus were much

welcomed, as well as USyd-based humour regarding the SRC election, satirising the student centre and the menace that is Okta Verify.

While I wish there was a musical number directly referencing the *Everything Everywhere All At Once* film, the



pop culture references were very inspired — Gaga and her “bad finance”, Madonna, the obligatory Barbie reference in “Dance the Night”, Pixar for adolescents, and an R.I.P. dedicated to Katy Perry’s music career. However, it was criminal that the Mariah Carey “All I Want for Christmas is You” skit was so short because the audience was just gearing up to sing along when it ended. The audience understandably roared more at the quips on the Australian political scene in contrast to American or international events — the cameo of one Hunter Biden on a laptop

nonetheless, and a Boris Johnson/Liz Truss x ABBA combination. The scenes — centring around Peter “loosen up that” Dutton, a Matildas-lovin’ Albo, a Minns/Perrottet bromance, and Jim Chalmers’s aversion to “Euro Summer” — balanced outrageous comedy with clever lampooning.

Two particular occasions in the second act saw the audience become visibly shocked and turn silent in an attempt to digest the bold humour. There were many catchy songs, but the best of the night goes to “Girl, pay your HECS debt off”, and the lyric relatable to many, including myself (“but I do liberal arts, so fuck me”).

I overheard some audience members saying they preferred the second act, while others loved the first act better. Safe to say, there was something for everyone. At one (regrettable) point, I wished I studied law just to be able to be a part of this extravaganza — law students sigh everywhere all at once. Bravo (or whatever the Latin equivalent is to that) to directors Una Altarac and Martha Barlow, choreographers Isla Mowbray, Anna Simpson, and Ellie Zheng, producers Amelie Roediger and Ariana Haghghi, stage manager Veronica Lenard, and the entire cast, band and crew.

*Law Revue played at Seymour Centre’s Everest Theatre from 24-26 August.*

# Weddings, fathers, daughters: SUDS Presents Eurydice

Sandra Kallarakkal considers the trials and tribulations of being a daughter.

For those unfamiliar with the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, the story goes more or less like this: there is an Orpheus who is deeply in love with a Eurydice. (I assume here, that conversely, there is a Eurydice who is deeply in love with an Orpheus; we shouldn’t be too concerned with the details. We only need to know that they are in love.) They live together happily, but only for a short while, as suddenly, unexpectedly, one day, Eurydice dies. Orpheus sings out his grief, descending into the Underworld to bring her back. Hades allows it, stating Eurydice will follow behind as they ascend back to the world of the Living, but warning Orpheus to not look back on his return. However, like anyone told to not do something, Orpheus does it anyway, and Eurydice returns to the Underworld, lost to it forever.

There are, and have been, many reimaginings of this story. As the name

suggests, Sarah Ruhl’s *Eurydice* is one such iteration, and one that chooses to centre *Eurydice*, and her grief, as well as subtly showcase Ruhl’s own grief in losing her father. Ruhl’s play is about lovers, sure, but with the

Maddie Lewis (*Eurydice*) and Dan Prichard (*Orpheus*) play the lovers charmingly, landing comedy and emotional beats with ease. Similarly, Aidan Hale as *Eurydice’s* Father strikes the right balance between the role of father and an individual with complexities. But it is when Lewis and Hale finally come together, and the story further diverges from the source material a little more, that the play seems to truly start.

Early on, we see *Eurydice* and her Father mourning each other. There are letters read from father to daughter, lines at weddings: “A wedding is for daughters and fathers”. When they meet again, in the Underworld, we

are shown how much they love each other either both in the smallest of actions — *Eurydice* is instantly comfortable even when she does not recognise her father; her Father makes her a room out of string — and in conversations, which appear as a chance to speak what they never had the chance to before. The subtle use of lighting to denote the setting changes between the Underworld and the World of the Living, as well as the minimal and stationary props (such as the water fountain), add to, rather than distracting from, these moments. Kudos to the set design team (Gemma Hudson, Gaby Walland, Hennessy), lighting designer Nikki Eghlimi, and stage manager Emily Whiting for pulling off such transitions seamlessly.

Putting all that aside, when considering the heart of *Eurydice* was *Eurydice*

herself, dealing with the enormity of her love and her grief, there’s nothing much more to say, just questions to think to and reflect on. Whether it be imagining your own version of an afterlife, or about remembering people you love and have lost, or are losing, or will lose, or being a daughter to a father.

*Eurydice will play at the Cellar Theatre until September 3.*





# President

LIA PERKINS

Hey! Here's what I was up to over the past week.

I attended as many Festival of Radical Ideas sessions as I could, including on climate justice, housing inequality and Indigenous Justice in 2023. These were fantastic sessions and I congratulate the organising group, coordinated by the Gen Secs for their work. Thanks to all speakers who came and imparted interesting left wing content with us. There's a lot to organise and fight for!

Earlier in the week, I drafted some amendments to regulations for the next council meeting on September 6th. On Tuesday, I attended the e-tools sub-committee where I spoke about student concern for the use of Cadmus - a private company which requires students to use the platform while completing assignments. Honi recently highlighted the issues with the software in an article, and I was pleased that my concerns about privacy and security meant that approval for the software has been delayed, and hopefully will be halted completely.

I also attended the student consultative committee, and addressed the need for the uni to put pressure on the government to provide international students with concession Opal cards. I also raised the alarming problem of a rent increase at Sydney Uni Village, a company which USyd is on the board of. Any increase to rent at student accommodation providers should not go ahead, and the SRC and our collectives will be campaigning against this.

I made the decision to close the SRC on Thursday due to a Covid case the day before. We aim to reopen on Tuesday, with no affected individuals coming into the office until they are testing negative. As always, reach out to me via email [president@src.usyd.edu.au](mailto:president@src.usyd.edu.au)

# Disclaimer

These pages belong to the Office Bearers of the SRC. They are not edited by Honi Soit.

**Whose street? OUR STREET!**

**RECLAIM OXFORD ST FROM RIGHT-WING BIGOTS**

**PROTEST & PARTY**

SEPTEMBER 2 @ 9PM HYDE PARK → TAYLOR SQUARE

A PRIDE IN PROTEST JOINT

# Education

ISHBEL DUNSMORE  
YASMINE JOHNSON

There's lots of activism to be involved in as the cost of living crisis and attacks on students and workers continue!

We'll be part of the upcoming September 9 rally to fix the housing crisis, which is being organised by the National Union of Students Get a Room campaign group, and NSW Greens MP Jenny Leong. Rental prices are continuing to rise, and the Labor government on state and federal levels has promised nothing to genuinely address this crisis. We've also been part of ongoing campaigning to defend and extend public housing, in particular the demolitions set

to take place in Glebe and Waterloo.

It has also been exciting to hear that staff in Arts, Law and Libraries at Melbourne University will be taking part in a week of strike action starting on Monday August 28. We stand in solidarity with workers fighting back against the corporate uni, demanding a pay rise above inflation and better conditions for working, teaching and learning.

We're also involved in ongoing campaigning against war and militarism. Week 4 was the Festival of Radical Thinking, which involved a panel against the AUKUS deal. If you're interested in getting involved with anti-war campaigning, come along to one of our meetings! You can find more information about what we're up to on our Facebook page, Sydney University Education Action Group.

# Women's

IGGY BOYD  
ALEV SARACOGLU

WoCo has been going strong organising for Women's Honi as well as Rad Pride and Consent Week; we've discussed pitches for the Honi edition and we've started planning and organising sessions for RPxC Week, stay tuned for more exciting updates!

WoCo would also like to condemn the recent decision by the Queensland Government to suspend their Human Rights Act in order to place youth offenders into adult watchhouses. This will not help children in the slightest, it will not prevent them from re-offending nor will it aid in rehabilitating them; it is a

barbaric decision that will impact Indigenous communities most on account of the disgustingly high levels of youth incarceration amongst the Indigenous population.

Additionally, the 2021-22 Australian Bureau of Statistics Personal Safety Survey released its full details. It found that 22% of women have been exposed to sexual violence, with higher rates amongst women aged 18-24 and particularly amongst women who are studying at University. Women should not experience violence just because they wish for an education; the federal government has committed \$368bn for nuclear submarines to go to war with China, yet it has spent less than 1% of that on preventing and ending sexual violence in this country.

The Global Solidarity Officers, the Refugee Rights Officers, and the Sexual Harassment Officers did not submit a Report this week.

**SAY YES TO THE VOICE**

**Demonstrate your support.**  
**Location: QUADRANGLE. 8 SEP 4PM.**

The U shape often represents 'person' in Aboriginal art.

The circles mean 'meeting place'.

SRC

**The Learning Hub - Academic Language and Learning Resources**

### Make Your Study Easier

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

### The Learning Hub (Academic Language and Learning)

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

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

### The Learning Hub (Mathematics)

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

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

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

### Getting the most out of the Uni libraries

The University Library, whether

online or on campus, is a great resource for all students. They offer help with exam preparation, library orientation, assignment support, referencing guides, and more. They also host the [Peer Learning Advisors](#), who are postgraduate students who you can talk to about advice on study skills, referencing techniques, or anything that is affecting you as a student.

### Study Groups – be aware of academic honesty

Finding a group of people from your course to study with is a popular strategy. Study groups can be a great way to make new friends and connections in your degree, while also improving your knowledge of course content.

However, the University's Academic Honesty rules make a distinction between legitimate cooperation, and collusion that breaches academic integrity rules. The SRC has assisted a number of students with academic honesty allegations arising from shared notes and study groups. We recommend [reading the short article from the Uni website](#) to make sure you are aware of the line between collusion, and legitimate cooperation.

### What other support is available?

There are also faculty-specific options for assistance. The library offers [drop-in sessions for students](#) to help with specific questions about research and referencing in your faculty.

If you want to talk about your degree structure and unit of study selection, you can [contact an Academic Advisor from your faculty or discipline](#).

If you have questions about the Uni and you're not sure where to go, you can contact the SRC's Caseworkers by completing the casework contact form: [bit.ly/SRCcaseworker](http://bit.ly/SRCcaseworker)

Read our Learning Hub Article online to access links & resources. Scan the QR:



# Ask Abe

SRC Caseworker Help Q&A



## Relationships & Centrelink Payments

Dear Abe,  
I've been seeing someone on and off for the last 14 months, but we're mostly in an open relationship now. I've moved into their place this year, but we're both still dating other people. Will this affect my payments? Will both my partners' incomes be assessed?

Thanks, Polli Amorie

Dear Polli,

Centrelink may treat your first relationship as de-facto, because of the social ties of the relationship and because you live together. They would suggest that

you would be sharing day-to-day household expenses, and dividing housework between (or among) yourselves. You have also been involved with each other for over 12 months, and now share living arrangements. So, you may be assessed as independent and your first partner's income may be assessed as well, affecting your Youth Allowance payments. However, your newer partner's income will not be assessed, as Centrelink no longer recognise polyamory. Check out the SRC website information on [Effect of Relationships on Payments](#) (See QR code below) for more information.

Thanks, Abe

Read the Information on Centrelink & Relationships: [bit.ly/centrelink-relationships](http://bit.ly/centrelink-relationships)



**New Rules Apply for Discontinuing (DC)**

**AUGUST 31**

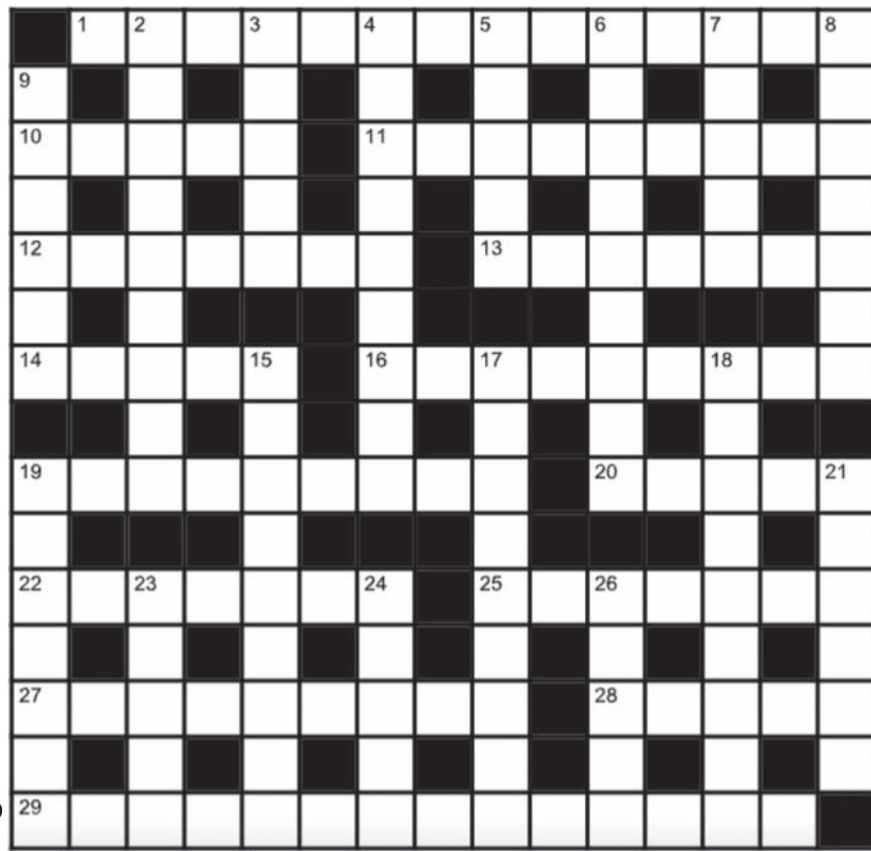
If you want to discontinue a subject and avoid a fail the **CENSUS DATE is 31st August**

NOTE! Rules for applying for DC changed in 2022  
Contact an SRC Caseworker if you need help

contact a caseworker [bit.ly/SRCcaseworker](http://bit.ly/SRCcaseworker) www.srcusyd.net.au 02 9660 5222



Quick Crossword



Across

1. Pair of figure skaters renowned for their perfect scores in Sarajevo 1984 (7,3,4)
10. Country of Buddha's birth (5)
11. Raise the stakes (2,3,4)
12. What Robert Burns calls a mouse, what Jack Sparrow calls the kraken (7)
13. Crowe, Howard, or T Davies (7)
14. Jim, Tony, or Eddard (5)
16. Hairy red fruits, like lychees (9)
19. Jane, Elizabeth I, or the sixth Zodiac sign (3,6)
20. Walls built into ditches so as to not interrupt a view (2-3)
22. Native American people of the Southwestern U.S. (7)
25. Ptitim: \_\_ couscous (7)
27. Aristocratic Roman (9)
28. Parts of Yellowstone are in this state (5)
29. Composer of 'An American in Paris'; and 'Porgy and Bess' (6, 8)

Down

2. Where Little Orphan Annie lives (9)
3. Bates, Pennyworth, or Passepartout (5)

Across

4. Mia went back to music school (3)
9. Reverend, ditch moray in cereal (7)
10. Why gun lobbyists in? And the philosopher? (3,4)
11. Bill rents iPads (7)
12. Mother of monsters wrongly chained (7)
13. Spooner's irritant shackle causes angina (9)
16. This light verse lies not / in the clue's phrasing, but in / its syllabic form (5)
18. Indeed if I cement building (7)
21. Allures tangled wreaths (7)
23. Icy poet (5)
24. Basic French and the crazy go together (9)
28. Mufasa's brother starts, largely embarrassed, turning pink (7)
29. Describe former savannah (7)
31. Oh! She, an ER reporter, is in the Pacific islands (7)
32. Routine abortion before birth (2,5)
33. Dearly odd and backward young man (3)

4. 'The Iron Horse' of Major League Baseball, affected by ALS (3,6)
5. Thespian (5)
6. U.S. states that relied primarily on slavery for income (4,5)
7. Bert's pal (5)
8. Collective name for obelisks of London, Paris, NYC: Cleopatra's \_\_\_ (7)
9. Jackal-headed god of embalmment (6)
15. When the queen taps you on the shoulders with sword, she's doing this to you (9)
17. Title given to an important member of clergy (9)
18. Relating to Jews from Central or Eastern Europe (9)
19. Spike used for camping, also not a bad murder weapon (7)
21. Puccini's 'Madama Butterfly' was adapted into a musical set in this city (6)
23. Test-tube experiments: in \_\_\_ (5)
24. Frodo's sword (5)
26. German realm (5)
29. Soybean paste (4)
30. Dance wildly (4)
31. Upon (4)

Down

1. Non-white embraces alien one — artistic! (6)
2. Reliable pen (6)
3. Destiny sounds fair (4)
4. The last frontier!? I'll ask her how it sounds (6)
5. Caring friend begins reading Nazi aphorisms, lol (8)
6. It's free where the chimney is (2,3,5)
7. Phone ABC news programme (8)
8. Light-bulb adaptation, I dare say, loses rays (4)
14. Concealed in hash I did (3)
15. Races this lot ran drunkenly (10)
17. Uni regressive in its tuition (3)
18. Health of a Cockney dwarf (3)
19. Wedding vow with subsequent heathen (8)
20. Ultimate net value: poor (8)
22. Helena's lost hens in a meadow (3)
25. Anatomical shutter (6)
26. Picks on the daisies so irregularly (6)
27. Imagine writer the French number among knights and Newtons (6)
28. Nearly put glasses into tin (4)
30. Prune a tree (4)

Quiz

Put these in order?

- A: A 1966 song by the Easy Beats, commonly voted as one of the best Australian songs ever
- B: A 1977 Disco Drama Film, starring John Travolta
- C: A hit 1983 alternative dance track by New Order, that is always used in films set in the 80s (History Boys, Blue Jean, Wonder Woman 1984, etc)

D: A hit 2022 Netflix Tv show, based on a character from the Adams Family

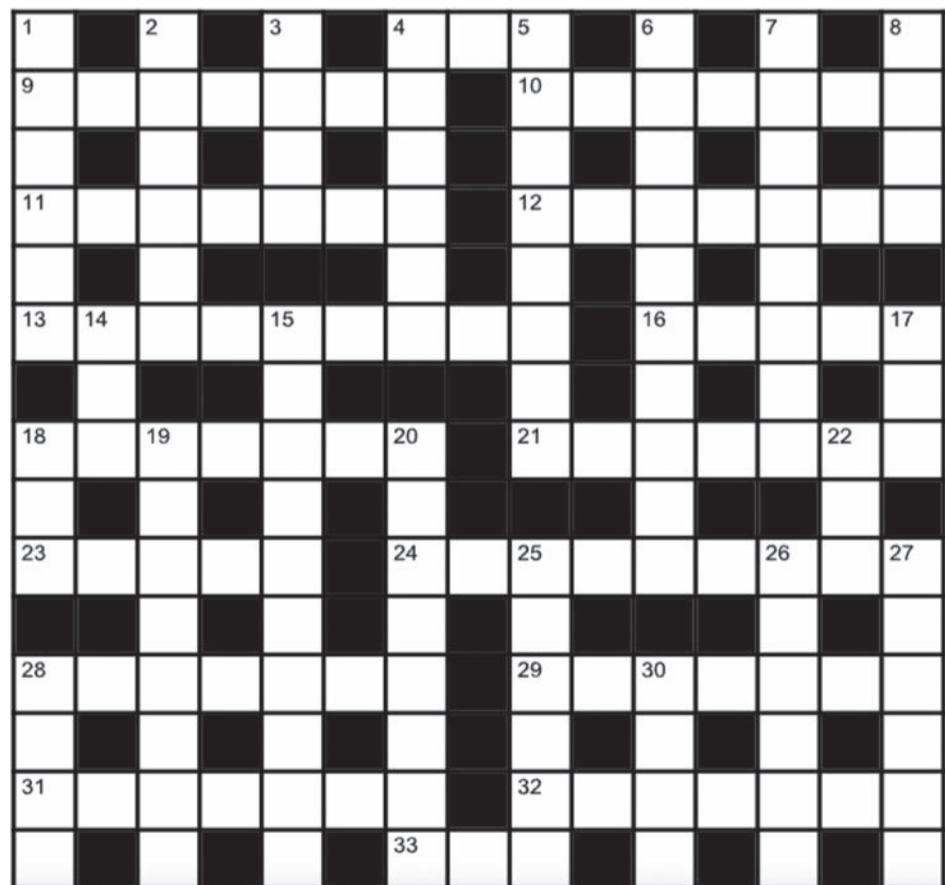
E: A metaphysical thriller, that is arguably the most famous novel written by GK Chesterton

F: A 1946 romantic Jazz Standard, that was most famously sung by Etta James in 1960

G: A 1973 song by Paul Simon, that shares its title with an annual LGBTQ+ festival

Quiz by Some Hack

Cryptic Crossword



Crosswords by Tournesol

Find the answers at [honisoit.com/puzzle-answers](http://honisoit.com/puzzle-answers)

misinformation.com.au

File Edit View Favourites Help

Address: <http://misinformation.com.au>

National
Sport
Lifestyle
Fascist Propaganda

what should i wear

radchicweek

Grassroots

Liberals

NLS

SLA

Socialist Alternative

Switch

Unity

WHO SAID IT?

USU CEO Andrew Mills

Former Caliph of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi

1. "The USU was delighted to be recognised for the phenomenal cross-campus effort to deliver the best orientation experience in the country."
2. "Fight them and ambush them everywhere. Target the infidels' information and media centres and their psychological warfare centres."
3. "Alex, the USU's Queer Revue is coming up this week"
4. "For the Mujahideen the scale of victory or defeat is not dependent on a city or town being stolen or subject to those who have aerial superiority, intercontinental missiles or smart bombs... Oh Caliphate soldiers ... Trust in God's promise and His victory ... For with hardship comes relief and a way out."

spotify.com.au

1. I'm Just Ken	3:42
2. HonkyTonkBadonkadonk	4:41
3. I love you Jesus	2:47
4. This is Me	3:55
5. Hey There Delilah	3:52
6. I Swear	1:39
7. Ram Ranch	6:49
8. The Monster Mash	3:00
9. Nutbush City Limits	3:19

ADD REM SEL MISC



# SYDNEY

# Stop Coal Seam Gas

# RAALLY



## SAVE THE PILLIGA AND LIVERPOOL PLAINS

**WHEN:** 11.30am, Thursday 14 September

**WHAT:** March from Customs House Circular Quay to the NSW Parliament

It's time for a united and powerful stand. Join us outside NSW Parliament in solidarity with Gomeri people defending culture and farmers needing certainty for ongoing food production.

Santos' coal seam gas (CSG) plans for north-west NSW, including the proposed Narrabri Gas Project, are opposed by Gomeri Traditional Owners, farmers, the union movement and civil society.

There are significant concerns these plans will have a detrimental impact on the Pilliga Forest and groundwater as well as threatening highly productive agriculture on the Liverpool Plains.

