



Acknowledgement of Country

Honi Soit is produced, published and distributed on the stolen land of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. Sovereignty was never ceded. For over 235 years, First Nations peoples in so-called 'Australia' have continued to suffer under the destructive effects of invasion, genocide, and colonisation. As editors of this paper, we acknowledge that we are each living, writing, and working on stolen Gadigal, Wangal and Bidjigal land, and are beneficiaries of ongoing colonial dispossession.

We acknowledge that the University of Sydney is an inherently colonial institution which is not only physically built on stolen land, but also ideologically upholds a devaluing of Indigenous systems of knowledge and systematically excludes First Nations peoples. We recognise our complicity in such systems. We strive to remain conscious of, and actively resist and unlearn, colonial ideologies and biases, both our own and those perpetuated by the University and other institutions like it.

As a student newspaper, we pledge to stand in solidarity with both First Nations movements and all Indigenous struggles toward decolonisation worldwide, endeavouring to platform Indigenous voices. *Honi* is committed to countering the exclusion, censoring, and silencing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in mainstream media.

Always was, and always will be Aboriginal land.

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I love local libraries. So much so that across all my years of primary school, I was a chronic library visitor. Appa and I would make our weekly trip down to Marrickville Library (the old one, down the road from Marrickville Town Hall), where I would spend hours scouring shelves for the twenty or so books I would take home with me and systematically read through in the dimly lit corners of my room.

Over the years, in amongst moving between places and stumbling through the trials and tribulations of being a teenage girl, my local library visiting rates significantly declined. Yet, the occasional visits still never fail to bring a smile to my face. There is a familiarity to the space that makes me remember to unclench my jaw and take a breath.

This edition looks to that feeling of community. Communities we make, find, and lose, and those that make, find and lose us in return. The past months have also shown us the power of community resistance and strength of community in fighting for justice. *Honi* stands with the fight for a free Palestine.

Within these pages you'll find the idiosyncrasies that form and impact communities around us. I hope this little community that *Honi* has created stays with you in some small way, wherever you go and wherever you may end up. Oh, and visit your local library.

Aaron Bushnell's Last Words

"My name is Aaron Bushnell. I'm an active-duty member of the United States Air Force. And I will no longer be complicit in genocide. I'm about to engage in an extreme act of protest, but compared to what people have been experiencing in Palestine at the hands of their colonizers, it's not extreme at all. This is what our ruling class has decided will be normal."

– February 25, 2024, outside the Embassy of Israel in Washington DC

Publication Parties!

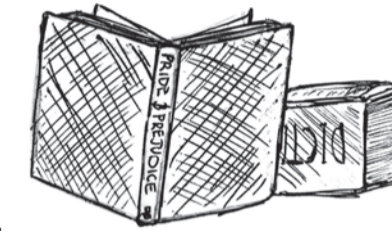
Friday 8 March
Fling magazine Issue 1 launch @ Puzzle Art Garage

Thursday 14 March
Rough as Guts exhibition and RAG zine launch @ Mothership Studios
Ekphrasis: A Midsummer's Night @ Goodspace Gallery

Friday 15 March
Honi's Ides of March Party ... more to come

Saturday 16 March
PULP Issue 13 launch @ Glebe Hotel

Thursday 28 March
Booker Magazine Issue 2 launch @ Red Rattler Theatre



Letters



To the editors at *Honi Soit*,

This is my formal suggestion that we should have MORE puzzles on the back page. Maybe something like NYT connection?

Please consider my idea!

Thanks,
Khushi

Dear learned reader,

Thank you for your formal suggestion. You have suggested and we answered. Scan the QR code for a little surprise.

xoxo *Honi Soit*



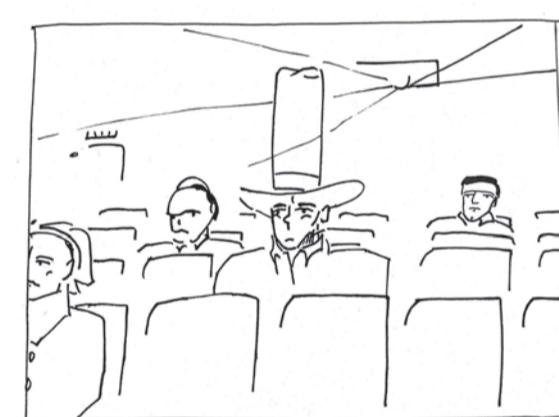
Cartoon Caption Contest

This Week



Cartoon: Alexandra Angus

Last Week

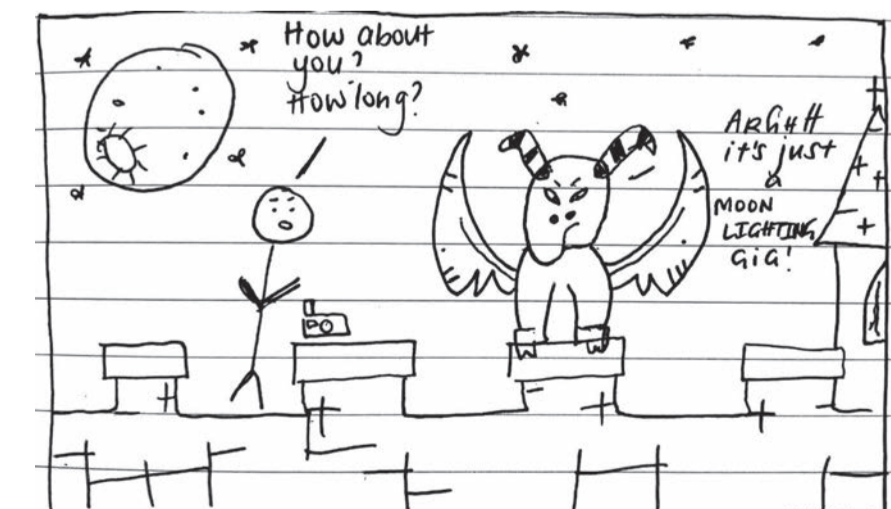


Cartoon: Huw Bradshaw

Winning caption:
"Hats off to this guy"
– Hugh (@hugh.d_b)

Submit your best caption for the above to editors@honisoit.com for a chance to WIN and be published in the next edition!
Winners receive a personalised limerick from Angus McGregor.

Winner's reward, as promised:
We presented a hatted guy in a movie
And received a caption quite groovy
A toast to blunt captions
With no wordy distractions
It's a chance to be silly and goofy!



Comic: Emily O'Brien



Comic: Bipasha Chakraborty

Students charged up to \$1,000 difference in fees to complete the same interdisciplinary units

Stephanie Arulthasan and Simone Maddison report.

Honi Soit has received screenshots, testimonies, and transcripts indicating that students at the University of Sydney are paying disparate fees for the same units of study.

Observed across interdisciplinary units, where students from different subject areas come together to work on a common project, these costs appear to differ according to each student's Faculty of origin.

Honi was first made aware of these cost differences in the third-year Industry and Community Project unit, registered as FASS3333 in Sydney Student for students in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and SCPU3001 for those in STEM. Invoices dated January 25, 2024, show that while a Bachelor of Arts student was charged \$2,040.00 on HECS to complete the unit, their Bachelor of Science counterpart was only charged \$1,118.00. Both students were in the same class and worked together in the same group.

Further investigation has revealed similar disparities as high as \$1,000 across other interdisciplinary units. This is evident in the interdisciplinary units only required for students in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, such as FASS3999. The unit was described by Deputy Vice Chancellor Annemarie Jagose as "providing senior students with scaffolded opportunities to work effectively with others from different disciplinary backgrounds in the context of a real-world issue or problem".

This proves a large inconsistency between the prices that different disciplinary backgrounds are expected to pay. A student who completed FASS3999 in 2023 as part of a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Advanced Studies was charged \$1892.00. In comparison, a student who commenced a combined Bachelor of Education (Secondary) and Bachelor of Arts in 2020 was charged \$858.00 on HECS to complete FASS3999 on March 31 in 2022.

The discrepancy is further complicated by the lack of a STEM counterpart for FASS3999. Students within the humanities are not only paying more for interdisciplinary units, but are also required to complete additional interdisciplinary units to fulfil their degree requirements. This limits opportunities for academic choice and growth through electives, while also furthering the narrative that Arts graduates are unemployable and lack value unless they engage with other disciplinary skill sets.

These fee hikes are a direct outcome of the Jobs-Ready Graduate Package (JRGP), introduced in 2021 by Scott Morrison's Coalition government. Initially aimed at "investing in higher education in areas of national priority," the package has resulted in the doubling of the cost of Arts and Communications degrees and fewer HECS options for students with low completion rates.

Although findings from the

Albanese government's Australian Universities Accord Interim Report 2023 have resulted in the removal of the requirement for students to pass 50% of the units they study to remain eligible for a Commonwealth supported place, HECS-HELP or FEE-HELP, large fee disparities remain.

Consequently, the costs of different degrees as a whole have been inflated to align with the JRGP's guidelines. Arts students, who are paying the most for interdisciplinary units, are listed as completing a Band 4 degree, which incurs the highest student contribution rate of \$16,323 in their first year of study.

In contrast, their STEM counterparts and Education counterparts pay between \$8,000 in Band 1 and \$10,000 in Band 2 during their first year of study.

The JRGP is reflective of broader attitudes towards the contributions and necessity of the humanities. Dan Tehan, former Minister for Education, announced this policy in 2020 to the National Press Club of Australia and commented that "we want our arts graduates making sure that they are thinking about the employment outcomes that they are going to get from their degree," while also suggesting to prospective arts students that "they don't silo their degree" and "If you wanna do an arts degree, think about also doing IT." Tehan later stated that it was "common sense" to incentivise students to make "job-relevant choices".

When informed about *Honi's* findings, SRC President Harrison President stated that "it is utterly absurd that arts students are paying over \$2,000 for a mandatory course (such as FASS3999) that is in no way relevant to the major they are undertaking." He went on: "JRGP and HECS are schemes which have ruinous and inequitable outcomes for students now and decades in the future and have only degraded the quality higher education, turning it into a commodity for management to profit from, not as a public good accessible to all. The solution is fee-free tertiary education."

SRC Education Officer Grace Street echoed these sentiments, commenting that "targeted fee hikes" are a "waste of students' money while they battle incessant cost-of-living crises, and a waste of academia and teaching that provide students with critical and important studies of history, politics, culture, and society. Between my own experiences in FASS3999 and the collective pessimism shared by undergraduate students, the interdisciplinary units currently on offer are impractical at best, and a complete financial and mental burden at worst."

Honi will continue to monitor the costs of these interdisciplinary degrees, and others across different faculties, as the Federal government continues to review the JRGP and release the Australian Universities Accord report.

NSW Islamic Council rejects government celebrations, the rest of the states follow

Valerie Chidiac and Zeina Khochaiche report.

Less than two weeks before Ramadan commences, Australian Muslim bodies have rejected *Iftar* invitations from the NSW and Victoria governments as community groups become increasingly frustrated with the government's response to the genocide and humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

The Australian National Imams Councils (ANIC), the Islamic Council of New South Wales (ICNSW), the Islamic Council of Victoria (ICV), and the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils are among the groups boycotting the state government's events.

Iftar — the fast-breaking meal at sunset — is an international Islamic calendar event, observed by Muslims during the holy month of Ramadan, a time of community connection, fasting, prayer, and reflection. The Premier's *Iftar* dinner has been held by the NSW government since 2015.

The ICNSW declared this decision

as emanating from the "deep sense of abandonment" felt amongst the Muslim community and that they cannot "break bread" with those who claim "friendship" with their words but betray the community with their actions.

NSW Premier Chris Minns and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese were called out for their divisive statements, cuts to humanitarian funding, and the failure to call for an immediate ceasefire.

The ICNSW ended their statement by calling upon all Muslim communities to cancel *Iftar* and instead use those budgeted funds towards humanitarian aid in Gaza, as it is a time of "deep mourning", and not appropriate to hold festive events.

The ANIC will "not be attending the Premier's *Iftar* dinner this year," a Facebook statement from the council read.

"The ANIC is also deeply

disappointed with the Minns' Government's lack of response to the distress of the Muslim and Arab communities in NSW", the post said.

Yesterday, a representative from the Islamic Council of Victoria told *ABC National Radio* that representatives from their council will also not attend government organised events.

The event is attended by community members, both Muslim and non-Muslim, and has been an ongoing initiative by state governments to build cultural and literacy bridges between communities.

In an open letter led by Mohammed Helmy and penned by 8 members of the Victorian Muslim community, various voices are calling for the boycotting of the Victorian *Iftar* event.

"We feel as a community it's not right while Gazans are literally starving because of a lack of food and water and kids are eating grass from

the ground," the letter reads.

Upon Victorian Premier Jacinta Allan's announcement that the *Iftar* had been cancelled, the ICV released a statement, deeming this an "appropriate decision in response to the overwhelming sentiment from the Muslim community", and signalled that this is one step closer to their demands being heard by the government.

The NSW government followed suit with a spokesperson for Chris Minns saying that, "the annual *Iftar* will not be going ahead this year."

The beginning of the holy month of Ramadan is determined by the sighting of the moon, but in Australia, it will begin after sunset on Monday, March 11 or Tuesday, March 12.

Queer Action Collective holds emergency briefing over drag storytime ban moved in Cumberland City Council

Simone Maddison reports.

The University of Sydney's Queer Action Collective (QuAC) held an emergency briefing at 9am on February 29 to condemn the support of a motion banning drag storytime in the Cumberland City Council the night before.

The briefing, led by QuAC's convenors Tim Duff and Esther Whitehead, focused on the Council meeting events and the strong presence of Christian Lives Matter (CLM) at the meeting.

Duff opened by addressing "the facts of the matter" and contextualising the meeting for those in the Zoom call. First raised by Liberal councillor Steve Christou at a debate the previous week, the motion called for a ban on all drag storytime events at Cumberland City Council facilities, libraries, and halls. This is despite drag storytime never being held in this area, nor plans being made for upcoming events. Councillors from both the Liberal and Labor parties voted in support of the motion.

Duff then showed two videos, the

first of which was a call for Cumberland City residents and CLM members to attend Wednesday night's meeting by Joe Mekhael, an anti-vaxxer who has organised politically, according to QuAC, "around fear mongering on queer education" in schools under the campaign *Leave The Kids Alone*.

The second video was taken by anonymous queer activists who had attended the Council meeting in protest. Heard amidst other offensive language was the repeated heckle: "You're not welcome in our neighbourhood, we don't want you here."

2023 National Union of Students (NUS) Queer Officer Damien Nguyen went into more detail about CLM's presence at the meeting, emphasising that, "in front of the Council was a speaker system with a banner. There were around ten people outside the Council who were leafleting and waiting for the Council to happen. There were ten more people inside lining up because the entire Gallery was packed with people."

University scraps OLES2155: Experience Israel this year, cites "safety concerns"

Grace Street and Simone Maddison report.

The University of Sydney is not offering OLES2155: Experience Israel this year amidst the ongoing genocide in Gaza.

This OLE, which ran as a block-mode June intensive unit last year alongside Germany, Italy and the Spanish-Speaking World, is currently listed as having "no availabilities for this year."

When asked for comment, a spokesperson from the University informed *Honi Soit* that "the safety of our community is our first priority. The University's current travel advice is 'do not travel' to Israel so this unit isn't available."

They went on to note that "our travel advice follows risk assessments sourced from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, with International SOS information then used to identify location-specific hazards and safety measures to be applied."

The purpose of the unit, as stipulated by the University's School of Languages, was to "introduce students to the Hebrew language and culture" at a "partner university in Israel." In addition to "practical language lessons", students would supposedly "participate in cultural activities and have the opportunity to interact with local communities including Arab and other minority groups."

The aforementioned "partner

university" was the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, known for opening in 1925 as the first Israeli university in the city. Having a Jewish university in Jerusalem was an early preliminary goal of the Zionist movement, proposed by Hermann Schapira at the First Zionist Congress of 1897. The University prides itself on its primary goal of serving the State of Israel and acting as a "symbol of the cultural rebirth of the Jewish nation in its ancestral homeland" — all while standing on stolen land.

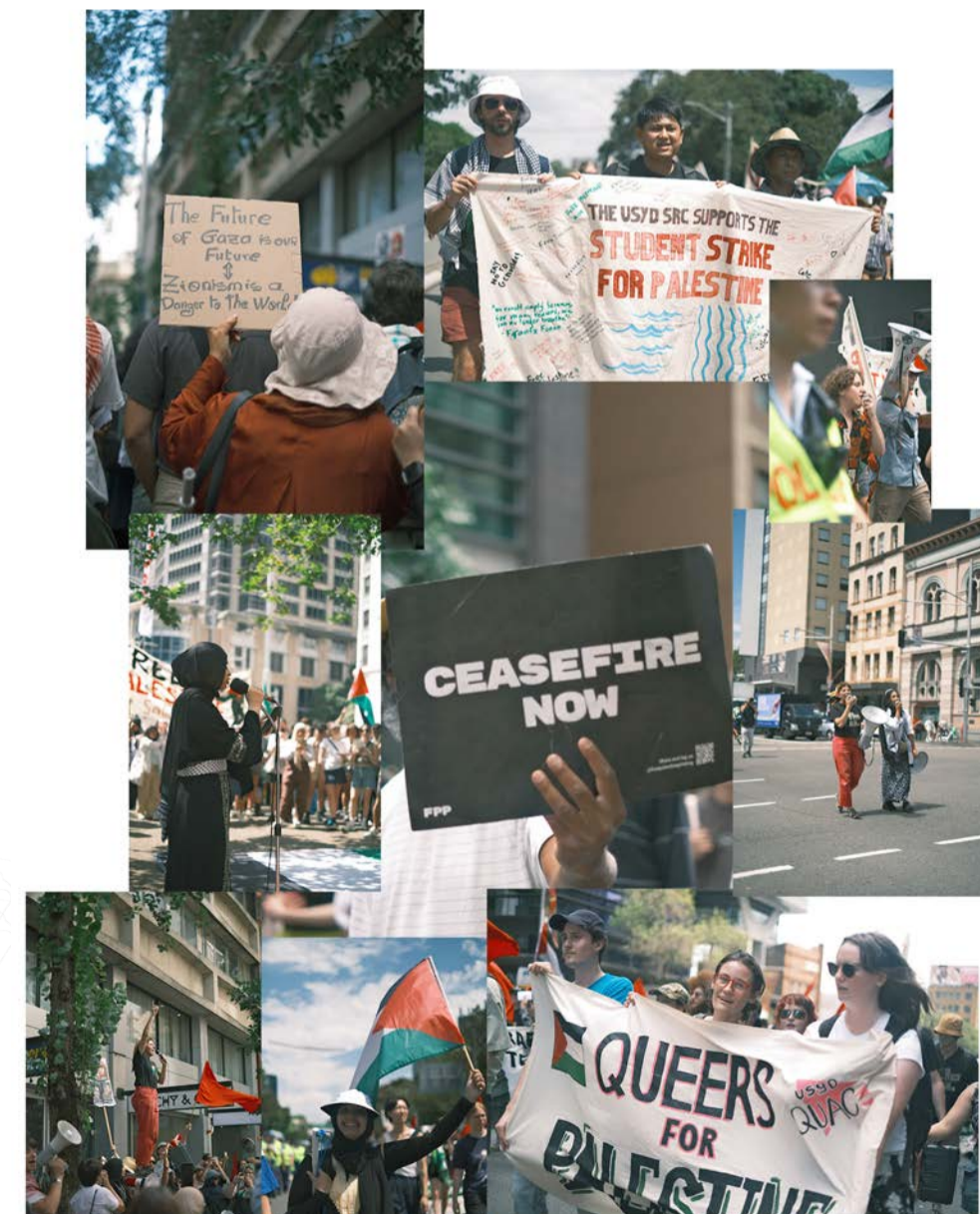
The University's decision to halt OLES2155 comes just days after news of the Israeli Defence Force's (IDF) murder of over 100 Palestinian civilians waiting for food aid in Gaza City. Simultaneously, four more children died from starvation at the Kamal Adwan Hospital, and three Palestinian brothers were shot dead by the IDF near Hebron while collecting the native plant *akoub*.

These atrocities are notably absent from the University's reasons for stopping this OLE in 2024.

Honi Soit will continue to report on any changes to other in-country OLEs, as well as the University's position on OLES2155.

Glimpses of the Sydney students' strike for Palestine

Ishbel Dunsmore photographs.



On the National Day of Action, Sydney students strike for Palestine

Sandra Kallarakkal and Valerie Chidiac report.

Thousands of high school and university students walked out of class on February 29 as part of a National Day of Action to protest the ongoing genocide in Palestine as well as the Australian government's continued support for Israel.

Convening officially outside Town Hall, the walkout began on Eastern Avenue, where a USyd contingent formed. Following speeches by Jasmine Al-Rawi and USyd SRC President Harrison Brennan, the USyd contingent marched to Town Hall, with UTS, MQU and UNSW contingents joining along the way.

The rally at Town Hall was co-chaired by Year 12 Palestinian student activist Noura Hussein, with anti-Zionist Jewish student and Sydney Students for Palestine Organiser Yasmine Johnson.

Noura, from the city of Tulkarem, (طولكرم) began by affirming that the student strike was "to show our government and the international community, [that] while you may stay silent, the students will not." Noura noted the climbing figures: over two million Palestinians forcefully displaced, 30 000+ killed, including 15 000+ children, and others unaccounted for. A minute's silence was held, especially after the invocation of five-year-old Hind Rajab, whose family was killed in their car by Israeli tanks, and who then stayed on the phone with the Palestinian Red Crescent for hours before her death.

Noura signalled that the

government understands "the power youth have in revolution" before reassuring the crowd that "we will disrupt any sense of normalcy shoved down [our] faces."

Yasmin noted the continuous sieges in what Israel used to refer to as "mowing the lawn" and the deliberate policy of starvation, cuts to UNRWA funding, and the fact that the last time food was delivered to northern Gaza was on January 23. Yasmin exclaimed that "leaders cry crocodile tears" and delay a ceasefire, while Aaron Bushnell self-immolates in protest. She also denounced the Australian government's recently announced deal with Israeli-based Elbit Systems worth almost \$1 billion (\$917 million).

Ethan Floyd, Wiradjuri and Wailwan activist and USyd First Nations Officer, spoke to the complicity of the Minns and Albanese government in placing Australia's diplomatic and trade relations above the lives of Palestinians, "there is no neutral stance on genocide. If you're not taking action, you're complicit."

He condemned the political reassurance that Australia is not supplying arms to Israel, and encouraged students to show Chris Minns and Prue Carr that we are educated by learning the "lessons of history in the classroom and standing up outside."

Palestinian activist and UTS student Raneem Emad brought to attention how education has empowered students, highlighting "[our

education] taught us that when we see something wrong we do what we can to stop it... it never taught us to be complicit and silent when we are watching war crimes, it never taught us to be ignorant of the suffering of others."

Raneem continued, "how can we stop when the Israeli occupation shows no signs of stopping?", stating that this is not a "war", "conflict" or "complicated situation". She also asked how she is expected "to sit in international law classes" while Palestinians are being killed, and "if that's the case, the Minns government has never met a Palestinian from Gaza."

The Greens City of Sydney Councillor Sylvie Ellmore spoke in Jenny Leong's absence, noting the irony of speeches taking place near the "colonial building of Town Hall and close to ground zero of invasion." She relayed the UN alarm of an imminent famine in Gaza, while the "one action Australia has decided to take is suspend funding to UNRWA."

Deen Kafina, a Palestinian community organiser and climate activist, spoke about Israeli degradation of Palestinian land, and how the fight for Palestine is intertwined with the fight for climate justice, contending that "the system is not broken, it works



Photography: Ishbel Dunmore

exactly as it is meant to!"

She concluded by reiterating the need for collective self-determination, including the Palestinian right to "self-determination from the river to sea."

Eva Sutherland, Year 12 student activist and high school Students for Palestine organiser, called out the US and Australian governments who "can barely bring themselves to call for a temporary ceasefire." Eva disagreed with politicians redirecting students to use "proper channels because that's how we make real change" and their arguments that students have no real power, because "we stand in a long tradition of global student activism."

Following the speeches, protestors marched to the ALP office on Sussex St. After chanting, the organisers called the office, and sent a voicemail with the crowd vocalising their grievances with the Labor Party.

Students for Palestine will be protesting outside the ALP office on Sussex St, March 15.

Prizes come, scholarships go — if only we knew where

Simone Maddison gets snubbed.

I first became aware of the many prizes, scholarships, and bursaries offered by the University of Sydney while sitting in a third-year mandatory History seminar. At the end of our hour together, my professor quickly diverted to a PowerPoint slide about the department's prize for outstanding work in our unit. He encouraged us to apply, making the pertinent observation that "very few students ever do".

That was the first and last time I have thought about this prize until now, almost a year on. Not only was I completely unaware that it existed before completing this unit at the tail-end of my degree, but I clearly forgot about it the moment I left the lecture theatre. My peers, all in desperate need of the prize money amidst the ongoing cost of living crisis, have been similarly left completing their studies in the dark.

So there remains a large fountain of untapped wealth on our campus, a shared pool supposedly built for students but which never seems to flow to them. The water is murky, veiling where these funds come from and how we might access them. Yet one crystal-clear question remains: where does this money go if no one uses it?

As it turns out, no one seems to know — and they didn't want to talk to me about it.

The money on the table



It is best to start at the shallow end, where it is easier to see and everyone knows how to navigate. The University awards over 600 academic prizes annually, each valued at \$1,000 or more. These prizes were established in 2007 "to recognise exemplary undergraduate students", and are selected internally by each Faculty's Board of Examiners. While students recognised by their faculty are notified automatically, those hoping to claim one of the eight Literary Prizes for poems, plays and essays valued up to \$10,000 must apply themselves.

In addition to the \$8,500 scholarships offered for low socio-economic domestic undergraduate students and the 21 scholarships available for international students completing Bachelors and Honours

degrees, a host of funds and bursaries are also available as a subset of the aforementioned Literary Prizes. While they are only available to students at the Conservatorium of Music, the value, open, and close dates of these prizes remain unlisted at the time of this article's publication.



Art: Aidan Ewing Pollock

The University's Academic Board's Scholarships and Student Recognition Awards Policy, first introduced in 2016 and most recently amended in May of last year, attempts to rectify this obscurity. This Policy details how student recognition awards should be established, managed, marketed, and reviewed. Section 2.7 is of particular interest, stipulating that student recognition awards may be funded by "any, or a mixture, of donated funds, contractually provided funds (including sponsorships), government funding schemes or internal University funds."

Yet this policy fails to provide any specific details about these funds' origins, longevity and ethics. By stating that this money could come from anywhere, the Academic Board has said essentially nothing. Using this information, there appears to be more than \$700,000 available to students each year in the form of academic prize money. This does not include funds accessed through bursaries and scholarships, which fluctuate regularly.

All the funds you cannot see

At first glance, the University's many Heads of School, Chairs and Program Directors appear to be the most knowledgeable people to contact about the allocation of their faculties' funds. Yet of the twenty whom I contacted, only two academics provided any clarity.

One professor in an Arts faculty told me that "as far as scholarship funds and research support etc goes, generally the funds that are available in one year get rolled over to the next if not taken up, so they are still available... it just means we will have more funds to give out next year." As a result, academic staff "know what happens to the unspent balances" of those "scholarships and prizes that have a financial code" related to their faculty.

But crucially, they also noted that "there is a communication issue between the scholarships office, us [university staff] and students. They often open up scholarships for applications with a limited window of time, and fail to tell anyone."

This is because some bursaries have been "taken over by the Scholarships office and we lose control at that point — including of what happens to unspent funding. We have no idea because we can't see the accounts." Many academics have subsequently been left wondering "why the Scholarships office has taken over some of these in the past year."

It seems that the gap between these funds and students has widened quickly and only recently, extending to staff and university management alike. It was at this point that I was intercepted by a University spokesperson, who informed me in a statement that scholarships "exist thanks to the generosity of our donors. Most philanthropic support is strictly managed under legally binding agreements, rather than discretionary funding, meaning gifts must be used in accordance with the donor's wishes and can't be redirected to other causes."

They confirmed that scholarships "established by donors which aren't able to be spent accumulate, so that additional scholarships can be awarded the following semester or year." Yet in contrast with the experiences of academics, the spokesperson also noted that "faculties have discretion to allocate operating funds towards scholarships aligned to their individual strategic objectives. Faculties also have delegate responsibilities for the use of donor funds as per the terms and conditions of the deed."

I left the email thread knowing no more about the total sum, origins and endpoints of these funds than when I started it. As the University spokesperson reminded me, universities are "not-for-profit institutions; every cent we receive is directed back into teaching, student support, research, technology and physical infrastructure." So why was no one able to provide the details necessary to prove this?

The Dalyell dilemma



One further complication is the allocation of funds to members of the

Dalyell Scholars stream. Currently, a Dalyell Global Mobility scholarship of \$2,000 is available to students enrolled in this stream who wish to partake in a Faculty-led program worth at least six credit points, or a semester exchange worth 24 credit points. Students must apply for these programs, and funds are centrally administered through Sydney Student and the Dalyell Subcommittee of the Scholarships Office.

It is worth noting that students not enrolled in the Dalyell program are still able to access \$1,500 in the Vice Chancellor's Global Mobility scholarship.

Akin to the handling of other scholarships and prizes, the same University spokesperson told me that "where the allocation exceeds demand in any one year (as it did, for example, during the pandemic) the funds are used for other areas within the scholarships portfolio. Similarly where demand exceeds the amount budgeted additional funds are sourced from other areas."

However, when I spoke to another Economics academic at the University, they clarified that "when students do not get a chance to pursue an overseas enrichment experience and they are in their last year of their degree, they can use those funds for a domestic enrichment activity such as attending a conference, research, or in-country experience." But in their position, they can only provide "a quality control check to make sure that the activity will enrich students' academic experience."

This academic also pointed out that it is difficult to determine the number of Dalyell students at the beginning of each academic year because high-performing individuals can join the stream at any time. This "would probably involve some uncertainty in the funds required for every cohort", potentially fuelling further miscommunication between staff and students.

Your hard-earned cash



Two conclusions are clear despite the University's lack of transparency: that unclaimed funds are continuously recycled across various bursaries, scholarships, and prizes, but that no one knows where or how. Any control that academics once had has now been relinquished to University management, along with the hope of finding out who has donated this money and where they got it in the first place.

There is only one thing left to do — apply for every piece of funding that you can. At least then we will know where it has gone.

Twentieth week of Free Palestine protests in Sydney

Niamh Elliott-Brennan reports.

At 1:30pm on Sunday February 25, the Palestinian Action Group (PAG) held their twentieth consecutive protest at Hyde Park, demanding an immediate ceasefire and end to Israel's genocide in Palestine.

This protest occurred against the backdrop of an imminent full-scale offensive by the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) on the designated 'safe zone' Rafah, where an estimated 1.5 million Palestinians are sheltering.

Palestinian woman Jana Fayyad co-chaired the event alongside PAG's Josh Lees. Fayyad, who spoke about being forced to watch her people massacred whilst global leaders stood by silently, said that she "stand[s] in front of [us] today as a broken woman, but I am not ashamed of that."

Fayyad referenced recent news from the UN Special Procedures panel over reports about the sexual assault of Palestinian women and girls in Israeli detention, expressing horror over the prevalence of sexual violence as a military tactic by the IDF. "Where are all the white feminists now?" Fayyad asked, calling out prominent feminists who have stayed silent about Palestine. "You have lost the right to call yourselves

feminist," Fayyad said.

Fayyad also reminded attendees that Gaza was not the only place under attack. Fayyad noted that the West Bank and Lebanon have both been recipients of Israeli military offensives, with over 87,000 people displaced by Israeli attacks in Lebanon since October 8.

Mohamad Zarob, a Palestinian man from Khan Younis, spoke about his family, 70 of whom have been massacred in Palestine. He criticised overtones of racism and Islamophobia in political criticisms of the protest, asking attendees "why are [politicians] enraged and surprised by our basic human reaction to the insurmountable grief of genocide?"

Without action, Australia will be "legally complicit in genocide," Zarob asserted, referencing the 127 Australian scholars who wrote an open letter calling for immediate action from the government.

Palestinians are literal people, Zarob told the crowd. "Our most famous dish is called 'upside-down', because when you make it you literally flip it upside-down." So, Zarob continued, when a Palestinian tells you they "will

not bow down to tyranny," you should know they "will not bow down."

PAG's Josh Lees and Greens Senator David Shoebridge both spoke about the Australian government's complicity in the genocide, condemning Foreign Minister Penny Wong's decision to halt funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

The halt to UNRWA funding occurred after Israel brought allegations of staff affiliation with Hamas to the UN, despite a recent US intelligence report into these claims casting doubt on their validity.

Lees and Shoebridge also deplored the Foreign Minister's refusal to acknowledge the \$10 million in weapons exports Australia has sent to Israel (such as the 'Australian spike' missile production at Varley Rafael Australia).

Ethan Floyd, a Wiradjuri Wailwan student activist (and former *Honi Soit* editor), focused on the "parallel existence" of First Nations peoples in Australia and Palestinians, both the victims of settler-colonial violence, "marginalised in our own countries". Floyd said the stories of suffering in

From Saltburn to Hogwarts: Tracing the classist history of Oxbridge popular culture

Angus McGregor becomes an Anglophile.

When Christopher Hitchens visited a California bookstore in 2007 to pick up a review copy of the *Deathly Hallows*, he was shocked by the hundreds of children wearing black gowns, and the stalls proclaiming, “Get your house colours here!”

To him, he was not just witnessing a cultural phenomenon but a practiced and prolific homage to the Anglophilic nature of our popular culture. The “dreams of wealth and class and snobbery,” as Hitchens put it, were built into the fascination with sandstone universities and the sealed letters dropped from above by a parliament of owls that invited you into them.

Set in the same year, *Saltburn* is a partially self-aware contributor to this tradition. At one point, Elordi’s character Felix Catton can be seen reading the final Potter book, while the Saltburn mansion looms in the background. Oliver Quick’s hedonistic fascination and repressed anger at the Catton family, which later transitions into a bloody rampage, reflects how the average person has looked at Oxbridge and the Mansions, compared to the students going back home for centuries. The speculation on how the other half lives has driven a classist literary tradition that ‘may’ poke fun at the aristocracy but also give them an undesired ritual power.

The first mainstream novels romanticising the life of the Anglophone upper class began in the

early 19th century. Thomas Hughes’s *Tom Brown’s School Days* and Kipling’s *Stalky & Co* were both bestsellers set in old English public schools. The plots follow adolescent boys as they become ‘men’ in an environment dominated by bullying, sport, and a traditional liberal education filled with Latin classics and English history.

Australians were not immune from the glamour either. The Australian Common Reader tracks reading habits of mostly working-class Australians between 1861 and 1928 using circulation records from six mechanics institute libraries statewide. Miners and Homemakers were the most popular borrowers. Rather than reading novels closer to their experience, they too become trapped in Anglophile chains.

The third most popular author, ahead of Charles Dickens, was Henry Rider Haggard, a Conservative election candidate who wrote novels like *King Solomon’s Mines* (1885) which follows young British explorers as they ‘discover’ parts of Africa. Even when there was a book on the list which prominently featured the working class, like Silas Kitto Hocking’s *Her Benny*, which follows the lives of Liverpool street kids, it was a morality tale where the young boys cast away their perceived filth and become model workers.

It’s easy to dismiss these types of literature as an escape, however their prominence suggests something much more sinister. A rigid class

system depends on the perception that mobility is possible and, more importantly, desirable. ANU Professor Julieanne Lamond argues that “the ostensible aim for these libraries really was workers’ education.”

If that is the case, the workers have been taught that the greatest good is an adolescent boy wearing an oversized tie reciting hymns on the path to becoming an officer. In 1940, when the British empire was seemingly on its last legs, George Orwell noticed that the weekly boys magazines and penny novels that kids bought from London newsstands overflowed with nostalgia for the public school lifestyle:

“It is quite clear that there are tens and scores of thousands of people to whom every detail of life at a ‘posh’ public school is wildly thrilling and romantic. They happen to be outside that mystic world of quadrangles and house-colours, but they can...live mentally in it for hours at a stretch.”

In *Harry Potter*, that nostalgia is on full display. Revered figures like Godric Gryffindor and Albus Dumbledore have deeply Anglo-Saxon names and Hogwarts beauty comes from its history that readers are deliberately only given a taste of. Even other magical cultures are depicted as largely usurpers. In *The Goblet of Fire*, also filmed at Oxford, the Beauxbatons Academy of Magic led by Fleur Delacour wear blue hats and sing with birds while the men from Durmstrang, led by Viktor Krum, shout war chants and wear fur coats. Their initial entrance to Hogwarts is almost

a procession. Both schools perform for the students before paying respect to Dumbledore. Hogwarts, it seems, and by extension Britain, is at the centre of the magical universe.

In *Saltburn*, there is some attempt to poke fun at the Oxford staples. In a tutorial, Oliver and Farleigh argue over nothing while a tired Professor sits there mindlessly prompting them to continue. Yet, most of the audience would be lying to themselves if they said they didn’t envy the parties in the colleges like Oliver does.

Orwell points out that in the boys magazines, “the working classes only enter into the Gem and Magnet as comics or semi-villains.” *Saltburn* takes that to the extreme. Not only can Oliver not handle the pure pleasure of a life at the Catton family home, but he also has to kill them and take what they have. Oliver’s poverty and parental drug problems are all a middle-class fabrication to get his hands on wealth he does not deserve. “As for class-friction, trade unionism, strikes, slumps, unemployment,” Orwell continues, “not a mention.”

The lavish *Midsummer Night’s Dream* themed parties and eccentric family members will never be good enough for Oliver because as Farleigh tells him bluntly, “you will never be one of us.” The message to the wider population is clear. It’s okay to have a taste of our world on the page but never okay to enter it.

Elizabeth Farm. Both are steeped in Australia’s tumultuous colonial history, and both, with their gardens and greenery, serve as a counterpoint to the surrounding suburbia.

Vaucluse, encompassing traditional Birrabirragal lands, gets its name from Vaucluse House, the construction of which began in 1803. It was initially the cottage of Sir Henry Browne Hayes, Irish landowner turned kidnapper, turned convict. The estate was purchased by the explorer, barrister, and journalist William Charles Wentworth in 1827, after which he and his family, including partner Sarah Cox, moved in and transformed the property.

While the Wentworths were long ostracised by high society for their convict heritage, the circumstances of their relationship, and William’s political agitation, the house had its place in Sydney’s social scene. It hosted a boisterous party when Governor Darling — then derided for his stance on ex-convicts’ rights, deadly punishment of two absconding soldiers, and harsh restrictions on the press — was dismissed. Sydney was a rougher town, reflected by the drunken

gathering of nearly 4,000. It was in this setting that Australia’s march from the rule of autocratic governors toward parliamentary self-governance began.

Sarah oversaw Vaucluse House, living a life that was ‘comfortable yet secluded’, though she became more socially involved as the family became accepted by high society. She had been the litigant in Australia’s first breach of promise suit, represented by William. These suits allowed women to sue men who reneged on a promise to marry, at a time when women’s livelihoods were typically highly dependent on marriage. Sarah also played a key role in designing the nearby Wentworth Mausoleum, once within the estate grounds.

Australia’s oldest homestead, Elizabeth Farm in Rosehill — on Darug lands — has many on-paper commonalities. It, too, was a grand home, inhabited by the Macarthurs from its beginnings in 1793. On the farm, Elizabeth and John Macarthur pioneered Australia’s wool industry, which drove the New South Wales colony’s early wealth. Elizabeth managed the property herself for long periods. The Macarthurs always

Cautious optimism: The future of the Australian Universities Accord Report implementation

Angus McGregor, Ariana Haghighi & Aidan Elwig Pollock look forward.

Spanning over 400 pages and 47 recommendations, the University Accord Final Report is the most significant review of the tertiary sector in at least 15 years. Led by Dr Mary O’Kane, former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Adelaide, the panel released an interim report in July last year before delivering their findings to the federal Education Minister Jason Clare in December.

The report comes at a time when there is a clear consensus that the future growth of the Australian economy depends on a massive increase in university and vocational skill attainment. The report argues the proportion of Australians with tertiary qualifications needs to rise from 60% to 80% by 2050, with 55% of people aged 25-34 needing to gain a university degree. That amounts to over 1.8 million Commonwealth Supported Places annually. Recognising its scale, the government has publicly analysed the plan with the staggering increase in high school attendance (40% to 80%) during the Hawke and Keating years.

While bold in its diagnosis of the issues facing Australian education and skills development, the report’s largely excellent recommendations will be quickly overshadowed by its cost, alongside the multiple levels of negotiations across federal and state governments required to legislate and implement any changes. The implementation of the Accord report requires the establishment

of an Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC) that would, in principle, function independently from government and oversee the reform. The ATEC is evidence that even the procedural elements of the Accord will take time to become a reality.

The purpose of the ATEC and the extent of its power is ambiguous. Following the interim report, The Australian published that the ATEC will “help protect universities from the political winds of the day,” highlighting the conservative narrative that the progressive politics surrounding universities are a threat. Others fear the oversight body’s interventionist powers will threaten institutional autonomy. Australian National University Professor in the Practice of Higher Education Andrew Norton warns that the ATEC may become a “monster” wrecking “overreach” over time. Norton believes that the Commission can step into waters of over-regulation, depending on who manages it. However, Norton explains that the detail provided on the ATEC in the recently released report calms some of his worries compared to the description provided in the interim report, to which he responded by calling the proposed ATEC “Job-ready Graduates 2.0”.

Coming into an election year, the government will likely begin acting on the report during the May budget in areas that align with its narrative on reducing cost of living. However,

had an aristocratic flair — Elizabeth lamented the foul language of women convicts on the notorious Second Fleet.

As John became insane, Elizabeth consented to him being sent to the family’s Camden estate, managing the property until her death. Elizabeth was one example of a commercially successful woman in the colonial era; another, trader Mary Reibey, whose home stood in Newtown, features on the twenty dollar banknote.

These properties have been transformed into community assets. In addition to their inherent histories, their greenspaces are a welcome reprieve. Standing in the grass around Vaucluse House, one sees little except vegetation; people and dogs stroll nearby. Elizabeth Farm is surrounded by some measure of greenspace, too. Such storied, serene spaces are invaluable possessions for a busy city.

The Indigenous histories of these places, and of Australia at large, cannot be forgotten. The gift shops of both estates stock Bill Gammage’s *The Biggest Estate on Earth*, which promises to detonate “the myth that pre-settlement Australia was an

untamed wilderness”, and reveal “the complex, country-wide systems of land management used by Aboriginal people.” These historic homesteads preceded further development around them. As colonial society expanded outwards from Sydney Cove, Aboriginal people lost ever more of their traditional lands, compounded by an absence of treaties which continues to this day. While Vaucluse House and Elizabeth Farm are kept in good nick, other grand homes have fallen into disrepair. Not all historic houses, however, are majestic estates. Many, lining successive streets of Sydney’s inner suburbs, have thoroughly working class histories. MHSNW maintains Susannah Place in The Rocks, which it describes as a ‘resilient reminder’ of the role in Sydney’s development played by immigrants; the terrace was built by Irish immigrants in 1844.

History, community, and shared spaces are intertwined, and Sydney’s historic homes have a unique role in bringing these together. They remind us of those who lived before, influencing those around and after them. May we think of who we are, too, and our own legacies.

the fiscal ‘responsibility’ Albanese has modelled himself on will likely block further reform until after the election. Clare has already told the media this will take “multiple ministers and multiple governments.” Unfortunately, reviews almost never last that long.

The last review of higher education, the 2008 Bradley Review, also called on the government to increase income support to close the equity gaps in higher education, enhance funding for rural campuses, and develop pathways between higher education and vocational education. While the Accord uses stronger language and phrases the crisis in more urgent terms, the similarities with the Bradley Review highlights that governments can act in degrees.

“The report comes at a time when there is a clear consensus that the future growth of the Australian economy depends on a massive increase in university and vocational skill attainment.”

While the 2009 budget did increase financial support and needs-based funding for low-income and First Nations students, it was minimal because the Gillard government was focused on implementing the Gonski reforms. Overall, even though many recommendations were implemented, \$2.3 billion of government funding towards universities was cut. The process of what goes into a budget is often a matter of optical priority. Strong action on the Accord depends on governments aligning recommendations with electability. However, as the current secretary of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet Glenn Davis pointed out when he was University of Melbourne Vice Chancellor “all recent governments have cut university funding per student in real terms. There is no evidence that any paid a political price for doing so.”

The Accord only recommends one funding mechanism, the Higher Education Future Fund (HEFF), outside of governments directly injecting money into the sector. The \$10 billion fund would be primarily funded through levies on university income in areas like philanthropic donations and international student fees, with the bulk of the money coming from wealthy universities like USyd and the University of Melbourne.

While regional universities, who would benefit most from the fund, have come out in support of the plan — University of Newcastle Vice Chancellor Alex Zelinsky called it “progressive” — larger universities are already lobbying hard against it. Mark Scott called the policy a “tax dressed up as a fund” and argued that because international student income is the primary way universities fund research due to government cuts, the levy would put further pressure on the sector.

There are also serious concerns about the reliability of the income. The government’s recent crackdown on migration has caused many international students to lose their visa, with thousands of potential students now being turned away. Disincentivising the attraction of students by taxing fees won’t create a sustainable base of funding. Further, as Clare himself conceded, it’s unclear why donations to individual universities would remain consistent if donors no longer had full control over where the money went. A similar \$11 billion fund was set up after the Bradley Review but was dropped after only three investment rounds with the money being transferred to the NDIS.

Foreshadowing the USyd SRC’s response to the report, Harrison Brennan in his President’s report this week highlights that a direct GDP commitment from the government on the long term funding of the tertiary sector is crucially missing. Brennan also pointed out that the universities’ supposed not-for-profit model comes under little scrutiny in the report. While universities claim all profit is reinvested back into research and education, there are very limited guidelines on where within the university they can spend that money. The over \$1 billion profit USyd recorded last financial year could have been reinvested in increasing casual wages or lowering the cost of student accommodation well below market rates. However, as this week’s article on prizes and bursaries shows, a lot of the money coming into the university goes into vague pools which are meant to be redistributed to students but where the money goes remains largely a mystery.

After spending weeks bombarding the public with their minor changes to the Stage 3 tax cuts, any movement on the report in the budget will likely align with short term cost of living relief. Clare has signalled that the recommended changes to the HECS loan scheme are on his agenda. The Accord proposes the government index loan payments to wage growth rather than the Consumer Price Index and reduce upfront payments for those earning below a certain income threshold. Indexing increases to wage growth would prevent the 7.1% increase in HECS indexation students

Home, sweet home

Will Thorpe scopes the streets.



Art: Claudia Blane

In a city where heritage and housing are often made enemies, in a country that can seem to have limited interest in its history, a spattering of historic homes is a saving grace.

Though merely one subset of historic buildings, historic homes have a multifaceted importance as exemplifiers of architecture — as are Newtown’s Victorian terraces — and,

often, former residences of significant figures in Australia’s development. In their presence, these houses erode the perception of their eras as long ago and detached.

Museums of History New South Wales (MHSNW) manages several properties as house museums, including the Gothic Revival Vaucluse House and the Australian Old Colonial

faced last year when inflation peaked. Reducing upfront payments could be the equivalent of saving around \$1000 for those on incomes of around \$75,000 a year — a wage common for first year carers, teachers and nurses.

Implementing these changes would also, in effect, repeal the Morrison-era Jobs Ready Graduate Program which increased the fees of some degree areas in order to encourage students to choose more 'employable' degrees. Since 2019, the increased fees have not shifted the demand for arts, law, or other degrees deemed less desirable. Both the National Union of Students (NUS) and National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) have publicly backed the repeal of the law. "It had terrible implications for the sector and didn't work as it was intended," NTEU president Alison Barnes said, citing the report as conclusive evidence the law had failed.

Other recommendations, such as an increase to youth allowance and more free vocational and tertiary preparatory places are easy for the government to act on for similar reasons. The government has already committed to another 300,000 free fee TAFE places this year and increased youth allowance in the last budget. Clare, in his own words, "made it clear my priority is helping more kids from the outer suburbs and the regions, more kids from poor backgrounds get a crack at university." The 54% retention rate for education students has been flagged by the government as evidence that money needs to be targeted at selectively easing the cost of university. The amount poorer students will receive could be negligible in a cost of living crisis, but the government may count on the flip side of that, every dollar is worth more

when you are under pressure.

The report also responds to student feedback in reducing unpaid work placements, which are often inherent features of university degrees such as teaching, nursing and social work. The push for paid placements reveals that reforms to tertiary education depend on fixing the structural inequality that plagues Australian high schools. Increased university attendance assumes a higher percentage of Australians are graduating high school when in reality graduation rates have been dropping for the past five years. The recent story that the top five private schools spend more on facilities than 3,300 public schools highlights the reality that, at best, public schools in Australia are only funded at 89% of the Gonski target set years ago. The students who fall behind in fundamental areas like literacy and numeracy are the very group the Accord wants to attend university. Teacher and facility shortages impact the regional and First Nations students the government wants to uplift more than any other demographic.

The federal government is currently negotiating a new school funding agreement with states. Western Australia has attained an in-principle agreement from the government that the 5% shortfall in funding will be fully covered by the Commonwealth. Other states, many in heavy debt, have every incentive to seek the same concessions. The cruel reality of these negotiations is that every dollar given to states to fund public schools is likely a dollar taken out of funding an Accord recommendation. Just like Gonski disrupted the implementation of the Bradley review in 2009, education can only make up so much of the budget

announcements, even though both sectors need serious reform and there is a clear consensus on how deep the issues are.

Alongside improvements to the student experience, the Accord report aims to ameliorate the Australian research system, claiming Australia "does not currently use its full potential as a source of innovation". Despite record profits for many Group of Eight (Go8) research-intensive universities since 2021, Australian universities fail to invest adequately in research, particularly supporting researchers — our university tutors. During USyd's Enterprise Bargaining agreement, USyd management fiercely attempted to displace the 40/40/20 workload for academic staff (40% teaching, 40% research, 20% administration), envisioning a shift where fewer academic staff engage with research.

To 'support' research, USyd has taken a 'top-down' approach which concentrates its financial surplus in management and fails to buttress research projects among casual academics. In USyd's 2022 Annual Report, one of USyd's key policies to tackle declines in research output was the establishment of additional Pro-Vice-Chancellor positions. Though this may assist in systematic reform in USyd's research sector, it fails to address funding gaps.

The Accord report focuses on governmental support for research, which although also beneficial, particularly for smaller universities, neglects the underlying problem that major Australian universities undervalue research, particularly in non-STEM industries. There are also no

recommendations on job insecurity or issues facing university researchers themselves.

These recommendations regarding governmental financial support for research do respond to an epidemic of funding cuts to the research sector under the Coalition government; government investment in academic research only accounts for 0.17% of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The report charts a pathway for the government to fully-fund university research, where universities charge, and governments pay, full market rates for commissioned and contract research and consulting. It also plans for the creation of a government-run "Solving Australian Challenges Strategic Fund", which involves the allocation of funding to universities, based on factors such as a "portfolio assessment" and the "University's mission". This recommendation outright states, "Universities with exceptional performance should be rewarded at a higher level than others." Placing access to funding on a competitive plane might bolster the worst elements of university management policies, encouraging image-conscious, PR-driven campaigns to secure it. It also raises the threat of smaller universities facing neglect as they have less resources to lobby their research to fit the very arbitrary "exceptional performance" metric.

Regional tertiary education has been singled out in the report for special attention. The regions face a number of challenges less applicable to metropolitan universities. The 2017 Halsey Review — the Independent Review into Regional, Rural and Remote Education — made eleven

recommendations in this area, including the need to bolster support for students living away from home. This produced the Regional University Study Hubs program, which from 2018 saw \$100 million committed to 32 Regional Hubs across Australia. These "hubs" are intended to provide study spaces, computer facilities, internet access and academic skills support. The report, along with the 2019 Napthine Review, culminated in the Coalition Government's National Regional, Rural and Remote Education Strategy. This included an increase in funding for regional campuses, a new role entitled Regional Education Commissioner, bolstering regional research and a \$5000 Tertiary Access Payment for regional students. This was not the first attempt to ameliorate the unique burdens placed upon students at regional universities. Over a decade ago, the Social Security Amendment (Student Income Support Reforms) Bill 2011 expanded the laxer youth allowance rules that applied to "Outer Regional, Remote and Very Remote areas" to students from "Inner Regional areas" and introduced a "Relocation Scholarship" to "eligible regional students."

However, it is clear regional universities still face significant challenges, some of which previous attempts to bolster regional study failed to lighten. The Tertiary Access Payment in particular represents a problematic initiative. Firstly, the payment is not applied until after the census date, forcing students to pay any relocation costs from their own pocket before receiving reimbursement from the government. Another serious oversight derives from rules surrounding course commencement. Under the current model, the Tertiary Access Payment can only be taken if students attend tertiary education immediately after completing high school. This prevents prospective students from taking a gap year. Whilst this may appear at first glance to simply lock students out of a privilege not even afforded to many

metropolitan students, a gap year is a necessity for many regional school leavers to access independent youth allowance. "Concessional criteria" that apply to regional students enable those aged 21 or below to negate the impact of their parents' income on their youth allowance eligibility if they demonstrate financial independence by working at least 15 hours a week for more than two years. Preventing students from undertaking gap years adds another obstacle in place of the roadblock bulldozed by the Tertiary Access Payment.

These are not the only challenges faced by regional students. Whilst placement poverty is a noted issue for even metropolitan students, costs imposed by long-distance travel compound the issue for regional students. Additionally, existing inequalities in the primary and secondary education system — including teacher shortages and limited subject menus — can cause problems for regional school leavers who want to attend university. This is important because, according to the Regional Universities Network, "[regional universities] do the heavy lifting in attracting students from regional and remote backgrounds to higher education and graduating them."

According to the report it is also regional universities themselves that face significant financial obstacles to providing quality education. Regional universities face a lack of "high-value investments, valuable infrastructure, established and diverse revenue profiles, and philanthropic support" when compared to high-profile metropolitan universities like USyd. Additionally, only 7% of Australia's research funding finds its way to regional universities, while the geographic necessity of spread campuses means more courses must be run, and more facilities built, for less students.

These obstacles, both for students and the institutions that they study at, must be ameliorated. According to

the Regional Universities Network, "students who go to university in regional Australia tend to remain in regional areas after graduation," however "students who leave regional areas to study in an urban institution are unlikely to return." Australia is one of the most urbanised countries in the world, a trend that has consistently increased since the colonial era. In 1901, around 33% of Australian workers found employment in regional resources industries. In 1906, 50% of Australia's people lived in the Bush. Now the script has flipped, and Australia's metropolitan centres take a lion's share of the country's economic potential. This has contributed to a series of socio-economic problems in regional Australia, including a much publicised regional skills shortage and high rates of economic disadvantage. Service shortages, particularly in areas of school education, early childhood education and healthcare, only compound disadvantages in regional areas. Educating more teachers, nurses and childcare practitioners in the regions will go a long way to ensure these services can be fulfilled.

The most ambitious attempt to reform regional education is the National Regional University (NRU). The idea was first raised in the Interim Report. The final report "acknowledged the serious sustainability issues faced by some regional universities" and "noted the need to consider new approaches to improve delivery of higher education in regional and remote Australia." This led to the recommendation of "exploring the creation of a second national university — a National Regional University." However, the report also notes "mixed feedback" for the idea: some regional stakeholders asserted that a NRU would only work if properly funded, while others "questioned how long it might take to establish and wanted to know what positive, negative and unintended consequences there might be for existing

institutions and their communities." "More detail required" seems to be the consensus. Nevertheless, the report "sees value in further examining the potential creation of a National Regional University."

This would not be the first time a National University was created by the federal government to fill a skills shortage and enable a more hands-on approach to a troubled tertiary education system. Canberra's Australian National University (ANU) was established in 1946 by the Chifley government as a post-war reconstruction measure. If ANU is anything to go by, a National Regional University could be a huge success: ANU is now part of the Group of Eight, and represents one of Australia's biggest tertiary education providers. History shows that direct government involvement can have spectacular results, but for a NRU to work, stability and consistent funding would be a necessity. Ultimately however, a NRU is still a long way off. Land was set aside for a University like ANU in Canberra in 1908 by Walter Burley Griffin himself, yet the institution wasn't built for another four decades. Regional Tertiary Education needs creative and large scale solutions promptly to secure a better life for everyone in rural and regional Australia — a NRU cannot be left to stew in the ideas stage like ANU was.

Clare is already using this report within broader election rhetoric, "the election I fight next year will determine the future of public education in this country." At this point in the government's response, sweeping statements like this are unearned. The political stagnation that has dominated recent Australian politics will likely doom this report to largely gather dust on the Education Minister's desk. Unless there is strong action in the May budget, the mandate for university reform will slip away when the other issues ranging from housing to immigration dominate the upcoming election cycle. The Labor government will only act if there are votes to lose — university students have an obligation to make their votes count.

A better funding model

Modular, stackable skills. Australia should have more modular, stackable skills that can be earned in shorter periods of time. This would require more modular, flexible learning pathways.

New qualifications and better pathways are needed to support personal and professional development, and to provide better opportunities for students to gain skills and do the research that sets them up for the future.

Delivering for students means higher and more accessible income support for students who need it most. Student contributions that are fairer and reflect the lifetime benefits that students will gain from studying are needed. Fairer and simpler indexation and repayment arrangements are also required.

Replacing the Job-ready Graduates (JRG) package. The Review found the JRG package replaced. Its purpose of providing price influence student subject choices has been replaced.

Putting students at the centre is a new objective. A national tertiary education system with an objective of underpinning a strong, equitable and resilient democracy, and driving national economic and social development and environmental sustainability.

A future fund. Since the closure of the Education Infrastructure Fund, there has been no dedicated government funding for higher education infrastructure. To provide a student housing and funding for the creation of a High Quality Education Fund.

Students pay considerable fees and the Review found there is a need to ensure they receive good teaching in return.

Student safety. The Review heard from students about the problems they face, including sexual violence, support and housing that students and staff face when on campus or

The proportion of students receiving income support has fallen.

Recognising the reality and importance of student part-time work. The proportion of students studying part-time is increasing. Student

A new vision for tertiary education

The Review makes it clear it is critical to increase participation in and successful completion of tertiary education. Australia is not meeting our current skills needs and will not meet them in the future unless we produce far greater numbers of completions.

Needs-based funding. Australia should recognise the need to not just improve access to higher education, but also to ensure that people from groups historically under-represented in higher education receive the support they need to succeed. The Review recommended the introduction of a needs-based funding system.

Australia needs a more equitable and innovative higher education system.

Skills through equity

The Review's vision is to grow and strengthen tertiary education in Australia over the next two decades so that all Australians have the opportunity to obtain the knowledge, skills and

In 2022, Australian higher education providers enrolled almost 450,000 international fee-paying students (more than a quarter of total enrolments), with around 120,000 of these studying Australian higher education courses from outside Australia.⁹ International student fees contributed more than a fifth of overall university funding.¹⁰ Now Australia's

Subverting narratives with Sweatshop Literacy Movement

Valerie Chidiac and Sandra Kallarakkal interview founder Michael Mohammad Ahmad and general manager Winnie Dunn.

A University of Western Sydney 2013 media piece describes Sweatshop as “a new movement in Western Sydney that is quickly gaining momentum and empowering scores of potential local writers.” Nearly twelve years on, Sweatshop is well into its mission of literacy empowerment and diverse storytelling.

What prompted the founding of the Sweatshop Literacy Movement?

Sweatshop draws its values and strength from the teachings and philosophies of the late African-American scholar and intersectional feminist, bell hooks, who argued:

“All steps towards freedom and justice in any culture are dependent on mass-based literacy movements — because degrees of literacy determine how we see what we see.”

Western Sydney is home to over 2.6 million people, making it the most densely populated region in Australia. Furthermore, Western Sydney is home to Australia's largest communities of people from Indigenous, migrant and refugee backgrounds; with more than half its population being able to speak a language other than English.

Unfortunately, the communities of Western Sydney have historically been represented in politics, media and arts in a negative light. The dominant and mainstream narratives have often focused on one-dimensional portraits about poverty, ethnicity and crime.

As one of Australia's leading FNPOC-led literary organisations, we founded Sweatshop in order to bridge the gap between diverse Australian writers and general Australian readers on a national scale.

Can you explain what Sweatshop does and your primary objectives for this movement?

Our purpose is to deliver arts and cultural programs for diverse writers throughout Australia — with a key focus on Western Sydney — which centre and celebrate ‘own-voices’ narratives and provide original contributions to world knowledge.

Sweatshop's annual program includes an ongoing writers' group initiative for First Nations and POC storytellers from Western Sydney; an ongoing writers' collective for First Nations and POC women from Western Sydney; and creative writing residencies and workshops in schools, universities, arts centres and literary festivals throughout Australia. The outcomes of these writers' group initiatives and writers' residencies and workshops include the development of single-authored texts, anthologies, poetry collections, live performances and theatre productions, short films, podcasts and writing seminars. Together, these programs and outcomes seek to highlight new and empowering narratives about some of Australia's most underrepresented communities, which challenge and subvert mainstream stereotypes about the cultural ‘Other’.



What was the reasoning behind the name ‘Sweatshop’?

People are always asking us why our organisation is called Sweatshop. “Where are the sewing machines?” one writer scoffed when she visited our office for the first time. The origin of the word ‘text’ is from the Latin, which means ‘woven’. No person who works in Sweatshop comes with a needle and a thread but there is a lot of stitching.

The goal of Sweatshop is the same as that of any sweatshop: to weave. And just like a sweatshop, most of the people that become involved with us identify as marginalised: young writers from low socio-economic and/or diverse backgrounds who struggle to have their voices heard and their experiences valued amongst Australia's dominant White culture.

It is only the outcomes of Sweatshop that differ from what we consider to be a real sweatshop. While sweatshops are spaces that disempower and dehumanise people of colour, Sweatshop Literacy Movement aims to provide Australians from Indigenous, migrant and refugee backgrounds with the tools to counteract racist, sexist, classist and homophobic narratives that are often encoded in mainstream media, film, television, computer games and literature.

As one of Australia's leading FNPOC-led literary organisations, we founded Sweatshop in order to bridge the gap between diverse Australian writers and general Australian readers on a national scale.

Can you explain what Sweatshop does and your primary objectives for this movement?

Our purpose is to deliver arts and cultural programs for diverse writers throughout Australia — with a key focus on Western Sydney — which centre and celebrate ‘own-voices’ narratives and provide original contributions to world knowledge.

Sweatshop's annual program includes an ongoing writers' group initiative for First Nations and POC storytellers from Western Sydney; an ongoing writers' collective for First Nations and POC women from Western Sydney; and creative writing residencies and workshops in schools, universities, arts centres and literary festivals throughout Australia. The outcomes of these writers' group initiatives and writers' residencies and workshops include the development of single-authored texts, anthologies, poetry collections, live performances and theatre productions, short films, podcasts and writing seminars. Together, these programs and outcomes seek to highlight new and empowering narratives about some of Australia's most underrepresented communities, which challenge and subvert mainstream stereotypes about the cultural ‘Other’.

In order to address this significant gap in our arts and cultural landscape, Sweatshop focuses on the needs of our writing communities, including storytellers from Indigenous, African, Asian, Arab, South American, Pasifika



Credit: Michael Mohammad Ahmad and even some European backgrounds.

Since 2012, Sweatshop has supported over 10,000 First Nations and POC primary and high school students throughout Australia (the majority of whom are from Western Sydney), to develop their critical reading and writing abilities, as well as produce short stories, poems and essays which have been presented in print, audio, video and live theatre outcomes.

Alongside Sweatshop's annual school programs, our organisation has provided high quality writing collectives, mentorships and residencies to mature-aged established and emerging writers from First Nations and POC backgrounds. Facilitated by a team of award-winning and acclaimed authors, these fellowships have provided literacy and literary skills to over 500 First Nations and POC writers, as well as numerous opportunities to publish and publicly present their work.

Whilst there are several literary organisations in the western suburbs of Sydney, Sweatshop Literacy Movement is the first and only Western Sydney-based literary organisation in Australia that is entirely run by and for First Nations and POC communities with strong ties to the region.

To date, Sweatshop has collaborated with some of Australia's leading writers, thinkers and arts practitioners, including Ghassan Hage, Shankari Chandran, Amani Haydar, Randa Abdel-Fattah, Evelyn Araluen, Jumana Bayeh, Sara Saleh, Shirley Le, Phoebe Grainer, Daniel Nour, Tyree Barnette, Sarah Ayoub, Sela Ahošivi-Atioli, Jazz Money, Natalia Figueroa Barroso, Sheree Josphe, Michelle Law, Sisonke Msimang and L-FRESH The LION.

You focus on “reading, writing and critical thinking”, the latter being a buzzword that university students are very familiar with. How does Sweatshop interpret critical thinking in its activities?

You're absolutely right that ‘critical thinking’ has become a bit of a buzzword in recent years, while most people don't really question what exactly ‘critical’ means in this context. Isn't it ironic? We need to start thinking critically about critical thinking! For Sweatshop, critical thinking is the ability to reverse engineer the creation and dissemination of information.

Before we can create complex and sophisticated alternatives to harmful

and dominant narratives, we must first be able to examine texts (books, films, TV programs, news media) and uncover the underlying themes which reinforce systems of power and oppression: including those that are racist, white supremacist, orientalist, sexist, misogynous, patriarchal, classist, capitalist, homophobic, heteronormative and ableist.

You conduct a lot of workshops within schools. What is covered in those workshops, and have you seen a wider engagement in the Arts amongst students since Sweatshop began?

Often times, a well-intentioned teacher will invite us to help their school because they are concerned that ‘the students aren't interested in reading’. The reverse is actually true: it's not that the students aren't interested in reading, it's that the readings aren't interested in the students!

During our workshops and residencies, school students are introduced to local and diverse works of literature, which mirror their lived experiences and realities. All of a sudden, the students are reading and writing about their own unique experiences as young people from Indigenous, migrant and refugee backgrounds.

What are some exciting projects planned for 2024?

We have just released our latest anthology, *Povo*. Edited by Indonesian-Australian writer, Adam Novaldy Anderson, this dynamic new book features thirty-seven emerging and established writers who explore Australia's complex socio-economic conditions through a collection of short stories, essays, poems and street illustrations. Secondly, we are extremely proud to announce that Sweatshop general manager, Winnie Dunn, will be releasing her debut novel, *Dirt Poor Islanders*, in April. This trail-blazing new book will be Australia's first-ever mainstream novel by and about the Pasifika-Australian community.

Throughout 2024, we will continue to deliver a fresh program of ground-breaking publications, public dialogues, performances and book launches, and various mentorships and collectives for diverse emerging writers. For more information about our projects, or to apply for our mentorships and writers' collectives, visit our website and social media.

Michael Mohammed Ahmad is the founding director of Sweatshop Literacy Movement and the author of three award-winning novels: *The Tribe*, *The Lebs* and *The Other Half of You*, and editor of several critically acclaimed anthologies, including *After Australia*.

Winnie Dunn is a Tongan-Australian writer and editor from Mount Druitt. She is also the General Manager of Sweatshop Literacy Movement and has had her work published in *The Guardian*, *Griffith Review*, *Meanjin* and *Sydney Review of Books*.

Sydney Metro Project devastates The Area

Eko Bautista maps the future.

Crossing the Cooks River through Canterbury, I ponder on how our communities will be affected by the Sydney Metro Project. With station closures due to start in July this year, the T3 Bankstown Line Metro conversion project illustrates a pessimistic perspective in my mind. Marrickville, Lakemba, Campsie, and Bankstown are just a few of the major population centres forced to take bus replacements for the estimated twelve months that it will take to complete the project. Yet, these suburbs between Sydenham and Bankstown are just a select few considered for the Metro Project that will ignore the significantly lower socio-economic communities west of Bankstown.

Affectionately named ‘The Area’, the T3 serves as a lifeline for its 200,000 residents, with roughly 20,000 commuters boarding its trains, bound for work and education. ‘The Area’ is mainly home to a plethora of ethnic communities — Asian, Arab, Greek, and Pacific Islander. These communities have historically faced and continue to reckon with racist socio-economic disadvantages ranging

from education and literacy to job security and social acceptance by the wider Sydney area. They rely on the T3 for their livelihoods, the railroad to opportunities systematically disconnected from them.

From Sydenham to Bankstown and beyond, a full year's worth of station closures will significantly impact ‘The Area’ and its communal wellbeing. This is something that will snowball further past the completion of the conversion.

Though completion of the Metro will still provide a metro service for the Sydenham to Bankstown service, a handful of stations west of Bankstown will face potentially permanent closures. As of July 2023, Transport NSW has expressed no interest in long-term operations in the 2030s for the stations starting at Carramar and ending at Sefton. In bureaucratic limbo, permanent station closures may be well within the near future, disconnecting roughly 36,000 residents from their closest train line. Whether or not a T2 City to Liverpool via Regents Park service will exist is up for question, but a direct service to the

cultural centre that is Bankstown will not. Birrong and Yagoona face critical danger as these two stations are still in the dark on whether the Bankstown to Lidcombe Service will continue or if a Metro Extension to Birrong will occur. The suburbs from Carramar to Birrong, collectively, are part of Sydney's most disadvantaged areas, between 5 to 22 percentile ranking within Australia on the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRADS) in the 2021 Census. Despite this, communities in these parts thrive through their shared experiences and struggles. ‘The Area’, as Layla Mkh puts it beautifully, is a place that “resists and grows despite feeling like almost everyone in this country is against it”. Disconnecting the poorer parts of ‘The Area’ from its cultural centre adds to the disproportionate socio-economic disadvantages already present.

The Metro Project will sever a lifeline to the major metropolitan area of Bankstown. By taking away the T3 line from Bankstown's Western suburbs, an increase in reliance on personal transport vehicles will come to fruition. Though bus replacements

Student media spotlight: Woroni

Zeina Khochaiche logs onto Woroni.

Canberra — the epicentre of democracy, mint factories and bus lines. Within the nation's capital territory is the Australian National University (ANU). A university home to the first independent student media and proud amplifier of multi-platform coverage, *Woroni*.

Woroni released its first publication in 1947 but became an official student publication in 1950. It has been a dedicated and evolving platform microphone for student culture both on and off campus dating back to student activism of the Vietnam War. Today, *Woroni* is a publication with creatives in print, radio, TV and multimedia arts, making it a steadfast pillar of ANU culture.

As such, turning the page to the third instalment of student media spotlight on *Woroni* was irresistible.

Woroni started off as a student newspaper attached to the Australian National University's Student Association (ANUSA) until 2010 when they separated and became an independent student media publication — the first of its kind. In 2018, *Woroni* switched from a fortnightly newspaper to a monthly magazine and now produces six themed magazines across both semesters whilst maintaining steady online posts.

With a few strings pulled and a few friends nagged, I was able to connect with *Woroni* comrades on a late night last week to chat about all things student media. On Zoom I met with Matthew Box, editor-in-chief, Charlie

Crawford, deputy editor-in-chief and Arabella Ritchie, TV editor.

We went on to discuss the name ‘*Woroni*’ — a word originally stolen from the Wadi Wadi nation that translates to “mouthpiece.”

“*Woroni* has participated in recent consultation to continue to use the name whilst continuing to seek reconciliation,” Box said.

It seems *Woroni* does not evade history and instead keeps up with changing times vowing to maintain an appropriate “use of language” considerate to the lands they work and produce on. A motif across our conversation was ensuring *Woroni* was a safe and creative ‘mouthpiece’ accessible to all.

When asked what drew the editors to the publication, Box calmly said, “I was interested in the mechanics of it all and into the structure of how it runs” proudly revealing the title of “*Woroni* bureaucrat.”

Crawford revealed that “*Woroni* played a big part of year one and year

two of university. Especially in the midst of COVID.”

Crawford went on to say that “*Woroni* was telling a different side to what ANU was saying” and appreciated the student focussed lens.

In true digital age fashion, Ritchie “saw *Woroni* on Facebook” and applied from there, feeling inspired by creatives before her.

Some of the magazine's best works come from “weekly wrap ups” — a chance to discuss the week's key articles and any headline student happenings. Crawford had some recent TikTok success, interviewing ANU members during O-week and told *Honi* how excited they were for the future of video pieces.

At its core, *Woroni* “offers a chance for students to access a creative outlet that is open to anyone.”

Crawford said that “most of the submissions are personal essays which do the best” amidst the density of conventional news. This is a noticeable similarity to *Farrago* who's best performing pieces are personal essays and discursive pieces.

Ritchie echoed with a comment on how “*Woroni* is able to raise student voices” and “give creatives a platform” like *Woroni*'s previous ‘Love Island’ series produced in 2021.

Discussing *Woroni*'s publication evolution, Box described the change from fortnightly print cycle to magazine as “a shift towards

will carry through 2025, traffic on major roads and highways will worsen and vehicle emissions will skyrocket, ultimately contributing to the already disproportionate artificial heat island effect in Western Sydney.

From Ten-pin bowling in Villawood, mad feeds at Al-Taza in Regents Park to the Roundabout Youth Centre's roller rink at Sefton, late-night Chè at Cabra and ice skating at Canterbury; these places I've gone to by taking the T3 and all experiences won't ever be immediately accessible due to the South-West Metro Project. Direct travel between the city circle and those West of Sydney could involve a bus ‘replacement’, T3 shuttle train, metro service to Sydenham and a final change onto the T4 to City Circle service. For the next 16 months, a hole in the train map will further exacerbate the rejection of South-west Sydney by the rest of the city. The death of the T3 spells a disaster for ‘The Area’.

an aesthetic focus rather than a newspaper's traditional style.”

Jumping to the tired funding talk, *Woroni*'s circumstance is a little different than most. The publication is funded by ‘ANU Student Media Inc.’ and the university itself — completely independent of ANUSA but are able to support and coordinate projects like the ‘student collaborative publication fund’: a fund that assists with collectives like ANUSA women's annual ‘bossy’ publication.

Despite their independent status, Box said “one doesn't really expect student media to have a valid hourly rate.”

Interestingly, *Woroni* is able to avoid contentious relations and says difficulty is only at play “during ANUSA election season” and only felt by news editors at that. This was a notable difference in comparison to my conversations with *Vertigo* and *Farrago* — papers that battle with unstable institutional, fundings and student association relations all year round.

When discussing what's next for *Woroni*, the editors eagerly told us of their next themed edition, Home, expected to be coming out in the next few weeks.

Chatting with *Woroni* was a refreshing insight into a unique publication independent of usual student body theatrics but dependent on ensuring students have access to a creative platform that is financially, editorially and aesthetically theirs.

The troll under the bridge

Veronica Lenard goes to visit a troll.

At the corner of Johnson St and the Crescent sits a troll. It is sheltered between two pylons that support the bridge and light rail line above. Its concrete platform is surrounded by shrubbery and recent plantings. It was originally accompanied by a sign behind it saying “have you paid your troll?” and small coins stuck to its hand. Now, a slowly changing roster of advertisements adorn the pylons.

I have been fascinated by this troll for years.

After years of watching the troll through car windows as a child and eventually finding it as an unexpected companion on my 433 bus journeys to uni, I recently wondered why I have never tried to learn more about the troll.

I already knew the basics. It was part of a TV show called *Guerrilla Gardeners* that aired between 2009 and 2011. With out-of-the box ideas (think: giant planter pots, plants growing from cars, mini boats and wharves, metal cacti and more), bunches of plants, a green ute, and a creative cover story, the *Guerrilla Gardeners* transformed unused patches of city streets into usable greenspaces, without the permission of local councils or the owners of the land.

While trawling the internet for a record of this show, I stumbled upon an upload of the first six episodes on YouTube. While the majority of Season One had aired on Channel Ten, it was eventually moved, with Season Two on Channel One (an early iteration of what is now known as Ten Bold) — a move that was attributed to reducing viewing numbers and the introduction of a little known cooking show called *Masterchef*.

There, in the title sequence, was the first reveal. One of the *Guerrilla Gardeners* was none other than Mickie Quick (amongst a plethora of other fascinating things, he is one of *Honi's* Publications Managers), who was dubbed their “covert ops” expert, tasked with creating each site’s cover story.

“Have you paid your troll?”

Whilst the show had received criticism for moving into communities with the budget of a Channel Ten TV show before disappearing to work on the next one, as opposed to the often local and ongoing practices of guerrilla gardeners, Mickie described how the show was effectively a kids show, despite not being marketed as such.

“Kids just love the simplistic premise of taking over a site and doing something cool, and I don’t think they question the reality of how much

budget it takes to build things at that sort of scale and all that.”

This gave Mickie a unique kind of fame. A friend of his had once found graffiti scribbled inside a playground cubby that read “I love Mickie Quick from Guerrilla Gardeners.” A trip to a skate rink ended up with kids trying to figure out if they were really seeing the Mickie Quick that they had seen on their screens.

Since they were working without permission, the threat of councils intervening loomed overhead. Fondly remembering the creation of the fictional group “Big Things Australia” — who would, as the name suggests, do big things around Australia — Mickie described how many of the cover stories revolved around logos and signage that he could create and print.

“I really love that sort of stuff. I could see the appeal to kids that you really make yourself official with just the thinnest of logic and then a purposeful and authoritative looking design that matches that logic, and then, bang, you can kind of pretend you’re that.”

“I love how that communicates to kids that you just can fake this identity to pull something off like that.”

The Troll was part of an episode set in Annandale. In the episode, Mickie is shown designing and creating the centrepiece of the garden. Mickie explains that whilst he did the majority of the designing, its creation more of a group effort, as he was “invisibly assisted by a kind of props department.”

“I knew how to jump on polystyrene hot wires and actually use it, but it was absolutely a whole team of people doing the actual work and that f e l t

was people in the background, and they’re friends of mine, so you could just see them being told to get out of the way while I then went in with the machinery to look like I was.”

After surviving more than a decade of visitors (both appreciative and dismissive of their new neighbour), WestConnex approached Mickie to refurbish the Troll.

“A friend had once found graffiti scribbled inside a playground cubby that read ‘I love Mickie Quick from Guerrilla Gardeners.’”

The temporary disappearance of the Troll dismayed local residents. A missing poster appeared on the Annandale Troll’s Facebook page, despite signage advising that it was being refurbished. With a new colouring and coating for the Troll, along with some alterations including the addition of a pile of giant coins, the Troll was safely back home under the bridge.

“I really see the simple power and joy in it because people love it. You know you don’t have to have esoteric avant garde art for people to love. Some people just love a basic, simple thing like a troll

under a bridge that their kids grow up around,” said Mickie.

The only thing not allowed back? The original sign behind the Troll. WestConnex, perhaps unsurprisingly, warned that it couldn’t return. After all, the receiver of your tolls probably doesn’t want it to remind you of them.

Alongside the WestConnex development, the roads around the troll have changed. Whilst there once was a footpath along the side of the island, almost all of the island is blocked off by fencing making visits to the Troll more difficult, but not impossible.

The Annandale Troll has lived through a decade and a half of changing roads, vandalism attempts, and community care. It still lives under the bridge, peering out at the people passing by.

Which reminds me, have you paid your troll?



Art: Veronica Lenard



Localism and its discontents

Emilie Garcia-Dolnik braves the water.

Localism: the practice of prioritising local surfers over non-locals in the lineup. This often involves local surfers asserting their authority in the lineup, sometimes through aggressive or intimidating behavior towards non-locals/tourists/beginners.

Like many Australians, I spent my summer at the beach. I am a beginner surfer, although I’ve spent my entire life living on Sydney’s Eastern Coastline. While it has always captivated me as an unassuming yet enamouring activity to watch from the shoreline, I had never before been on a board, so when I had the opportunity to take up the sport during a brief period of unemployment last year, I decided to give it a go. I was by no means a prodigy. I slipped, and fell, and fumbled (as I still do). Most of all, I found there is no better feeling than sitting on a board in the sun, patiently scanning the horizon, feeling the tilt of your board and your body as you ride your next wave. It was ecstasy. But, along with this came a sense of unease. Eager to share the sport with others like me, I asked a girl in one of my classes last year if she would come surfing with me to which she exclaimed “I’ll surf with you, but not in Bondi. It’s too white there.” While it is easy to be embraced by the surf, it is far more difficult to be accepted by the community of, typically white, surfers that seem to dominate our coastline. Localism runs rife here, despite the near-perfect conditions for beginners

in Bondi. Yet, the beating heart of the sport is its pre-colonial, and decolonial history, invented and further kept alive by surfers of the colonised world and Global South with a liberatory and inclusive ethos.

Surfing is the legacy of pre-colonisation Polynesia, though the exact date of its creation is unknown. Scott Laderman, in *A Political History of Surfing*, speaks to the all-encompassing traditional history, from “the selection of a tree out of which a board might be shaped,” to “the interactions of the wave riders and spectators, surfing, which involved all strata of society” as representing “a ritualised set of practices at the core of what it meant to be Hawaiian.” Surfing, however, diminished in Hawaii following the colonisation of the islands. The activity became associated with “barbarity,” while native Hawaiians became slaves to settlers. It was not until Duke Kahanamoku, legendary Hawaiian surfer and swimmer, entered the scene that surfing became a legitimate and respected sport. But the sport was not free from its chains, and the white settler shadow was not done with its violent appropriation.

As with all pure things touched by colonisation and the newly commercialised world, surfing became quickly commodified. The craft of making traditional wooden surfboards was superseded by the quest for profit. Surfing sold the dream of Hawaiian

tourism (as a newly minted American global outpost and latest installment of the imperial project), of culture laid bare for the Western man and his family to enjoy at their leisure. Its image and connotation were quickly being replaced by Californian surf culture, and new fervour for the activity in Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, and France. Soon, surf shops selling Ripcurl, O’Neill, Hurley and other notable surf brands popped up on every beach.

So, we take ourselves back to our coast; to Bondi, Maroubra and Manly. To the image we sell to the world of the sunbleached-blond haired, blue-eyed, white Australian. Where white surfers may use their presence as a method of warding off beginners who snake their waves, pervasive localism is a reminder of a colonial ideology that continues to claim ownership over land, while partaking in a sport whose core ethos is liberation. Once we claim ownership or exclude, we erase Indigenous sovereignty, and we deny accessibility to the sport. Colonists created a market for surf tourism, much of which is unsustainable and fuelled by travellers from the Global North exploiting the Global South (particularly South-east Asia) for their beautiful surf and cheap prices while wreaking environmental and social havoc. It is difficult to separate the exclusionary politics of the sport from the demography of Bondi and Sydney’s Coastal suburbs,

which remains predominantly white and notoriously difficult to access, as well as the larger settler-colonial status of the Australian state.

Surfing is liberation. It requires patience, it requires submission to nature, to forces that are bigger than you, it requires grace and reckoning with your own smallness. It is inherently slow, antithetical to the pressure from our neoliberal society that imposes pace. Let’s commit to the decolonisation of the practice. The image the West has created of surf culture, a notion that so defines Australian identity, has real, tangible consequences for minority communities. White-Localism cannot coexist with decolonial justice. Where cultural appropriation runs rife on our coastlines, decolonisation begins with the individual surfer.



Art: Sofia Angelini

Carry-on baggage: A love letter home

Purny Ahmed considers what it means to go home.

Lately, my feelings have been calling out to me in my native tongue. Every thought had, word spoken, or lyric heard in Bangla swiftly translates to the feeling of wanting to “return home”, a habit I have not been able to let go of since childhood. I was four years old, the first time I returned from Bangladesh to Australia, and refused to speak a word of English, my first language. In fact, I had become so accustomed to my short, yet wonderful, life in a far-off land that I had called my father ‘Mama’, the Bengali word for Uncle, for months before returning to ‘Dad’. That was the first time I had left Bangladesh behind, not quite realising that the feeling of loss I was experiencing was, in fact, homesickness, for a place I wasn’t born to, for a language I have now lost fluency in, and a family I could not grow up with.

Since then, I have travelled between my two ‘homes’ four times. Since then, I have accumulated two lists: (1) the things I bring back to Australia with me, packed somewhere between my souvenirs and the soft spot in my heart, and (2) the things I leave behind. Through these lists, I try

to understand if you can belong to a place, and its people, while living miles away.

List one always starts with the songs that defined that trip. The memory of sitting amongst at least three generations of my family, all of us singing the same song and harmonising our laughter as we lean against each other is embedded within this ever-growing playlist, so much so that I can barely bring myself to listen to the songs once I am in Australia, feeling displaced and alone as I listen to them on the train. There are the little bits of culture I pack away into my carry-on: the bangles and the jhumkas, my Mami’s homemade achar, a pocket-sized flag. There is the language, which I say each time I will hold onto, but then Bangla turns to Banglish turns to English, and I find myself stuttering over my rolled ‘r’s once more. Everything that falls under list one always has a footnote attached to it, reminding me that I cannot pack an entire ‘home’ into a suitcase and bring it back with me.

List two is much longer. It holds more gravity. It pulls me to the floor, weighted by the yearning for things

that may never have been mine to begin with. When you leave Sydney airport after that 14-hour flight and you are sitting in the car on familiar roads, the first thing you notice is the sound of absolutely nothing. It’s a great loss, the ringing of rickshaws, the shouting and swearing of men across the streets, the way you can hear life in every moment. In its absence, loneliness makes convenient company.

You leave behind the trivial things, the things you take for granted, like wearing a salwar kameez every day, or rickshaws, or hearing Bangla everywhere you go. When you return to Australia, you wonder why you bought that orna if you have nothing to wear it with, and you take your headphones out on the bus just to listen to the man behind you speak in Bangla about car insurance to his wife.

Then, there is the matter of family. Each time I return to Bangladesh, a secondary list is made to list number two — all the changes that I had missed by simply being 7171km too far away to experience or witness them. It is a list that primarily consists of family, and places me on the outside of their world, looking in and trying

to find where I fit. My cousins, they have grown taller, they have married, they no longer play, they fall asleep by midnight. They share memories that I do not. They have grown up without me, together. When you live across the ocean, you are bound to miss a few things, or everything. My Mamas, who love me the same as they did when I was four, and my Mamis, who always show me an unfamiliar softness as they plait my saree or plait my hair; the love is still there, and it is the most special kind of love, but they did not watch me grow. When you live across the ocean, the people who love you are bound to miss a few things. My Nano has aged, and the years in between are time wasted that should have been spent by her side, listening to her stories, getting told off every time I did not eat enough.

Yet, regardless of all the shapes I feel I must bend and twist myself into to fit into the lives of these people I return to, I can’t help but feel most at home in their presence. If I do not belong to the people I left behind, then who do I belong to?

On their soil, my bare feet against the cold, soft dirt of my Nana’s Bari, is home for me.

Forget the Push, it's pulling history down

Huw Bradshaw and Zeina Khochaiche pull it apart.

Almost all present invocations of the Sydney Push, from the *Herald* to the paper I write this in, conclude with the same resounding message: we must remember the Push. To remember, to historicise, of course, seems an innocuous, even morally upright act which is also tied up in the left-wing politics supposedly belonging to the Sydney Push. Yet if there is anything we can learn from Australian historiography, it is that history, mythology, and remembering are often the most violent and effective tools of the colony.

Even just after the establishment of the NSW penal colony, Australia was a place of remembering, of nostalgia. English painters arrived to paint pastoral scenes reminiscent of a pre-industrial Europe. Settlers arrived to seek a fortune free from the servitude and gloom of the modern city. The mythologies and histories coined by these early colonists were the same used to carry out the most brutal colonial atrocities, largely committed by middle-class strivers and the petit-bourgeois who were enthused to pursue a greater lot by means of violent settlement.

When we remember the Sydney Push, a similar undertaking is at hand.

Obviously, it's nothing groundbreaking to remark on its general flaws — sexist, bohemian, utter middle-class debauchery — as almost all annals of the Sydney Push have made such observations already. Yet no matter how much it's shown for these spiritually ugly qualities, its mythos always ends up accepted and affirmed as an integral part of Australian identity. What I'm much more interested in is this persisting memory of the Push: its motivations and its consequences.

Much is written and commented about the Sydney Push. A late 2000s *Herald* article describes their efforts as a "50s phenomenon" that "the world could use a lot more of right now." Only very recently, within a 'pub and politics' history, the ABC regarded the period as a notable epoch that "sometimes led to political action". Little is mentioned of its feeble egalitarianism or transactional culture of women's involvement. Interestingly, The Push positioned themselves in opposition to moralism, as a movement supposedly founded on anti-establishment, anti-authoritarian and anti-bigotry ideologies despite their blind eye to First Nations issues and shallow second wave-feminist bolstering. But for all that, contemporary political history analysis still uses their movements and 'pub rendezvous' as a moral benchmark.

Yet the group remains a relatively obscure subject in larger society. More akin to Radio Birdman than INXS, the mythology of the Sydney Push is a niche of Australian identity, that like all niches of national identities, is as equally significant as its corresponding mainstream. When we imagine the people who think about, talk about, and identify with the Push, we think more of Sydney University and the ABC



Source: State Library of New South Wales collections

than Southern Cross tats and Bintang singlets. Though the former are repelled and disgusted by the latter as signifiers of vulgar nationalism, they too seek out their fix of Australian identity where they can find it; in bowling club beers and Labour party history, in Winton and Paterson. The Sydney Push is just one more example.

Though I'm not one to deny anyone their comforts, I think we ought to be clear-eyed about them.

“Little is mentioned of its feeble egalitarianism or transactional culture of women's involvement.”

Take 'critical drinking', for one; the Push pastime of intellectual discussion over booze. Little was critical about the Push's drinking. While Jim Baker and John Anderson wrote numerous treatises and essays on libertarianism and freedom of thought, the White Australia Policy was in full swing and the traditional owners of the land they wrote, drank, and slept on lacked the right to vote in state or federal elections. No mention of these clear encroachments on freedom are found in these writings of "permanent protest" towards egalitarian realisation. Though we'd be fools of retrospect to claim superiority to these writers and academics, we certainly need

not bestow them the title of 'critical'.

Beyond this, there is an implicit assertion in the phrase 'critical drinking', that drinking culture and the public bar, a predominantly working class institution, was somehow inherently unintellectual. Since the Push's gentrification of the Australian pub as a gathering spot, it has transformed a markedly more upper-middle class location (though of course this also has its roots in much larger socio-economic shifts) belonging to clerks and consultants rather than longshoremen and labourers.

Even in the desolate Wikipedia articles, the grounds of gender representation are eye-brow raising at best and depressing at most times. Of the 20 "key associates", three were women. And in that those 'Push Women' who according to James Franklin's 'Corrupting the Youth: A history of Australian Philosophy' were described as "loose", "pluck[ing] at sleeves" and subject to an "obsessional attitude towards sex".

The movement's culture created a breeding ground of academic discourse mixed in with the normalised objectification and problematic sexual treatment of Push Women; a history previously critiqued by *Honi Soit*.

One of the Push's most attractive qualities to contemporary admirers is its political nihilism. In the political situation we find ourselves in, one can easily find sympathy in the belief that "Labor and Liberal parties were both committed to destroying freedom", as James Franklin states. Yet this was not a principled rejection of electoral politics as we see today in the protests

and demonstrations that typically replace voting drives and campaign volunteering. To members of the Sydney Push, "demonstrating in the streets or organising for political action was regarded as succumbing to illusions."

It should come as no surprise, then, to find prominent Push member, Padraic McGuinness, ended his career editing the conservative journal *Quadrant*. Such is the fate of many who "teetered towards anarchism but joined the ALP".

Even in the 1969 federal election — which saw on the ballot the issues of free university education, universal health insurance, and the comprehensive abandonment of the White Australia Policy — Push activists engaged in poster campaigns encouraging informal voting. The Push's so-called "political action" held the sinking weight of a pint. This is not to say the politicisation of pub culture was the downfall of the Push's intestinal fortitude imagery, but rather the glorification of their inaccessible gossip session that mostly relied on elitist and inaccessible academic theory painted as precedent. Take the aforementioned enthusiastic historical analysis by the ABC or the consistent trend of nostalgia discourse in even this paper itself: a fabrication against the movement's evident ethos.

Despite this, we hear endlessly of the Push's radically progressive underpinnings. Often invoked is Jim Baker's assertion of the Push containing "a few anarchists who wouldn't hesitate to drop a bomb on the Sydney Harbour Bridge", what surely anyone could identify as a contrived bluff masking the at best, idle, and at worst, deeply conservative politics of the Sydney Push. Such a superficial flirtation with anarchism may well be a pillar of middle-class White Australian identity; from Ned Kelly fanboyism to the Eureka tower.

The Sydney Push characterises itself and continues to be characterised as a social and philosophical movement beyond nation and race, yet even at a cursory glance one can see it is anything but. Beyond views on sex and drugs, the Push is an overwhelmingly white, reactionary, and nationalist movement. Not in spite of but for these very traits, thousands of high-minded Australians, clutching their Saturday papers and holiday house keys, subscribe devotedly to the mythology of the Sydney Push. Though the movement allegedly disintegrated in the early Whitlam 70s, its now sunken memory acts as hyperbolised dinner table chatter shared by a select audience over a glass of red.

So as I pick up a paper and see one more article, one more history, one more reflection, one more invocation that I remember the Push for all its worth ... "God", I think, "there's nothing I'd rather do less."



Work smarter not harder: A new farming approach revitalises degraded land

Lisa Gronich toils away.

Syntropic farming has been gaining traction in recent decades as a way to more effectively grow produce on land, especially in areas where farming has been previously thought to be impossible.

The approach holds itself more as a set of perspectives on sustainable growing, rather than a one-size-fits-all recipe for agricultural success. It was popularised by farmer and researcher Ernst Gotsch, who has been operating a farm in Brazil since the 1980s using syntropic farming principles. Within a few years of starting this project he was able to turn his land, which used to be known as having "the poorest quality soil in the region", into a lush ecosystem that has a similar soil quality to that of natural rainforests. On top of this, his farm currently yields over 1,000 kilograms of cocoa per hectare, much higher than Brazil's national average of less than 400 kilograms in the same area.

The key to syntropic farming's success is its focus on trying to build a whole ecosystem, wherein plants thrive and fulfil their needs through their symbiotic relationships with each other, rather than a more traditional farming approach that focuses on the needs of each plant or species individually. Syntropic farming uses sequential cycles to build up this ecosystem, with each cycle creating a more fertile environment able to support more complex plant species.

The leafy group that you're not in

Imogen Sabey whispers to trees.

In the iconic musical number, "Waving Through a Window", Evan Hansen asks the age-old question: "If you're falling in a forest and there's nobody around, do you ever really crash or even make a sound?" The answer is yes. Trees are all around us... and they are always listening. But they're not nosy like your next-door neighbour, so you don't need to worry about them prying into your nonexistent love life and crippling job prospects.

It may sound like trees 'whisper' to each other through the wind, but they actually speak to each other with signals transmitting beneath the ground, with messages depending on what stimuli they're facing. In forests, trees are linked by mycorrhizal or fungal networks linked by the tips of their roots, which establishes a symbiotic relationship between the trees and the fungi that helps form the network. Peter Wohlleben, a German forester and author of the book *The Hidden Life of Trees*, aptly calls this vast fungal network the Wood-Wide Web. In return for using fungal filaments to send chemical signals to other trees, the host tree allows the fungi to absorb 30% of the sugar that the tree creates using photosynthesis. Different species of trees that

Take, for example, an arid landscape, filled with rock-hard, sun-baked soil, unable to retain moisture or nutrients and therefore only able to sustain the hardiest of plants. You could try to brute-force a plantation of fruit trees in these conditions, but this would require hours of labour supplying these trees with external resources necessary for their growth that the soil currently cannot provide them with, ultimately with a minimal likelihood of success.

A syntropic approach to this would instead plant species that are already able to thrive in these tough conditions — shrubs and grasses, for example, and after they have taken hold, use the more nutrient-rich soil these plants provide to grow plants that need more nutrients in the soil to thrive. Through continuing these cycles, you plant more complex and larger plants, until you have eventually created an environment that supports your goal of fruit trees. In this way, syntropic farming leverages the plants that you can currently grow into creating an environment that allows you to successfully plant what you want to grow.

Syntropic farming has found success all over the world, from being used for the Great Green Wall project

in Africa to stop the expansion of the Sahara Desert, to local farms in tropical Haiti, orange tree systems in Bolivia, and research farms in the Mediterranean. In Australia, one of the



Art: Adrian Naracita

foremost syntropic farms that exists is at The Hungry Spirit in Lightning Ridge.

The Hungry Spirit turned to syntropic farming in June of 2020 to try to reinvigorate land that was devastated by the effects of frequent droughts and little rainfall during the 2010s. This technique has allowed them to be able to successfully grow food for themselves and their business in a semi-arid climate, and they have since expanded with more syntropic systems.

In a comment for *Honi Soit*, Rebel

long distances between trees before they start eating again — about 90m before the ethylene gas is unable to travel further.

Some trees can also detect insects that feed on them, distinguishing the saliva of a specific insect and releasing pheromones to attract predators of that insect. When a caterpillar eats the leaves of an elm or pine, the tree can attract parasitic wasps using these pheromones and encourage the wasp to lay eggs inside the caterpillars, which eat the caterpillars from the inside out. Gruesome, but effective.

In a forest environment, an older tree can nurture saplings that haven't grown large enough to reach sunlight. These older trees can pump sugar, water, and essential nutrients so that saplings don't starve from a lack of sunlight. Accordingly, when old trees are cut down, there are negative consequences for the young trees, whose survival rate decreases because they don't have a reliable source of food. Similarly, Mother trees are connected with their young and develop a greater mycorrhizal network as they age so that their influence continues to grow and become vital for the stability of the forest. The saplings are even subject

Black, one of the owners of The Hungry Spirit, said the amount of interest her syntropic farming has generated has been one of the best positive effects it has had. Another unexpected benefit of her syntropic systems is the micro climate it has created around her property. "The greenery really feels incredible, especially during [the] long hot summer."

Despite this, syntropic farming does also have its fair share of challenges. It takes time, often years, for the desired outcomes of syntropic systems to come into effect, and as usual with a new method, creating a syntropic system involves a lot of trial and error, especially with the limited amounts of research undertaken on it so far. Finding the right mix of plants that work for the climate your farm is in can be difficult, along with the complexities involved with figuring out when and where to plant them in the highly structured syntropic system. Syntropic farming also isn't immune to natural weather events, Black told *Honi* that 'plant loss due to extreme heat and frost' has also affected her farm, which requires complex workarounds to still make her farms work.

Despite its flaws, syntropic farming has vast benefits in being a system that replicates nature, rather than overtaking it. An ecosystem that can sustain itself, and is further able to provide us with food and tools on top of this, seems like a golden ideal for what farming can be.

Art: Ella Thompson

to favouritism, as the mother tree prioritises sending its nutrients to its young and navigating its root system so that the saplings have space to grow.

When these trees die, it is a process that can take decades. Some 40% of the dying tree's carbon is sent off to other trees, while the rest filters out through decomposition. However, even after a tree has died, its neighbours don't necessarily give up on it. Wohlleben recounts that in the Eifel forests of Western Germany he once discovered a birch stump that had died several centuries prior, which still showed the green tinge of chlorophyll. This was caused by other trees around it continuing to share nutrients with the tree, long after its death.

So if Evan Hansen really did fall in a forest, the trees would definitely notice. They would know the difference between a human accidentally breaking a branch and an animal eating the leaves, and would send nutrients to the injured section to help repair and regrow. Unfortunately for Evan, they can't quite heal his broken arm.

The University of Sydney Library's Printer in Residence program *is now open for applications*

Returning for a fifth year, our eight-week residency invites letterpress printmakers and book artists to propose a publication or other creative work using our 1879 Albion Press, supported by a payment of \$10,000.

Applications close on Sunday, 10 March 2024.



To apply, visit: tiny.cc/PrinterInResidence

For more information, contact: rbsc@usyd.libanswers.com



Have you had some academic failure and set backs?

Have you been asked to show good cause?

The Uni's Counselling Service is running the Comeback Crew.

They are a small and friendly group designed to help overcome the challenge of academic failure. Using modern psychological frameworks, Comeback Crew members experience facilitated therapeutic discussion, new ways of interpreting their challenges and strategies to increase resilience. The Comeback Crew promotes the growth from hardship and setbacks while also fostering a sense of community and connection for the Usyd journey.

[Click here to register your interest or to ask for more information.](#)



- WIN cash prizes! \$6000 prize pool!
- All Sydney Uni students can enter.
- Get published! Kick start a career!
- Entries close Sunday April 7

MORE INFORMATION AND ENTRY DETAILS:



contact a caseworker
bit.ly/SRCcaseworker

srcusyd.net.au
02 9660 5222

honi soit.com | @honi_soit

Words without the weasel. (New concept from a political party)



Politicians have a well-deserved reputation for walking away from the things they said they'd do and then denying they ever said what they'd do. Or later weasel-wording their former promises with so many caveats that all you can see are the asterisks. That's not the Good Party.

We're there for change.

We want to wean our law enforcement agencies off the failed war on drugs and destroy organised crime's business model. We want to replace the current personal income tax system with a new revenue model that will allow the majority of Australians to keep 99.8% of their income, ending the affordability crisis. We want to make the first tertiary degree free of charge for Australian citizens. And refund the state school system to give parents a real education choice for their children. We want focused federal support for teachers, nurses, emergency services workers, and GPs. We want to create a Whistle Blower Protection Agency to shield the lives and livelihood of the

people who step forward to do what's right.

There's much to do.

We want to give 16-and-17-year-olds the right to vote in federal elections if they so choose. And end the outrageous subsidies provided to the fossil-fuel industries that exceed \$11bn annually. We want to put a stop to the negative gearing and fringe benefits tax

concessions that have made housing all about investment for the few rather than shelter for the many. We want to free up



the airspace over railway lines for the immediate construction of

affordable housing. And introduce fleet emissions standards sooner rather than later to cut carbon emissions and the cost of EVs. There's much to be done, and, unusually, not a single asterisk to be seen.

Join the Party that wants to shake things up.

If this sounds like your kind of Australia, come and join the movement. We need you.

www.goodparty.com.au/join

The Good Party. Think Differently



SRC Reports



President's Report

Harrison Brennan

Last week was the Student Strike for Palestine, a national day of action that saw thousands of students from across the country walking out of class to protest the Labor Government's complicity with Israel's genocidal assault on Gaza. It is so important that our opposition doesn't end at last week's protest, but extends to all future actions of opposition to the Australian government and our universities who continue to express unconditional support for Israeli occupation. This week and throughout the month of March is Israeli Apartheid Week, extended in light of the devastation wrought by Israel in Gaza. The Autonomous Collective Against Racism (ACAR), BDS Youth and Students for Palestine are collaborating to put on a slew of events throughout the first week of March and the rest of the month, not only to educate but to mobilize students to oppose occupation, apartheid and ethnic cleansing which has been ongoing for over 75 years.

As of last week the SRC and SUPRA, in collaboration with other student unions, managed to collect 20,000 signatures on our NSW Legislative Assembly petition demanding that part-time and international students be eligible for concession opal cards, halving the cost of public transport. A massive thank you to everyone who signed the petition and helped campaign over the past year. The petition is now tabled and will be heard in parliament sometime this year.

On Sunday the 25th of February the Australian Government released their Australian Universities Accords report, outlining a slew of recommendations for how to "drive lasting and transformative reform in Australia's higher education system". The Australian Government invested \$2.7 over 2 years in this 12-month review of Australia's Higher Education system, and delivered a report that failed to meet the needs of students across the country. Whilst some of the accords recommendations are promising - adjustments to HECS indexation, paid placements, creation of a student ombudsman - much of the recommendations fail to offer any fix to the structural issues that plague our universities. There is no recommendation of direct funding for universities, not even to 1% of GDP. There is no recommendation to regulate universities and change their for-profit model, nor prohibitions on partnerships with weapons manufacturers and climate criminals - like Thales and Santos. Nor are there any concrete recommendations on fixing the welfare system in Australia to ensure student's aren't experiencing poverty whilst undertaking their

studies. And, ultimately, there is no recommendation for fee-free education in Australia, that which would widen access to university for many prospective students, lift the financial burden off of current students, and fix the profiteering model of our universities which treat international students as cash cows, and suck domestic students dry after they graduate. The USYD SRC will soon be releasing our response to the universities accords.

With welcome week done and

20 HONI SOIT 2024

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Vice Presidents' Report

Annabelle Jones & Deaglan Godwin

Semester 1 is well and truly underway! In a great way to begin the semester, we attended Thursday's national student strike for Palestine. Hundreds of students walked off at USYD and were joined by many more at UTS and Town Hall.

The fight for a free Palestine is the key fight for the SRC this year, and we encourage all students to get involved. We need to build a strong student movement that stands up to our own government's complicity in this unfolding genocide. Next week will be Israeli Apartheid Week, and there are a suite of events being held by Students for Palestine and ACAR. Message the Students for Palestine page if you want to get involved in a more ongoing way with pro-Palestine activism.

Another campaign which the SRC alongside SUPRA are continuing to fight for is the campaign for fair fares. There are also only days left until the petition for concession fares for all students closes. The petition needs 20,000 signatures and we are so close! You can find the petition on our Facebook page.

Don't forget to follow us on Instagram @src_usyd and to follow our Facebook page to keep up to date with our campaigns and how you can get involved!

General Secretaries' Report

Jacklyn Scanlan & Daniel O'Shea

What a glorious time it has been since our last report. First and foremost — we would like to extend our thanks to everyone that helped us out over the course of the welcome period. Many bags were packed and many hours were spent under the sun on Eastern Avenue, and the generous support of our volunteers is sincerely appreciated. We had plans to begin hosting regular SRC stalls to promote campaigns from Wednesday of last week however we were unfortunately unable to go ahead with this. We hope to begin these stalls in the coming month.

With welcome week done and

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dusted, our focus has shifted to the 2023 SSAF Acquittal and 2024 Budget. From next week, Office-Bearers will be able to send in budget requests so that we can begin the process of allocating funds for the year.

Finally, we would like to draw attention to the NUS' campaigning and lobbying on the University Accords. While many of the outcomes of this process are a step in the right direction - particularly those regarding SSAF allocations, paid placements and the establishment of National Student Ombudsman and Student Charter, there is still much work to be done and we encourage all readers to engage in the NUS' ongoing campaigns.

First Nations Report

Taylah Cooper, Cianna Walker & Ethan Floyd

A huge thank you to everyone who came to see us during Welcome Week, we received a lot of sign-ups and were able to offload most of our merch.

We've continued our contingents to the weekly Palestine rallies, including speaking at Hyde Park and the National Day of Action at Town Hall on Feb 29.

We'll be working with the Gadigal Centre and the USU to host a schedule of events for NAIDOC Week. The theme this year is "Keep the Fire Burning! Blak, Loud and Proud," and this really captures the spirit of what we hope to be able to continue to do throughout this year.

Indigenous Honi is scheduled for Week 12, Semester One - if you have any ideas for articles you'd like to contribute, please let us know.

In broader news, the inquest into the death of Kumanjaji Walker has revealed egregious examples of racism and violence within the NT Police. These stories, and the recent issues surrounding cops marching in the Mardi Gras parade, only serve to highlight why we are demanding cops out of communities and to fund restorative justice frameworks.

As always, get in touch with us on Instagram (@usydfirstnations), on Facebook (ask to join the group), or via email (indigenous.officers@src.usyd.edu.au).

Student Accommodation Report

Sofija Filipovic, Ishbel Dunsmore, Will Jubb & Patrick Jacombs

Welcome back to uni (and to the back page)! Just by way of introduction, your 2024 student accommodation officers are Ishbel, Sofija, Will and Patrick! We've already gotten busy this semester, being out at welcome week promoting various campaigns and upcoming rallies. Last Thursday, we

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supported the national student walk-out for Palestine, which of course drew attention to the ongoing assault on Gaza and the West Bank, which have so far bore witness to over 30,000 murders at the hands of the apartheid state of Israel. We extend our solidarity as activists to the brave people of Palestine, and encourage others to get involved in, for example, Israeli Apartheid Week this week and for the month of March, as well as the weekly rallies held every Sunday at Hyde Park.

In other news, we now have an instagram and email, @usydstudenthousingofficers and student.housing@src.usyd.edu.au. This year, we're proud to continue supporting the Women's Collective's 'Burn the Colleges' campaign, as it directly addresses the dearth of support for ordinary students finding affordable housing, in addition to ending the sexual violence that runs rampant within their halls. Finally, get involved with the Welfare Action Group and Education Action Group! Both collectives have historically run excellent campaigns in solidarity with Public Housing tenants, and we are now gearing up for a campaign to reopen International House, which has lain dormant since pre-Covid. We'll be at their weekly meetings!

Global Solidarity Report

Nabilah Chowdhury, Gabriel Crowe, Tamsyn Smith & Lia Perkins

Free Palestine. End the genocide in Gaza.

as well as a semester planner to map out when each of your assignments are due, so that you allow enough time to complete each of them. Try each of these for a few weeks, and make whatever adjustments you need to have them suit you.

Sometimes poor time management can be caused by other factors, such as perfectionism and procrastination. The Uni's Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS) has some resources online, and you can also talk to a counselor to get some strategies. ADHD is also a major cause of time management difficulties. If you have a diagnosis, you can register with the Uni's Disability Services Unit to get adjustments, like extra time for your assessments. There are lots of support groups that share information on techniques that help to start tasks, remain focused, and manage the anxiety around ADHD. There are plenty of resources that are quite expensive, and

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Time Management Tips & Resources for students



Time management allows you to achieve the most within the limited time you have available. At University that might mean balancing all of your readings and assessments, with work, a social life and home responsibilities. It's like a budget for your time.

The internet is awash of time management resources. A good place to start is with the Learning Centre's information on how to make a daily timetable, for all of your classes, private study time, and other responsibilities;

some that are free, so take your time to find whatever works best for you. It is also a good idea to talk to your lecturers and tutors to let them know what you find difficult, and what they might do to help you to succeed.

Sometimes you cannot get things done, because there are too many demands on you. If you need to work, or have other responsibilities, consider taking a reduced study load. Students on a Centrelink payment will need to talk to a caseworker, while students on

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a visa will need to consult the SRC's migration solicitor, before dropping a subject. Some students think that having a smaller study load will mean they will graduate later, but the reality is that you will progress more quickly, and at less cost, if you do three subjects and pass them all, than if you attempt four subjects and fail some.

When completing any assignment, take the time to check that you have correctly referenced, and be mindful to paraphrase as you go. No matter how busy you are it is not worth risking a fail grade, because you have plagiarised, either deliberately or accidentally. Buying an assignment from someone, or using a fake medical certificate is likely to be discovered by the Uni, and is likely to lead to a suspension from Uni. If you are not sure what you could do instead, please talk to an SRC Caseworker, who can offer a free, confidential, non-judgmental service, that is independent of the Uni.

SRC Caseworker Help 23A
Centrelink Independence

Dear Abe,

I've applied for Centrelink Youth Allowance, but they said I can't have it because my parents earn too much money. My parents don't give me any money, so I think I should be able to get the payment. What should I do?

Independent

Dear Independent,

Unfortunately, Centrelink don't care about your actual circumstances. They will only consider you independent if you:

- are 22 years or older
- have special circumstances (e.g., you're an orphan, or

- parents are in prison)
- have worked an average of 30 hours a week
- are married, or in a marriage-like relationship

You might be eligible for a Low Income Health Care Card that won't give you an income, but may help with any health costs you have. Talk to the Uni's Financial Support Services to see what they can offer you.

For more details about Centrelink go to the SRC's Caseworker Help page: bit.ly/3XV5b5n

Thanks,
Abe

If you need help from an SRC Caseworker start an enquiry on our Caseworker Contact Form: bit.ly/SRCcaseworker



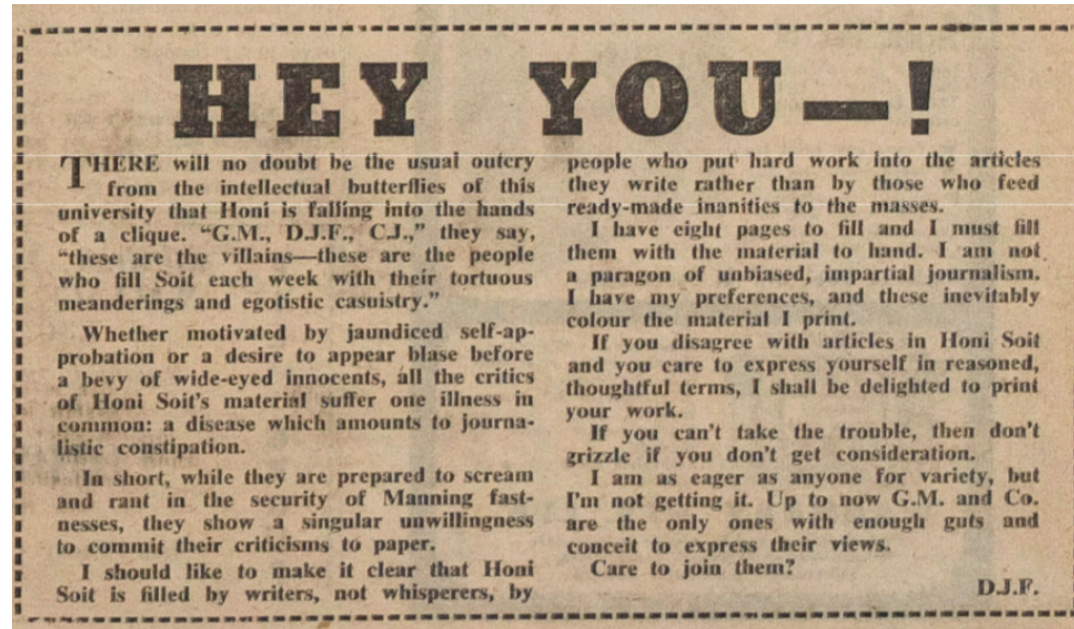
GET ORGANISED WITH OUR 2024 STUDENT WALL PLANNER

Our much-loved annual wall planner is an A1 poster folded to A4, and has all the important USYD dates and deadlines. You can get your FREE copy from the SRC Welcome Week stall, at USYD libraries, or from the SRC office.

Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney
src.usyd.net.au | usydsrcc | src_usyd | src_sydneyuni

Weekly quiz

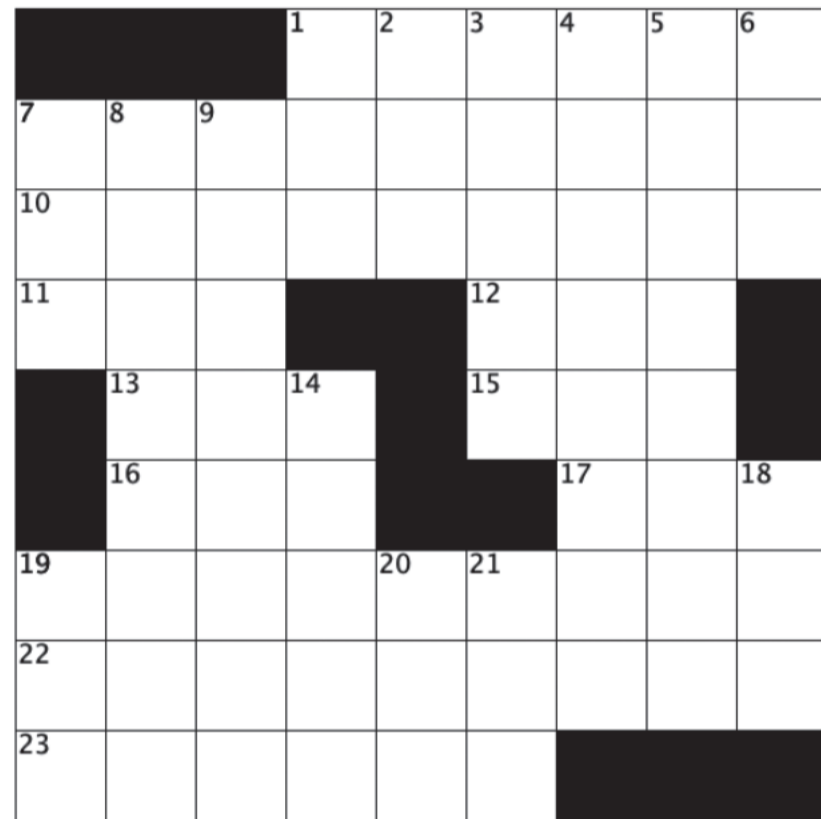
1. The American sitcom Community has a popular phrase that has yet to be rendered true. What is it?
2. What year did Australia stop manufacturing the Holden VF Commodore?
3. Which fictional character clarified that it's Alcoholics Anonymous because you don't say your surname?
4. What are the first three sections under the Honi Soit logo on our website?
5. What does Y.M.C.A stand for?
6. What year did the Balmain Tigers merge with the Western Suburbs Magpies to become the West Tigers?
7. Dev Patel lives in an Australian city, and once broke up a fight there. Which city is it?
8. What does the RSL in RSL Club refer to?
9. A 1999 Australian film starring Hugh Jackman in his debut: Erskineville Kings, Redfern Kings or Newtown Kings?
10. How many digits are in a USU member number?



'HEY YOU—!' Editor's Note, *Honi Soit*, Volume 32, Issue 3

Answers: 1. Six seasons and a movie? 2. 2017 3. Dexter Mayhew, from One Day 4. News, Analysis, and Culture 5. Young Men's Christian Association 6. 1999 7. Adelaide 8. Returned and Services League 9. Erskineville Kings 10. 7

Crossword



Crossword: Claire Lyour

Across:

1. To grow in two parts
7. Swedish canal often referred to as 'Sweden's blue ribbon'
10. A condition where both ovarian and testicular tissues are present in one individual
11. Person appointed to act or speak on behalf of an individual or entity (abbreviated)
12. Something that troubles a person in the mind or body
13. A single-stranded nucleic acid
15. British advocacy group in opposition to discriminatory queer policies — partially uses the initialism for the queer community
16. Profitability metric used to assess the net profits in reference to its initial cost (abbreviated)
17. The eggs of fish
19. To be beyond control
22. Not yet belonging to anyone
23. Common shape of fabric worn on the torso

Down:

1. Winged animals who use echolocation
2. Used to cool down wounds
3. related to the nose
4. Type of anagram with the opposite meaning of the original phrase/word
5. Bone below the back that no longer serves a function
6. Medical term for harmful environmental effects occurring during the prenatal/postnatal period (abbreviated)
7. Fictional setting for a planetary romance novel series by John Norman
8. To exceed expectation (plural)
9. Of the highest grade or quality
14. Popular mayonnaise based dip
18. A doctorate degree in education
19. The opposite of being inside something
20. Located geographically distant
21. To strike something

Always Balanced Coverage

HEDONISM | SIMS 2 | SCANDAL | DRUGS | NOAM CHOMSKY |



Could You Believe it: This all white jazz band is covering MF DOOM



PIGS IN LIPSTICK: NSW Police inconspicuously sneak onto farming and livestock Mardi Gras float



JUST LIKE THE BEAR: This hospo worker actually just hates women

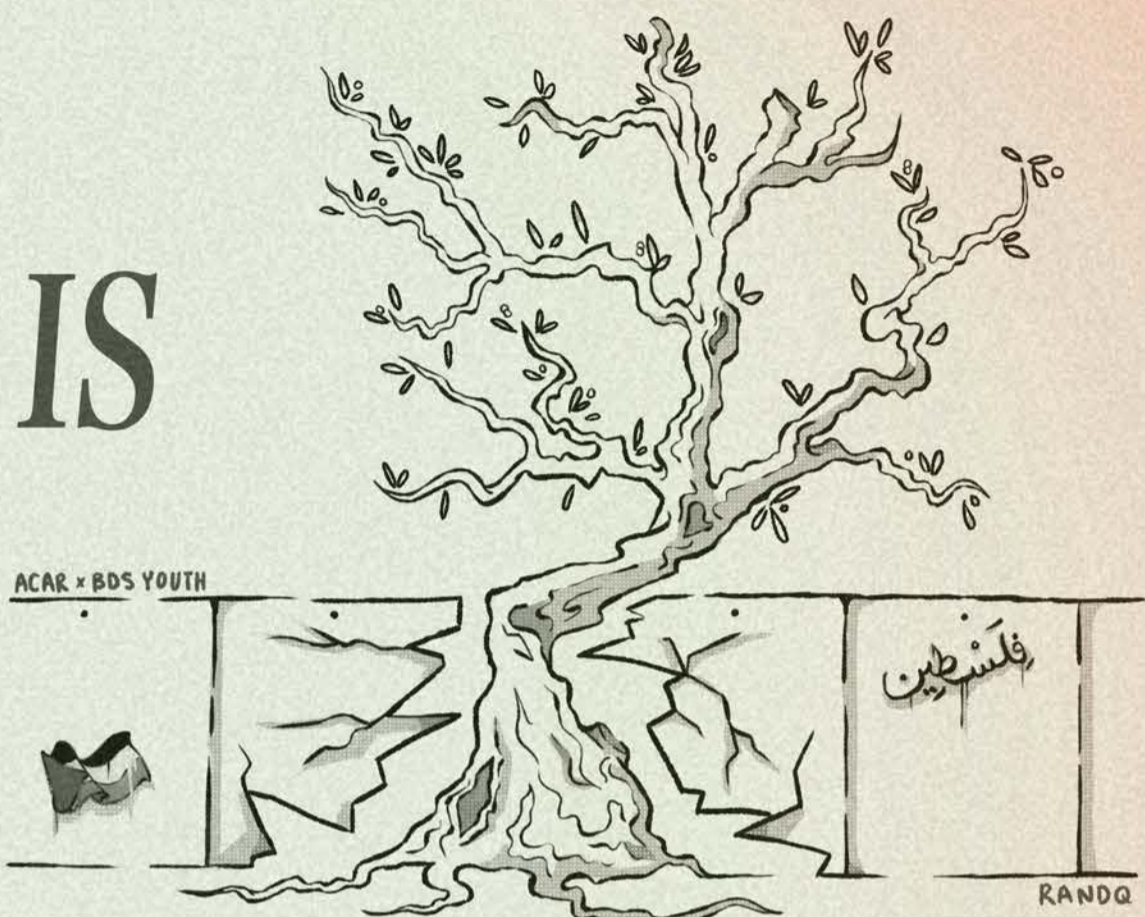
IN THIS ISSUE...



- Girlfriend asks, "Is the worm from Dune good or bad?"
- Excluded from the Bi women with boyfriends float? you may be entitled to financial compensation
- My instagram feed was really good today
- Overheard at Italian Bowl 5 minutes before close: so no fuckin' ziti now?



EXISTENCE



IS

RESISTANCE

ISRAELI APARTHEID WEEK



- TUES 05/03 2PM** - IAW PANEL DISCUSSION: INTERSECTIONALITY WITH PALESTINE
- THU 07/03 6:30PM** - CONTINGENT TO PALESTINIAN FILM FEST
- SUN 10/03 1PM** - STUDENT CONTINGENT TO PALESTINE RALLY
- TUES 12/03 12PM** - 'STOP ARMING GENOCIDE' FORUM
- MON 18/03** - FILM SCREENING: 'Roadmap to Apartheid'
- THU 21/03** - ONLINE TEACH-IN WITH ADDAMEER, PALESTINIAN PRISONER SUPPORT ASSOCIATION
- FRI 29/03 7PM** - ONLINE POLITICAL TOUR OF JERUSALEM

