

HONI SOIT



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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Aidan Elwig Pollock

Editorial

Aidan Elwig Pollock

The mythology underpinning modern Australia is as vast as our continent; incorporating various influences through a contested, often violent and surprisingly turbulent history. From the burnt orange sands of the red centre to the wiry brown grass of the northern savannahs; from Queensland's blacksoil plains to the diverse hubbub of Sydney and its turquoise harbour — the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves are unendingly interesting and intensely complex.

In semester one, week six of your student newspaper, we're diving into these narratives and unpacking what our country is all about. Within these pages you can find a figurative map of our history, from the violence of Cabramatta's heroin boom and what that meant for the immigrant experience to the scandalous 1944 Archibald Prize. Read on to delve into the history of New South Wales' unique selective school system. Engage with perspectives on the complicated nature of family history in the settler-colony, or a fresh approach to a non-anthropocentric Sydney. We also have more on trains, if that tickles your fancy.

Our feature this week investigates a central narrative in the Australian political landscape — the rural-urban divide, and what it really means for our country. Is there really a gulf between the attitudes of urban and rural students? Are the regions suffering from extreme disadvantage, neglected by a selfish metropole? Is Barnaby Joyce right? Turn to page 10 to find out!

Of course, any self-respecting radical paper would be remiss not to acknowledge the violent history of our settler-colony. Our University sits on Gadigal land, and is embroiled in this colonial history — a history that began in this part of Australia in 1770, with the encounter of James Cook with Kurnell, and intensified with the invasion of the First Fleet in 1788. But since the 1600s, Australian history has been marred by a seemingly endless cavalcade of atrocity and suffering perpetrated against the oldest continuing culture on earth, and the original custodians of the land we live on.

Only by fully examining the history and legacy of the Frontier Wars, of dispossession and genocide, of attempts at communication and understanding, of First Nations resistance, can we achieve our full potential as a country.

I hope the frank and inclusive discussion of our national narratives comes through in this wonderful edition of our paper. Turn each page and be inspired to wonder about, interrogate, and reflect upon our complicated, boundless, and shared country.



Cartoon Caption Contest



Cartoon: Aidan Elwig Pollock

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.

This Week

You guys all sucked this week. Here is a limerick for all of you:
We wanted a caption for our cartoon
But all your answers were worse than Dune
They were all so trite
It gave us a fright
And we were listless all afternoon



Cartoon: Khushi Chevli

Last Week

Culture Guide

Wednesday 27 March

Flower books book club, 6-8pm @ Frontyard. See @flowerbooks for more info.
Gaysian stories, 7pm @ Marrickville Town Hall. Free (optional donation), RSVP required here.
Brown Man White Paper, 6-8pm @ Scratch Art Space, Marrickville

Thursday 28 March

Booker Magazine issue #002 launch w GRXCE, Final Girls, Gnocchi, 7.30pm @ Red Rattler. Tickets: free-\$20.
DEBASER: Amnesiac, 6-10pm @ Goodspace Gallery, Marrickville

Friday 29 March

Gee Tee, Perfect Actress, Silicone Prairie, 7.30pm @ Marrickville Bowlo. Tickets: \$25.
SUDS Fundraiser: DEATHWATCH Drag Race, 7pm @ Cellar Theatre. Tickets: \$12.
Urban Enigmas @ Gaffa Gallery, Sydney

Saturday 30 March

Rave at The Honi Office (bit) (do not come)

Sunday 31 March

Bizarro x Heavenly Long Weekend, 2pm-9pm @ Hermann's. Tickets: Berlin Underground, 10pm @ Civic Underground. Tickets: free before 11pm-\$24

Monday 1 April

Tomfoolery.

Tuesday 2 April

Barbara McGrady: Australia Has a Black History (until June) @ Chau Chak Wing. Free entry.

'Letters'



To Anonymous,

Thank you for this. However, Piggy did not die and we question how this spurious claim arose.

Oink,

The Honi editors



Art: Yasodara Puhule

New independent student publication launched at UNSW amidst name changes to *Tharunka*

Simone Maddison

Launched by a student-led grassroots campaign, *Noise* is UNSW's newest independent on-campus publication.

Publishing its first editorial on March 6, 2024, the paper defines itself as "run entirely by and for students". In addition to informing "students of matters they have a right to know about", *Noise* is committed to following "a decades-long tradition of underground student journalism in protest of institutions that rely on secrecy and deception to act".

This mission statement is a direct challenge to funding cuts and veto controls enacted by UNSW's student union Arc to the University's existing student paper, *Tharunka*. Amidst realisations that *Tharunka's* name

was stolen from a Central Australian Indigenous language and does not mean "message stick" as its founders intended, the Chair of Arc's Board Arthy Makunthan requested a "pause" in *Tharunka's* activity at the end of last year.

These concerns coincide with proposals to change the name of the University of Wollongong's student publication *Tertangala*, originating from its time as a satellite campus of UNSW and sister publication to *Tharunka*.

The Board's decision has resulted in Arc defaulting on promises to hire new *Tharunka* editors in 2024 and

a "project officer" to advise name changes to the publication. The outlet announced on its Instagram page that while it is "not taking pitches or article ideas", *Tharunka* "will be back soon, and we can't wait to show you our new look!"

NOISE

Consequently, *Noise's* editors believe "students should turn to *Noise* where they feel their voice has been suppressed by Arc or UNSW", or if they "wish to write about Arc".

They have also implored their student union to "avoid using the paper's [*Tharunka's*] original name without gagging student journalism."

In response to allegations that Arc's marketing executives have

used their veto powers to "censor criticism of their initiatives, suppress victim-survivors of sexual harassment trying to speak up, and overwork and underpay staff", *Noise's* coverage has three primary focuses going forward:

- Arc's unethical spending over recent years.
- Reports of sexual assault/harassment that were allegedly mishandled.
- The mass defunding of UNSW's collectives and societies.

Honi Soit will continue to follow *Noise's* aims "to question and scrutinise Arc's initiatives so that transparency and accountability may be demanded of the Arc Board and its corporate executives".

Staff at Monash University held 24-hour strike

Aidan Elwig Pollock

The Monash University branch of the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) voted for a 24-hour strike beginning midday Wednesday March 20, provided University management does not submit to Union demands.

The NTEU called for improvements to job security, a 1,645 hour ceiling on academic workloads, the right to work from home, and a 4.5% pay increase for 2024.

"An Enterprise Agreement that doesn't deliver these fundamental improvements should be unacceptable to all," a Monash NTEU spokesperson said.

The NTEU has been engaged in an enterprise agreement bargaining process with Monash University since late 2022. Negotiations began over 55 clauses, of which only 12 remain to be settled.

The planned strike comes after inconclusive bargaining with Monash University management on March 7. The Union "attempted to discuss and reach agreement on a number of key clauses" such as "leave, conversion of fixed-term staff, hours of duty, and on-call allowances".

"It seemed to us today that the University only wants agreement as long as it is on their terms," the NTEU said following a March 7 meeting with Monash University management.

According to the NTEU, the University refused to modify the fixed-term conversion policy. The NTEU noted that management "argued that because the Award allows the university to offer rolling fixed-term contracts indefinitely, there was no need to offer staff anything better than conversion after four years."

University management refused a Union offer to "accept the status quo" on work hours provided Monash University made concessions on professional staff probation. Management also declined

NTEU requests for 600 additional full-time-equivalent positions.

Additionally, the University would not concede any changes to long-service leave. According to the NTEU, "Monash HR told us that despite Monash's long-service leave being the worst in the state, they simply weren't prepared to offer anything better."

The University made minor concessions in some areas, committing to consideration of staff requests for on-call allowances with accompanying review procedures for rejections, and a possible increase for non-birth partner parental leave to 12 weeks.

Impending strike action follows recent scandals involving Monash University, including a \$127,000 party, decried as "lavish" by the NTEU, for leaving Vice-Chancellor Margaret Gardner at the National Gallery of Victoria in late 2023.

Monash University NTEU Branch President Dr Ben Eltham said "Monash's University Council has serious questions to answer about who approved such an egregious waste of money."

According to Dr Eltham, University staff were "rightly angry" about the event. "With a litany of governance failures now piling up at Monash, it's hard to see how Chancellor Simon McKeon's job is tenable," Dr Eltham said.

Dr Eltham questioned why the University's own performing arts centre was not used for the party.

National President of the NTEU, Dr Alison Barnes, said "sadly these revelations are shocking but not surprising" in response to the party. "Where was the lavish function for all the Monash casual academics who had more than \$10 million in wages stolen?"

Barnes said "the lack of accountability is appalling," and called on the Federal Government to

"overhaul the broken governance model in response to the Universities Accord."

A Monash University spokesperson told *Honi Soit* that "the University remains committed to reaching a fair and equitable agreement with the NTEU as quickly as possible. We believe all remaining matters can be resolved with continued goodwill and openness to compromise on both sides."

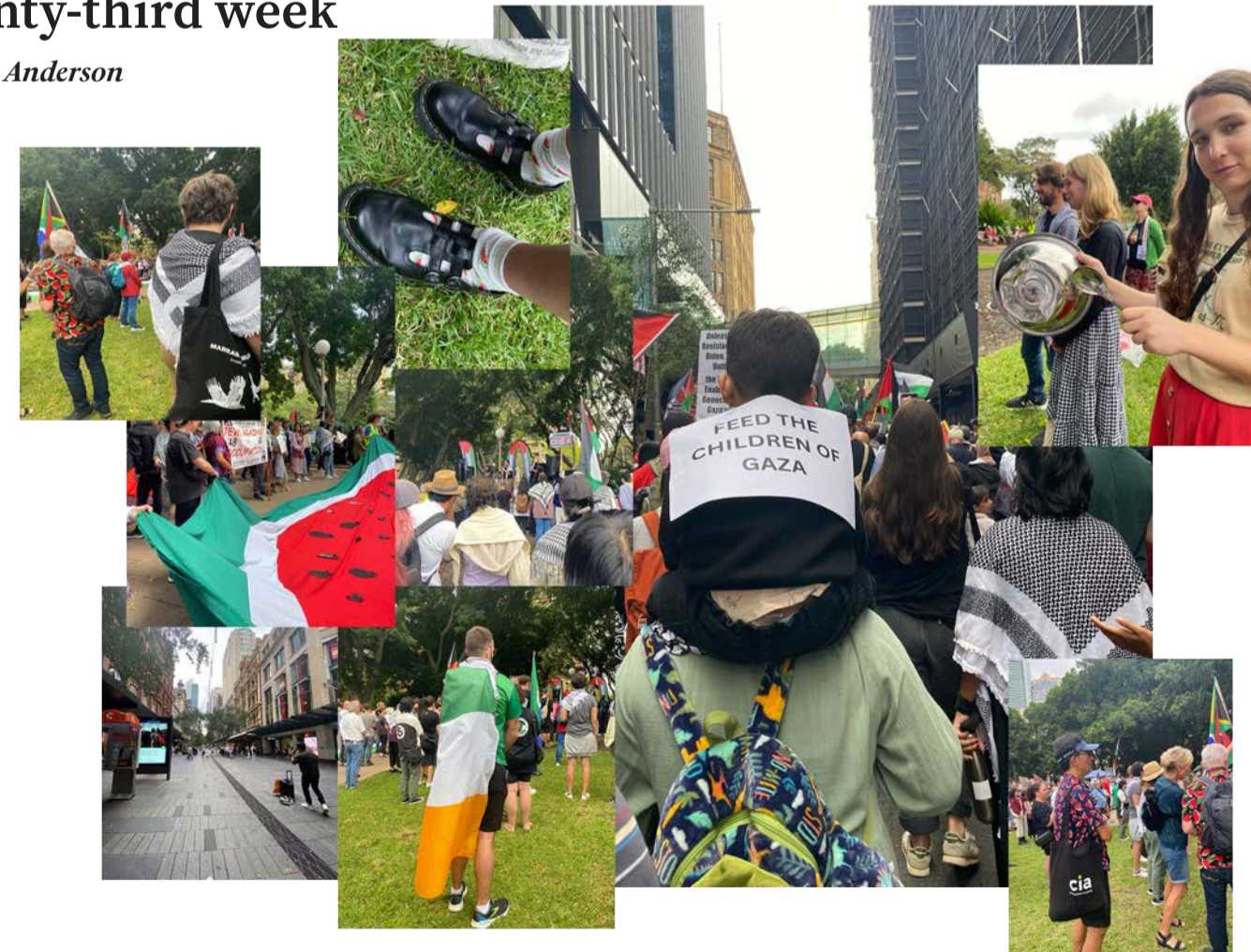
The University "respects the right

of the NTEU to take industrial action. The strike action will, however, not assist in the resolution of the remaining matters under negotiation."

"The University will be open and operating as normal. There will be no reduction to student services, scheduled classes will continue, and we expect any impacts of the industrial action to be minimal."

"While you're shopping, bombs are dropping": Palestine protests enter twenty-third week

Jordan Anderson



Justice for Veronica Baxter

Bipasha Chakraborty

Content warning: This piece contains mentions of Aboriginal deaths in custody, racism, and transphobia.

USyd Queer Action Collective, University of Sydney First Nations Students' Collective, and Pride in Protest held a rally outside Surry Hills police station where Veronica Baxter was first denied bail 15 years ago on March 14, 2009. The rally was chaired by Lauren and Vieve, both members of USyd's Queer Action Collective (QuAC).

The co-chairs began by addressing Baxter's circumstance, where "Veronica's home was raided by cops following information provided by an undercover cop for drug-related charges. She was denied bail right here at Surry Hills Police Station. And then she was sent to a male prison where she was denied hormone replacement therapy and died three days after Mardi Gras under suspicious circumstances."

Wiradjuri and Wailwan activist, and SRC USyd's First Nations Officer, Ethan Floyd began by noting that "since the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, at least 560 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have died in custody in police operations. We're here to remember one of them, Veronica Baxter, who was in custody in 2009".

"Deaths in custody are a result of the ongoing violence perpetrated by this colonial project and by the police. Governments on all levels are not just actively failing to take action, but are funding the institutions that kill us while refusing to hold a single individual or agency accountable."

Floyd finally remarked, "This is a matter of life and death for our people. It's also a sign of the intersectional struggle we share as queer folk and First Nations people. What we've been demanding for decades and will continue to demand is that the government implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission that the police and law enforcement across this country are defunded, disarmed, and dismantled in favour of community-minded restorative justice frameworks."

Greens Inner West Councillor and queer activist Liz Atkins reflected on their time working on the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody in their early career as an Attorney General's officer in Canberra. "We were so excited by the fact there had been the Royal Commission and recommendations had been made, and here we are today with the national shame of not having implemented any of them."

Atkins remarked on the transphobia experienced by Baxter which continues to persist today: "Her death while in a men's prison highlights the shameful discrimination against trans women in particular. Not just in our trans justice system, but more broadly. Overseas, transphobia is increasing its grip on government."

The Minns Labor government has continued to delay its implementation of the Equality Bill, voting just last Wednesday for further review. Atkins adds that "The government can demonstrate its opposition to transphobia by implementing the Equality Bill in full, including birth certificate reform, comprehensive

anti-discrimination reform, and ensuring the NSW Police implement the recommendations of the Sackar Special Commission.

"We need real transformational change, including a stop to over-policing of queer and First Nations people, and properly equipping and training police to de-escalate sensitive situations, rather than focusing on the use of force [and] weapons."

The final speaker for the event was Wei Thai-Haynes, a member of both Pride in Protest and Sex Worker Action Collective. She similarly echoed, "It is because of the failure to implement the findings of the 1991 Royal Commission [in]to Black Deaths in Custody that over 560 Aboriginal men, children, sister girls, and brother boys have died at the hands of the police and prison system."

"It is because the recommendations have not been implemented that Veronica died in this fucking prison system. Veronica's death is also another reminder of the transphobia that runs top to bottom in this country. It is another reminder of the intersection of sex worker, of drug user, of black, and of sister girl is not just an idea in the mind of someone, but it is a person in our community."

Thai-Haynes criticised the media cycle which "takes the sensationalised murder of two white gay men in the eastern suburbs by a policeman for the media to take notice of the brutality that police exact on our community."

"Even more repugnant that in the same cycle, we watch the same media, the same police, and the same government tell us to our faces that we don't get to decide the terms in which

we celebrate our own fucking pride. And that the context of Jesse and Luke's murders by Beau Lemarre was a crime of passion, an isolated incident, and not one of a larger pattern of evil enacted by the police and the state."

In a statement to *Honi Soit*, QuAC emphasised that the rally was a "call for the full disarming, defunding, and dismantling of all police; full decriminalisation of recreational drugs; full implementation of the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody; Pass the Equality Bill Now."

"Just this week we have seen the Minns Labor government propose changes to bail laws that would remove more Indigenous children from their communities, and further delayed the equality bill. This delay is a continual denial of the right to self-ID and the protection of sex workers as workers on the anti-discrimination act, this delay allows the continued material discrimination of many queer people in housing, healthcare and in the so called 'justice' system. Equality delayed is Equality denied, End Blak Deaths in Custody."

"Cases like Veronica Baxter's demonstrate the interlinked nature of queer and Blak justice. There will be no queer justice if there is no Blak justice, and no Blak justice without queer justice. Both rely on the decolonisation of so called 'Australia'."

"To this point, we extend our solidarity to Palestinians, who are facing a brutal colonisation at the hands of Israel aided by our own colonialist government."

Government establishes independent board to oversee National Competitive Grants Program

Angus McGregor

Legislation introduced in November 2023 to reform the Australian Research Council (ARC) passed through parliament today. The reforms were in response to the recommendations of last year's review into the ARC Act.

The ARC oversees the National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP), which funds the vast majority of Australian academic research. Before the review, ministers had a high level of discretion to approve or reject research grants.

According to Education Minister Jason Clare, "over the last decade, the ARC has been bedevilled by political interference and ministerial delays." The intention of the government was to give the ARC more autonomy over the grants process.

Clare argued that the system their government inherited "has made it harder for universities to recruit and retain staff, and it has damaged our international reputation."

"That's not good for our universities. It's not good for businesses either who work with our universities."

The review was led by Professor Margaret Sheil AO, Professor Susan Dodds and Professor Mark Hutchinson, and received 220 submissions before producing their final report in August 2023.

The Albanese government agreed to implement nine of the recommendations, and agreed to the final one in principle. The Australian Research Council Amendment (Review Response) Bill implements six of the ten recommendations. The remaining four do not require legislation.

The changes include creating a clearer scope for the purpose of the ARC and specifying their functions, as well as establishing a designated committee within the ARC for engagement and consultation with Indigenous Australian academics and their research partners.

The most important change is the establishment of an independent ARC board which will be responsible for the approval of grants within the NCGP.

While largely taking the process out of ministerial hands, the government will still be able to approve grants for projects that drive "nationally significant investments," a definition that includes infrastructure and training.

The government can also order the ARC to terminate funding for grants or direct the board to reject a grant if it poses national security concerns. They will have to inform the parliament when those powers are used.

The board is now also responsible for appointing the CEO and the members of the ARC's College of Experts, who oversee external assessments.

Facebook pulls out of world-first news bargaining code! What's next?

Zeina Khochaiche explains.

In 2020 the Morrison government began drafting the News Bargaining Code — the first of its kind. The code was intended to address the imbalance in bargaining power between Australian news media and tech giants including Meta and its subsidiary, Facebook. The code requested Facebook pay Australian news publishers for their content and provide publishers with important platform updates like changes to news rankings, feed updates, or search algorithm developments.

On March 1st, Meta announced to Australian news publishers that the company would be withdrawing from the code upon the contract's expiry this year — halting payment deals and refusing renewal negotiations, putting the fate of Australia's digital news industry now weighing in the balance. Facebook has said users will no longer have access to the separate tab feature Facebook News but has supposedly committed to not blocking access to Australian media. The initial News Bargaining Code had undergone several amendments and negotiations over the past three years to secure Facebook cooperation whilst news platforms like the *ABC*, *Seven West Media*, *Nine Entertainment*, *The Guardian*, and *The Daily Aus* continued to experience the oscillating consequences of reversed digital regulations.

The 2020 bargaining code emerged from the Australian Competition

and Consumer Commission (ACCC) digital inquiry report into how large search engines like Google and social media platforms like Facebook impact advertising, and specifically news marketing.

The report made many recommendations for competition law, identified imbalances in market power versus news media businesses, and proposed rectifications to data privacy and policy regulation on platforms. The imbalance in market power for news media business was the first recommendation to be addressed by the code, and in 2020 the Australian government asked for a mandatory code of conduct to be developed. The government said the deals of the bargaining code were predicted to provide at least \$200 million to Australian media outlets — an unprecedented aid to labour forces and combating the disproportionate market power that has been stifling platforms for decades.

Initially, Facebook did not support the legislation, and in a 2020 media release stated that it would “reluctantly stop allowing publishers and people in Australia from sharing local and international news on Facebook and Instagram,” citing the Australian government's actions as “def[y]ing logic.”

Facebook claimed providing news platforms access to application

updates and algorithmic updates gave an “unfair advantage” in light of other content creators and businesses not having access.

As a result, for a period in February 2021, Facebook pulled news from Australian feeds entirely and restricted user navigations and link usage; **demonstrating only a fraction of the control the tech giant could exercise over Australian media.**

In Facebook's 2021 removal period, *Honi Soit* joined the list of student media outlets whose posts were blocked and buried, like *Farrago* (University of Melbourne), *Vertigo* (University of Technology Sydney), and *Woroni* (Australian National University). During the coverage of the unfolding legislation, *Honi Soit* found the negative impact on student media to be extensive as “most student media in the past few decades has been either reducing print editions to focus on online content or relying solely on online platforms.”

Facebook's Goliath-like behaviour has returned and now Australian media organisations could face significant profit losses, job insecurity and a restricted media landscape. Now, Facebook will not pay organisations, place restrictions on publishing, and alter news access.

Now, Minister for Communications, Michelle Rowland and assistant treasurer, Stephen Jones,

are working on reviving the code. Jones labelled Meta's actions as “a dereliction of its responsibility to Australia” and told the *Financial Review* that the Australian government “resolve to back Australian journalism.”

The assistant treasurer is now attempting to designate certain platforms like Facebook in order for them to be held under obligation of the code.

The Treasurer was unable to do so in 2021, and instead enforced voluntary commercial agreements with a number of Australian media organisations. This new designation must consider the role Facebook plays in sustaining Australian journalism and news marketing.

In essence, there is no “where to next” to cushion this narrative. Meta's unwillingness to return to the negotiation table places media platforms of all kinds in a vulnerable position as Australia awaits their fate — a fate held in inexorable and indifferent hands.



NSW's obsession with selective schools

Edward Ellis wanders into class...

NSW has long had an obsession with selective schooling. Currently, there are 48 selective schools in the state, which is more than the number of selective schools in all other seven states and territories combined. There are four selective schools each in Victoria and Queensland, just one in Western Australia, and none in Canberra.

NSW's greater number of selective schools is attributed to the unique way the state responded to the growing demand for public secondary schooling. Selective schooling in NSW began in the 1880s, as the demand for universal secondary schooling increased, a parallel system was established from the 1920s which differentiated students and schools based on student IQ.

Economic expansion post-WW2 increased pressure for more schools and secondary schooling, which only increased the opportunities for more selective schools.

Despite emerging criticism of selective schooling in the late 20th century, its continued growth was aided by Terry Metherell, who in 1988 sought to increase the accessibility of selective schools for families from the outer suburbs, which in turn resulted in their growth across the outer suburbs

of Sydney, Newcastle, and Wollongong. Despite their growing prominence in NSW over the past century, the Department of Education, successive governments, and peak educational groups have long neglected the downsides of selective schooling, notably the segregation and disadvantage that it creates within our education system.

Selective schools are by definition not accessible to all, particularly those from disadvantaged lower socio-economic backgrounds. Amongst other factors they are unable to afford the very expensive tutoring fees, of around \$700-1,200 for ten weeks of classes that so many students often receive to pass the highly-competitive entrance exams, to secure a place at one of these top-level selective schools from an early age.

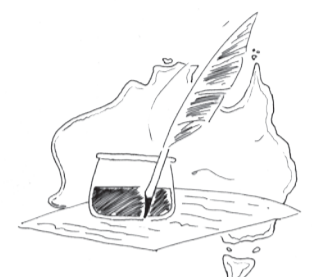
In 2024, 17,088 children sat a selective entrance exam for around only 4,248 places. A 2018 review by the NSW Department of Education found that students living in rural and remote areas, those with a disability, and Indigenous students were heavily

under-represented in selective schools. Research has consistently highlighted that a high proportion of students in selective schools are from advantaged households, locking out the students who would most benefit from the increased support and resources.

For example, 73% of students in NSW's selective schools come from the highest quarter of socio-economic advantage. Prominent selective school James Ruse, who up until last year topped the HSC league tables for 27 consecutive years, has 89% of its student body from the top SEA quarter. Just 2% of students statewide attending selective schools come from the lowest quarter of SEA.

This streaming results in students who are locked out of the selective system continuing to fall behind even further over time. Often placed in lower ability groups, where mobility is difficult and the best teaching and resources are absent, comprehensive public schools struggle to remain competitive.

Notably, selective schools



consistently dominate the top of the HSC school rankings. In 2023 eight of the top ten schools in the state were selective.

Furthermore, students in these selective schools are deprived of the optimal potential learning opportunities comprehensive schools are designed to provide. A raft of educational research over time has revealed that children learn best in diverse academic and social environments.

Mixed-ability classrooms help promote greater understanding, self-confidence, and interaction amongst a student body of varied ability. Students from these schools often miss out on the benefits of mixed-ability classrooms and may develop negative perceptions of the students deemed to not be as smart as them.

NSW's education system would benefit from a system that wasn't so obsessed with selectivity. Not only do these students often miss out on the benefits of a more well-rounded comprehensive education. But the streamlining of our schooling based on intelligence at a young age exacerbates the inequality and disadvantage of educational outcomes for students from a lower socio-economic background.

War on youth: rethinking festival drug use

Annabel Li discusses.

Picture yourself in regional Victoria. You're nestled within the rugged bushes and cascading mountains of the Grampians National Park, located approximately 250 kilometres west of Melbourne, and some 1,050 kilometres south-west of your home in Sydney. Everyone is dressed in similar renditions of the same outfit — think jorts, gorp-core, and headscarf.

Extreme fire warnings, whispers of a possible death, and distant rumbles of an overpassing rescue helicopter are also starting to waft through the tense, dry air. But it's too hot to think, and there's no reception to fact-check either; so you, under the spotty shade of the gazebo tent, drift in and out of a restless slumber, cradled by the sweltering heat of the summer and the rigidness of the nylon, fold-out chair beneath you. After a hasty decision made by organisers, the festival is cancelled last minute. You leave feeling disgruntled, hazy and unsatisfied. This was my experience at this year's Pitch Music and Arts Festival.

Festivals, by their nature, are chaotic, lending themselves to the possibility of a range of unforeseen circumstances. A mixture of drugs, alcohol, dehydration, heat, and overexertion work to create a potent, and sometimes fatal combination.

Indeed, it was later confirmed that a 23-year-old attendee did pass away. He was local, and his story joins a sobering list of similar tragedies, including the deaths of two young men at Sydney's Knockout Outdoor festival in September last year. Just two months ago, nine people were left hospitalised with three remaining in critical condition after suspected overdoses at another Melbourne music festival. A study led by Associate Professor Jennifer Schumann at Monash University's Department of Forensic Medicine uncovered more than 60 drug-related deaths at concerts and festivals in Australia between the years 2000 and 2019. These 64 deaths were largely preventable. In fact, some of the greatest risks associated with illicit drug use arise simply “because they are illegal,” Associate Professor Nicole Lee and Professor Alison Ritter write for the National Drug & Alcohol Research Centre. This means that first, there is a lack of education, awareness and support around safe drug use; and second, methods of illegal drug production largely go unregulated in underground black markets, allowing drugs to be adulterated and cut with other substances and thereby increasing the risk of fatal outcomes.

This is corroborated by Schumann's study which finds that the most common cause of drug-related deaths was MDMA toxicity, meaning MDMA was found at much higher concentrations than the usual threshold associated with overdoses. Yet, the government has continued to maintain a “war on drugs” approach that has proven to be harmful and sorely unproductive, time and time again. For example, an inquest conducted by Deputy State Coroner Harriet Grahame into the deaths of six young people at music festivals — including that of 19-year-old Jennie Ross-King — **found that high-visibility policing tactics such as drug dogs and strip searches increased, rather than decreased the risk and harm associated with drugs.** Further, she found no evidence to suggest such tactics were effective in reducing overall drug use or harm at all. Grahame again recommended drug-checking, stating it is “simply an evidence-based harm-reduction strategy that should be trialled as soon as possible in NSW.”

Of course, this was aptly shut down by NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian at the time, who resorted instead, to “increase penalties for people supplying these illegal substances to a maximum of 20 years.” This again

underscored a misguided emphasis on punitively condoning drug offences rather than mitigating the harm that continues to occur.

Government spending is also heavily skewed towards punishment. 66% of \$1.7 billion spent towards law enforcement against illicit drugs, compared to just 9% on prevention and 2% on harm reduction. Current NSW Premier Chris Minns peddles a similar, overly-simplistic approach to drugs of “just say no” that relies on a fear-based campaign that has also shown to be ineffective in reducing drug use, according to Grahame's inquest.

The tragic loss of young lives at a festival should not make us complacent, especially when those fatalities arise from preventable drug risks. **People are taking drugs, and people will most likely continue to take drugs in the future.** To actively dismiss evidence-based strategies that have the potential to save young lives in favour of a futile “law and order” approach presents as a huge disservice to the many young people who may be at risk, as well as the many young people who lost their lives before it. The ongoing “war on drugs” ultimately wages its fiercest battles against our youth.

Beyond prestige: USyd versus Go8 — Analysing employment outcomes

Kanav Batra and Yashvardhan Saboo investigate.

Source: QUILT

When a student chooses to attend the University of Sydney, they're promised a package deal that is allegedly inclusive of a rich cultural heritage and maybe even a job with a competitive salary after graduating, since the university is ranked fourth in the QS World rankings for graduate employability. When asked about the graduate employability ranking, an anonymous student said, “It's up there, but fourth worldwide for employability is a little ridiculous.”

What do the numbers say though? To truly understand where the university stands in offering its students employment opportunities post-graduation, we compared the university to its other Australian counterparts from the Group of Eight which are seven other equally large and research-intensive universities. And the University of Sydney is supposedly the most elite of them all.

Since no information is published directly by the University's Careers Centre on specific statistics regarding employment outcomes of graduates, we used the latest Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) from 2022 published under The Australian government's Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) initiative and the numbers do tell a different tale.

The GOS report shows that over 7.3% of graduates in 2022 had no labor force participation, a shocking

Name of University	Label	Labor Force Participation Rate %	Median Salary in \$
Monash University	MU	92.4	67,000
The University of Queensland	UQ	92.6	67,000
The University of Sydney	USYD	92.7	69,100
The University of Western Australia	UWA	89.3	62,800
The University of Melbourne	UMELB	87.6	63,900
The Australian National University	ANU	92.6	68,000
The University of Adelaide	UA	90.1	65,000
The University of New South Wales	UNSW	94.9	70,000

number that doesn't quite align with the university's claim of ranking fourth worldwide in graduate employability. These statistics also call for more transparent reporting of graduate outcomes on the Careers Centre's part as they are essential to assess students' overall employment prospects.

These could help ensure that students are adequately prepared for the challenges of the modern workforce and can make informed decisions about their education and future career paths.

USyd's Labor force participation rate in 2022 stood at 92.7% compared

to UNSW's 94.9%, a marginal difference but still closer to the performances of universities ranked much lower by the QS rankings. When looking at the median salary, the University of Sydney again falls short of the top spot.

Although the University ranks second among the Go8, this isn't reflected by a significant margin over its counterparts.

With the current cost of living crisis, the need for graduate placements with a greater median salary is only growing, especially for graduates in Sydney, which remains Australia's most

expensive city.

This discrepancy between median salaries also creates a financial burden on students, since the costs of tuition also differ greatly between the two institutions. The GOS study observes that the University of Sydney remains a more expensive option for prospective students while also having a lower median salary after graduation.

According to the U.S. News Rankings, another “recognized leader” in university rankings, The University of Sydney is ranked much higher than the University of New South Wales, but unfortunately this isn't quite reflected in its labor force participation or its graduate median salary.

When viewed from another lens, student satisfaction throughout the education process also remained quite low. Covered by Honi previously, the quality of the entire education experience for students remained the lowest with a score of 68.8 which brought USyd's ranking 40th nationally and the worst among the Go8 universities.

The 2024 GOS collection started on October 24, 2023, and will run over its last period in May 2024.

Silent witnesses: Catherine Oriley and the politics of family history

Angus McGregor looks and listens.

Catherine Oriley, like many poor women in the 19th century, signed her first marriage certificate with a cross. It was 1845 and her family had just landed in London. Her home, Ireland, was being ravaged by a famine that would kill over one million people and force another four million to migrate across the world. Catherine is my great great grandmother. It was because of her forced migration to London, and then to Australia in July 1852 on the *Lady Macdonald* that I was born so many generations later.

Discovering a problematic family history is almost always shocking even though it almost never should be. It has become trendy for white celebrities in the US and UK to look back and feel 'uncomfortable' or 'astonished' that their family owned slaves or participated in the massacre of First Nations people.



In the opening of his book *Killing For Country*, journalist David Marr traces his family's participation in the state ordered murder of Indigenous Australians in Queensland and has a similar reaction:

"I was appalled and curious. I have been writing about the politics of race all my career. I know what side I'm on. Yet that afternoon I found in the

lower branches of my family tree Sub-Inspector Reginald Uhr, a professional killer of [Aboriginal people]."

An honest reflection and acknowledgement of the crimes of the past at a family level as well as a national one is essential for truth telling or any form of reconciliation. Looking at history at the familial level lays bare how much you benefit from their actions even if you are not responsible for them.

More importantly, it allows you to historicise actions that are seemingly unthinkable. Looking at colonisation, migration, and state building from the lens of individuals forces us to confront the reality that people are trapped by structures and times they cannot control. Work in the style of Marr is important but often missing in the grand attempts to search for seminal moments are the people who fall through the cracks just trying to survive.

Catherine is one of those stories. Born in Dublin in 1827 to a family of coachmakers, she arrived in Melbourne with her husband Henry and three kids James, Joseph, and Mary. Henry worked as a labourer in the London sewers carting excrement. The children were all born in a three year span and barely survived the voyage. The government sponsored the family alongside 200 other migrants, likely as an attempt to curb overpopulation and poverty in London.

Advertisements calling for workers to move to the goldfields of Victoria and headlines in London newspapers highlighting regular people getting rich encouraged thousands of people to

take the perilous voyage.

Rather than finding gold, Catherine lost most of her family in the first two years of living in Australia. James died in 1852 and Henry was killed in a work accident in 1854. Joseph followed a few weeks later. More than a third of children in Australia never made it to age five. Catherine, left with no other option, was forced into a marriage with her boss Samuel Preston, a violent Tasmanian convict who took her to the goldfields.

The goldfields were violent and dangerous. Families lived in makeshift tents that did little to shelter people from the extreme heat in summer and cold in winter. Miners largely acted independently, and there were no labour laws or safety standards. Children regularly died falling down one of the hundreds of mine shafts and fights brought on by a toxic culture of alcoholism and competition, claimed others. Besides small tents set up by the church, there was no formal schooling.

The land itself was being annihilated in a futile attempt to find a couple specks of gold. Samuel never did and went missing under suspicious circumstances, leaving Catherine widowed with children for a second time.

Her true experiences were never passed down. It was believed that Henry was a successful clerk and the second marriage to Preston was wiped from memory altogether.

Her third marriage to William Cummins finally brought her life some stability. Cummins came from a family of seamen and dock workers and arrived in Melbourne in 1852, also seeking gold. He and Catherine eventually gave up on finding a fortune, settling instead for a small plot of land to farm. On a cart,

Photography: Keira Lockyer



they piled their entire lives and finally left the goldfields for Yea in 1870.

In a letter to Geoff and Ninette Dutton in 1973, Patrick White, in his characteristically condescending way, drew on the chaos of the 19th century to define Australian nationality. "What is so amazing is that Australians have changed so little; we are the same arrogant plutocrats, larrikins, and Irish rabble as we were then."

Some, like White, look down on early Australian migrants for their lack of culture and civility. Others lionize their 'pioneering' achievements in a way that ignores their complicity in colonization and genocide. Many just don't want to know. Marr wrote that his "blindness was so Australian," because he read book after book on the frontier wars never once asking himself whether his family was involved.

Catherine outlived William by nine years, dying in 1908 aged 71. The very little we can gather from marriage certificates, census listings, and obituaries does not depict a pioneer or Irish rabble but a woman who lived a harsh life in a harsh world. We will never know what she thought of the nation being built around her, but like most people in history, she did not have the luxury of making assessments.

30 years on: the assassination of John Newman in Cabramatta

Jayden Nguyen reflects on Vietnamese settlement.

5 September 2024 will mark the 30th anniversary of Australia's supposed first political assassination. In 1994, Cabramatta Labor MP John Newman was shot dead in the driveway of his Woods Avenue home.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported Newman had received numerous death threats after he publicly advertised to deport members of Asian gangs found guilty of crimes, while also calling for heavier policing in Cabramatta. Ngô Cảnh Phương, a local Vietnamese politician, remains sentenced to life imprisonment without parole nor review for orchestrating Newman's assassination.

This commemoration demands so-called 'Australians' to ponder the emergence of ethnic gang violence within the settler-colony. The common racist belief sees immigrants as innately violent and counter-cultural. In Pauline Hanson's words, "they have their own culture and religions, form ghettos, and do not assimilate."

An understanding of racism in Australia necessarily engages with the fact early Australian immigration policy sought to "keep Australia white and pure". Waves of Vietnamese immigration compromised such fundamental beliefs. In the context of gang activity in Cabramatta, it is essential to understand the turbulent relationship between the Australian settler-colony and the war-torn Vietnamese diaspora.

Art: Simone Maddison

The Cause of 5T's Emergence

In the words of the assassinated John Newman, "The Asian gangs involved don't fear our laws, but there's one thing that they do fear – that's possible



deportation back to the jungles of Vietnam because that's where, frankly, they belong." The rhetorical and military weapon of human displacement, in both the Resistance War Against America, and in Newman's words, were catalysts to the emergence of Vietnamese-Australian gangs.

Most important to Cabramatta's history was the emergence of '5T', named after five Vietnamese words: 'Tinh', 'Tiền', 'Tù', 'Tội', 'TỬ', translating to 'Love, Money, Prison, Punishment, Death'. Led by Trần Minh Tri, 5T was founded on a shared trauma of displacement, where mostly boys and

men whose families were overseas or killed as a result of war were able to redevelop a local community. These emotions, felt in the context of a racist white Australia, allowed gang violence to manifest as a way of establishing political and economic autonomy.

The rapid growth of 5T and its affiliations threatened the function of local police to



the extent where a Commonwealth Parliament Joint Committee formed in 1996 to address 'Vietnamese Organised Crime in Australia'. Eventually, the suppression of 5T by 1999 has left a Vietnamese community admittedly safer from gang violence and heroin dealing, though wearied and no longer as unified as it once was.

The Gentrification of Cabramatta

Today, Cabramatta appears dramatically different to the narratives

of the 1980s–2000s. The local history of Cabramatta has been adequately captured by SBS' renowned series 'Once Upon A Time In Cabramatta', however not without implicitly perpetuating the stereotype of Western Sydney's violence.

Regardless, Cabramatta now inherits a food-based cultural role, mainly advertised through social media. Politically, the region is often analysed as an ideologically conservative voter-base, as identified through voting results in the Voice to Parliament referendum, and the Same Sex Marriage plebiscite. While the community remains severely socio-economically disadvantaged, gradual generational settlement in Australia has helped alleviate the original feelings of displacement which troubled earlier refugees.

The violence of the Vietnamese diaspora is largely unknown in Australian history. Anh Do's book *The Happiest Refugee* has become the mainstream understanding of Vietnamese displacement; a romantic story of love and effort overcoming hardship in a prosperous imagination of Australia. It does not confront its white settler readers with the racism they impose onto ethnic immigrants, but instead fetishises a liberal myth of an egalitarian Australia. Vietnamese gang activity still lives in the memories of its local communities – I wrote this article guided by my mother's childhood reflections. As Newman's assassination reaches a new decade of commemoration, the immediacy of a trauma caused by war-torn displacement lingers in the background.

Return of the King: Yanis Varoufakis speaks at USyd

Alastair Panzarino and Ravkaran Grewal investigate the castles in the clouds.

Outside the lecture hall following his talk, a handful of his students circled the guest lecturer. "Compared to the powers that be, we are shit kickers, you and I," he explains. "We kick the shit." True enough. But unlike you and I, he was once an important political figure: for 5 months, Yanis Varoufakis was the finance minister of Greece during their debt crisis. He tried desperately to implement a repayment plan that avoided massive austerity in Greece.

Compared to the institutional might of the Troika, everyone's a shit kicker. Negotiations break down. Varoufakis resigns. The most anticipated left-wing reformist project of the 21st century implodes, and itself introduces the harshest austerity in Europe. But now the King is back — in more ways than one.

Two weeks ago, Varoufakis was invited to speak at the University of Sydney by the Political Economy

department, where he once taught. It began with a historical overview of global capitalism from World War Two until the GFC. Here Varoufakis shone, showing his talent for explaining economic developments and their relation to American imperialism in an engaging and accessible way. After his insightful history lesson, Varoufakis gets to the crux of his argument:

"Ladies and gentlemen, this is no longer capitalism."

This is not just inflammatory rhetoric to boost book sales; it is the genuine analysis featured in his 2023 book *Technofeudalism: What Killed Capitalism*. According to Varoufakis, traditional industrial capital has been displaced by 'cloud capital'; "an agglomeration of networks, software, communications' hardware and AI

algorithms" that function as "a produced means of behavioural modification". Think of Spotify recommendations based on your music taste or your oddly specific TikTok 'For You Page'.

Pointing to his phone, Varoufakis proclaimed "the most Hegelian dialectic happens here"; as cloud capital watches us consume, it trains us through recommendations in an endless feedback loop. This creates an individually targeted advertising model whereby cloud based retailers like Amazon bypass the market. These monopolised digital spaces, which Varoufakis calls 'cloud fiefdoms', generate revenue by extracting rent on 'vassal capitalists' who are seeking to sell their products. "Welcome to technofeudalism", where profit and markets have been replaced by rent and cloud fiefdoms and capitalists by 'cloudalists'.

There is some value in his empirical

understanding; the degree to which modern capitalism is unproductive, unprofitable, monopolised, and increasingly relies on assets, rents, and finance to make money. Yet any useful insights that Varoufakis has are obscured by his technofeudalism framework. What Marx identifies as the core of capitalism — generalised commodity production and the wage-labour social relation — still reigns. Social surplus, the lifeblood of any class society, is still extracted via the exploitation of the worker by the capitalist. Any peripheral rents extracted by so-called 'cloudalists' are only facilitated because of this. Cloud capital itself is engaged primarily in advertising, possessing its own market — cloudalists compete for our attention. If we are free to move between platforms, then how can we be understood as 'cloud serfs'? After explaining this 'new mode of production', Varoufakis pivots to

discussing the technofeudal dynamics of the 'New Cold War'.

"Why is the US provoking China?"

The answer: because of cloud capital and technofeudalism. China is the only other nation that competes with US cloud capital. Not only does it compete, but it surpasses Silicon Valley as it has effectively fused with sections of the global financial system. The inability of Europe and Australia to foster native cloud capital has spelled their increasing geopolitical irrelevancy in the 'New Cold War'. Varoufakis identifies part of the structural economic basis to the 'New Cold War'; it is not just a matter of individuals like Donald Trump or Joe Biden, as there is a clear continuity in foreign policy. However, the phenomenon he describes, monopoly capitalists competing on the global stage through geopolitical conflict, can be understood simply as a manifestation of capitalist imperialism. Indeed, the U.S. trade war

with China began with tariffs imposed on solar panels, washing machines, aluminium and steel. The one-sided weight given to cloud capital through the technofeudal explanation ignores the geopolitical struggle occurring on industrial, financial, and technological fronts.

Before discussing what is to be done, Varoufakis reminds us "we are the losers of history." After one hundred years, the Left has faced only catastrophe and cascading failure; nearly every social movement has been co-opted or crushed. Varoufakis' solution for the Australian Left in the 'New Cold War' is to have a government willing to stand up to Washington. But how, in the era of His Majesty Bezos and King Tencent, can this be achieved? The answer lies in Varoufakis' book: an

alliance of workers, cloud consumers, and vassal capitalists against the cloudalists. Invoking the *Communist Manifesto*, Varoufakis ends his text by proclaiming "we have nothing to lose but our mind-chains!" As Marx foretold, history repeats itself, but "the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce."

Ultimately, Varoufakis' proposal reinvents the same tired reformist project. Indeed, almost a century ago, Karl Kautsky

declared the need for socialists to ally with industrial capital against the regressive force of finance. If this unholy alliance is the Left's strategy, perhaps we will continue to be shit kickers.



Photography: Simone Maddison and Ravkaran Grewal

Straddling the barbed-wire fence: Australia, the rural-urban divide, and the National Party

Aidan Elwig Pollock asks where the money went.

The term “inner city elite” has become a buzzword in the Australian political consciousness. Politicians like Bob Katter and Barnaby Joyce refer to a neglected rural wonderland full of bush battlers scammed out of their immense contribution to Australian society by ‘woke city slickers’ who think beef grows in a supermarket refrigerator. Joyce, in particular, uses the phrase “weatherboard and iron” — also the title of his autobiography — to differentiate an apparently poorer, struggling rural Australia from the glitzy, well-provisioned city. Bob Brown’s 2019 “Convoy to Queensland” — an ill-advised attempt to publicise the climate change impact of the Sunshine State’s coal-mining industry — was widely decried by voices in the National Party, and ultimately blamed by many in Labor for Bill Shorten’s unexpected election loss that year.

At the centre of these conceptions of our country is a heavily discussed “urban-rural divide” that stretches back through the rhetorical history of Australia — take Joh Bjelke-Petersen’s infamous rule over Queensland, built on an ‘us-and-them’ mentality rooted in a gerry-mandered rural heartland whipped into a frenzied distrust of both the National Government and urban Brisbane.

The University of Sydney is often described as the epitome of the woke elite by Australian reactionaries. As one of the Group of Eight universities with their primary campus in urban centres — it symbolises the perceived difference in attention — and subsequent funds — collected by city-dwellers. I spoke to USyd students from both rural and urban backgrounds, to find out if the divide illustrated by National Party politicians reflects reality for these students.

It is certainly true that there are large differences between an increasingly sparse rural population and Australia’s cities. In 1911, the time of Australia’s first national census, only 60% of Australians lived in “urban” areas, which presumably included regional centres that did not constitute major cities. However, by 1954, the population of the capital cities overtook that of regional and rural Australia. By 2021, 76% of the then population of almost 26 million Australians lived in major cities. Even more illustrative of our overwhelmingly centralised population is the fact that around two thirds of Australians live in a capital city, with 39% of our population living in Melbourne and Sydney alone.

Urban centres are also the fastest growing parts of the country, with Sydney, Melbourne and South-East Queensland (including Brisbane and the Gold Coast) accounting for 75% of Australia’s population growth since 2020. This has

occurred alongside the much decried death of the small town, with a large number of particularly younger regional Australians moving to urban areas for the opportunities they provide.

While declining as a percentage of the population, the bush maintains a hold on Australian national identity. Historian Russell Ward’s famous “Bush Myth” suggested that the Australian national identity, defined by values of egalitarianism, irreverence, social obligation (often defined as “mateship”), and adaptability, emerged from the itinerant

that the ‘Pioneers’ built a legacy for all Australians.

It is important to note that these are not the only narratives that have defined modern Australia. Much has been made of ANZAC mythology as a national narrative, and recently more critical approaches to Australian colonial history have become mainstream. Typically, older myths marginalised First Nations Peoples and the horrific violence inherent to colonisation.

New narratives, germinating from the turn towards “black armband history” in the 1970s and blooming in the post-Mabo shift since the 1990s, have incorporated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders into

Julie Collins for ignoring farmers. I believe the words were something along the lines of ‘the closest you’ve ever been to a farmer is when you fly 10,000 feet above them in your aeroplane.’

Despite the Nationals’ claims that city slickers don’t care about the country, every urban student I spoke to also affirmed the importance of the Bush in how they see Australia. Second year Politics major and lifelong Sydney-sider Will Thorpe suggested that rural Australia “definitely is” a big part of the Australian identity, “because we are a big country and we have a long heritage of the Bush being an iconic part of Australian culture, though we are in fact a highly urbanised nation.”

Gabrielle Woodger, a Politics and Sociology major from Western Sydney, said that when you consider the idea of Australia, “that’s the one iconic image — going out to the Bush, small town identity; everyone knowing each other, and community, and togetherness.” Even second year Design student Gabriel Bean, who noted that he didn’t think about rural Australia often, conceded that “the Aussie battler, wrangling the wild” is “what other countries see as Australia, but it’s still really important to our identity.”

More importantly, regional students also noted they had never experienced prejudice from urban students regarding their regional backgrounds. Kailee Collins, a Third year Marine Science student from Tumut, in the NSW Riverina, when asked about urban students’ attitudes, suggested, “I don’t think they’re really bothered about it.”

Marc Paniza, a first year Archaeology major who relocated from the Philippines to Batemans Bay in Year Eight, noted that he was expecting “USyd students to be pretentious,” and stick their proverbial noses up at him for his regional background.

“I was generally expecting people would view me differently. I thought, ‘oh, okay, I’ll probably try not to mention it...when I’m here now, people, I don’t think they care at all.’ Urban students mirrored these attitudes. None of the students I spoke to projected negative attitudes towards people from Australia’s regions, although it should be noted that my sample size was small.

Notably, the only student who flagged any sort of negative attitude towards people from their area was Gabrielle, from Western Sydney. “No one has said things to my face, but I’ve heard of people saying [negative things] about Mt Druiitt. I’ve heard people on the internet say ‘I don’t know anything past Parramatta, Parramatta is the furthest west I would go.’”

Apparently, in terms of student experiences, the gulf between the inner city and the western suburbs is wider than anything indicated by urban perceptions of rural Australia. A Nationals PR hack might suggest that this indicates Western Sydney is at the very least in the consciousness of urban Australians. However, every student I interviewed — both urban and rural — noted warm sentiments from urban students towards the Bush that are not shared by Western Sydney. Perhaps the enduring weight of Bush-centric mythology means urban students feel a connection to

rural Australia that they don’t share with the marginalised suburbs of their own city.

Yet the Nationals continue to bang on about a rural-urban divide in terms of city siders who don’t understand the real conditions in the Country, look down on the people of the Bush, and selfishly hoard the economic prosperity of the nation — economic prosperity produced in the bush.

This supposed economic divide is one area where at first glance the complaints of Nationals politicians seem to align with reality. Two decades ago, submissions to a Senate Standing Committee on poverty noted a “large and growing gap between the incomes of those living in the capital cities and those living in the rest of the country. The incomes of metropolitan residents increased at about double the rate of those living in other major urban centres and regional and rural towns in the five years to 1996.”

One student, Kailee, did note that she noticed wealth in Sydney far more than she did in her home of Tumut. “Almost everyone I’ve met in Sydney is rich,” Kailee said, “And they all do stuff like skiing and go to private schools.”

However, a 2017 report by the Grattan Institute poured cold water on the notion of a pronounced divide in wealth between rural and metropolitan communities. According to the report, “the popular idea that the economic divide between Australia’s cities and regions is getting bigger is a misconception. Beneath the oft-told ‘tale of two Australias’ is a more nuanced story.”

“Income growth in the regions has kept pace with income growth in the cities over the past decade. The lowest income growth was typically in suburban areas of major cities. While unemployment varies between regions, it is not noticeably worse in the regions overall.”

The report did note growing dissatisfaction among regional and rural constituencies at the political status quo. However, the Grattan Institute disputed the idea that “the regions are getting a raw deal compared to the cities.”

Bella MacMunn, a former USyd student from Merryjig, in the Victorian High Country, spoke to the socioeconomic divide in Mansfield, her closest regional hub. Bella, who studied in Sydney for six months, said of Mansfield that “socioeconomically there is a spread, but there is a spread everywhere. Urban or rural, wherever you are there is a spread in wealth.”

“There’s the people who send their kids to Geelong Grammar School campus here, and there’s lots of people who grow up in Mansfield and then move to those schools. There are quite a lot of rich families. You know them, I can list them.”

Marc noted that the economic challenges faced by Sydneysiders were similar to those faced in Batemans Bay. “The city is crowded as well. [There are problems] with housing, cost of living. Even in Batemans Bay the rent is skyrocketing as well, it’s not different here in Sydney. Woollies and Coles are really expensive [everywhere]. When you decide to eat out, the prices here and in regional areas are pretty much the same.”

Looking at wealth inequality, unemployment, and income growth perhaps isn’t the right approach to locating the rural-urban divide. There was one other area that rural students consistently identified as a major gulf between the Bush

and the metropole: access to infrastructure and resources.

Marc noted that “the biggest gap would be the quality of and access to resources and education. Everyone from regional backgrounds are always clamouring for more resources, like more hospitals to be built, so people don’t have to drive an hour for an emergency room.”

Media and Communications student Hanna Kwan highlighted a lack of educational opportunities in her hometown of Armidale regarding extracurricular activities. “When I first came to USyd I didn’t realise how big debating was because that was just not a thing at my school. I guess those things that are really normal in Sydney were not normal in Armidale. There’s just much more opportunity to do stuff.”

“A good place to start would be the demise of the National Party.”

This is a well-documented problem. In August 2023, *The Guardian* reported that a NSW Education Department Audit found that the Department was “unlikely” to close a persistent and growing rural-urban education gap. According to the same article, the 2021 Education Census found that around 50% of regional students in NSW “were not on track to meet all five early development domains.” There has been no shortage of reports, audits, and investigations commissioned by the government to address this gap.

The Guardian, noted the 1973 Karmel Report, the 1988 Commonwealth Schools Commission Report, the 2000 Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Inquiry, the 2018 Federal Independent Review, and the two Gonski Reviews. This demonstrates the stark gap between knowledge about the issue and the steps taken to address it.

Hanna also spoke about a rural-urban healthcare divide. “Healthcare is something that there’s a divide between regional and urban areas. Obviously, there are not a lot of specialists in Armidale, so you have to come to Sydney. That would be an excursion on its own. If you want to get tested for Anxiety or ADHD you have to book it in and then come all the way to Sydney and make that a week-long kind of thing. In Sydney healthcare is there, but in Armidale it’s not tangible sometimes.”

Bella explained that interrelated problems with healthcare services and infrastructure made it difficult for some rural Australians. “There’s lots of things we need to outsource,” said Bella, “we don’t have an orthodontist in town. If you can’t afford to run your car out to Benalla, there’s not a bus, there’s no public transport. It’s that kind of thing that often gets forgotten, that’s the kind of thing people complain about.”

Gaps in regional healthcare and transport infrastructure are similarly well-documented. Deakin University academics noted that “urban areas in Australia already have almost three times as many hospital specialists per capita as outer regional areas and many times more critical care specialists.” Regional hospitals often resort to transporting “emergency, anaesthetic and intensive care doctors” when needed. The academics noted that this represented a

considerable problem during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic when many of these specialists were restricted by necessary quarantine measures.

So here is our rural-urban divide. Rural and regional communities struggle to access resources readily available in the major cities. A proportion of this problem is attributable to simple geography: it’s hard to provision small rural communities, often at great distance, with facilities that cater to a much smaller population per unit than facilities in urban areas. However, this doesn’t explain a per capita deficit in specialists in regional areas.

The National Party held the keys to power — the Liberal Party, without the National Coalition, would never have been able to form government — for almost a decade before 2022. They are the only major single-constituency party in Parliament, representing exclusively regional and rural interests, and consistently trade on the perceived attitude gap between the Bush and the metropole. Yet essential services — in the direct purview of the government, the only organisation truly equipped to fix them — in the Bush continue to suffer from neglect and underfunding.

Disaster response epitomises the curious hypocrisy of the National Party and their Liberal bedfellows. The 2019-2020 Black Summer bushfires were noted as a flashpoint for rural communities by Marc. “People in my area usually think they are forgotten by the government, especially during the 2020 [bushfires],” Marc said, “do you remember when Scott Morrison got the heat in Cobargo, an hour drive from where I live? People were shitting on the government for their inadequate response to the fires. ‘Oh so its just in the middle of nowhere, we don’t really give a fuck’ — That’s just my take on [the government’s attitude].”

Yet Scott Morrison represented a government in coalition with the only successful single-constituency party in Australia — the party for the Bush, aka. the Nationals. Despite their constant bleating about city slickers not caring about the Country, the Liberal-National Coalition was missing in action when the communities they spoke for needed support most.

This is illustrative of the National Party in general. Rural Australians — the constituency of the political unit formerly called the Country Party — are consistently let down by a group that allegedly represents them. The rural-urban divide in infrastructure and resources lies directly in the hands of the government; yet a decade of Coalition control, and over a century of the National Party’s representation of rural electorates, nothing seems to have improved.

Not all rural electorates are underfunded. The National Party forces the Liberals to make concessions on Bush funding, and relies on perceptions of their effectiveness in this regard to win re-election in their rural constituency. The “Sports Rorts” scandal, for which National Party MP Bridget McKenzie took responsibility, saw some Bush seats receive inappropriate funding for unneeded sports facilities. Some rural electorates, like the National Party heartland of Maranoa, in South-western Queensland, received considerably more funding per capita than city electorates under specifically National Party pork-

barrelling schemes. However, this funding doesn’t address wider systemic issues like broad educational disadvantage in the public school system, or a lack of specialist doctors in the country. Addressing these issues is apparently much harder — and perhaps less visible — than flying into a town, shaking some hands, flashing around a big cheque for a new bike path, and then flying back to Canberra again.

Australians, both urban and rural, clearly care about the future of the Bush. Every student I spoke to expressed hope for a brighter future for regional Australia but were pessimistic that would become the reality. Overwhelmingly, students suggested that more funding needed to be allocated to regional areas.

A good place to start would be the demise of the National Party. The hypocrisy of this Australian institution, in manipulating a complicated rural-urban divide for electoral gain without actually addressing the real problems in funding inequality on a systemic level, is glaring.

In this area, there is hope. The 2017 *Grattan Report* noted that rural and regional Australians are increasingly abandoning the major parties — particularly the National Party — in favour of minor parties and independents. Labor hasn’t performed well in the regions — with some notable exceptions — for decades, and so isn’t incentivised to spend money on rural electorates. The Liberal Party has a well-known deal with the Nationals to avoid contesting rural seats, and the Nationals clearly don’t represent the best option for regional Australia. Unfortunately, the alternatives don’t exactly represent a shining light of hope for the regions. The Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party is the only main opponent to the Nationals in NSW, and represents a problematically conservative program, even without mentioning their attitude to gun reform. The party is also wracked with internal turbulence, and all three NSW MPs now sit as Independents.

And little needs to be said of the erratic Bob Katter, the main opponent of the Nationals in outback Queensland, and his often bizarre and conservative policy platforms (not to mention his problematic history in the Queensland Country Party).

It’s clear that people from all over Australia care profoundly about the Bush. To secure the future of regional and rural Australia, for those living there and ultimately for all Australians, we need an alternative to the National Party that will confront the challenges that face the Bush, with fully funded public healthcare, public education, and public services. Only then will Australia’s vast interior have a bright future.



From Dhaka to Gaza: In defence of national pride

Nafesa Rahman looks transnationally.

I rarely contribute to lectures. I find it a valiant yet unnerving task to willingly summon the attention of two hundred pairs of eyes as you voice your concerns about the faltering education system or the hidden connotations of a Shakespearean metaphor. But there in that hot and fateful lecture theatre deep in the belly of John Woolley Building, I felt my hand shoot up at the question raised by my Linguistics lecturer: "What is the significance of the 21st of February?"

To me, that date represents a few things at once. It's the day my parents took me to the Liberation War Museum in Dhaka, where I was in awe of a bullet-holed blazer belonging to a Bengali Language Movement martyr. It's the day that I bought too many books at a Bangla book fair in Ashfield commemorating International Mother Language Day. It's also the day that I contributed to a lecture to proclaim my heritage as a proud Bangladeshi woman.

The feelings of national pride I hold, however, are deeply confusing. For one, the myopic international status that the Bangladeshi Liberation War of 1971 has as a largely 'forgotten genocide' makes it difficult to bring up, and difficult for people to empathise. To this day, the war Bangladesh fought for its sovereignty is diluted into the 'Indo-Pak War', and the Bengali people's struggle for autonomy and independence is considered a product

of India's conspiracy to fracture Pakistan and limit its geopolitical powers in the subcontinent. What results is an oversimplification of a painful history – one that leans towards complete non-narration of Bangladesh's contribution to its own existence. The real victims of the War and their stories are undermined and delegitimised, genocide is denied, and human loss and trauma become simply collateral damage.

It seems fair then, for me to take every opportunity to speak about the War with others. My national pride drives it, as does my convenient position as a teacher and History student. But underlying all of this is a dizzying intergenerational guilt – a feeling that being of a generation with no lived experience of war, am I well-positioned to speak about it as if it is an integral part of my identity? I justify my passions with my grandparents' accounts of war, using their trauma to inspire stories I write for creative writing units at university. How else do I inform others of a largely undiscussed and untold history?

I recognise that being so far detached from the threat of real violence and cultural erasure, I have the privilege to pick up and leave off my national pride whenever I choose. At the same time, I recognise that so many others in our current world

cannot.

Palestinians cannot. Gazans cannot.

During the decades long carousel of oppression and resistance in Gaza and the West Bank, there has been one unwavering constant – Palestinian national pride. While the majority of the Western world basks in a dogged ignorance of Palestinian pain and suffering, Palestinians around the world don their keffiyehs, march in freedom rallies, show up to public forums, educate, share, and inform. Their indefatigable spirit is admirable, and their national pride is enviable.

Yet, Palestinians are denied the privilege of choosing when to represent their nation. It falls on each individual as a kind of perpetual responsibility, a crippling expectation that to be a 'good Palestinian' is to be outspoken about violence, to give voice to trauma, and challenge bulwarks of misinformation in an attempt to protect their nation from erasure. At the same time, Palestinians are tasked with propagating positive images of their nation to the rest of the world so that the terms 'genocide', 'starvation', and 'suffering' don't become synonymous with their national consciousness.

Many Bengalis can empathise with this pressure. As a small nation with little international recognition outside of 'Made in Bangladesh' clothing tags, images of poverty, and an erratic national cricket team, we feel a continual need to keep redefining who we are. Perhaps this stems from wartime

sentiment; a desire to highlight that we were once the victims who emerged as victors in a largely one-sided war. Our national pride gives us the momentum to reclaim our heritage, just as our forefathers did when the nation's very existence was threatened. And perhaps this is also why Bengalis feel so strongly for Palestinians. When Bangladesh gained its liberation, advocacy for Palestine became part of its official foreign policy. Israel was one of the first nations to recognise Bangladeshi sovereignty in 1972, but the Bangladeshi government rejected this, in turn declining any diplomatic relation with Israel. In his article 'For Bangladesh, Recognizing Israel Is an Immoral Choice', journalist Nazmul Ahasan justifies this hostility:

"There may be pragmatic reasons for Bangladesh to consider ties with Israel. But having fought our own liberation war against a cruel occupier, we cling to one overriding moral imperative: Palestinian freedom."

This week begins with March 26 – Independence Day of

Bangladesh. It marks 52 years since the war against dispossession began and ended. I will remember this day with solemnity, reverence, and a bubbling sense of national pride. I will raise my hand to share what I know with others. And I will make sure that I mention Palestine, Gaza, the river, and the sea in the process.

MySydney Scholarship program insufficient to support students

Khanh Tran investigates.

Ramla Khalid is a second-year Bachelor of Arts (Cultural Studies) student who lives in Cairns Hill in Western Sydney. Working three full shifts a week with a commute of approximately two hours each way to afford her studies, she is frank about not being able to participate much in campus life other than contributing to *Honi* and *Pulp*.

She is also a MySydney Scholar, one of many hundreds receiving money as part of the University's attempt at

Meanwhile, Rose Cooke, a second-year student and Sydney University Dramatic Society (SUDS) member who is studying for an Arts degree majoring in Socio-Legal Studies, was only able to navigate and balance first year thanks to a full accommodation scholarship to live in the Queen Mary Building (QMB). With her home located 90 minutes away in Katoomba, if it were not for the scholarship and staff at USyd's Student Life team, she might not have chosen to study at USyd altogether.

"There was a lady [in Student Life] who gave me the scholarship. She, literally, facilitated the whole thing and was the most helpful," Cooke says, praising the Student Life staff who helped in her application process.

If it were not for the staff's willingness to consider her for an accommodation scholarship, Cooke says that she would have chosen a different institution.

"That was a really great resource because I had no idea how to get through these things [administrative systems]."

Beyond the cost of living, what struck both Khalid and Cooke was a sense that Sydney was far more elitist and less culturally diverse than their home communities. For Khalid, the lack of cultural diversity took her by surprise.

"Where I come from is very multicultural whereas at USyd and coming from Western Sydney, USyd has a reputation for being white and I think many of us were scared," Khalid says.

Sydney University's lack of cultural diversity is reflected in her own politics classes where she was often the "only" non-white person. In one unit, classroom discourse surrounding readings assigned about the hijab made her feel "awkward" because everyone else in her tutorial "did not know" how to "navigate around" Khalid as a person wearing a hijab.

Similarly, Cooke shared that she felt at odds with the high proportion of privately educated students at USyd. As of 2021, the proportion of privately educated students at the University stood at 32%, exceeding both Oxford and Cambridge's numbers.

"When I first came to university, it was a culture shock because I went to a quite poor high school and I didn't really know anyone who was upper-middle class growing up because it was like one private school where I grew up in the Mountains," she says.

"It was really weird meeting all these people from all these private schools and I did have a lot of trouble feeling out of place."

Although Sydney offers multiple accommodation scholarships such as the MySydney Equity Accommodation Scholarship that pays 60% of costs associated with university-owned housing, the number of affordable student beds has fallen in the past few years due to sales of the Arundel Terraces and uncertain futures of the Darlington Terraces.

Cooke argues that the University can and should step up to offer full accommodation scholarships rather than capping support at 60%.

"I feel like they've gone back on a

few of the things they did in the first year because it was such a new thing," Cooke says. "They [Student Life] called me and [said] instead of deferring, we can offer you free accommodation for a year and you can come to the university."

In conjunction with better housing, Khalid points to clearer information and administrative support for MySydney Scholars, including prospective students, are crucial to ensuring that the program is genuinely accessible.

"I have a friend who got E12 but did not get MySydney even though she came to the [university] at the same time as me," she says. "She resented it a little bit because of that."

Khalid herself was close to not opting for USyd if it were not for MySydney as the scholarship was the thin difference between choosing between Sydney and UNSW.

"I think help with the administration of MySydney at the beginning would be great. I contacted the University to see if I was eligible and was initially told no but then received an offer in the end."

Despite the reservations they have, Khalid and Cooke are united in the view that MySydney represents an improved, if overdue stepping stone to making inroads into USyd's longstanding elitism.

"Accommodation is way too expensive and giving them [students] those scholarships and offering that could make a huge difference to us."

USyd's first in family: A seat at the table (...I mean, desk)

Lotte Weber and Simone Maddison attend their families' first classes.

It is Week 6, the last week before the mid-semester break. Most likely, that entails a heavy flow of assessments and an even heavier flow of resentment towards the business of education. In this daze of revision, tears and USU coffee, how many of us forget our privilege? For 12% of students, the first in their family to undertake a university qualification, higher education is an unlikely opportunity. But it's not something they'll be rewarded for. **Elitism remains entrenched in our tertiary education culture.** Who decides who will make it within these hallowed halls?

It was this week at Courtyard Cafe that we, the writers, were shocked to discover that we had not encountered anyone else at the University of Sydney (besides each other) who are First in Family (FiF) students. Often the statement, "no, my parents didn't go to uni" is met with an uncomfortable glance, as if one has just bared their soul, or at the very least, their income bracket. Aside from social stigma, structural prejudice means that

adjusting to university administration and bureaucracy proves an additional challenge. When enrolling in a unit or selecting a tutorial before stepping foot on campus, it can be helpful if someone in your household knows what a 'unit' or 'tutorial' actually is.

FiF students are those who are the first of their parents, siblings and grandparents to attend university. This semester, 11% of students enrolled in a popular introductory core unit of study at the University are FiF. That's 20 students in a cohort of 182. According to the University of Sydney's 2021 Student Diversity Report, 12% of currently enrolled students are grouped in this category. Furthermore, the University reported in 2020 that the number of prospective FiF students who preferred it as their first UAC choice increased by 11% from the previous year.

Viewed in isolation, these statistics appear to indicate that there are fewer FiF students in Australia than ever before because tertiary education is increasingly accessible, and that the

University itself has played a key role in facilitating this inclusivity. However, these assumptions are incorrect. The remainder of the Student Diversity Report shows that more than 60% of all undergraduate students live locally, and that 35% of this cohort graduated from independent schools. When compared to an institution like the University of Western Sydney, where more than 65% of students are FiF, these figures show a clear continuation of USyd's elitist origins.

If the University is reluctant to admit that it has a class diversity problem, it is even less interested in providing tangible and meaningful solutions. Although few students are aware of it, the University does offer what it markets as a First In Family Mentoring Program. However, this Program is only available to Economics students, and students must apply directly to the School of Economics with their CVs for consideration.

Rather than helping students find their community or foster meaningful relationships with academics and industry

addressing its chronically low intake of socio-economically disadvantaged students, which ranks in the bottom five of all universities nationally – a figure that has barely moved in the past decade. The Scholarship offers \$8,500 per annum and a host of supports such as free USU Rewards membership.

"I don't know how to meet my attendance requirement due to the travel distance," she explains. The distance combined with part-time work has caused her to struggle to meet attendance requirements and fail units. "Everyone's event times are too long and take place in the evening,"

throughout their degrees, the Program is also only targeted at first-years to "provide support to find your direction and plan your career." These technical and bureaucratic concerns, such as the rigorous requirements to meet with one's assigned mentor once a

month and submit two reflective journals during the Program's duration, reinforce the University's focus on maximising its image and profits the expense of student welfare.

That we had never heard of this

Multispecies Living: A call to re-assess the direction of Sydney's anthropogenic urban planning

Liz Kilham and Ondine Karpinellison reconsider the cityscape.

Sydney, as a city and an urban space, is in a state of expansion. To try to solve the housing crisis and create more livable spaces, we see calls for the mass approval of large scale development schemes. These projects, however, lack an acute sensitivity to the city's massive biodiversity loss, carbon construction footprint and concrete heat emission. To continue in this direction would be to design an ultimately unliveable, anthropocentric city.

Academic Danielle Celermajer puts it best, stating urban areas "have been designed for and organised with the interests of certain humans...in mind, but of course, there are so many others who live or exist here."

Celermajer includes not only animals, birds, trees and plants in this argument, but "the waterways that have been often violently reshaped, and the soils that were once the ground on which ecological communities flourished but have now been desiccated."

Urban planning: decentring the human

To combat this desiccation, Sydney's urban planning needs to lose its human focus. Of course, city planning that completely de-centres the human agenda is not wholly achievable. Rather, we want to imagine a Sydney that begins to examine cohabitation with multiple species as a driving design factor.

'Multispecies living' is a theory widely discussed within the fields of environmental politics, ecology, sociology, anthropology, architecture, design and planning. Importantly, 'multispecies' living rejects the centrality of humans, and centres an Indigenous ecology. Indigenous Australian culture considers the idea that as humans, we have a relational responsibility to ensure that all species flourish. Multispecies living is vital, not only for its potential to restore biodiversity loss, but also for its contribution to the cause of multispecies justice — a practice that works to dismantle the pervading structures of late-stage colonialism and capitalism.

Through this lens, we can begin to imagine a built world that is socially and physically tenable beyond the next 100 years. Projects that consider this idea are beginning to evolve. "Alive: A New Spatial Contract for Multispecies Architecture" is a project that came out of an exhibition in the 2021 Biennale, collaboratively created by (The Living, David Benjamin, Lindsey Wikstrom, Ray Wang, Jim Stoddart, Lorenzo Villaggi, John Locke, Damon Lau, Dale Zhao, with Factory NYC and Columbia GSAPP). In considering multispecies living, it examines as per Alive's public ethos, "a new vision of probiotic buildings." Through the integration of natural materials

and modern architecture, the prototype gives a tangible reality to architecture that creates a symbiotic environment for both humans and microbes. The piece evocatively considers the question of how we can "harness the microbes that invisibly surround us" in order to create more sustainable and healthy environments for all species.

As a more practical application of this exhibition, Carla Bonnila Huaroc explores possibilities surrounding "interspecies design." She examines how an architectural philosophy that advocates non-hierarchical relationships between species can function to "cultivate empathy for other life forms and shift our perspective on the world around us."

Antithetically, whilst concrete in urban expansion and infrastructure is not a sustainable idea, Huaroc explores "Econcrete" which is a "concrete technology engineered to foster marine life on shore infrastructure." In essence, by simulating complex surface textures and shapes, it promotes the growth of organisms such as oysters, whilst being beneficial to the overall stability of the shore infrastructure.

An approach that would promote rehabilitation of one of the central species in the greater Sydney area are 'Bee Bricks'. Bee Bricks are bricks that house solo bees within them, and as such offer a possible solution to serious habitat loss that bees have been facing for

years. There has been some contention surrounding their effectiveness, but nevertheless, they represent the building of technologies that are angled towards a biodiverse rehabilitation, aligned with a multispecies approach.

Sydney's current applications of non- anthropogenic thinking

The Central Park Sydney vertical gardens are an important example to consider. Though not functional in their practical use, the gardens create a host of benefits that demonstrate how the need for increased housing can be conceptualised with the need for multispecies living. Specifically, the vertical garden acts as a natural layer of insulation for the building, decreasing interior temperature levels, which as the planet continues to warm, will be an invaluable resource.

The gardens are sustained by irrigation systems that use recycled wastewater. This has increased the biodiversity, otherwise lost by the development of the highrise building, creating new habitat space for birds and insects. This type of architecture, though not perfect, is angled towards sustainability and biodiversity, acting as a guide for what Sydney should continue to strive towards. Danielle Celermajer notes that "human health, human community and human joy is greatly enhanced when we are embedded in flourishing ecosystems."

A design such as the vertical gardens works to embed human existence within a multispecies eco-system and has been proven to have tangible health benefits.

Both of these examples, one prototype and one practical, act as a precedent for the implementation of "Multispecies Justice."

First Nations, socio-cultural, environmental sensitivities

In applying a multispecies approach towards Sydney, an ideal process would be led by and in consultation with both First Nation's planners and

designers, and the Connective Country government planning guidelines. The veins of multispecies thought have been ever-present in First Nation's culture, pre-dating any sight of colonial design.

In a 2020 podcast series 'Capitalism, Colonialism, and Multispecies Justice', that came out of The University of Sydney's Environment Institute, Professor Christine Winter (Ngati Kahungunu ki Wairoa, Ngati Pakeha), a justice theorist and researcher, states that "settlers are to listen and learn how to implement regimes of multispecies justice from their Indigenous compatriots."

In speaking to Jirral woman, Aunty Sonya Grant, she explained that Indigenous understandings are inherently holistic and Land and Country hold a deeply complex spiritual value. There is a foundational, ancestral heritage held within Country, endowing it as both a metaphysical and physical being. This empowers people to hold roles of custodianship, and responsibilities of care. Indeed, as identities are place-based, there is an intrinsic relationality which sees land as connected to the person, as well as being a living and breathing entity.

"You care for Country and Country cares for you" — an Indigenous Australian knowledge system that has long since championed the idea of multispecies justice. In Australia, this looks like 'The Rights of Nature' movement, which advocates a First Nations led approach towards "Earth Centred Culture." Specifically, according to the Australian Earth Law Center, "the Rights of Nature [...] means recognizing that ecosystems and natural communities are not merely property that can be owned. Rather, they are entities that have an independent and inalienable right to exist and flourish."

This sentiment is echoed in Winter's calls for "land back and water back to Indigenous care" in order to disrupt and dismantle structures of colonialism and capitalism that flourish because of human centred planning.

Where to next?

National, organisational and corporate social responsibility has never been needed more; and not in the vanity metrics or sustainability quotas previously recognised as enough. Informed schools of thought like multispecies living and material-conscious architecture are one of the methods we need to consider if non-anthropogenic urban planning and environmental preservation is to ever be materialised. With Indigenous knowledge and care at the forefront, multispecies living and justice is an achievable cause that should be implemented into Sydney's urban planning and architecture development.



Alive: A New Spatial Contract for Multispecies

Unlocking cross-cultural connections: Navigating challenges in connecting with international students

Hilary Sutanto writes.

In university, it can be challenging for international students to find a sense of belonging, especially as it takes time and understanding to assimilate into a foreign environment. The saying "birds of a feather flock together" holds true for human connections. Whether it is through shared interests, professions, or humour, the foundation of connection lies in relatability. Automatically, it takes more than just willpower to be able to socialise with someone from a completely different cultural upbringing.

Connection starts from commonality and as a result students seek out those who come from the same cultural background to collectivise. While this alleviates loneliness and social disconnection, it also encourages students to seek out familiarity and avoid further cultural assimilation. It inevitably creates a group dynamic which is disconnected from both domestic and international students. This often happens due to their socialisation tendency of preferring peers who share the same cultural upbringing. There is an intuitive gravitation towards individuals who are akin to them, thus enabling them to remain connected in their own community and cultural society. For the majority of students studying abroad and being exposed to a new environment it can be daunting when sacrificing consistent contact with their home lives.

Another common experience is undergoing acculturative stress. In this case, it can be described as the struggles

students might find when facing or integrating to the host country's culture.

The struggle to assimilate into the host country's culture encourages international students to gravitate to communities that bring them closer to their previous cultural orientation. As students walk through the myriads of stalls in orientation week, chances are, they will visit ones that are least respectively relatable to them. Beyond this first-time experience, students will then begin navigating their social interactions. Some might attempt to integrate with their domestic peers while others stay in their own group.

At university, such socialisation behaviours are further cemented by students' engagement in, and creation of, cultural clubs and societies. Cultural clubs and societies function similarly to community migrant hubs in many Sydney suburbs, albeit on a smaller scale, in that they foster a sense of belonging for the diaspora. Cultural clubs and societies bring remnants of a student's home country into the university and each of these societies operates differently depending on each country's respective culture, adding diversity to the campus's communal spaces.

However, depending on the motivation of each society, these groups might not necessarily bridge the gap between international and domestic students. If most cultural societies are made solely to create a space for international students to connect with peers of the same nationality, chances

are that connectivity between domestic and international students remains unpromoted.

While numerous determinants abound in our social life, linguistic understanding is the most important of them all. Credentially speaking, international students are acknowledged as "competent" English speakers on paper, as they require a band seven on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) exam. Unfortunately, the IELTS paper does not ensure smooth sailing language usage.

Frankly speaking, conversations do not depend on the amount of vocabulary a person knows nor from how grammatically correct they are, it is mostly through an individual's ability to correctly capture these signals, referred to as semantics.

To connect well with those from different cultures, one needs to adapt their conversing style, understanding the conversing style, prose and jokes of the hosting culture. This is a challenge as most norms are not universal, as different norms originate from distinct cultures. As a result, the ability to adapt oneself to the communication style of other cultures becomes necessary so that individuals can understand the norms (i.e., what others find rude, funny, and serious) of their host country.

One way international students can acquire this skill is to continue to socialise and adapt to their surroundings, by deliberately choosing to throw themselves into uncomfortable situations (yes, bearing awkward silences

and missing out on the jokes). If no effort is put into attempting to develop such skills, then international students remain isolated from their domestic peers.

However, an active participation from domestic students is also needed, for the notion of choosing familiarity does not apply to international students only. Inevitably, as our mind tends to label things binarily, often a mindset of thinking international students as the "other person" exists. Upholding a new mindset of delabelling the foreign status of international students would alleviate the segregation between the two. Additionally, attempts of bridging between domestic students should be received positively (instead of nonchalant).

In the end, disconnection and difficulty will inevitably happen within a student's social life and in many forms. For international students it comes from having to interact and set themselves in a foreign culture, and challenging their humane instinct to be with someone that brings familiarity.

Understandably, the majority would prefer to band with others from the same country or cultural upbringing, that is facilitated in cultural clubs/societies. Hence why, it is important for communities that host international students' diaspora, to emphasise on cultural integration (and connection with domestic peers). I believe this would hopefully alleviate the ongoing disconnection that happens between domestic and international students.

Fat Girl: Leah Herbert's deep dive into body neutrality and Spanx

Charlie Vlies Lawrence reviews.

As part of ArtsLab: Collide's collaboration with 107 Redfern, Leah Herbert's *Fat Girl* uncovers the all-too-hidden experience of growing up in mid-2000s Australia as a fat person. The one-woman show proclaimed body neutrality and acceptance as pivotal teachings for fat adults, formerly recognised as fat girls.

Herbert crafted the performance piece with support from her mentor, Rachel Roberts. In her artist's note, Herbert discusses the childlike comfort in her fatness before the onslaught of diet culture and fatphobia informed her opinions on her body. Poignantly, Herbert states that *Fat Girl* is about "finding your way back".

As the audience entered the upstairs theatre, soft pink and blue lighting welcomed them into the intimate space. Projected onto the stage is a game of Nintendo Wii Fit, and as Herbert wraps up her passionately played game, Wii excitedly advises us of all of the calories lost during her workout.

Herbert satirically examines fat experiences such as chub rub, unwelcoming airplane seating, sweat, fears of chubby chasers, and the benefits of the funny fat friend. As Herbert jokingly named and shamed Jan, her scarring fitness instructor, I thought of

Hilary, my parent-appointed personal trainer as a tween. Herbert delves into *fat girl*, a metaphorical second character in the performance and a crucial part of Herbert's childhood. Born from a traumatic fitness program experience, *fat girl* covers herself in tape and Spanx, consumes dieting tips, and partakes in disordered eating and thinking, doing her best to achieve smallness in every form.

Herbert makes an interesting distinction between herself and *fat girl*, recognising the creation of *fat girl* as a necessary survival technique, whilst also illustrating the desperate desire for *fat girl* to die so Herbert could regain control of her body.

The set design is minimalistic; the only props visible are a mop, scale, Spanx, tape, a jar of Nutella, and a spoon, ominously balanced on a stool at the stage's edge. Each of these is utilised at different points within the play; Herbert urges the audience to sit in the discomfort of watching her dress, undress, tape up, and tape down.

At the climax of the show, Herbert removes her clothes and bares her stomach while she discusses how her experiences of shame shaped her as a teenager, and then, as an adult. It is here that she begins to move her stomach, an

act which felt violent at times, continuing the attempt to shrink her stomach and dig into it. Other times, it felt loving; a caressing and comforting gesture. At every point, this act felt powerful.

Herbert reminisces on her sixteen-year-old self, who, after living with an eating disorder, finally lost weight. She professes her love for this person, empathy for what she experienced, as well as the hatred that her teenage self would feel for the way that Herbert has since grown back into her body — and how Herbert loves her anyway.

Herbert does an incredible job of merging comedy and vulnerability, poking fun at her parents' unspoken and awkward attempts to encourage weight loss, and shamelessly sweating in true fat fashion as the performance description states, "watch her sweat on stage and decide if she's good enough". In the more serious moments, Herbert opens herself up to the audience, discussing her distrust in the love and attraction expressed by people around her, and relating it to the message she was given as a child: no one could or would genuinely love a fat body.

The radiant lighting is skillfully used to build and relieve tension, and assists in the flow as my well-meaning, straight-sized, plus-one remarked that it "made the play feel less chunky". The lighting

aids in the delivery of every fat person's nightmare sequence: the Body Positivity Movement.

As the lights flashed red, and alarms went off, Herbert was forced to proclaim her undying and unshifting love for her body. Herbert subtly jabs at the harmful nature of the body positivity movement, geared to the unrealistic and untrue ideal that a fat person must enthusiastically and loudly embrace their body, with these sequences demonstrating how the movement rarely recognises the importance of body neutrality and acceptance as integral to fat liberation. Fat liberation activist Demon Derriere echoes this move towards body neutrality and acceptance stating "body acceptance holds more range. I can feel all different ways about my body and accept it."

As a fat person, I felt immense solidarity with Herbert and *fat girl*, having had those experiences myself. I felt akin to *fat girl*'s struggle for belonging and Herbert's fight for neutrality. As Herbert grieved for the child unaware of the world's predispositions, I too grieved for mine. Herbert centres fat joy, discovery, and vulnerability in *Fat Girl*, inviting us to confront our inner *fat girls*, listen to them, love them, and finally, lay them to rest.

The Girl is/a Glitch: Mym Kwa

Lani Marshallsea reviews ArtsLab: Collide.

Tucked into 107 Redfern Street is Shopfront Arts' heartfelt, intimate ArtsLab: Collide!, a festival celebrating young emerging Sydney artists. Nestled around cosy couches and beanbags, works of various mediums (video, puppetry, dance, theatre and visual arts) come together stunningly well for a small space. Each young artist works with a mentor to bring their final product to the gallery; the atmosphere is one of support, collaboration, and interrelatedness.

Perhaps the best embodiment of the festival's spirit is Mym Kwa's *The Girl is/a Glitch*. Kwa's performance artwork, supported by mentor Marnie Palomares, takes her audience throughout the gallery, from the street outside to the stairwell. Using a series of mirrors, from full-length bedroom mirrors to desk vanity mirrors to tiny makeup compacts, Kwa moves through space and catches the eyes of her audience's reflections, both provoking and reacting to her audience with her expressions.

The prolonged one-on-one eye contact emphasises artist-audience connection to the extreme, which you might think could get overly intense, even confrontational, but Kwa is deliberately playful and keeps the stakes low. Her relaxed, friendly smile and whimsical experimentation with lighting, refraction, and funhouse mirror proportions take the pressure off. Crucially, the interaction takes place in a safe, separate space inside the mirror, reserved for one purpose only, allowing the audience to forget material burdens. Thus, the audience is invited not to be observed or judged, but to take an active role in a conversation and collaboration with the artist. People say the Mona Lisa's most memorable feature is her eyes that follow you around the room; that purposeful connection like the kind Kwa forms with her audience

makes the difference between consuming and experiencing.

The performance is not just Kwa and the mirror. Kwa works with and augments the space, calling attention to the details and quirks of 107 Redfern, playing with indoor and outdoor space, windows and framing, and endless ways to pose around and interact with furniture. Kwa's background in theatre and dance shines through; her movement is intentional, and the choices she makes with it — relaxed, tense, fluid, robotic — are just as captivating as the mirror itself. Part dance, part celebration of movements found in everyday life, Kwa's physicality is a treat to watch. To keep a three-and-a-half hour show refreshing and interesting throughout is not easy, and Kwa's interaction with the gallery in new and different ways throughout accomplishes that wonderfully.

Accompanying music by Daniel Bailen is the cherry on top. Bailen's dreamy, mesmerising sound — recorded live in the gallery on guitar, drum pad, and a dizzying array of loop and reverb pedals — fills the space with a hazy, tranquil energy that primes the audience for Kwa's mirror dimension of human connection.

If you're not a fan of prolonged eye contact, *The Girl is/a Glitch* might not be for you — although Kwa's movement in and interactions with the space outside the mirror are a performance in their own right. Other than that, Kwa's work is a must-see of the festival, and is bound to leave you reflecting on the intentional connections you make in your everyday life.

Kwa is performing *The Girl is/a Glitch* at 107 Redfern Street's downstairs theatre on weekdays (5-8:30 pm) and weekends (1-4:30 pm) until March 24.

Fatima Navqi's 'Artefacts of a Revolution'

Purny Ahmed reviews ArtsLab: Collide.

The Aqeeq, the Alam Panja, the Zulfiqar and the Sajdagah and Tasbeeh: objects used in the daily practice of Shi'a Islam monumentally turned to symbols of resilience and resistance in Fatima Navqi's *Artefacts of a Revolution*. This body of work by the talented emerging artist carries the great responsibility of "[servicing their] community what [they have] always deserved: representation, respect, admiration and positive press."

A Pakistani-Australian Shi'a Muslim artist, Fatima Navqi's work is highly reflective of her efforts in decolonising the contemporary art space seen within each stroke and soft blend of graphite. The body of work consists of four realistic graphite on paper drawings depicting prominent Shi'a artefacts, exhibited alongside the represented objects and a video piece. Navqi displays the essence of what it means to be Shi'a: resistance in the face of oppression.

Shi'a Islam is one of the two major sects of Islam. The sect has unjustifiably faced discrimination, rejection, and persecution from non-Shi'a peoples. As said by Navqi, "Every Shi'a knows of at least one martyr that has been killed in an act of anti-Shia violence," making this body of work significant in shifting the narrative towards a more devoted and tender representation of the religion. The objects Navqi draws all hold special significance to her practice, each holding similar messaging of protection, resistance, justice and revolution.

Navqi is a talented emerging artist, with a deep care and passion for her subject matter, which is embodied in her oeuvre. Her technique employs a soft delicacy in which her care and admiration for her religion is evident through the meditative consideration of detail in the realism of each artefact. Her choices in scaling, best demonstrated in

the enlargement of the Aqeeq Ring, are empowering and speaks to her intentions of calling attention to her Shi'a identity. Essentially, in taking up more space on the surfaces she works on, Navqi demands to also take up space in an art world that has been majorly omitting her identity and experiences, thus decolonising the art space.

The standout piece, however, is the beautiful drawing of the Sajdagah and Tasbeeh. The texture of the piece is tastefully tactile, from the organic softness of the tassel to the pearliness of beads, creating a sense of intimacy that I dare say is somewhat lacking in the other pieces in this body of work.

The monochromatic curation of Navqi's body of work, with the few moments of colour represented in the objects taken from the artist's own personal practice and home, evokes a sense of cohesion and vulnerability to the work. In pedestalling the objects on white fabrics and casing them away behind glass, Navqi brings immense value to objects which are a part of her everyday life, creating them into symbols of her and her community's strength.

I would like to reiterate Navqi's dedication, as a celebration of what remains at the heart of her art: "And finally, I would like to thank Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) for making this all happen, for his love, blessings and guidance and for his support in my spiritual pursuit, and for giving me the gift of making."

It is brave, above all else, to open her home and her spirituality for the world to see, to analyse, accept and scrutinise even. Mashallah*, Fatima Navqi holds the door open with a pencil, paper and her Shi'a strength.

Mashallah: "God has willed it" — said when something good has happened; an appreciation.

Your first degree, free (And other radical ideas)



Policies some might consider radical, the Good Party believes are either plain common sense or simply fair and reasonable. Take your first tertiary degree. It should be free of charge for all Australian citizens, paid for by a super profits tax on the fossil fuel and mining industries. If we want a lasting benefit for the natural resources taken out of the ground, what better place to reinvest that revenue than in the nation's human resources?

Ideas for real change

We want to free up the airspace over railway lines for the construction of social housing. We want the tax system completely overhauled and replaced by a revenue system recommended by top global economists that would release the vast majority of Australians from the burden of personal income tax, putting more money in our pockets and ending the affordability crisis. We want to dramatically cut the cost of EVs by imposing fleet emission standards on motor vehicle importers. Given that we're striving for net zero by 2050, we also want to end the annual subsidies given to the fossil-fuel industry that exceed \$11bn.

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We'll give 16-and-17-year-olds who want to have their say the option of voting in federal elections. And because we think the new National Anti-Crime Commission lacks teeth, we'll create a Whistle Blower Protection Agency and strengthen the laws defending the people who step forward to do what's right,

often at great personal risk. We also want a

Royal Commission into Medicare so that it can be re-engineered to do that job for which it was intended: provide world-class publicly-funded

healthcare. The Good Party is a movement for Australians starting out in life who want to inherit a more decent society. You represent 40% of the population, so your vote can make a real difference.

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ENTRIES CLOSE APRIL 7



SRC Reports



President's Report

Harrison Brennan

I hope everyone is excited for mid semester break, I know I sure am. I spent most of last week compiling the SRC's SSAF acquittal document, which justifies our spending for the year prior, and why we should continue to be funded. In 2006 John Howard implemented Voluntary Student Unionism (VSU) and the implementation of SSAF followed. Prior to VSU, student unions (the SRC), used to have substantially more funding and complete control over the fees they received from students and what those funds were spent on. Since these reforms, the university now controls SSAF and reserves all the rights to revoke funding from any student organization on campus. Hence, the university also has expectations that we fill out extensive and bureaucratic documents that prove the necessity of our funding. Last Tuesday USyd held their study abroad festival along Eastern Avenue. Student activists caught wind that Tel Aviv university, an institution complicit in supporting Israeli occupation, apartheid and the ongoing genocide, was invited. Activists staged a peaceful sit-in at the Law Building, and won their demands to have Tel Aviv university leave campus. They were then joined by members of the NTEU in a march down to F23. Our university has a slew of unethical partnerships, whether with weapons manufacturers like Thales, or Israeli universities, like the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, which is on stolen Palestinian land. On Wednesday at 12pm at F23, join the speak-out calling for our university to implement BDS by cutting all ties with Israel. On Friday we have the Israeli Apartheid Week: Online Political Tour of Jerusalem, which you can find on facebook and register to learn about the history of Jerusalem from Grassroots Al-Quds.

Education Officers' Report

Grace Street & Shovan Bhattarai

Last week was a big one in the fight of students and staff against the University of Sydney's complicity in Israel's genocide of Palestine. On Tuesday, we disrupted Tel Aviv University's stall at the Sydney Abroad Fair, where we stayed in the room, gave speeches, and chanted until the representatives left. The NTEU joined Students Against War for a speak-out afterwards, protesting this partnership with Tel Aviv University that collaborates with Elbit Systems and the Israeli Air Force, amongst others. On Wednesday, we participated in the Students for Palestine speak-out on campus and the planting of an olive tree in solidarity with Palestinians and

in recognition of their strength and the right of to return to their land. These were important wins and actions but the struggle will continue until our university finally cuts ties with apartheid and militarism, and until Palestine is free. Our education must not be funding genocide, and military and weapons partnerships should not be funding our research and studies.

Women Officers' Report

Eliza & Rand

WoCo is currently building for a pro choice rally to counter the Day of the Unborn Child procession on the 16th of April. The Day of the Unborn Child is an annual gathering that protests the decriminalisation of abortion and preaches on the suffering abortion brings. The event is run by the Catholic Church and Family and Life Australia, encouraging attendees to show that "every human life is sacred and that abortion is evil!" This year WoCo will be holding a speakout outside of Saint Mary's to flight this archaic view and to push for safe, free abortions and reproductive justice for all.

We have also just started working on Women's Honi and are excited to make a staunch, radical edition! If you have any feminist articles to pitch make sure you get them in through our google form this week!

Also remember to support the abolish the colleges campaign head to abolishthecolleges.org.

See you at WoCo!
In love and rage,
Eliza & Rand

Disabilities Officers' Report

Khanh Tran & Victor Zhang

Hello all, hope your semester is going well so far. We are running weekly collective meetings at 2pm on Thursdays at the Disabilities Community Room in Manning House. Come along if you identify as a person with a disability and would like to get involved.

We took part in the sit-in protest against Tel Aviv University together with Students Against War and other collectives and successfully pushed TAU out of campus.

Disabled Honi is slated for Week 10 this semester. We've had a good response for the editorial callout so far, the contributor callout is coming soon. We would appreciate any pitches whether it's news, analysis, opinion, or creative pieces! We will also be running a media workshop for editors and contributors in anticipation of Disabled Honi.

The Disabilities Community Room launch is set for 4pm on the 19th of April 2024. The past several cohorts of disabilities officers have

campaign hard for the creation of our autonomous space and it is gratifying to see it being turned into a reality.

We will be hosting an upcoming webinar on disabilities justice and Palestinian solidarity (the first of many). Disabilities justice is and has always been intersectional. This would be a great opportunity to educate disabilities activists on the intersection between disabilities justice and Palestine.

We have also been building for the Block the Boat campaign led by the Palestinian Justice Movement with the support of the Maritime Union of Australia. Palestinian trade unions have called on union solidarity across the world on direct action against Israel. We have a duty to mobilise student contingents to aid direct action wherever possible.

In solidarity,
Khanh Tran and Victor Zhang

Environment Officers' Report

Jack Lockhart, Madeleine Clark, Thomas Williams & Jordan Anderson

Since the start of the year, the focus of the Environment Office has been on Palestine. Israel's genocide of Palestine is getting worse and worse each day. Yet, the Labor party has continued to demonstrate its apathy toward the people of Palestine and indeed where they stand: firmly with Israel and firmly on the side of the oppressors.

Last month, Penny Wong cut Australian funding to UNRWA - critical aid for the people of Gaza - on baseless and unsubstantiated claims, only to reverse that decision this week. The response to this by Labor politicians, such as Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek, was to praise Wong, as if her decision was not worsening Israel's forced starvation and deepening Australia's complicity with genocide of Gaza. The UN now warns that 1.1 million Palestinians are on the brink of starvation and imminent death. Thus, our approach has and should continue to be, to oppose the Labor party at all turns. In this vein, we built, attended and spoke at a campus speak-out for Gaza on 20 March, planting an olive tree to recognise the 31,000 Palestinians murdered by Israel since October last year.

In addition to this, University management has continued to shamelessly ally themselves with institutions embedded into Israeli apartheid and genocide, recently inviting Tel Aviv University to their 'Study Abroad' festival. The Environment Office was involved in a sit-in in front of their stall and the speak-out that followed, demanding USyd immediately cut all ties with Israel.

FREE PALESTINE.

Palestine Events Coming Up:
Tuesday 26 March 3pm: Students for Palestine organising meeting
Wednesday 27 March 12pm: Speak-out at USyd to cut ties with Israel
Friday 29 March 7pm: Online political tour of Jerusalem with Grassroots Al-Quds
Every Sunday 1:30pm: Palestine Action Group rally at Hyde Park North

Queer Officers' Report

Esther Whitehead, Jamie Bridge & Tim Duff

Content warning: transphobia, racism, police brutality, murder, suicide.

On March 10th 2009, Veronica Baxter, a Blak trans woman, was ripped from her home in Redfern by plainclothes police. She was charged with drug supply and locked in Surry Hills Police station while coming down from heroin and denied access to HRT. On March 14th, Veronica was sent to an all-male prison. Two days later, she died in her cell. The police claim that Baxter, despite being 6ft tall and having a broken hand, hanged herself from her 5ft bedframe.

This was a murder at the hands of NSW Police. Fifteen years later, no justice has been served.

It was in this context that USyd Queer Action Collective called a rally to demand Justice for Veronica Baxter. Co-hosted with USyd First Nations Collective and Pride in Protest, we demanded the implementation of all recommendations of the Royal Commission Into Aboriginal Deaths In Custody; the disarming, defunding and dismantling of the police; an end to sniffer dogs and undercover police, and full drug decriminalisation; and the immediate passage of the Equality Bill. See *Honi's* news coverage for more.

The NSW Labor Government has once again voted to delay the Equality Bill, obscuring their actions with the announcement of a shamefully watered-down bill to ban conversion therapy.

The federal Labor Government has also just announced it will backflip on its promise to ban discrimination against staff and students in religious schools.

If you're also mad at Labor, join us for Trans Day of Visibility March & Rally, 2 pm on March 31st at Pride Square, Newtown.

On campus, queer students continue to be denied access to the Queerspace by the USU and Manning Building management. If you'd like to join us to fight back against this, or any other issue mentioned in this report, come to our weekly meetings! Details at @usydqueer on Instagram.

Taking Care of Student Carers



Unpaid caring duties can be incredibly rewarding, however without the right level of support, can have a negative impact on various aspects of your life, including your studies.

You may be an unpaid carer if you spend time regularly providing a level of practical or emotional support to a family member or friend who has a disability, a medical condition, mental illness, or someone who is frail due to age. This could look like many things, such as, undertaking chores for family members who cannot do them themselves, looking after your siblings because your parents are at medical appointments, or helping provide personal care to a loved one with a disability.

Caring duties are unique and varied. Each carer will have a different relationship to the person they care for, and their identity as a carer. Even if you find your caring role rewarding, it can still take a toll on you, and may impact the time you have available to work or engage in your studies. It may even sometimes be difficult to manage emotionally.

For many unpaid carers the tasks they undertake as part of their caring role are not seen as something out of the ordinary, as they are used to the responsibility. Many carers may have grown up with the responsibility of undertaking caring duties. Caring for family is often a cultural responsibility, and therefore it is difficult to see as

something that would negatively impact your life.

No matter the level of care you provide, or your relationship to the person you care for, if you identify as a carer and find that you could use some extra support, you are able to access it.

The Carer Gateway is a national government funded service that supports unpaid carers.

They define their eligibility as, "You may be an unpaid carer if you are providing care and support to a family member or friend with disability, a medical condition, mental illness, or someone who is frail due to age."

Carer Gateway provides services such as in person and phone counselling, financial support for young carers engaging in study, access to emergency respite, and individual coaching support. You can find a full list of available services on the Carer Gateway website.

You don't need a Medicare card to access Carer Gateway, so student visa holders are able to access their services.

Carer Gateway can be contacted via their website; carergateway.gov.au or can be called on: 1800 422 737.

If you need assistance applying for special considerations or other arrangements due to the impact of caring duties on your studies, you can contact the SRC caseworks via our contact form, or by calling 9696 5222.

Ask Abe

SRC Caseworker Help Q&A

Centrelink Dropped Subject



Dear Abe,

I get Youth Allowance. I'm currently doing 4 subjects but I want to drop to 3.

Do I need to tell Centrelink? Will they cut me off?

Thanks,
YA Cut Off.

Dear YA Cut Off,

Yes, it is always a good idea to tell Centrelink whenever your circumstances have changed. For example, if you drop a subject, move house, or get a new job. You will still be full time so it will not change your payment. If you were dropping to part time you would no longer be eligible for that payment and you would need to talk to a caseworker to see what your options were.

Thanks,
Abe

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



If you want to discontinue a subject and avoid a fail grade the CENSUS DATE is 2 April

APRIL

2



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



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srcusyd.net.au
02 9660 5222



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ANTI-DISCRIMINATION ACT
(ADA).

END PINKWASHING; NO SAFETY
WITH POLICE—DEFUND,
DISARM AND DISMANTLE.

SUNDAY, 31 MARCH
2 PM, PRIDE SQUARE
NEWTOWN



EVENT LINK

