

HONISOIT

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12

Week Seven | September 12

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We came,
we saw,
we heckled

.....
REVUE SPECIAL ⑥

Dangerous ideas:
Bitcoins and the
Deep Web

.....
FEATURE ⑭

Street art:
the good, the bad
and the Banksy

.....
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Planner

HONI'S GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON



Debris

8pm, TAP Theatre, Darlinghurst \$15/\$22

Part of the Sydney Fringe Festival and running for five shows. Debris is the debut play by burgeoning theatre company Mischief in the Woods.

Book Fair

10am-4pm, University Quadrangle, FREE

The annual event from the University of Sydney Chancellor's Committee, which has over 65,000 second-hand books on offer. However this is the final day so be quick!



Femme Locale

7pm, The Basement, \$15+bf

Established to support emerging female singer/songwriters, this inaugural event will be a wonderful evening of entertainment featuring Rainbow Chan, Little Miss, Lucy B. and Lily So.

The Pitchfork Disney

Sidetrack Theatre Marrickville, from \$14.20

The final night of Philip Ridley's dark hallucination of a play. A disturbed brother and sister whose parents have disappeared are visited by two vomiting, cockroach-eating showmen. Pitchfork and Disney.



ARNA Launch Party, Verge Gallery, FREE

Join the 2012 editorial team to celebrate the official launch of the latest edition of ARNA - SASS's annual literary and creative journal. Featuring special guest Mungo MacCallum.

National Campus Band Comp State Final, 7pm, Manning Bar, FREE

Remember Milk? They recently won the Sydney Uni Band Comp. So head along and support these crazy kids in their efforts to take over the world. http://www.manningbar.com/Whats_On/EventsSummary.aspx



Derby Baby

7pm, The Red Rattler, \$10/\$15

Witness the love and the pure addiction that drives tens of thousands of women around the globe to don skates and pseudonyms for the privilege of kicking each others' asses. <http://www.redrattler.org/event/481/Derby+Baby>

Piff the Magic Dragon

7pm, Playhouse, Sydney Opera House, \$37

All the way from Edinburgh, part of the Fringe Festival, Piff has gone viral on YouTube and he's opened for Mumford & Sons.



Bogan-ville Burlesque

6pm, The Sly Fox Hotel, FREE

Another event in the Sydney Fringe Festival, this is an Australian take on the classic burlesque show, as if 'Cabaret' was set in modern day Rooty Hill RSL, not 1930's Berlin. (<http://2012.sydneyfringe.com/event/circus-and-burlesque/bogan-ville-burlesque>)

Conversation Piece - Sunday Forum

3pm, Belvoir St Theatre, \$42 conc.

This new work from Lucy Guerin's has a different conversation between the performers each night. Plus head along to a Sunday Forum for the story behind the show.



The Mending Project

10am-5pm, MCA, FREE

Become part of this artwork by bringing along a garment or object that requires mending and connect with the artist mending your clothes through conversation. <http://www.mca.com.au/events/mending-project/2616/>

SRC/Honi/NUS elections pre-polling,

10am-3pm, SRC Offices, FREE

Come get your democracy on and vote in the SRC elections. Full polling will take place on Wednesday and Thursday.

LETTERS

Speaking out about mental illness

Girl Interrupted,
Arts (Languages) II

Dear *Honi*,

I am writing in response to Alexandra Christie's feature, 'Weight Expectations' (August 29).

Having grappled with depression and anxiety for the last decade, I can confirm that public awareness of mental illness in general is grossly inadequate. I applaud her for contributing to awareness about such issues on campus, and for her dedication to presenting a more accurate portrayal of anorexia than is usually given to us by the mainstream media. I do, however, take issue with the notion that anorexia is 'ignored' compared to other mental disorders such as depression and anxiety. Regardless of disorder, public awareness is universally inadequate. Stigma still exists across all axes and spectra of mental illness.

Last year, I was finally diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder, a chronic condition characterised by profound emotional pain, wide and frequent mood swings, self-harm, and chaotic relationships. Borderline is a strongly stigmatised illness, so much that very few people know that I even suffer from the disorder. A commonly-held belief by those who know of the disorder is that sufferers are 'bad' or 'crazy'. It's a hurtful and inaccurate stereotype that leads me to keep my illness a secret.

BPD affects 1.5 per cent of the population, and has a 10 per cent mortality rate by suicide. Like anorexia, it is a serious disorder, similarly prevalent, and with a high suicide rate. Anecdotally, I would argue that it is unfair to suggest that, as a disorder, anorexia is especially ignored. We need to raise awareness about all kinds of mental illness, not compete with each other over whose particular disorder should get the most recognition. The way forward is to work at eliminating the stigma associated with mental illness in our society which keeps so many from recovering. It's a difficult task, and needs to be done through a collective effort from us all.

Want to win \$1500?

The *Honi Soit* Opinion Competition is back!

The theme for this year is:

'LIMBO'

Entries should be between 700-800 words and the winners will receive cash prizes and have their work published in *Honi Soit*.

Send your entries to - opinion@src.usyd.edu.au

With your name, year, faculty, student ID and contact details

Stop the Boats!

Name withheld (electoral regs)
Arts/Law II

Dear *Honi*,

I am truly astounded at the level of political ignorance in Poppy Burnett's article in *Honi Soit* ('Houston, do we really have a problem?' August 29)

Her question posed throughout the article was what is the inherent "problem" in current political discourse over asylum seekers, questioning why stopping the boats is "a desirable goal". Now, as fun as it is to paint those who support offshore processing and deterrent policies as xenophobes who have no other political incentive or logic other than to stop brown people from arriving on our shores, this characterisation in no way reflects either major party's stance on the issue.

The reason why politicians frame the arrival of boats as a problem isn't because they're doing it to be dicks, but because when people try to make it to Australia, people die. Surprisingly, when you have hundreds of people packed into boats designed for fishing in river deltas, that are now braving the waves of the Pacific and Indian oceans, not everyone lives to tell the tale, which is an awful, terrible thing. God forbid politicians try to adopt policies that tangibly save lives.

If Ms Burnett is honestly confounded as to what the problem which the parties are trying to solve (with one of the parties being historically and empirically being far more successful than the other in saving the lives of asylum seekers), then I point her towards the foreword of the expert panel's report which consistently talks about: "the prospect of further losses of life at sea". Literally, in it's in the first page of the report!

I'm happy to discuss different and competing mechanisms of preventing those tragic deaths, but until opponents of Government and Opposition policies at least try to understand the very basic premises upon which those policies are based, I'm not surprised that Ms Burnett feels "alienated from the discussion."

Disney disaster

Joshua Sprake
Arts II

Dear *Honi*,

I have often defended the *Honi* editors over claims of inaccuracies and poor journalism. However, there was such an egregious breach of not only accuracy but also of the basic fundamentals of childhood that I will not stand idly by as the core of our society's values are attacked by such a poor and glaringly obvious mistake.

I write this assuming that it was a mistake as the consequences and possible retaliation of this being an intended attack on one of the most important texts of my time, life and belief system are too outreaching to assume otherwise.

Anastasia was NOT a Disney movie, it was a DREAMWORKS film. As much as I am a personal lover of the film and personally can sing in harmony the song "Once Upon a December" let us not sully the reputation of the hallowed texts by getting them incorrect.

EDITORIAL

HONISOIT

The University is about to enter negotiations to determine the allocation of the Student Services and Amenities Fee for 2013.

The SSAF is the \$263 you forked out/ ignored/let your parents pay for at the beginning of the year. It represents a weak throwback to the days of compulsory student unionism. Instead of protecting student bodies through a guaranteed cash stream as CSU did, the funding is now arbitrated by a puppeteer university administration team. Student organisations are expected to dance. A sub-optimum power dynamic ensues.

When the University is responsible for allocating funding to the very organisations that are supposed to keep it to account, it is not surprising that funding often misses the mark in supporting that nebulous 'student experience' we all hold so dear.

The 2012 funding model saw Sydney University Sport and Fitness take top billing, receiving an incredible \$3,763,401. Far from empowering student voices, this funding went directly into the hands of the aged sports

enthusiasts that run SUSF. That money was then directed predominantly to elite athlete programs, and probably sweeter smelling chlorine. The general membership fees at SUSF were not even reduced as a result of the three million dollar increase in funding. But hey, it's an Olympic year, right?

The Students Representative Council that funds this newspaper received only \$1,254,727 from the SSAF funding. This is a dismal figure when considering the direct role the SRC plays in the lives of students at this University.

The SRC provides free caseworkers for students in need, organises protests against the retrospective cutting of some of our best professors and is responsible for advocating for a better learning experience for all students through improvements in wifi coverage, reduced classroom sizes and the provision of twenty-four hour study spaces. Issues that effect far more students than the few and the freakishly fit.

Bebe D'Souza

I am also on Twitter, sometimes:

@bebedsouza

Bob Carr not so welcome

Clare Fester
Anti-Racism Collective

Dear *Honi*,

It has been a dark few weeks for Australian politics, with Labor shamefully reintroducing a refugee policy worse than Howard's Pacific Solution. For this reason, refugee activists from the Anti-Racism Collective were dismayed to find that the ALP Club had invited Senator Bob Carr to speak on campus last Friday.

Carr plans to use aid money to re-establish the Pacific Solution 2.0 - but aid money should be used to alleviate misery, not inflict it! The government wants to bribe impoverished Pacific islands so it can incarcerate refugees indefinitely under torturous conditions. The Anti-Racism Collective fights to build a pro-refugee campus, so when politicians come here to spout, defend or sidestep their policies we always drop by to make clear they will not get away with it.

The Labor party, and no-one more so than Carr, has justified its policies by claiming they want to stop deaths at sea. If there were an ounce of truth to this Labor would decriminalise people smuggling so boats could be organised safely in the open, or provide safe passage and sturdy boats for refugees so they needn't get on leaky boats in the first place. Better yet, the government could process refugees in Indonesia and Malaysia directly and guarantee them resettlement in Australia.

A humane refugee policy can only begin by welcoming the boats. When Carr is ready to put forward that kind of policy, we will gladly welcome him back onto the campus.

Quizmaster's alternate reality

Toby Miles
Arts III

Dear *Honi*,

Every week, two of my friends and I test our knowledge of trivia by attempting The Quiz. And yet it occurs to me that perhaps the writer of The Quiz is living in an alternate reality. That would certainly explain the unique display of geographical error which we saw in Week 4. My friends and I were certainly surprised by the answer of "Brazil" to Question 3 ("Which country shares more borders than any other?"). After a little quick Googling I found that both Russia and China share roughly the same number of borders (between 12 and 16 depending on how you count them, but either way still more than Brazil) and counting overseas territory, even France's 11 can one-up Brazil's 10. And then of course there was James' astute observation regarding San Marino in his letter last week. I must admit that though we thought of that oft-forgot republic we assumed we were wrong - how wrong we were!

Hopefully, future faults of a geopolitical nature will be sought out and annihilated, but just in case, I shall be reading *Honi* with an atlas of alternate realities firmly in hand.

(Apologies Toby. Our quizmaster has developed an insidious crack addiction over the past couple of weeks. He has been fed to the ibises. - Eds.)



OPINION

A note from the NUS President

Donherra Walmsley defends the National Union of Students

I write in reply to the report of the SRC Vice President published in the week 4 edition of *Honi Soit* regarding the National Union of Students (NUS).

The Vice President asserts that NUS is an “insignificant and useless organisation” that “spends more money on its Office-Bearers’ pay and travel than it does on campaigns”.

First of all, I’m not sure how you can call an organisation which features in print, radio, and digital media at least once a week - often upwards of 3-4 times a week - insignificant, unless you don’t believe that students’ voices on student issues should be widely publicised alongside the views of universities, government, and opposition. Personally I think that having a student voice out there on issues like student fees, education quality, accessible housing, women’s safety, and student work rights - just to name a few that NUS has spoken on in the fortnight alone - is pretty important.

Secondly, for the University of Sydney SRC to criticise an organisation for spending more money on office bearer salaries than campaigns is hypocritical and ironic, because the last time I looked at the SRC budget (as President in 2011 and General Secretary in 2010), the SRC also spent more on student Office Bearer salaries than it did on campaigns. OBs are paid in recognition of the fact that student representation, done well, is a job that limits or precludes entirely your ability to undertake other paid work. Paying OBs means that it is not just wealthy students and students who have families who can afford to support them taking on roles, but that all students have that opportunity.

Many campuses are not as well resourced as the University of Sydney, and don’t have institutional knowledge required to run successful campaigns alone. Activists on these campuses require the assistance of Office-Bearers to run campaigns, and this is why NUS OBs travel around and visit campuses. NUS could spend all the money we liked on campaigns, but without OBs traveling around to skill up activists on how to organise effectively, campaigns won’t get run. (As a side note, NUS doesn’t pay for us to stay in hotels; so if you

think that travelling around constantly is glamorous and fun, I’d invite you to spend weeks on end sleeping on couches, floors, and spare mattresses and see how enjoyable you find it.)

Furthermore, the campaign budget of most departments with the exception of my own exceeds that of the travel budget, because NUS most certainly recognises the importance of campaigns. I certainly love a good rally and support direct action where it is called for, however students will only mobilize when something makes them angry enough to do so. I’m not sure that “the government has increased funding to universities but not by enough” or “the government has improved youth allowance but it’s still not good enough” is going to anger a student enough to motivate them to go to a rally. In fact I’m certain it’s not, because we tried it in 2010 and it didn’t work.

If you think that the accomplishments of NUS including: the abolition of Domestic Undergraduate Full Fee places, the lowering of the age of independence for income support from 25 to 22, the introduction of start up and relocation scholarships, the increase in the personal income test meaning students can earn \$400/fortnight instead of \$236/fortnight before payments get docked, the numerous campuses including Curtin and Swinburne who have secured better deals from the SSAF thanks to NUS’ assistance, the first ever survey of women’s safety on campus which is still discussed by a wide variety of organisations, and the subsequent publication of a blueprint for safety endorsed by many organisations including Universities Australia are useless and insignificant, then I really don’t know what you would consider significant.

This is without even touching upon the numerous government and sector reference groups on which I sit, and the work NUS does on a daily basis supporting campuses with a wide range of issues – I’d happily write thousands of words if there were room enough in *Honi*, but feel free to send any questions to pres@nus.asn.au

Donherra Walmsley is the NUS President

WEEKLY NEWS

Work & Organisation Society hosts Equal Pay Day panel

Our egalitarian society is not reflected in working women’s pay, writes **Nick Sunderland**

One of Australia’s most pernicious and pervasive discrimination issues received due attention last week as the Sydney University Work and Organisational Studies Society held its annual Equal Pay Day event.

It has been a big year for gender pay policy in 2012, with a number of new policy initiatives adding a strong context for the evening. The equal remuneration case in front of Fair Work Australia was finally resolved in June this year and established a new approach to gender equality, which argued that the Queensland social care sector is underpaid due to the fact that it was mostly feminised.



There have also been calls in the last few weeks from the federal government’s Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency for businesses to start to quantify their gender targets within their organisations rather than rely on vision and goals.

These developments provided a rich pool of current issues to draw upon, and the event’s panel discussion at the

New Law School didn’t disappoint.

University of Sydney academic Susan McGrath-Champ opened the discussion by outlining the state of the problem. Despite widespread assumptions that the gender pay gap is decreasing and women’s conditions are improving, the experience has been markedly different. The current gender pay gap between the average full time earnings of men and women sits at 17.4 per cent, remaining largely unchanged since the equal pay for equal work legislation was introduced in Australia in the 1980s. Nor is this something that only affects mothers or older women, with the gender pay gap starting at \$2,000 a year at the point of graduation.

While the gap between the existing legislation and the actual operation of policy was highlighted by Melanie Fernandez from the Women’s Electoral Lobby, the feeling of disappointment turned to shock as Lisa Cabaero from the Asian Women at Work organisation described the working conditions of some of her organisation’s members.

Ms Cabaero recalled stories of women routinely working in hospitality for \$8-10 an hour, while out-work rates in some situations were averaging out as low as \$3-5 an hour. With challenges such as these, the notion that change could be made with legislation alone stands as a truly optimistic vision.

While the debate on cause, identification and response was wide-ranging, what was certain is that our ideas of Australian egalitarianism still mask a deep inequality that exists for many members of our society.

Patriotic Paralympians

Sydney athletes are performing strongly in London, reports **Kira Spucys-Tahar**

The University of Sydney’s Paralympians are beating the best with our seven female athletes impressing on the world’s stage in London. Australia is currently ranked fifth on the official medal tally with 31 gold, 23 silver and 29 bronze medals.

Angela Ballard, who is currently studying for Psychology Honours, had previously won medals in Athens and Beijing. An athlete who competes in wheelchair racing, Ms Ballard won a bronze medal in the 100m and a silver medal in the 400m race. Ms Ballard won also won a silver medal in the 200m, breaking an Australian record with a time of 29.35 seconds.

Sydney Uni WheelKings and Wheelchair Flames representatives Katie Hill and Sarah Stewart were part of the silver medal-winning wheelchair basketball team. The Gliders were defeated 44-58 by Germany, with Hill and Stewart scoring four and two points respectively.

In the swimming, Science student and three-time Paralympian Prue Watt won a bronze medal in the 50m Freestyle and



Psychology student Angie Ballard was a silver medalist. Photo: Sydney University

a gold medal in the 100m Breaststroke event. Ms Watt was presented with her bronze medal by Vision Australian Board Member and Sydney University Emeritus Professor of Law Ron McCallum AO.

Commerce student Katrina Porter, who won a gold medal in Beijing, made the finals of the 400m Freestyle, 100m Backstroke and 100m Breaststroke.

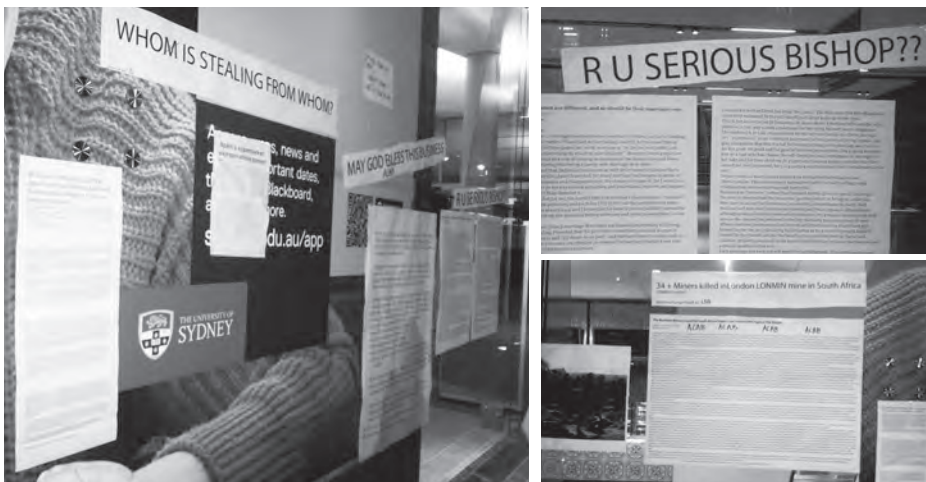
Sydney Uni Swim Club member Sarah Rose, who won bronze in Athens, made the finals of the 50m Butterfly.

Arts/Education student Jenny Blow and her Goalball team were knocked out in the preliminary rounds. This was Ms Blow’s first Paralympics.

PHOTOS

Glass Warfare

The New Law building faced a sticky situation last week when ‘anarchists’ papered over its glass walls with secular signs and posters, in protest against the University of Sydney Union’s funding of Interfaith Week.



OPINION

The Cool Makers of Manning

Studying for a PhD in Chemistry, and in his eighth year at Sydney Uni, **Jehan Kanga** reflects on the changes at Manning Bar

As one of Verge Festival's Directors in 2009, I was privileged enough to work with many USU staff, working intimately with everyone from the Rock Office, the Marketing and Design team, Bars, Catering, and the ACCESS office. Even though I had been active at USYD in several major societies and revues yet I couldn't see (and therefore appreciate) the amount of work that went into operating the Union and talent employed in throwing massive parties, gigs, band comps, and festivals, not to mention supporting the C&S program. The team that USU had on the front line in 2009 was something of a dream team: talented, cohesive, efficient and youthful - something USU management I think are only just realising.

Many of those talented people lost their jobs in 2010. A friend of mine, Bel, was a long time senior but casual member of the bar staff. She would manage Hermann's and Manning at the same time whilst there were major events operating at both (some serious talent). She worked with the experience licensee at the time Ian Redpath who could probably set up and manage a small bar on Mars if you gave him the chance. Ian was retrenched (probably because he'd been around "too long" and his wages were higher than a new recruit). This marked the beginning of the end, with some new recruits

keep their daggy Manning Bar T-shirts because, back then, it really was the coolest place to be in Sydney.

The culling of all-ages events, gigs branded as 'metal', and the banning of sexy burlesque gigs meant entire (lucrative) demographics of young metal heads and queer/fem communities were locked out. Those events have found homes at the refurbished Imperial Hotel in Erskineville which caters to an inclusive queer crowd of more than 3000 on a good night and to the Annandale which has benefited from an increased number of gigs they can schedule per week. Manning is now vanilla - a relic of older bureaucrats who never under-

.....
"The failure of Snowball is the ultimate barometer for the USU's current management. Parties like that were considered events that could never fail in 2009."

stood the value of talented front line staff hired from the student body.

What the Union failed to understand (and still do) is that USYD students are also members of the wider community, and that the wider population of the inner west often have strong ties to Syd-



famously unable to attach beer kegs to taps and in incident ensuing in which an order for a new batch of gin, vodka, and tequila before Eurovision in 2010 was forgotten (a massive downer for the entire party when the spirits stopped flowing at 7:30pm). Bel didn't hang around, since she was never offered a full time or more secure part time position managing the bars, despite being well loved by students and staff alike.

The same story goes for all the other teams too. The loss of Will Balfour, and then Richie Cuthbert sucked the life out of the venue. Richie was one of the most well-known people in the inner west, a kind of glitterati hipster who by mere association gave Manning serious street cred. Along with Dave Springer, they had the clout in the music industry to call upon major promoters like Chugg Entertainment who represent Gotye and Rufus Wainright and get them to play for a fraction of their normal gig price. They turned a dump with daggy 90s interior into "that dump with 90s interior that EVERYONE in Sydney wanted to hang out at". The generation of students who are just older than me revere Manning in a way in which students now cannot imagine. They even

ney Uni. Censoring events by type killed the cool that Manning once had. The older kids set the agenda, the younger kids followed and learnt what a really good party was. This is ever more pertinent for current students as they don't remember a time before 2010.

It exasperates me to hear that USU and the university want to spend (probably tens of millions) on renovating a functional space, when the space is not the problem. You could throw the biggest party since Cory Worthington in the School of Chemistry and thousands would come if the bands, DJs, and promotion were right, and bars were run efficiently with friendly and familiar staff. Besides, the 90s is now actually cool - so a design renovation surely would recreate what currently exists.

The failure of Snowball is the ultimate barometer for the USU's current management. Parties like that were considered events that could never fail in 2009, forever making money, and creating that sense of cool for the Union. It seemed so easy - an event that could run itself. USU management need to swallow their pride, accept that bureaucratic penny pinching in 2010 has cost it millions and invest in high quality staff

USU

Censure motion stifles speech

USU board members must express their views, writes **Tim Scriven**

You've probably heard that Tom Raue was censured by the University of Sydney Union (USU) for publicly stating that he opposed the funding of LifeChoice and Interfaith week. A censure motion is a motion of condemnation by the Board. While it doesn't itself remove a Director, if the Board finds he has breached his duties again, it may then have grounds to remove him.

The thrust of the case against Tom had two prongs; firstly that he acted against the interests of the union, secondly that he misrepresented Board policy. It is unclear to me how stating Board policy, being careful to distinguish it from your own opinion, and calling for change constitutes "misrepresentation".

Nor did he act against the interest of the Board; public debate is in the interest of the Board. The USU is supposed to be based on genuine democracy of the membership. To suggest that a director expressing his personal view to the membership, in order to encourage public debate on the policies of the USU, is an insult to the ideal of member control and participation. A pretend united front by the Board Directors on the other hand, dampens debate, as it makes it appear as if there is no dissent.

Why does the USU feel that a Board Director joining public discussion around its programs is a threat? I would like to imagine the USU is robust enough to tolerate dissent and discussion on these issues. Instead it seems remarkably shy for an organisation that started as a debating society. Interfaith week and LifeChoice are far from core initiatives

of the Union; this does not bode well for discussion around the big issues on the horizon like SSAF.

Many of us feel that the way the USU handled the matter was disturbing. In response to public concern about the upcoming motion, the USU released a blog post stating, or at least heavily implying, that Tom had acted in a way worthy of censure. This was before the censure motion had been voted on, which hardly increases one's confidence in the process.

Perhaps the most absurd aspect of the USU's actions is its naive assumption that censoring a Board Director will protect its brand. The backlash has already been significant. Discussion of the censure motion trended on Twitter. The history of attempts to control image by suppressing speech gives little reason for optimism, as outrage typically strengthens and amplifies the original message.

Tom ran on an explicitly progressive platform and was elected to the Board by progressive students who wanted to be heard. In my view he represented them responsibly, and by no stretch of the imagination did he put the Union under threat. He was supported by a sizeable constituency when around twenty-five students turned up to support him, a far greater number of ordinary students that one usually sees at Board meetings. He has borne this censure with dignity, but was visibly upset when the motion passed.

Tom deserves our support. Let the union know how you feel, you can contact the president at president@usu.usyd.edu.au.

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+ COMMERCE

Dirty Financing

Rafi Alam thought the sex couldn't compensate for a lack of laughs

Commerce and Economics were not subjects I was particularly enthused about pursuing at high school, and as such was nudged out by my disappointed teachers. Despite this, I have a decent understanding of the current economic climate. I came to Commerce Revue 2012, *Dirty Financing*, with this in mind.

Unfortunately, *Dirty Financing* focuses most of its attention on subpar one-liners or, worse yet, should-have-been-one-liners: those sketches that were dragged out as fillers. Skits were, almost consistently, painful to watch. The writing tread the fine line between absurd 'random' humour and frustrating pointlessness. Where it excels, however, is during its conceptual musical scenes, wonderfully lambasting a world of dodgy politics. The dancing was a joy to watch, and the amateur dancing was endearing rather than jarring. The singing on the other hand was inconsistent, but strong female leads kept the show going.

Where the singing wasn't the greatest, sheer bravery made up for it, most

obviously in the form of an an a cappella barbershop quarter parody of Outkast's 'Hey Ya'.

Standout skits were few and far between. One sketch about unionised superheroes managed to hit the mark, and pithy punchlines like "investment wanker" scraped a laugh.

The show lost its way when deviating from relevance – a song about the difficulties of public transport pulls at common experience, while a joke about Stevie Wonder being blind is tired, done, and dead. So are, generally speaking, hipster jokes.

The show certainly lived up to its promise of sex appeal, with plenty of skin and racy choreography. Unfortunately, the 'sexy' skits weren't great, with jokes about blow jobs, hand jobs, more dick jokes, and a naked panel interview falling flaccid (sorry).

All in all, *Dirty Financing* was a bit disappointing, but thanks to a few well-executed skits the show wasn't a regret to watch.

Slow off the mark but scraped a happy ending, says **Max Chalmers**

The 2012 Commerce Revue *Dirty Financing* followed the golden rule of amateur theatre; put your filler first. The opening half of the show was patchy. Several of the skits were all investment and no dividend, with half-decent punch lines an underwhelming reward for long preambles.

There were evidently some first night nerves as lines were forgotten and potentially sound sketches became shaky. However, some of the more absurd skits came off well. "I just wish you had better service," a man tells Siri, to which the automated program responds: "WHAT THE FUCK IS WRONG WITH MY CERVIX!?"

Points also for managing to tie the obligatory Carly Rae Jepsen joke into the show's theme with a "nobody puts maybe in the corner" line.

The second half was a notable improvement. Even the sketches with tenuous punch lines remained entertaining as the cast found their groove. The crowd responded to their renewed

efforts and cheered heartily after several scenes, including one where a woman struggled in vain to use the supermarket self-check-out aisle, resulting in her own fatal demise.

A common trick was to re-contextualise racist aphorisms. In one skit a Martian tells an earthling to go back to where he came from because "we grew here, you flew here", while in another a waiter trying to serve another course to Bob Katter and a guest is rebuffed by a "fuck off, we're full".

Several particularly talented singers and actors elevated the on stage presence and the musical numbers consistently injected energy at crucial moments. The musicals were unfortunately hampered by the fact the lyrics were displayed too low, leaving them blocked by the dancers. The show did not have the polished finish of some of the bigger revues, but its lack of pretension meant you were prepared to overlook this and enjoy the good with the bad.



Dirty Financing's aliens and abs.



Cashing in on applause: the lead cast of Commerce revue.

+ LAW

How I Met Your Honour

Tight law students provide good value for money, says **Victoria Lui**

To nobody's shame and dishonour, Law Revue gave audiences an impressive spectacle this year that was as clever as it was hilarious. Starting with a series of excellent Olympic-centric song parodies that rivaled the opening ceremony itself in entertainment value, *How I Met Your Honour* kicked off a strong show that married timely satire with moments of fantastic weirdness (yes, last year's grotesque hanky man made an appearance and it was glorious).

The show's highlights were without a doubt its great song and dance numbers, the abundance of which made me wonder if any other cast in revue history ever had to learn so much choreography before. The Queen lamented a post-colonial Olympics to the sounds of 'Viva La

Vida' while everything from the refugee policy to the carbon tax was covered in the first half's high-spirited closing number. The 'Assange Extradition', set to that R. Kelly classic 'Ignition', was particularly clever but it was the barbershop tribute to Penny Wong and marriage equality, sung to the tune of 'Stacy's Mum', that was both witty and surprisingly sweet.

A welcomingly frequent recurring joke about disparate mash-ups was especially well received, giving us such amazing punchlines as Virginia Woolf Creek, Man versus Oscar Wilde, and Tortanic - while the show's audio-visual sketches included an especially funny 'Shit Law Students Say'.

Law Revue has always been one of the



The famed Law revue dance faces in action.

more tightly executed shows of the revue season but this year's briskness gave it a greater sense of comedic timing than it did just militaristic efficiency. This was evident in the show's snappy momentum, giving its brief skits and visual gags some additional punch while helping to liven

up some of the revue's weaker sketches. With the exception of a relatively weak number that gave the show its abrupt ending, *How I Met Your Honour* made for the best two billable hours a group of lawyers could ever give us.

Season

ENGINEERING • LAW • MEDICINE • QUEER • SCIENCE

✦ ARCHITECTURE

Game of Homes

More Gehry than Eames, the shock tactics didn't impress **Cindy Chong**

There are two main words to describe the 2012 Architecture Revue – offensive and awkward. *Game of Homes* broke many writers' rules for their blatantly unpleasant racist jokes depicting the lack of difference between Chinese people and names, and slightly anti-Semitic jokes that make you wonder whether a revival of the Nazi movement is secretly conjuring among Architecture students. At least they didn't mention dead babies!

Unfortunately, their musical numbers had more to do with people's bodies than the amount of dubious laughter in the audience. Their shit jokes (literally) in the parody of Katy Perry's 'Firework' displayed two singers sitting on makeshift toilets singing about the movement and sounds of "poo" and how it goes "oooh". And their take on The Zutons' 'Valerie' manifested in the form of taunting trans bodies with lyrics such as "I had penis-removal surgery", and how wearing a dress was okay after the doctor had come over.

However, their plot sketches were thoroughly more enjoyable than the musical numbers. *Game of Homes* depicted three architects in an Iron Chef-esque

competition to build a castle for The King. The three architects competed with the key ingredient being blue Lego. The sketch was over-milked though, and the revue closed with a dance on how to build a castle.

The amount of pop-culture references in the revue has to be commended. An Angry Birds sketch, and a video poking fun at Instagram, renaming it to Instacrap with filters such as overexposed and footshot, was hilarious. The dance-off between the Olde English and twenty-first century youth was witty, entertaining, and consisted of fine costumes – and even included the current YouTube sensation 'Gangnam Style' in the mix of songs. The sketch on dysfunctional printers in our libraries also had the mutual support of Sydney Uni students.

One thing *Game of Homes* excelled in was their band. Their array of musical instruments, and talent at playing various scores was very impressive – by far the best band I've ever seen in a revue. On the other hand, their writing and scripts need a lot more reconsideration. It was an interesting experience overall.

It's a fine line between humour and overt racism, says **Connie Ye**

This year's Architecture Revue was like my elderly grandmother: earnestly well-meaning, and unexpectedly racist at times. Unlike some other revues, politics wasn't the mainstay. Instead I came to expect safe laughs, with lowbrow humour (semen, faeces, houses made of penises, penis removal surgery, incest) and ridiculous non sequiturs like the bizarre giraffe 'spirit animal' skit. Then there were those which drew uncomfortable groans and heckles with more risqué gags about Asian stereotypes and oven references in the 'Nazi Jehovah's Witness' skit. If there was any social commentary in those particular sketches, then they were definitely buried deep under questionable writing and execution of ideas.

The theme based on *Game of Thrones*, of three bumbling architects competing to win the chance to design the king's new home, was neatly executed through an evocative set of three doors (they are Architecture students, after all) which allowed for multiple clever entrances and exits during scenes. The Ironchef 'build-off' between the competing architects and the dance duel between the Eliza-

bethan pansies and hip hop aficionados were definite highlights, along with the superbly tight band.

Many of the sketches could have benefited greatly from being cut short significantly. As they say, length is the soul of dire sketches, and those like the nude 'facetious jammed printers' sketch would have been vastly more enjoyable without painfully protracted gags on language settings which again verged on the unnecessarily racist. The videos and graphics showed far more promise, including the now seemingly ubiquitous Instagram parodies in 'Instacrap' and the 'job interview' sketch which transitioned well into a live skit.

I did have a personal issue with the way the show ended. When you kill off the character that wins the architecture competition, and get the surviving characters to help him do an interpretative dance, it adds a (pardon the pun) limp note to what otherwise would have been a satisfying finish. Having said that, as your ordinary average punter, it was enjoyable so long as one came to the show with an open mind. And preferably intoxicated.



A death comparable to that of Ned Stark?



We love building things (up to a climax!) Photo: Zoya Kuptsova

✦ LAW

Nick Rowbotham dissented from the hype

I am by no means a seasoned revue attendee, but my expectations for *How I Met Your Honour* were inflated by practically everyone I spoke to whom had ever seen a Law Revue. So it was with some surprise that I left the show feeling somewhat dissatisfied.

Undoubtedly, the revue had its witty, and sometimes hilarious, moments. Musical highlights included an a cappella ode to Penny Wong, to the tune of 'Stacy's Mum'; 'Extradition', a Julian Assange styled parody of R. Kelly's 'Ignition'; and, of course, the numerous songs featuring the show's simultaneous protagonist and villain, Julia Gillard, depicted in eerily convincing fashion by red-headed director Sam Farrell.

Other noteworthy aspects of *How I Met Your Honour* were its sleek audiovi-

sual interludes - particularly the all-too-true 'Shit USyd Law Students Say' - and its absolutely fucking awesome brass band: they even did a cover of the *Daria* theme tune.

But despite being punctuated by an ample amount of memorable skits and songs, to me, large parts of the show felt flat. This could be attributed primarily to its length; throughout the near two and a half hours (with an interval), some of the short skits, in particular, seemed extraneous to the revue's overarching progression. The Olympic material at the beginning of the show was also lacking in continuity, and struck me as incongruous with the (largely) political satire that followed.

As revues go, *How I Met Your Honour* was certainly not a bad show, but its

urge to cover as much ground as possible prevented it from being the polished product that it could have and perhaps should have been.

Directors and assistant directors Christina White, Meriana Gyory, Harry Knight, Sam Farrell, and Charlotte Johnstone-Burt. Photo: Margaret Zhang



Revue Season



ARCHITECTURE • ARTS • COMMERCE • EDUCATION • ENGINEERING • LAW • MEDICINE • QUEER • SCIENCE

SCIENCE

Sin(x) City

Neha Kasbekar learns to speak Science

Revue is a lot like first love: there's the period where it actually happens, where dizzying peaks are balanced by painful troughs. Then there's the mythologising that comes ever after, where anything even remotely unpleasant recedes into memory.

The 2012 Science Revue will be no exception. At its best, *Sin(x) City* was audacious, disarmingly hilarious, and deserving of a review little more than a highlights reel.

There was utter commitment by the cast, most notably in a sketch taking the concept of 'Bertie Bott's Every Flavour Beans' to its inevitable conclusion. Sharp, imaginative writing, from videos like 'Sketchception' to the overarching geek noir storyline. Consistently strong musical numbers, in particular the a cappella paean to Google Chrome. The thoughtful use of the band and the space, be it gunshot sounds produced by well-timed snare hits or blue-light raves.

Science Revue was however plagued by a run of weaker material early in the sec-

ond half. While bits mostly escalated to a satisfying coda (the fantastically-staged bank-robbers sequence, for one), there were a few that relied on non sequiturs for punch-lines, like a sketch mocking dub-step, or were promising ideas that simply lost momentum, an especial affliction of the videos.

Nonetheless, to review this as a Science student would, what worked > what did not. It's the rare show where even the casually sexist heckles are basically supportive. For the spectacle, the risk-taking, and the palpable joy of everyone involved in the production, Science Revue is a strong contender for the best revue of this season.



Long and indulgent but justifiably so, says **Patrick Morrow**

With a running length of two-and-a-half hours, *Sin(x) City* certainly had a long time to win us over with laughs and spectacle. It was a success, but it had its not insignificant flaws.

Time, the chief concern, saw plenty of pieces whose laudable high points came early on, begging for a snap to black and violent applause, only to taper off to an uncertain close, five minutes later. The through-line was likewise inconsistent. Though the noir aesthetic was beautiful, its dialogue was tired and ultimately groan-inducing. How we could maintain that crime was no more, in spite of the god-awful voiceover gags, was the greatest mystery of all.

Given the wealth of talent at their disposal, stronger leads could have alleviated a lot of the through-lines problems, for the cohort was huge. This size was an asset, for the most part, but the opening number (in an attempt at something epic) looked cluttered, and would have been well served with fewer, better choreographed feet. The balance, though, was perfectly struck in the post-interval, Tron-Orgy laser show (and was definitely

not struck in another haunting sketch, whose premise I have forcibly forgotten due to its excess of exposed scientist flesh).

Strength in numbers further succeeded in the a cappella routines. To those farther back, volume may have rendered them incomprehensible, but from where I was seated the Google Chrome, Jetpack, and Bad Dream numbers were very well written, and just as well sung (most every number, it is worth adding, was well sung; here an incredibly honourable mention to Allister Haire, whose voice moistens).

In keeping with musical strengths, the band cannot be overlooked, nor overpraised. They were perhaps afforded too much time between sketches, but it really is hard to object whilst tears of nostalgia well to the theme tunes of *Arthur* and *Fireman Sam*.

Of all the indulgence to be found in *Sin(x) City*, the bows were amongst the most long-winded, but there was license for them to be. For congratulations are due - this was a properly entertaining show.

QUEER

Mister Sister Act

Justin Pen found some of his Favourite Things in Queer Revue

What *Mister Sister Act* may've lacked in robotically tight choreography or a consistently taut script, it made up for in soul.

Built on a steady premise - reimagining the cast of *Sister Act* as a lewd crew of drag queens, gay gangsters and lesbian nuns - the show's driving storyline served as a roadworthy vehicle for some impressive musical numbers and great name gags. The latter completely dispelled my belief in diminishing returns.

In no particular order: Headlining Drag Queen 'Clitaurus Van Carti-gay', Police Officer 'Seargentle Lover', and of course, Mob Boss 'Adolf Jizzler'.

The show's skits veered in humour and tone. Lampooning student politics in 'Hacks Anonymous' ('you know the smell of that fresh pack... of chalk'); 'The Hunger Games (before Mardi Gras)' pitted weight-watching gay men against a cupcake; and the parodic spoken-word performance, 'The Tell Tale Tart', finally bringing together those two cultural icons Poe and Preston, all earned rapturous applause.

On the other hand, the pre-recorded videos caricaturing Gina Rinehart as an overweight and ungainly slob felt lazy and formulaic, despite its excellent production values. Musically, however, 'Hy-

mens are a Girl's Best Friend' and 'We Come from Oxford Street' were theatrical and lyrical knock-outs, satirising the Evangelical Union and celebrating the many faces of queer culture, respectively.

Staged in the Seymour's Centre's underground auditorium, Reginald Theatre, the show felt insulated and cosy - 'A Few of My Favourite Things' probably won't be performed until a second sexual liberation - apt for a risqué, funny and at times touching Queer Revue.



A scene from "GYNO210". Photo: Rob Jones

Patrick Massarani enjoys a sexually deviant tour de force

When first I heard Queer Revue 2012, *Mister Sister Act* was getting Catholic, naturally, I thought the worst. But thankfully and aptly they brought an audience to their knees and kept them there (mostly) for over an hour. Amen.

Thankfully, a loose narrative thread wove daintily betwixt the frothing, fisting, and fisting of the evening's festivities. Drag Empress Clitaurus Van Carti-gay (John Francis) seeks refuge from the Gaystapo (six impressionable young men with more package between their thighs than a Indonesian drug mule) amongst the Grind of St Ellen deGeneres (a phalanx of fuzz bumping, clam diving, nuns dressed in neon tartan handkerchiefs).

With more rug-munching jokes than a Persian dietician, our habit-clad nuns lead by Sapphic Superstar and Mother Superior Gayda de Mesa were a suitably raucous adornment throughout. Their Gaystapo counterparts were equally endearing, while answering that age old question: "Just how many socks can you stuff into the front of your camouflage patterned Calvin Kleins whilst still seeming plausible?"

Chorus singing was lovably enthusiastic but often descended into a schizoid harmonic car crash. Opening night sound and tech wobbles were the likely

culprit but these incidents went some way to dismantling this author's glossy homosexual musical-theatre archetype. Highlights included 'Hymens Are A Girl's Best Friend' and 'Twink'.

Notably, the fun kept rolling at interval where the whistling and toe-tapping followed the audience all the way to men's room and returned refreshed some discreet time later.

Bro Reveleigh's contribution brought particular delight. His commanding soliloquy 'The Tell-Tale Tart', lamenting the fucking abominable state of the 'Masterchef' phenomenon, had this author's neckerchief in knots.

Oddly, Kristin Stewart was victim to a particularly cruel pair of skits, being portrayed under spotlight as a length of 2x4 in a wig. While marginally amusing the first time, the second time I spent 45 seconds staring at a bare stage and stick in a wig it wore thin. A minor blemish.

Special mentions to Annie Wylie for her ore-inspiring portrayal of notably maligned sack-of-shit Gina Rinehart and also Michael Koziol for a triumphant Sandra Sully - showing us he is equally at home 'treading the boards' as he is shuffling through the bushes of his local beat.

IT'S TIME TO VOTE IN THE SRC ELECTIONS

Polling Booth Times & Locations 2012

Polling Location	Wed 19th Sept 2012	Thurs 20th Sept 2012
Fisher	8:30-6:30	8:30-5:00
Manning	10:00-4:00	10:00-4:00
Cumberland	11:00-3:00	11:00-3:00
SCA	12:00-2:00	No polling
Engineering	No polling	12:00-2:00
Conservatorium	12:00-2:00	No polling
Jane Foss	8:30-6:00	8:30-6:00

Pre-Polling will also be held outside the SRC's Offices, Level 1 Wentworth Building, on Tuesday 18th September from 10am-3pm.



Authorised by Paulene Graham, SRC Electoral Officer 2012.

Students' Representative Council, The University of Sydney Phone: 02 9660 5222 www.src.usyd.edu.au

EDUCATION

Cuts to NSW Independent school funding imminent

A bill slashing funding to Independent schools could be tabled before the end of the year. **James O'Doherty** reports

The NSW Government is under fire for proposed cuts to Independent school funding, after Education Minister Adrian Piccoli announced \$67 million could be stripped from Independent and Catholic schools.

In a statement on Monday, Mr Piccoli said "no decision has been made about how savings will be achieved in the education portfolio".

But *Honi Soit* has learned that proposals to cut funding have been discussed in cabinet. Sources say Mr Piccoli is likely to be preparing to bring an amendment bill to the House, probably before the end of the year.

The move has the potential to split the party, with some Liberal MPs saying they will cross the floor to vote against the cuts.

Dr Geoff Newcombe, executive director of the Association of Independent Schools, confirmed Catholic and Independent school representatives had been told by Mr Piccoli the funding restructure was indeed to go ahead.

He said independent schools are set to lose twice as much funding as Catholic schools thanks to the funding cutbacks.

Chair of the Association of Heads of Independent Schools Dr John Collier said any cuts to Independent school funding would flow on to affect Government schools.

"Many parents will withdraw their children from Independent schools and send them to government schools," Dr Collier said in a joint-letter to Mr Piccoli and Premier Barry O'Farrell.

Under current funding arrangements, Independent schools receive about 25 per cent of the funding allocated to those in government schools per student.

Dr Collier said contrary to popular belief, most Independent schools don't have the money to absorb these cuts.

"Many parents live on the cusp, scraping money together to send their children to low-fee Independent schools," Dr Collier told *Honi*.

He said these schools would be facing fee increases of up to 20 per cent.

As fee increases push students to the public sector, these proposed cuts could end up costing the NSW Government more than they aim to save by the cuts.

"This could save the government some money in the short term but end up costing it a lot more," said Stephen Grieve, President of the NSW Parents' Council.

The government pays more per student in public education, so an increase to public school admissions would cost the government more than they would save.

It is understood there is palpable concern in the Liberal caucus that a Nationals MP has been given such free reign over education funding.

Honi has been told Cardinal George Pell met with the Premier and federal Opposition Leader Tony Abbott, both Catholics, to raise concern with the proposal.

Cabinet was scheduled to have a regular meeting on Monday afternoon, after *Honi Soit* went to print. It was not known whether the issue would be discussed again.

ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

View from the voting booth: an election day diary

1am Saturday – It has become apparent that other parties have been tearing down our posters from poles. We are too tired to retaliate. Final blitz of distributing resources to booth captains and then home.

7am – Setting up at Forest Lodge. There is a sea of green – Clover has co-opted The Greens' branding for this election. Probably not a bad move around here.

9am – I meet a Greens volunteer. She is a former ALP member and admits that she participated in our community preselection. Greens like the ALP when it suits them, but vote against us when it counts.

9:30am – The Liberal turns up late. He looks out of place and then admits to living on the north shore. Apparently Tony Abbott has called in favours to support his sister, Christine Forster. I can never understand how the Liberals win elections without grassroots support.

9:45am – Dr Meredith Burgmann arrives. She is a living legend and a Labor hero. I go to chat to her and discover a Liberal harassing voters behind the no-go chalk line. I berate him with my best Labor vocabulary.

10:15am – The Greens have a new helper. They have a more relaxed roster than Labor, with quicker turnaround. The replacement also voted in the ALP community preselection. Me-tooism is pervasive in their movement and one of the reasons I disapprove of them.

10:30am – The Clover volunteer and the Greens helper are talking about real estate. This is Sydney after all. Clover approved a development in Harold Park which the Greens opposed. Not this Green

though – he is interested in buying an apartment off the plan in the "nice part" of Glebe. They resolve to investigate their options. Keating once described this sort of person as a tap dancing basket weaver. They are the modern face of the Left, I'm told. I despair.

11:00am – I am replaced and take an early lunch before heading across to St Scholastica's at the other end of Glebe – absolute Clover Country. The typical Clover supporter is in his or her mid 60s, wears silly glasses and is a bicycle fancier.

11:15am – One of the Greens' candidates is here handing out with her daughter. The daughter is complaining about the light rail extension to Dulwich Hill. Apparently this will promote overuse by commuters and she may not score a seat every morning. Public transport? Not in my back yard.

12:00pm – 4:00pm – I pass the time with a volunteer for the 'Housing Action' independents. They want more support for public housing. I decide he is a fellow traveller and we share the lunch provided by the ALP.

6:00pm – I settle in for scrutineering the count of votes at Sydney Town Hall. I have obviously upset someone to end up in this particular political gulag. There are 11,000 ballot papers.

10:00pm – We spend four hours arguing about who lost to Clover Moore and in what order and I leave in a huff with a dead phone and no Twitter. It has been a long day.

Tom Harris-Brassil is a member of the Australian Labor Party

WORLD TOUR

Post-apartheid mistakes haunt South Africa today

Economic self-determination failed to accompany social revolution and now the consequences are apparent, writes **Fabian Di Lizia**

Over the past few weeks, the world platinum market has skyrocketed, with prices momentarily exceeding those of gold. One of the largest platinum mines in the world, Lonmin's Marikana operation just outside Johannesburg, has virtually ceased production.

The Lonmin operation was crippled by strikes that have seen only 5 per cent of workers turn up at work. Violence at the strikes exploded after police fired on strikers. 34 workers and 10 policemen have consequently died. 78 were injured.

Most mainstream media commentary has highlighted how the violence has been the worst since the country's terrible apartheid era, or has sought to play the blame game.

However, most commentators have failed to highlight how the strikes represent a deeper issue that has plagued South Africa pre and post-apartheid, one that the African National Congress has failed to address. The nation still has a rampant monkey on its back: its failure to achieve economic self-determination.

The anti-apartheid movement was triumphant in gaining political and civil rights. Blacks and whites alike have political self-determination. But also part



South African President Jacob Zuma dances at the World Economic Forum in Davos, 2010. Photo Credit: World Economic Forum

of true freedom is economic self-determination, and a few key post-apartheid economic decisions by the ANC failed to achieve this for South Africa.

The list of "shots in the foot" by the ANC is extensive. The constitution that was broken contained a protection of private property, prohibiting redistribution of land to poor South Africans. The ANC signed on to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT),

which forbade support of local industries and factories - hence governments could not create jobs. The ANC signed the World Trade Organization's intellectual property agreement, which forbade South Africa from copying formulae for AIDS drugs. Such medications, owned and patented by Western pharmaceutical firms, are too expensive for poor South Africans dying from the disease.

When Thabo Mbeki came to power in 1999 he engineered a quasi-neoliberal revolution. The ANC was bound to austerity policies in order to service a massive debt inherited from de Klerk. While business was set up in the country, little devotion was given to constructing housing.

The ANC also signed a deal with the World Bank to service the national debt, however this required "wage restraint", preventing rises in the minimum wage.

Thus modern South Africa evolved to be one of the most unequal societies in the world. Inevitably, when the gloss of political self-determination wears off, people want to be able to have economic self-determination. These inadequacies have come to the fore with the violence over the past few days.

Workers at Lonmin have called for a wage rise, demanding an increase of 200 per cent to 12,500 rand (US\$1486) per month. Many of the workers live in a rickety township nearby, with no electricity or water in their homes.

South Africa finds itself at a crossroads. A debate about economic direction was had at the ANC conference earlier this year, with some serious calls for President Jacob Zuma to rid the nation of the "neoliberal straightjacket" that favours business but is fuelling inequality.

It would take a brave leader to structurally reform the nation, especially with mining giants threatening to withdraw investment the moment change is mentioned. However, the ANC has let down its people in recent years, with slush funds, corruption charges, and perennial bad governance dogging the party.

Zuma has the chance to radically change his image from a shady character to a true leader of Mandela's class. It will take much resolve and bravery to push for change, but it may be the only opportunity the nation has to avoid a relapse into the violence and division of the apartheid era.

Political correctness not black or white

Racial profiling thrives in election season, writes **John Gooding**

In our politically correct, pluralist, multicultural, quite nice country, there is almost no situation in which generalising by race is publically acceptable. Almost. One bastion of racial profiling remains somehow alive and well; political analysis. If you watched any coverage of the 2010 NSW state elections, you would most likely have heard of Barry O'Farrell's appeal to Chinese, Lebanese, and Vietnamese voters and of how Labor had lost its stranglehold on the



87 per cent approval among 'blacks': Barack Obama. Photo: rob.rudloff via Flickr.

non-white vote. While a fairly demure phenomenon in Australia outside of local elections, dividing the population into the ethnic voting blocs of black, white, and Hispanic has been common practice among American analysts for quite some time.

Do these distinctions have any merit? On the surface of it, yes. Barack Obama's approval rating as of this writing stands at 52 per cent overall according to Gallup, but in terms of individual ethnicities, Obama has a 37 per cent approval rating amongst whites, a 58 per cent approval rating amongst Hispanics, and an 87 per cent approval rating amongst blacks. The divides between these numbers are simply enormous, and lead to a final figure which does not really reflect any particular group.

More to the point, however, analyst after analyst has pointed out that should Obama lose 'the black vote', he has absolutely no hope for re-election in November. This reliance lead to widespread tittering amongst left-wing commentators after Obama announced his support for gay marriage.

The conventional wisdom was that the black vote strongly disapproved of gay marriage, and as such Obama was risking his re-election prospects by making a statement that, although admirable in its support, could not really enable any

new legislation in and of itself. As it happened, however, black approval on gay marriage moved toward the President's position, though supporters of it are still in the minority. As soon as this change became apparent, a variety of explanations were accordingly wheeled out. Most of these revolved around Obama leading the black community to this new movement.

So there are real differences in voting preferences between these demographics. The question now becomes whether or not we should continue to identify and report on differences. They may be true, but it still may not be ethical to state them. By the bounds of social convention you and I are discouraged from generalising preferences by race, even if those preferences are true. It may be the case that if I did a scientific poll, I would discover that something we consider to be a racist stereotype may actually be true. I could, for example find black people generally prefer fried chicken, or watermelon, or whatever foodstuff black people stereotypically eat, to other foods.

Even if this were the case, I would still not say: "black people generally prefer X to Y" out loud because those preferences would have absolutely nothing to do with being black. The experiment would show correlation, not causation. In our case, while there may be a correlation between having black skin and being against marriage, nothing about having black skin directly causes somebody to be against gay marriage. It reinforces the idea that blacks are some sort of homogenous community, completely disengaged from the society as a whole, without any possibility for integrated political presence.

The obvious answer to my politically correct angst is that we use ethnic terms as rough placeholders for actual communities, founded on some sort of historically shared experience. My response to this is that if we can we should probably find less totalising placeholders. Your ethnicity should not automatically denote your community, and referring to ethnicities and voting blocs does just that.

INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIA

Income management a wrong turn on the road to reconciliation

Punitive policies do nothing to foster relationships between Indigenous communities and service providers, writes **Lovelle D'Souza**

The patchwork quilt of welfare quarantining will expand to remote South Australia next month as the Gillard government targets the remote Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara lands for the scheme.

Voluntary and forced income management is already operating in the Northern Territory, Bankstown in Sydney, Logan and Rockhampton in Queensland, Greater Shepparton in Victoria, and some parts of metropolitan Perth and the Kimberley region in Western Australia. Its purpose is to partially restrict the spending of welfare payments to necessities such as food, clothing, and utilities.

I recently spent three weeks in the remote Indigenous community of Nganmurriyanga in the NT, running recreational programs for Indigenous kids as part of the Linkz Odyssey program.

My time at the coalface has convinced me that the 'circuit breaker' approach to Indigenous disadvantage – that punitive, reductive measures like income management are required to force change in behaviour – is entirely unhelpful.

Rather, it is the development of personal relationships and a commitment to the long view which are the key drivers of positive development.

While ongoing cyclical hardships were apparent in Nganmurriyanga, it was encouraging to see the fruits of sustained, cooperative efforts to change the situation, involving both Indigenous families and staff – both white and Indigenous.

Local school principal Sue, who has lived in Nganmurriyanga for 5 years, has been waging very effective campaigns to increase the attendance rate and improve nutrition during school hours, with measures including training local men and women, to run the school cafeteria and serve three fresh, nutritious meals to the kids every day.

According to Sue, the Intervention didn't have much of an impact on Nganmurriyanga, which was already voluntarily dry. But for communities where the police and army tanks did roll in, the hostility and swiftness of events did much to instill distrust in government, not to mention recall the deeply scarring events of the past.

Sue's key piece of advice to those overwhelmed by the scale of the problem of entrenched Indigenous disadvantage was: "don't expect things to happen overnight". This is certainly a lesson that government would do well to heed.

At the crux of the positive developments in the community, particularly in relation to the younger generation, were the relationships and programs nurtured over time, wherein the people delivering programs made an effort to get to know the participants and follow up on them, as Sue and the teachers in Nganmurriyanga did with the parents of truants, much to the improvement of school attendance records.

Given the isolation and significant pay cut that working in a remote commu-



Photo Credit: Justin Cozart

nity entails, it is a challenge to attract talented, caring people who are prepared to commit for longer than two years. But when such individuals do find their way there, the difference they make seems far more valuable than any platitudes, sweeping reforms or government hand-outs.

Case in point: an income management system had been requested by senior women in the APY lands to prevent the diversion of welfare and income into alcohol purchases or 'humbugging' (where people are forced to share earnings with family members). However the scheme actually being rolled out in SA communities only deals with those on welfare, giving them a "Basics" card which can only be spent on food, housing, and bills.

It ignores the situation of those people, often vulnerable women, who are either trying to get paid work and are discouraged because of humbugging that occurs when they obtain actual qualifications, or trying to hold down a job and manage their income wisely. Such individuals would benefit from voluntary income management accompanied by ongoing financial planning (for when they transition out of income management), delivered by people they know and trust.

But in a world of myopic and short-term policy-making, such nuance is lost, leaving people like Sue and the residents of Nganmurriyanga to devise their own solutions in spite of the work of the government, not because of it.

CHALLENGE ACCEPTED: NAKED ON STAGE



Lucy Watson gets her tits out

It's a man's world. But it wouldn't be nothing without a woman or a girl. Right?

Nudity on stage, particularly the Seymour stages that play host to the University of Sydney revues, is definitely a man's world. A whole lotta cock, not a lotta clunge. I'm here to change that. Challenge accepted.

I joined the queer revue this year, my only qualification being my tendency to prefer women to men. I can't sing, act, or dance (in time); yet here I am. And on a whim, I put my hand up to be in the naked sketch.

Nudity in revues has a long tradition. Everyone does it. Most of the time, it's guys. Most of the time, it's pointless; nudity for the sake of nudity. This was no exception, let's be honest.

We had our first audience last Tuesday.

I'm on stage immediately prior to the naked scene, so spend the entire scene in a dressing gown, and nothing else. I then have to whip off the dressing gown on stage, adding something of a strip tease to the already awkward nakedness.

Now completely naked, save a small triangle of modesty fabric, I turn to face the audience, a lone spotlight on me, and one other naked fellow.

Not a single whoop, cheer or wolf whistle. I feel very bare, and I'm certain everyone can see my heart jumping out of my chest – especially if I haven't covered myself properly.

And just like that, it's over. I'm off stage, scrambling to find my dressing gown.

Audience #2 was better. There were a few wolf whistles, though I suspect most of them were for my fellow cast member's chiseled jaw line (and other body parts).

I thought getting naked in front of 750 people would be a way to celebrate some body positivity, to figure out a way to be comfortable on my own skin, but instead, judging by audience reactions, I should just keep my clothes on and dance ridiculously.

It's not really a man's world. It's a clothed world, and people prefer lesbians knitting to copious amount of bare flesh.



HORNI SOIT

By Hannah Ryan

It was three days since last Sunday and four days until the next. Paul was impatiently fiddling with a sausage. Most foul-minded students, including the author of Horni Soit, would immediately think of something crude and unsavoury when they read that phrase, but Paul wouldn't. He was holier than thou, actually. He was a member of the most financially viable EU in the world, Sydney Uni's Evangelical Union, and he was giving out sausages to students too lazy to buy their own lunches in a bid to convince them of God's existence and benevolence. It was erotic, but only if erotic means something entirely different to what you think it means, involving more chastity and devotion.

Mary was there. It was no coincidence that she was called Mary and he was called Paul, because these were suitably biblical names for a piece of erotic fiction set in a religious group, and also their parents were avid fans of the Good Book and had named their children after leading characters. Still, it gave him a little buzz imagining her not as the holy mother of the Messiah, but rather as the slightly looser Mary Magdalene. It was erotic, more along the lines of what erotic usually means.

Paul approached Mary and offered her his sausage. She accepted, chastely. "Thank you," she murmured. Paul's social skills fled like Jews out of Egypt in Exodus. "Uh, well, uh, yes, it's my pleasure," he replied. He hoped she didn't think pleasure bore any sexual undertones, his commitment to chastity frustratingly steadfast, despite his being the subject of erotic fiction. "Mine too," she whispered. She extended her sausage-free hand and grabbed his. They gently held hands for a good twenty seconds. And then it finished, virginal and innocent, and so did this week's edition of Horni Soit.

🐦 FROM THE DEAD

with Lucy Watson

- 
Picasso @Picasso 3s
 even when I paint them ugly, bitches still love me #winning
- 
Franz Ferdinand @DoYaWanna 25s
 no one kill me, cos if I die, a huge war will start. #noseriously #firstworldwarproblems
- 
Oliver Twist @romeo_m 30s
 Please Sir, I just want some more #industrialageproblems
- 
George Orwell @alexanderthegreat69 1984
 Big Brother is Watching You #Dystopia
- 
Channel 10 @Trash 2001
 RT George Orwell: Big Brother is watching you
- 
Channel 9 @OldPeople 2012
 RT Channel 10: Big Brother is watching you, no one else is.
 Retweeted by Sarah-Maree
- 
Neopets @FuckJubJubIsCute 10m
 WTF is club penguin?
- 
D.H Lawrence @LadyChatterlyWasMyNotMyLover 18m
 I was writing porn before #50shadesofGAY ever existed
- 
John Milton @LongJohn 20m
 I think I've lost something...
- 
John Lennon @Imagine 22m
 Life Goal: EVERYONE see me and @yoko naked."
- 
Alexander the Great @alexanderthegreat69 30m
 Some bastard took my handle. I'm Alexander the Great, not Alexander the Great 69
- 
Lady MacBeth @FirstLady 33m
 My hands are red because I killed someone, damnit! It's not from chalking #Usydvotes
- 
Abraham Lincoln @WhosYourFoundingFather 37m
 My beard is bossin'
 Retweeted by Albus Dumbledore
- 
Henry Parkes @Henry_Parkes_n_Rec 38m
 I may be penniless but I'm the goddamn father of federation and one day all the \$5 notes will be mine! #dolladollabills
- 
Salvador Dali @Dali86 40m
 lol I'm so high woouooooooooooooooooooooo
 Retweeted by Lighthouse Family
- 
Shakespeare @Shake_my_Spear 50m
 high school students will rue the day I was born! #muahahaha
 Retweeted by Jane Austen
- 
Alan Ginsberg @fckshtfckcnt 58m
 fuck cock cunt shit asshole fuck fuck shit cunt #fuckingpoetry
 Retweeted by William S Burroughs
- 
Whitney Houston @GuardMe 1h
 #toosoon


TOP FIVE


National Anthems


By Rafi Alam


You don't normally hear national anthems outside of school assemblies, sporting events, and race riots. With an anthem like ours, it's probably a good thing. That being said, there are some super badass national anthems out there that are worth a listen.


- 5** **La Marseillaise – France**
 The French aren't particularly known for their military might anymore, but at one point in time they had a decent bunch of mass murderers and Reigns of Terror. Fittingly, their anthem calls their citizens to arms, tells them to shed "impure blood" and raise a "bloody banner", and spits in the face of "hordes of slaves, of traitors and conjured kings". It's also a fucking swelling song, so much so the Bolsheviks used it for a while. Imagine this being screamed at a footy match in English while you're warming up.


- 4** **Kassaman – Algeria**
 Trust the Algerians to declare independence from France by one up-ing their brutality. The first line of their anthem is "We swear by the lightning that destroys", which sounds like the initiation rite of a death metal lion-worshipping tribe. Some lines address France directly by saying "O France, the day of reckoning is at hand". "From our heroes we shall make an army come to being, and on our dead we build glory" – the dead are their strength. They don't give a shit about mortality. They are going to fuck shit up. Watch out.


- 3** **Tiên Quân Ca – Vietnam**
 The national anthem of Vietnam is adopted from North Vietnam pre-unification. It describes "soldiers of Vietnam, marching onwards" in the name of "our flag, dyed with the blood of victory, [that] bears the spirit of the country." Its badass-ness also stems from its inspiring call to lead the country out of poverty, hand in hand, in unison, "for too long have we swallowed our hatred." It ends with more bloodshed. Moral of the story: violence is liberating!


- 2** **Hatikvah – Israel**
 The national anthem of Israel isn't badass in the traditional sense (defined above), but is badass in just how fucking tragic and depressing it is. You can tell straight away: Hatikvah means "The Hope". On the other hand, "Advance Australia Fair" means "Advance Australia Fair", which just sounds dopey. One of the lines is "as long as tears from our eyes, flow like benevolent rain." WAH. It keeps going and going and you keep crying and crying. Guns N' Roses once played Hatikvah as the lead to Don't Cry. SORRY I JUST DID.


- 1** **Star Spangled Banner – Jim Hendrix (USA)**
 Star Spangled Banner is OK. Whitney Houston's version is excellent, sure. But let's be real: the version of Jimi Hendrix is better than the 'normal' version ever would be. Played at Woodstock around the time when 'black music' and 'Native Americans' and 'guitars' were all lambasted as devil's music, playing the Star Spangled Banner as a fucking acid rock anthem that devolves into noise is an incredibly ballsy move. Sure, there's no blood and guts in it, but there'll be lots of it when your HEAD EXPLODES.



Honourable mentions: The most badass national anthem writer is Rabindranath Tagore, who wrote the anthems for Bangladesh and India. In other words, 1.4 billion people. What have **you** done then?

Soundtrack to: Your first driving lesson

Xiaoran Shi learnt that driving is hard and hours are long.

Clueless – The Teen Idols

Hey, you just passed a multiple choice test and this is crazy, but here's a motor vehicle with the potential to kill everything in and around it. So, drive it maybe? Once you've reconciled the logistical insanity of the situation with your noble, automobile-related experiences in Grand Theft Auto IV, you know it's time to get behind the wheel and run over some prostitutes. While you're at it, don't forget to amass an inexplicable number of firearms and violently harass law enforcement at every given opportunity. But, no drink driving. What are you, a savage?

Paralysed – Gang of Four

In his magnum opus, Voltaire wrote that "the safest course is to do nothing against one's conscience". Wise words from a wise guy (sleeping with your niece was a lot more kosher during the French Enlightenment, I guess). What this cheese-eating surrender monkey basically meant was: when the tiny part of your brain that isn't already colonised by Breaking Bad quotes or the phone numbers of your various drug dealers is telling you to just sit there because the car won't explode if you just sit there, then you should probably listen if you want to continue living. Until you realise you're actually paying someone to just sit in their hatchback for an hour.

Ignition – R. Kelly

Robert Sylvester Kelly is hardly a credit to the human species, but if you choose to ignore the man's history as a sex offender, this track is capable of making even a few casual laps around the parking lot an ironically suave affair. You're well and truly settled in. The pedals, the gearbox, the mirrors: they ain't no thang. It's like you were born within the metallic shell of this Toyota hybrid. Who was the old you and what were they thinking? I mean, why walk places when you can have them pedestrians on your motherfuckin' windshield? Not even your year-long composting project can stand between you and the road now.

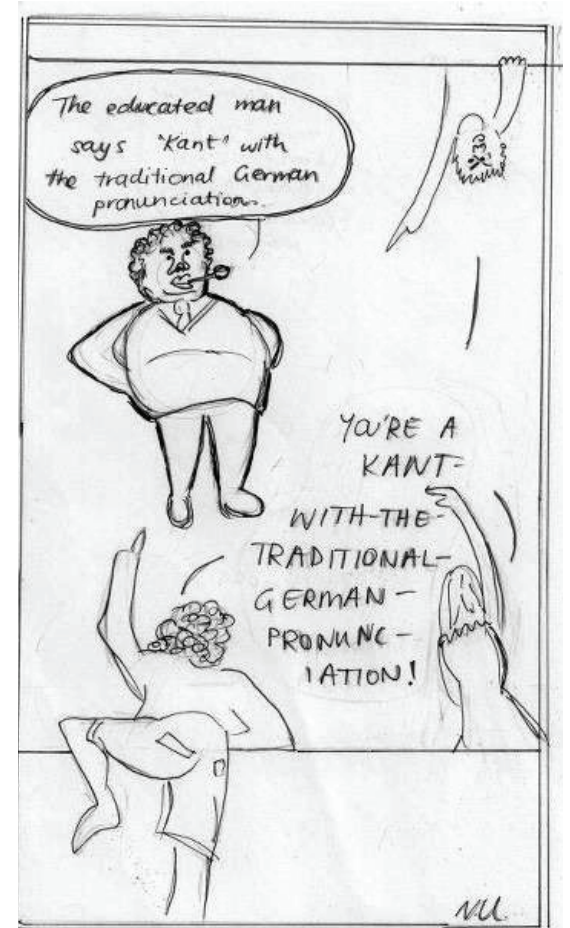


Illustration: Nina Ubaldi



Bitcoins

The end of fiat currency, or just another nerd fad, ask Rafi Alam and Mason McCann

First hailed as the crystallisation of free market ideals and the death knell for the central bank, Bitcoins have since survived repeated robberies, wild fluctuations in value, being used to buy drugs and weaponry online, and a series of very awkward podcasts, but Bitcoins are still around, so let's take a look at why. The question asked most often is, "what the hell are Bitcoins?" For those people who've never thought of using hashtags as money, Bitcoins are a virtual currency where value is based not on government fiat, but on a community of individuals deciding that the currency has value by agreeing to accept it in exchange for goods and services. Bitcoins are "mined" out of a "cloud" algorithm and then stored in "wallets" for later use (it takes a lot of quotation marks to explain Bitcoins).

Developed by Satoshi Nakamoto (thought to be a pseudonym), Bitcoins are a relatively new online technology that expands upon the potential of peer-to-peer file sharing to bypass the legal limitations of credit cards and bank transfers.

Many music and film aficionados would be familiar with 'torrenting', a method of sharing content without hosting it on a web server. Instead content is hosted on individual uploader's computers, and shared to downloaders, in a system known as peer-to-peer file sharing. Using this method torrent websites are able to – in theory – avoid litigation. Sites like The Pirate Bay are public websites, accessible to everyone, freely distributing copyrighted material.

More successful torrent sites are hosted in the 'Deep Web'. In this complex online web, there exist exclusive, invite-only communities where users must

maintain a share ratio which meets the standards of the site in order to stay involved in its activities. On these websites you can find hundreds of thousands of torrents, in different file qualities, different releases, from different countries. But the web goes deeper still: for example, 'topsites' are highly secretive websites that host illegal content, uploaded by online groups and couriers who vie to be the first to release new films, games, and music. From here, content trickles down to private and public torrent sites, and eventually into the hands of the average internet user.

potential Bitcoins at 21 million, to guard against inflation and ensure a rising currency value. New Bitcoins are constantly entering circulation at an exponentially decreasing pace in order to keep supply in a rough equilibrium with demand. It becomes harder to produce bitcoins as time goes on, to ensure their stability.

Currency is transferred in the same way as an electronic bank transfer – numbers change, and suddenly there is less or more value in your account. Each transaction is encrypted so users remain completely anonymous except to one another. This anonymity is what makes

technology to apply a kind of 'peer-review' process for ensuring the currency's integrity. A network of computers runs a program that can recognise whether previous Bitcoins- tagged with a specific code - have already been spent. This network can block a transaction if the specific code has already been used. This way, Bitcoins do away with the necessity of a central bank to regulate the integrity of the currency while maintaining transactional security and anonymity.

The initial popularity of Bitcoins can be largely traced to the context in which they were first created. In 2008, Nakamoto and many of his peers were dissatisfied with the banks. Global financial crises, super-profits, and corporate power had created an atmosphere of distrust of the financial sector and its unprecedented power over individuals through the corporatisation of everyday life. Many saw the dominance of banks as a major global issue, with their independent power to regulate the value of money behind closed doors, as a threat to democratic principles.

In response, the anarchic side of the internet formed a narrative of participatory counterculture that drove individuals, like Nakamoto, to pursue a system that would bypass the corruption they saw in society. In Nakamoto's own words: "The central bank must be trusted not to debase the currency, but the history of fiat currencies is full of breaches of that trust. Banks must be trusted to hold our money and transfer it electronically, but they lend it out in waves of credit bubbles with barely a fraction in reserve. We have to trust them with our privacy, trust them not to let identity thieves drain our accounts."

Bitcoins rode the wave of countercultural movements like Occupy Wall Street and Anonymous, which were all either formed or popularised by the prevailing opinion that global finance was a rigged game. Bitcoins became a countercultural motif as organisations like LulzSec, a group of hackers who use their skills to shut down the websites of groups they consider authoritarian or immoral, began using Bitcoins both to avoid having their activities traced as well as to show their disapproval for fiat currencies.

The infamous Silk Road, an online drug bazaar, also uses Bitcoins to keep their users – and the sites managers – safe from international drug enforcement agencies. Silk Road, too, carries with it a moral agenda; when asked about possible deaths resulting from the use of drugs bought on Silk Road, the site's administrator responded by saying, "it is [our] sincere hope that by making drugs available in a safe, secure, and predictable way, that we will eliminate the violence and danger of obtaining and using drugs

.....
"It is [our] sincere hope that by making drugs available in a safe, secure, and predictable way, that we will eliminate the violence and danger of obtaining and using drugs through traditional methods."

But while corporations are concerned with the expanding illegal trade of music and film on the internet, police and governments are more preoccupied with the darker side of the Deep Web: drugs, hacker groups, child pornography distribution rings, and domestic terrorism. While selling drugs on the internet arguably provides more security than selling them on a street corner, high profile crackdowns on groups hosting illegal websites have forced agents in the online black market to find more innovative ways to distribute products and transfer currency. Paper trails don't disappear on the internet, and there are many ways for the legal system to keep track of an individual's financial and usage records.

This is where Bitcoins come in. The Bitcoins system caps the total number of

Bitcoins so appealing to owners of websites dedicated to illegal trade.

But this system isn't devoid of fault. Online currencies like Bitcoins have always had to contest with a major issue: 'double spending'. As online currency units are just pieces of data stored with users and/or on the net, they're susceptible to cloning, an act whereby users spend the same currency units multiple times. A central institution to ensure the validity of transactions would remedy the problem of 'double spending', but would also allow the institution to keep track of transaction records and store the identity of users, which would compromise the anonymity of users and defeat the entire purpose of the project.

Bitcoins are unique in that they overcome this obstacle by using peer-to-peer

The Silk Road is an online marketplace which capitalises on the anonymity of bitcoins to sell illicit drugs



Mining Bitcoins uses more RAM than your Macbook can handle

through traditional methods.” They cited their refusal to allow the listing of child pornography, hitman services, counterfeit documents, and credit card fraud as an example of their moral agenda.

Online communities tend to form around private and secure illegal trade websites and the countercultural narratives that support them. Music file sharing communities often discuss the unfairness of major record labels keeping the majority of profits for themselves, while many of their users still refuse to download music by artists on independent labels. Similarly, Silk Road users often see their transactions as a political message against drug criminalisation and the war on drugs.

Bitcoins’ potential can be highlighted by the animosity from governmental agencies: the FBI penned a document called “Bitcoin Virtual Currency: Unique Features Present Distinct Challenges for Detering Illicit Activity” that outlined how Bitcoins can be used for money laundering and illicit trade, admitting: “Despite the virtual nature of Bitcoin, users value the currency for many of the same reasons people trust Federal Reserve notes: they believe they can exchange the currency for goods, services, or a national currency at a later date.”

The FBI document, unclassified but leaked through news sites like Wired, also notes that the dangers of Bitcoins extend to users themselves. Much like any other currency, Bitcoins are susceptible to theft – however, unlike fiat currencies, there exist no central institutions to provide currency insurance to their users. There is also a threat of compromised anonymity for semi-illicit activities, or an increase in security for users, to the point of seriously inhibiting law enforcement’s ability to police incidents where Bitcoins are used for hitmen and child pornography. While Bitcoins can be used to drive an agenda of resistance, those with more unethical aims can also exploit them.

The economic theory behind Bitcoins is relatively sound, albeit unique in that it artificially attempts to limit inflation by making it exponentially more difficult to ‘mine’ each successive coin. One might ask: “What if we all agreed that rocks were a currency, wouldn’t that make rocks valuable?” But Bitcoins are able to overcome the obvious flaw in such a proposal (too many rocks) by making it progressively harder for the people who ‘mine’ Bitcoins to find the next ‘valid’ coin. Thereby they artificially strangle

supply and maintain a stable currency value - provided, of course, that demand either increases or remains static.

Don’t get the wrong impression from the term ‘mine’: there is no physical labour involved in the acquisition of Bitcoins. Instead, enormous, exorbitantly expensive, and ludicrously powerful processing computers are bought by the kinds of people who want to use Bitcoins and set to the task of finding usable coins. The cost in electricity and computational resources, as well as the massive amount of heat generated by mining setups makes them utterly economically unfeasible for anyone who isn’t receiving free electricity in a secure environment. Further, the increased demand for power and incredible heat in the server rooms are the same signs that law enforcement agencies look for in identifying and raiding marijuana grow-operations. If you

want a picture of the reality of Bitcoins, picture a network of hyper-nerds, holed up in IT company boiler rooms and Russian bunkers, expending thousands of dollars worth of electricity in a fevered and desperate effort to get to at that one, last coin.

For those who still want to use Bitcoins without going to the effort of mining them, there is another, seemingly easier way to acquire the currency: theft. In March this year, hackers broke into the servers of the site Bitcoinica, an online Bitcoin broker and made off with \$87,000 worth of the currency, prompting site operators to shut down trading in an attempt to lock the gate after virtual thieves had already made off with the horse. This came in the wake of an earlier theft, at the beginning of 2012 when thieves made off with over \$210,000 dollars worth of BTC (as the currency is called). Over a quarter of a million dollars in online currency has been stolen from this one website alone and there is no avenue for recourse by users because of the decentralised, non-fiat nature of Bitcoin. In fact, some internet users have pointed out that technically, under the law, stealing Bitcoins does not even qualify as larceny, it’s closer to intellectual property theft.

If an individual navigates the pitfalls of theft, prohibitive costs and police intervention into their Bitcoin “grow-operation”, they then have access to a colourful and varied online marketplace of vendors who accept the coins as currency. Unfortunately, many of the vendors’ descriptions read like this:

- Education of the Noobz: Lossless downloads of lo-tech Homecomputer music and mixed live recordings from

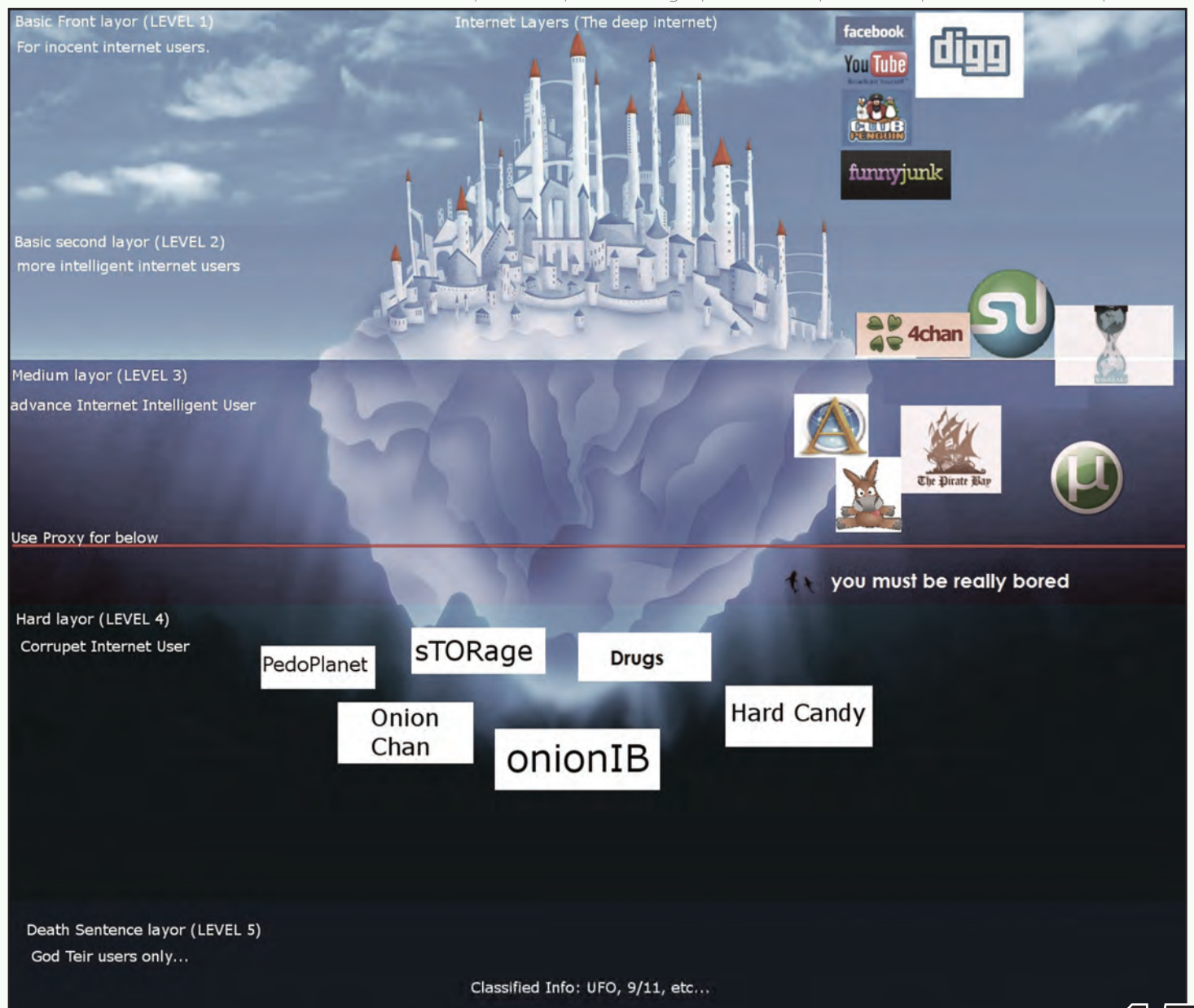
Dragan Espenschied, member of Bodenständig 2000. ASCII shopping cart interface.

- Kickass-Kombat.com: Martial arts clothing, weapons and equipment from Kickass-Kombat.com. Free worldwide shipping, specializing in clothing, books, DVDs, gifts and weapons for Karate, Bujinkan Taijutsu, Judo, Aikido, Masaki Ryu, Shurikenjutsu, Kenjutsu, and general Budo.

Fortunately, the only people who will know what any of those words mean are the same people who will spend thousands of dollars on computers to make online currency. Therein lies the central problem with Bitcoins: after Occupy Wall Street faded into the countercultural limbo and the central banks were no longer the enemy, the majority of the Bitcoin community faded away as well. This left behind only the most hardened adherents to internet culture, and only their particular interests. Bitcoins are progressively becoming a more and more specialised service for buying more and more specialised products. This is also due in part to the fact that very, very few reputable goods and services vendors will accept payment in Bitcoins.

And so we come to the central irony of Bitcoins: while their adherents call them the perfect free-market solution to a corrupt and bloated system of fiat currencies, the free market itself roundly rejects them based on their comic instability and inherent inability to be backed by any sort of sociopolitical clout. Unfortunately for the serious users of Bitcoins, you can’t build a new financial empire on social awkwardness and libertarian pipe dreams alone.

The Deep Web explained in graphic form by a n00b speller. Classic Deep Web



REVIEWS: TV

Breaking Bad

Sertan Saral catches up with the drug kingpin Walter White



After being thoroughly emasculated over the course of season four by boss Gus Fring on one end and wife Skyler on the other, it was inevitable that there would be blowback from Walter White.

(Inevitable also because this is a TV show with one more season left in its life.) And that blowback? Exciting and horrific in equal measure.

Before we get into this season, I want

to revisit a promise Walter White made to us last year. The promise ended an argument with Skyler about the terrible risks he's facing:

"You clearly don't know who you're talking to, so let me clue you in: I am not in danger, Skyler. I am the danger. A guy opens his door and gets shot, and you think that's me? No! I am the one who knocks!"

Walt knocked and now, in the fifth and final season (we're halfway, there's eight more coming early next year) we bear witness to the fallout from that blowback.

So far, as is typical of this show, it's an insane trip.

When we left Walt at the end of season four, he felt on top of the world but what we've learned is that he's really hanging

perilously off a cliff. The season kicks off with a cold open in medias res, showing Walter White "celebrate" his 52nd birthday at a small diner in New Hampshire, the opposite end of America from his home in New Mexico. He's got an alias, a head of hair and a New Hampshire driver's license. He's at the diner to meet an old associate, who gives him keys to a car with an M60 machine gun (Wait, what?) with ammo in the boot.

Before we can find out the whys and hows, we're brought back to the present where Walter disposes of all the evidence linking him to Fring's gory demise. It's the new Walt from this point on: a monster coated in a thick layer of hubris, manipulation and gross creeping-creepiness (the power dynamic between he and Skyler reverses: she hasn't brought down a drug kingpin, after all... yet?). Any one or a combination of these qualities and more can spell his downfall, but he doesn't see it: Walt's hanging off a the edge and season five is the drop.

REVIEWS: COMEDY

Bill Bailey's Qualmpeddler

Connie Ye is just waiting for the live DVD to come out already

It is impossible for Bill Bailey to disappoint. The moment Bailey strides onto stage like some sort of endearing hobbit savant, his roadie cum rockstar aura alone is usually enough to set off the endorphins. Watching him work his magic is, in Baileyesque terms, like having a balding porcupine mesmerise a crowd.

Qualmpeddler was one of his more accessible shows to date, the measure of which is done by counting the amount of time he spends talking about: a) badgers and other friendly English woodland wildlife, and b) the origins of obscure musical instruments requiring several extra appendages to play. There was still plenty of that in *Qualmpeddler*, but interspersed among it was a greater concern with the stupidity of human nature. It seems our Billy is getting older and world-wearier, and more susceptible to the pensioner-type habits of pointing out the foibles of the young.

The title being an evocation of the comedian as 'chronic worrywart', we see Bailey move towards more social and political commentary. He dismisses a British politician as a "piece of cress in a vindaloo", and waxes lyrical on his disgust for a certain vapid Big Brother celebrity who "thought the sun and the moon were the same thing". His exasperation at said celebrity's following statement - "Turns out they're not the same" - saw him rage for at least a good ten minutes about the appropriate use of the phrase 'turns out'. *Turns out*, Bailey semantic logic requires that the phrase only be used in the mundane context of

realising that sausages don't need to be pricked when cooking.

In the same jaded, querulous tone more commonly found in tuckshop ladies was a call to arms about reclaiming the acronym from verbalisings of 'LOL'. For a while in the first half, he imitates the mannerisms of East London lads. "They never point straight. Always gotta point to the side, like that, just pointin' to the side. They're the ones always getting the wrong cheese in the deli."

It's Bailey's little humanising com-

ments amidst the rants on big ideas that get you. The tongue-in-cheek British disdain for the Continent emerges in his musings on the efficiency of German porn. When he rails against consumerism and chain stores, you envisage the reality of Bailey's dystopia where coffee or rather "cups of milky disappointment" are served by dead-eyed Eastern Europeans whispering "There is no hope".

Bailey is renowned and appreciated for delving whole-heartedly into the weird and esoteric underside of music.



Bill Bailey on a mission to make sense of a guitar fit for an octopus amputee

The 'Bill Bailey Famous Soundtracks' cover band included hits such as a reggae-dub take on the Downton Abbey theme and an enthusiastic 'Final Countdown' rendition on a car horn monstrosity, securing his place once more as 'Most Accomplished Instrumentalist' in the comedy world. Or just the world really.

He's patently in top form (as with the best of comedians) when going off script and improvising to inane heckling. The night I went, Bailey welcomed a pro-saic response to his call for Lara Bingle descriptors - "Where the bloody hell are ya" - as one of the most existential heckles he had ever encountered. He later brought out a Saz-Bouzouki (Google it) and during a protracted audience guessing game, proceeded to discuss the idea of being trapped in a hypothetical metaphysical self-reflexive time warp.

Audience: "Is it an oud?"

Bailey: "No."

Audience: "Is it an...oud?"

Bailey: "No!"

Audience: "Is it an oud!"

Bailey: "NO."

And so forth, as the tumbleweed blew past.

The show ends with a tender moment when he plays footage of his bizarre owl rescue mission in China. We see him cut the owl loose from tape it was bound in, and at the moment we can't help but love Bill Bailey for all his talent, his multifariousness.

HACK IN THE DAY...



Foreign editor of *The Australian* **Greg Sheridan** spoke to **Max Chalmers** about doing battle with the left-wing on campus back in the day.

When talking about university life during the 1970s it feels anachronistic to mention conservatism. Conventional narratives of Australian history present the decade as a brief blossoming of radical progressivism; the full stop at the end of the long fifties and the forlorn precursor to the economically 'rational' eighties. Yet during this era a generation of conservative politicians, lobbyists and journalists were undergoing their intellectual and technical training. Among them was Greg Sheridan.

Now the foreign editor of *The Australian*, Sheridan is one of the most influential journalists in the country and has met some of the world's most famous and infamous presidents, monarchs and general secretaries. Years before rising to national prominence he undertook an Arts degree at Sydney University.

"I greatly enjoyed Sydney University, had enormous fun...The fizz and buzz of the university was great," he says with balanced nostalgia.

It was not in the sandstone halls that Sheridan received his most profound lessons however. He speaks disparagingly about the quality of the university itself and says the intellectual environment in the classroom was "very poor" and dominated by "mediocre teachers". He never completed his actual degree.

The battlefield of student politics was where the young journalist found his niche. Sheridan was part of a small but committed band that resisted the dominant left-wing politics of the decade, the politics we now almost exclusively associate with the time and place.

"We were definitely a small minority within that little subculture" he tells me, "but that little subculture itself was so isolated from mainstream Australia".

He maintains that the "florid, bizarre, baroque" environment of student politics did not even represent most students.

Through this group Sheridan first met Tony Abbott, who fast became his "best friend". His praise for the young Abbott is overwhelming and he lauds him as "generous, spontaneous, full of laughter", and a "big thinker". Sheridan is obviously proud of his association with the current Leader of the Opposition.

"It's a great tribute [to Abbott that] he would become fast friends with an irredeemable dork like me," he says in a jumble of humility and pride.

.....
"His praise for the young Abbott is overwhelming and he lauds him as 'generous, spontaneous, full of laughter' and a 'big thinker'."

It is clear that, like Abbott, Sheridan revelled in his role as a political outsider. He was once banned from addressing a student protest when it became clear he wanted to denounce the strike it aimed to promote. Pretending to renege and promising to speak in solidarity with the strikers, he was eventually given the stand. In front of an audience of a few thousand he then performed an imitation of Gough Whitlam - slow, booming voice and all - and mocked the strikers by sarcastically declaring that their study hiatus would "bring Australia to its knees". As the crowd started to chant "off, off, off", his small band of supporters coalesced their cry, distorting it into one of "Gough, Gough, Gough", cheering on his ironic performance. Conservative university students chant-

ing the name of a deposed, lefty legend, Labor Prime Minister, surrounded by an angry mob of striking students. It makes contemporary campus politics seem almost sensible.

As our conversation goes on communism (though more precisely, anti-communism) becomes a theme. In those days Sheridan saw himself primarily as an anti-communist activist.

"Most of our opponents were members of some kind of communist group at that time...we were very cognisant of the fact that these people were fruitcakes" he says.

This is not as schizophrenic as it sounds to contemporary ears; communism was a prominent student ideology at the time. In 1977 the editors of *Honi Soit* consciously identified themselves as communists, editorialising one week that "as communists, we believe everything is political". Other editions of the same year included ads for lectures by a touring Malaysian Socialist and a feature article entitled "Let the ruling classes tremble".

While Sheridan emphatically defends his opposition to these groups he explicitly emphasises that he does not describe himself as right-wing. "I didn't oppose a progressive agenda as an undergraduate, I opposed a leftist agenda of the 1970s. The term leftist had much more meaning in the 1970s, especially when used about people who were loyal members of the Communist Party".

Despite advising that "it can quite help to be a little intellectually promiscuous as an undergraduate", cross-ideological dialogue was never Sheridan's interest. "I was more interested in exposing [the left on campus]...bringing the broad light of day to this dark little subculture," he says.

Throughout the interview I try to draw concessions, hoping to get some kind of Whitlam-Fraser 'we're all friends in the end' moral to the story. Surely the factional lines of university politics dissolve with time? But the years have not weathered Sheridan's obstinacy. I point out that the communists and more centred leftists of the 1970s were spearheading the push for women's, indigenous and queer rights, and running fervent campaigns against South African Apartheid. While assuring me he has never opposed any of these causes and highlighting his own long standing support for Asian immigration to Australia, Sheridan avoids assigning any praise to the activists he once rallied against.

Sheridan comes across as assertive and stern. He speaks with bravado and confidence but occasionally infuses his rhetoric with self-deprecating humour. He exhibits an unnerving talent for slipping between the brutish language of realpolitik and an elegant, eloquent vocabulary. The stories he tells of Sydney University, and those of the other resilient conservatives who were educated in the 1970s, are a reminder that there is never total political hegemony or homogeneity, especially not in a university. Where there is power - be it progressive or conservative - there is resistance, often galvanised by the strength of its other.

Back in his days as a student Sheridan wrote for the prestigious magazine *The Bulletin*. But there was always one paper that showed him no love.

"Oddly enough, I couldn't get published in *Honi Soit* because it was run by a kind of communist collective at that time," he recalls.

Congratulations Greg, you've finally made it now.

WHEN STREET ART LOST ITS MOJO



What once began as a transgressive culture born out of a disdain for mainstream artistic channels now thrives in the very world it once rebelled against, writes **Mariana Podesta-Diverio**

Graffiti has leapt off the streets and into art galleries across the globe, carving out a place of its own in a world once notorious for its institutionalised conventions and predominantly unattainable prestige. The importance of graffiti artwork once lay in its accessibility, colourful transformation of public space and the freedom it offered artists outside exclusive cultural channels. The once-rustic charm of the murals, stencils and wheat pasted posters that simultaneously won hearts and wreaked havoc amongst urban building owners has started to fade into a glossy, sanitised world of “safe” art, designed to please even the most highly refined of cultural tastes.

But graffiti isn't the only kind of art susceptible to a dilution of quality. Bastions of elite culture, like orthodox artwork, have a way of being watered down to a level attainable to the masses. We now have whole markets dedicated to the production of famous graphics that once had tremendous value in art history.

Think about the images you were flooded with last time you passed a poster shop in Newtown or visited a tacky suburban pub. The Mona Lisa, Andy Warhol's 32 Campbell's Soup Cans and Roy Lichtenstein's trademark works have been mass-produced to the point where they have lost all meaning and warrant a closer inspection, as well as an analysis of the art's work in context, in order to garner an appreciation for the piece itself rather than the value it brings to another kitchen wall or bed-and-breakfast guest room.

It's worth acknowledging that this barrage of kitschy carbon copies of cultural icons interestingly ends up having a trend merit of its own (think of Raben cloth shoes – a design appropriated from traditional South American footwear, commonly referred to as 'Alpargatas'). Unfashionable things have a way of being taken into the stride of transgressives and conformists alike.

However, is it still true that legitimate and “successful” art will always be dominated by talented individuals who can brandish their work with a flair that inadvertently meets the most stringent

of aesthetic standards? Surely the culture that emerged as a reaction to conformist artistic mediums is impermeable to pollution by conservative expectations?

Art supplies like oil paint, canvases and easels were traditionally available only to the middle and upper classes. Nowadays, almost every discount and department store boasts a wide range of different arts and crafts

has subverted conventional paradigms by freely using public space as a medium for expression rather than constraining itself to the sheltered indoor sphere where orthodox art thrives.

The political outrage, the passionate expression and colourful experimentation that has garnished the streets of Newtown for years was once an protest with meaning

“The notorious [Banksy] that once relied on the sides of run-down buildings, billboards, and sewers as canvases has recently seen some of his works being auctioned for small fortunes.”

supplies. Although the quality is often incomparable to that of high-end paints and brushes, these supplies fulfil a purpose and cater to a market that is wider and more inclusive than ever before. Aficionados and rookies alike can now take to canvases in a world where tawdry endeavours in the name of art are taken way too seriously to retain legitimacy outside of the insular groups that produce them.

Considering this, it's almost a miracle that graffiti has even made it into the 21st century without suffering a gentrified, watered-down demise until now. By its very nature, graffiti has traditionally boasted an incredibly high level of visibility in comparison to orthodox, gallery-restricted art. Graffiti

that went deeper than the words and images employed by stencillers and wheatpasters. These days, thanks to the dilution of meaningful street art, we have to question what it really stands for. Although the passion of artists is still very much alive, it's become a mere attraction in a sea of overpriced op-shops and trendy pubs. A colourful, sprawling addition to the crumbling Hub. A photo opportunity.

In recent times the only piece of Sydney graffiti that has been capable of inciting public debate drew from Islamophobia in an extremely controversial attempt to convey meaning. Will the survival of meaningful street art be contingent on the continued pushing of boundaries? Graffiti was

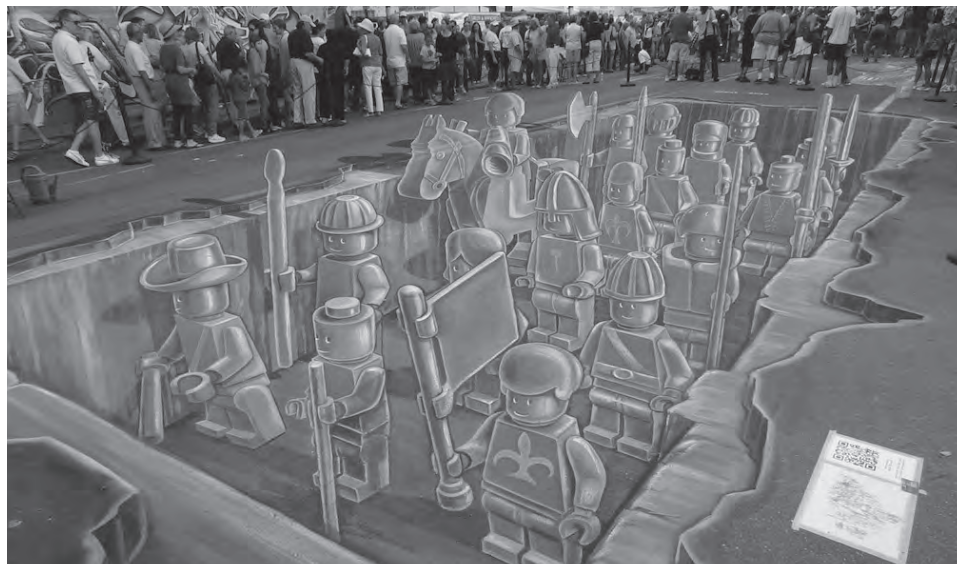
always meant to be about overturning acceptable norms, but where will the line be drawn? Perhaps society has a way of siphoning off the best street artists and slowly transporting them into the world of orthodox mediums like gallery space. Ironically, what's happening is that the ‘best’ artists are the ones that end up with exhibitions and an ability to live off their craft, should they choose to do so.

British street artist Banksy, who rose to fame with impeccable anonymity and a trademark stencilling technique, is possibly the most well-known and most referenced case of a graffiti artist ‘selling out’. The notorious artist that once relied on the sides of run-down buildings, billboards, and sewers as canvases has recently seen some of his works being auctioned for small fortunes. The most expensive Banksy piece ever sold clocked in at almost AUD \$160,000.

The mainstream success of graffiti has created a market for spray paint that would have never before survived. Although spray paint is available in all hardware stores and many discount variety stores, high-end paints are now becoming increasingly available for the wider public. AVT paints, the manufacturers of Ironlak, was founded in 2002 and controls a respectable slice of the Australian market for these once-unorthodox art supplies.

Ironlak, as well as other high-end paint brands like Montana and Molotov are available in a very select number of retailers across the country – one of which is Newtown's own 567, which is somewhat of an institution in the local street art community. 567 sells an immense range of art-specific paint, but a single can of Montana Gold can set you back more than ten dollars. Needless to say, if you intend on purchasing more than a few cans, or even buy paint online, it becomes a very costly endeavour. Perhaps the world that was once so accessible is becoming more exclusive and unattainable to the people who would have thrived in its mediums and accessibility prior to the commercialisation of street art.

It's fair to say that all of this was inevitable, but has street art now crossed an unforgivable boundary?



Taboo



TECH OPINION

Apple's absurd 'patent war' will stifle future innovation

The world's most valuable company is fundamentally redefining what it means to innovate, but not in a good way, writes **Ben Brooks**

From Cupertino in California to Seoul in South Korea, a silicon curtain has descended across the planet. Behind it, Apple and Samsung are waging a World War 3G in courtrooms and tribunals across ten nations. Last month, Apple won a decisive victory. But there is more at stake than the immediate future of the smartphone-tablet industry: the litigation is fundamentally defining and redefining what it means to "innovate".

On August 24, a United States jury found that Samsung had wilfully infringed six of the seven patents presented by Apple, awarding US\$1.05 billion in damages. Samsung shares plummeted whilst its executives struggled to contain the public relations fallout. Apple shares rose markedly, buoyed by the home field victory.

The verdict is remarkable for its severity. Last month, a similar case in Seoul concluded differently, that both companies were guilty of mutual patent infringement, awarding a paltry USD\$22,000 to Apple and USD\$35,000 to Samsung. In July, the High Court of England and Wales ruled that Samsung had not at all infringed Apple tablet designs. How could it? The Galaxy Tab is simply "not as cool. The overall impression produced is different". And whilst a trial over wireless technology continues downunder, Apple's request for a preliminary tablet injunction was declined by the High Court of Australia in December.

But these cases are also remarkable for their absurdity. Of the six patents Samsung infringed in its US trial, three



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were utility (software/hardware) patents, and three were design patents. The three utility patents claim the tap-to-zoom gesture, the multiple-finger-swipe gesture, and the "rubber band" mechanism by which an Apple menu will "bounce" back if a user scrolls to the end. The three design patents lay claim to "rounded square" menu icons, and the "rounded corners" of the iPhone body. This is not surprising for a company which prides itself on aesthetic style.

Apple's geometric imperialism did not end there. Their seventh, failed argument related to patent no. D504,889. The official patent document is worth perusing. It contains nine diagrams of a blank, rounded rectangle, in various orientations. Not even a jury of patent-holders thought Apple was entitled to exclusive use of the oblong.

But six arguments prevailed. With each finding in Apple's favour, the court gave legal force and weight to otherwise questionable patent claims. Patent applications must satisfy criteria of "non-obviousness" and "novelty", among

others, and the outcome of the case implicitly lowered those standards. Judge Richard Posner made a similar complaint in June after dismissing a separate Apple case against Motorola. He publicly questioned the value of any technology-related patents, when digital innovation is so much cheaper than comparable pharmaceutical innovation, for instance, and when individual devices require thousands of integrated components.

The success of Apple's utility patents has led to an explosion of gesture-related patent applications in the US. With most filed over the past year, Microsoft has made 69 such applications, Google 13 and Samsung 17, though Apple is well ahead of the game with a comprehensive "gesture dictionary" of "tactile events". The tech industry is, in short, patenting intuition and our fingertips.

Defenders of the billion dollar verdict see it as a necessary evil, deterring complacency and encouraging innovation. Without such protection, they say, the consumer electronics market will fill with scarcely differentiable alternatives, and

that in any case, patented components of universal necessity ("standard-essential") are required to be licensed to competitors at reasonable rates. They argue that it is costly to innovate, and that the effort should be rewarded.

But how costly and how original is the swipe of a finger, or the curved corners of a 'squircle'? And of all their major competitors, Apple is among the most complacent in developing newer devices – a product of its aggressively litigious, defensive corporate ethos.

A dependence on patent law is destructive of a culture of innovation. By the time the lawsuit makes it to court, the technology in question is long outdated. When these cases finally wind their way through trial and appeal, the offending devices will be long obsolete. And as far as product improvement is concerned, competing in a courtroom is no substitute for competing in the lab and in the market. Besides, Apple surely understands that being first is far more profitable than being alone. One could be both, but securing its monopoly has left Apple vulnerable to Samsung's desperate (and equally pathetic) counterclaims, and has cost both Apple and Samsung significant public credibility.

Innovation, in short, is built on innovation. The Walkman and the iSeries lie on the same continuum, however much Apple projects an image of sui generis, inspired genius. The "next big thing" will come from constructive competition, not by exploiting overburdened patent systems and exasperating judges across the globe.

TECH OPINION

Storing your personal web data helps the government snoop on you

The data retention plan goes against public and industry opinion and raises mainly questions about its true motives, writes **Andrew Passarello**



In 2010, then Attorney-General Robert McLelland revealed that plans for a data retention policy were being considered, requiring all internet service providers to track the web activities of Australians. At the time, McLelland's office insisted it was "not about web browser history", but solely intending to "track and verify identities online".

Since then, a parliamentary committee has been set up and opened to submissions from the general public. So far, the committee has published 177 of these submissions, the vast majority of which are overwhelmingly opposed to any data retention scheme. Current Attorney-General Nicola Roxon herself said in July this year that "the case has yet to be made" for the plan.

So one would be puzzled as to why Roxon came out last week in support of the scheme, which would store the internet activity of Australians for two years. The scope of the proposal is alarming. The changes would, for

example, make it an offence to not provide passwords for encrypted material on request.

Roxon has defended the plans, insisting they are crucial for law enforcement. Citing the murder of Cabramatta MP John Newman as an example, she argued that phone records at the time "allowed police to reconstruct the crime scene". Veracity of these claims aside, it is an unconvincing argument given the sheer quantity of data this proposal would collect and collate.

Andrew Lewman is the executive director of the Tor software project, an 'onion routing' network that provides anonymity online, and said in July that while the proposal sounds like "something sexy that politicians should get behind", it fails to stop crime because the problem for law enforcement is that "there is already too much data".

Roxon herself has been unreliable and misleading on the issue. On Friday, she claimed that there are "no proposals to enforce people to give up passwords", yet the parliamentary discussion paper specifically raises the topic of whether the government should "establish an offence for failure to assist in the

decryption of communications".

If Australia Post were asked to intercept and photocopy all letters, storing them for two years, there would be both a furore and snorts of derision at the absurdity of the idea. It should be no different for internet activity, especially when it comes with provisions making it illegal to keep passwords secret. Viewed alongside the NSW Government's moves to 'water down' the right to remain silent, there appears to be an imminent threat to privacy and civil liberties.

Even forgetting these concerns, the onus for this data collection would be on internet service providers themselves. Storing two years of activity for every customer would not be a trivial exercise, and a submission by the Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association (AMTA) to the parliamentary committee on the matter stated that it would cost between \$500 and \$700 million dollars for the industry to log this information. Unsurprisingly, all submissions from the telco industry to the committee were strongly opposed to the scheme.

For an outrageously unpopular proposal that has been deemed burdensome to implement, a threat to privacy, and potentially useless for its

main stated purpose, why has the federal government decided to move in favour of it? One should look across at the other major telecommunications issue the Attorney-General is responsible for: the meetings regarding copyright and intellectual property infringement. Controversially taking place behind closed doors, and the federal government refusing FOI requests for details about the meetings, it would not be a stretch to assume organisations like the Australian Federation Against Copyright Theft (AFACT) are in favour of a data retention scheme. AFACT, who lost a protracted court battle against iiNet after trying to make the service provider liable for the copyright infringement of their customers, has long intimated a need for the monitoring of illegal activities online. Considering the SOPA and PIPA controversies in the US earlier this year, AFACT and their Hollywood backers may very well have put their collective weight behind this proposal.

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WEIRD SPORTS

Is there a worse sport?

Lane Sainty will never ferret a leg or leg a ferret

In a desperate attempt for legitimacy, weird sports are often portrayed as endearing, niche, or just plain underappreciated. A lot of the time, this is actually the case, and as a fan of all things bizarre, I tend to give credit where it's due. However, it is virtually impossible to describe the ridiculous habit of ferret legging as anything other than a complete waste of time.

The game allegedly stems from tougher times in England, when only the relatively wealthy were able to hunt animals and poachers were forced to stuff ferrets down their pants to elude capture. Then, because people are idiots, this became a thing.

The aim of ferret legging is to keep a ferret down your pants for as long as possible. That's pretty much it. Contestants don baggy trousers that are tied tightly at the ankles, drop a ferret inside and then tighten up the waist. Then, it's the ultimate waiting game, as contestants attempt to put up with the obvious discomfort associated with such an activity. The world record is five hours and thirty minutes, held jointly by Frank Bartlett and Christine Farnsworth.

Participants in ferret legging are usually male, presumably because their genitalia incite a more frenzied reaction from the ferrets. No underpants may be worn,

and the ferret must be able to move freely from one trouser leg to another. The only other rules are that contestants cannot be drunk and ferrets cannot be sedated. The fact that all involved must be in a sober state of mind, and yet, the ferret legging continues, is perhaps the most frightening aspect of all.

Somehow, ferret legging is simultaneously tedious, dumb, and ethically questionable, a combination of elements which have never produced a decent game. It's not only unpleasant for the contestant, but also for the ferret, and heck, probably those watching too. While some might lament the impending death of this so-called sport, the rest of us can thank our lucky stars that it appears to be fading into obscurity.



Not pictured: ferret legging

SCIENCE OPINION

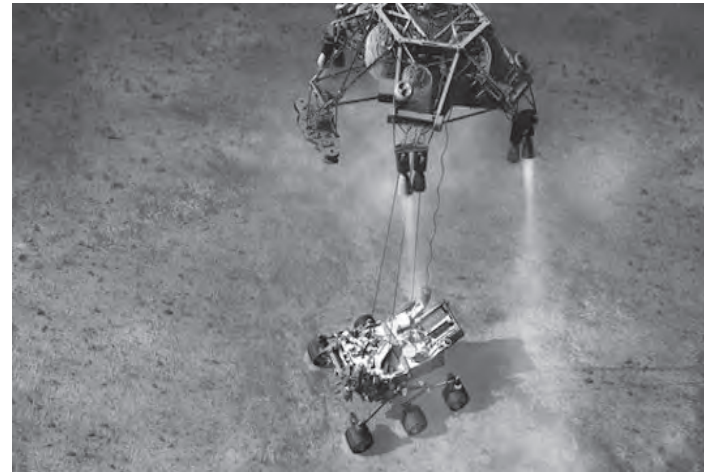
A curious solution

Tara Waniganayaka gives her take on the robust rover trawling the red planet

The landing of NASA's Mars rover Curiosity marks the first time a human voice has travelled to another planet and back.

In a rare display of "Houston, we don't have a problem", Curiosity has already collected high definition images of the planet's surface, stored samples of dust and rock, drilled below the surface, monitored radiation, and set up a remote weather station. It's a slow and treacherous process, and scientists are moving Curiosity from its current location in the Gale Crater to another area called Glenelg where they hope to further analyse types of rock very different to those on Earth.

There is no doubt that this is mind-blowingly amazing. The very idea that humans are able to observe activity on a planet some 225 million kilometres away is almost inconceivable. In this light, the rover was named by a 12 year old girl, Clara Ma. In an essay contest she



Source: Science.com

penned: "Curiosity is the passion that drives us through our everyday lives".

Oh how inspiring. However, I beg to differ. Sorry, Clara, but Curiosity is perhaps the last thing I would name this rover.

Sure, beaming X-rays at particles of red sand too small to be seen by the human eye is awe-inspiring. But I'm not going to lie – I'm only interested because I want to know whether that red sand could support a four-bedroom house with a swimming pool.

Yes, ladies and gentlemen, I christen this rover 'Plan B'. #occupymars

SPORTS PROFILE

Waratahs' back looks to the future

Richard Withers talks with Sydney University's Bernard Foley about his rugby sevens career and breakout season with the Waratahs



One of the few causes for optimism emanating from a grim, injury-ravaged season of Super 15 Rugby for the NSW Waratahs was the performance of pacey utility back Bernard Foley.

After being rushed into the Waratahs squad for last year's preliminary final against the Blues in Auckland, the talented playmaker impressed the NSW coaching staff over the summer before cementing a spot in the backline in 2012. This was no small achievement considering Foley was playing in a backline consisting of Australian stars Adam Ashley-Cooper, Berrick Barnes, Rob Horne, Drew Mitchell and Lachie Turner.

Foley's success during a difficult year for the Waratahs culminated in the 23-year-old's selection in the 39-man Wallabies squad for the June tests against Scotland and Wales. It capped a meteoric rise for the former captain of Australia's rugby sevens team, who while relishing the opportunity to represent NSW, hasn't lost sight of his sevens background.

"In the past, the sevens has primarily been a development route for a lot of up-and-coming players. You hope that the sevens does put you in good stead, but you'll never assume it's going to lead to anything. To make my debut off the back of the sevens was a massive surprise and something I never thought was going to happen," he says.

Before stamping his presence on the game with the Waratahs,

Foley won a silver medal at the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi.

"It was an amazing experience, to be a part of the wider Australian team in a tournament like the Commonwealth Games was something really special. To go to a place like India... was a great experience for me personally, and to be in the athlete's village and to mingle with so many different types of athletes from all different sports and disciplines was eye-opening. It's great to see how different people prepare. To be fortunate enough to win a silver medal was a dream come true."

Proponents of the shortened rugby format will be excited by news that the sport will feature at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio.

"Watching this last Olympics and going to the Commonwealth Games, you get itchy feet about hopefully making it to Rio for the Olympics Games. Any athlete will tell you that going to the Olympic Games and being an Olympian

is probably the pinnacle, but in the 15's game there is still a lot to achieve, you want to be a Wallaby, to win the World Cup and the Bledisloe Cup would be the ultimate."

At a time in which Foley is quickly rising through the ranks, four years feels a long way off.

"I'm lucky I don't have to make that decision yet...in the future it might be made for me if my body isn't holding up for it, or if I'm not suited to it. It's still a while off, but it may be something that people will have to consider...whether they choose one or the other," he says.

In the time being, Foley is focused on his recovery from a post-season shoulder operation and preparing himself for what the Waratahs will hope is a more memorable 2013 season. In his recuperation, Foley is studying a Bachelor of Economics full-time at Sydney University and watching his USyd teammates from the stands. Although clearly desperate to get back out on the paddock, Foley recognises the values of juggling rugby with study commitments.

"I find studying so beneficial because it gives you a release and something to focus on outside of rugby, the study is a good balance and something I enjoy doing while still playing rugby," he says

It's a taste of what it takes to play for the Wallabies in the June training camp that has inspired Foley to go one step further next year as he approaches the 2013 Waratahs season with renewed vigour.

"To be called up was a big surprise and it was great to be in and amongst the team and to see the intensity lift and the experience of everyone come together to play in those series and to play so well and cleansweep the Welsh. Just getting a taste of that has driven me and given me a lot of hunger now to want to be at that level."

A positional change is also on the cards for Foley, who started at five-eight in the penultimate game this year against the Brumbies in Sydney.

"I really enjoy playing at fullback, but to play at five-eighth is the position that I probably see myself at more than fullback...if it's in line with the team's thinking, I'd love to be at five-eighth moving forward. If you can stay at five-eight for a few games, once you string them together you can get comfortable and feel like you're the man for the job"

With Waratahs fans enduring seven consecutive losses to end the season, I ask Bernard if there is a silver lining to a tough 2012.

"Once you do have a rough season and you've experienced the lows, it makes everyone a lot more determined and hungrier to do things differently. Everyone will come back with a point to prove, and they'll come back fitter and wiser and looking to do a lot better."

All eyes will be on an under-pressure Waratahs outfit as they look to defy last season's critics with a strong start to the 2013 season.

The Low Income Health Care Card

If you are an Australian resident who earns less than \$483 per week you may be eligible for a Low Income Health Care Card from Centrelink. If you present your Low Income Health Care Card to the doctor you want to see, you should be able to get bulk billing.

A Low Income Health Care Card also gives you access to many things such as cheap pharmaceuticals (about \$6), free ambulance in NSW (as opposed to \$350-\$750), free dental, free optical (lenses and frames) and some other discounts.

Just ring Centrelink on 132 490 or get the application form from the website or your Centrelink office. If you are not on a Centrelink payment you will need to renew this card every 3 months.

Even without a health care card the University Health Service will bulk bill automatically. This includes pathology tests.

Mental Health Care

You can have access to a psychologist through a mental health plan. This will give you 6 visits to a clinical psychologist through Medicare. If, at the end of those 6 visits you still need treatment, you can get another 6 visits. Some clinics will charge more than the Medicare rate. Make sure you check before you start your sessions. International students should note that you are able to get a rebate on the cost of seeing a clinical psychologist through your health insurance. If you need help finding someone that doesn't charge more than your rebate contact SRC Help.

Ask Abe



Dear Abe,

I've got a million things going on in my life at the moment and unfortunately uni is not my number one priority. I can't imagine that I will be attending many classes from now until the end of the year. I know I've missed the HECs census date, but is there a way that I can avoid failing.

Past Census

Abe is the SRC's welfare dog.

If you would like to ask Abe a question send an email to help@src.usyd.edu.au. Abe gathers his answers from experts in a number of areas.

Dear Past Census,

You are still in time to apply for a Discontinue Not to count as Fail grade (DNF). Look on your faculty website for details on how to do this. This means you will have no academic penalty, but will still be liable for fees. However, if you can show that you reasonably believed that you could complete the subject at the beginning of the year, then things disintegrated beyond your control, you may be able to apply for a refund. Ask SRC Help for details based on your personal circumstances to see if you should apply.

Abe

The Mythical Rainbow Family

By Moo Baulch

Rarely does a week go by without some level of debate raging in the Australian media on queer themes as diverse as whether girls should be allowed to marry girls, homophobes should be given airtime and if Penny Wong's Kitchen Cabinet appearance helped or hindered the cause.

Regardless of where you sit on the gay marriage/civil partnership spectrum and whether you think "It Gets Better" speaks to lesbians in Lakemba or not, it looks as if we're closer than ever to achieving complete equal same-sex rights in Australia. So, as the queer 'lifestyle' becomes more mainstream, and Mardi Gras drops the "gay and lesbian", it's time to start having some honest conversations about the way that we treat each other within the mythical rainbow family.

It's not easy to begin talking about the not-so-fabulous things that occur in our communities and relationships - domestic violence (DV) for example. How do we contextualise it in a queer framework? Let's begin with an important statement. Most queer relationships are loving and respectful. Some are about power and control. Just as some men abuse women, so some of us also abuse one another. Research suggests that DV in same-sex relationships occurs at rates comparable to the wider population. The effects on the victim are similar - isolation, fear, intimidation and the cycles of explosion, remorse, pursuit and honeymoon before the violence recommences.

There are precious few prominent models of healthy LGBTIQ relationships. Those new to the queer world may therefore find it difficult to picture what a healthy relationship looks or feels like. Sometimes it can be hard to decide whether what's being experienced is

abuse or just the usual conflict that occurs periodically in most relationships.

DV can be packaged in a number of different ways - it can be financial, emotional, psychological, physical, social, sexual or cultural. It may involve overt threats of violence or feature a subtle controlling of how someone might make decisions about their daily life. An absence of physical violence doesn't mean that a relationship is not abusive. Ultimately DV is the exercise of power by one partner over another with the intent to control.

But there are some fundamental differences in the dynamics of queer DV. Abusers may manipulate their victim into believing that this is the way all queer relationships are, that the rules are different, that no-one else will want them or support services will not believe them if they ask for help. Abusers may threaten to 'out' their partner or disclose their HIV status. They may also threaten to withhold medications or control finances to limit a partner's movements. They may use regular put downs in public or private which target a person's expression of gender, appearance or sexuality. They may isolate their partner from their friends or family or they could threaten to harm pets. They may also threaten self harm or suicide or blame their partner for their own anger, health, condition or behaviour.

Discussing the existence of bullying, sexual racism, misogyny, DV and the prejudice in our own communities is challenging, especially when we live in a society or culture that sometimes may seem to only just accept us. But it's the measure of a maturing LGBTIQ community if we are able to create space and nurture a

culture of diversity that fosters open, honest dialogues on these sticky subjects. We have a responsibility as friends, ethical bystanders and as part of the alphabet-soup family to speak up and ask if someone is ok or let them know we are there. It's not an easy thing to do but it could help someone who really needs it.

There are a number of LGBTIQ-friendly places to get help if you're in an abusive relationship. If have experienced DV or want to support a friend, visit <http://www.anothercloset.com.au/>

- In an emergency always call NSW Police 000
- The Safe Relationships Project provides statewide LGBTIQ domestic violence legal support. Ph: 02 9332 1966/1800 244 481 <http://www.iclc.org.au/srp/>
- ACON's Anti-Violence Project supports LGBTIQ people who have experienced DV. Ph: 9206 2116 or 1800 063 060 <http://www.acon.org.au/anti-violence/>
- The Transgender Anti-Violence Project supports gender diverse people in NSW who have experienced violence. Ph: 9569 2366 or 1800 069 115 <http://tavp.org.au/>
- DV Line is free, confidential and staffed 24/7. Ph: 1800 65 64 63

Moo Baulch is the LGBTIQ Domestic and Family Violence Project Officer at ACON's Anti-Violence Project.

She loves acronyms and isn't afraid to make up new ones.



SRC Legal Service

NEED a Justice of the Peace?

Here is a list of JP's on campus:
<http://www.usyd.edu.au/staff/directories/jps.shtml>

The Students' Representative Council (SRC) Legal Service has a solicitor on Darlington campus to provide free legal advice, representation in court and a referral service to undergraduate students at Sydney University.

Appointments

Phone the SRC Office to make an appointment 9660 5222

Drop-in sessions

Tuesdays & Thursdays 1pm-3pm
(no need for an appointment)

Location

Level 1, Wentworth Building
(under the footbridge on City Road), Darlington Campus

www.src.usyd.edu.au



Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney
Level 1 Wentworth Building, Uni of Sydney
02 9660 5222 | www.src.usyd.edu.au
ACN 146 653 143



The SRC's operational costs, space and administrative support are financed by the University of Sydney.

President's Report: SSAF Negotiations

president@src.usyd.edu.au

Phoebe Drake details the SSAF negotiation process

SSAF and you – where will your money go in 2013?

Better food, welfare services, legal representation and childcare - some of the many non-academic items students listed as important in the recent SSAF survey. With almost 3000 responses, one thing is clear - students want not only value for money, but also a situation where students' money goes to students.

This is not surprising. In a university as large as Sydney, investment in support services can have a resounding impact on the student experience. Additionally, with Sydney University consistently receiving the number one ranking in Australia by NUS for its student experience, it seems the combined efforts by student organisations and student support services are doing something right.

But should we expect this to continue? Several weeks ago I would have said yes, but now it seems funding to student organisations is threatened by the university's plan to create a 'Capital Sinking Fund'.

As many of you may have read in my column earlier this year, in the first round of negotiations the university created a 'Sydney Life Fund' pool of money, which consisted of approximately \$1 million of the SSAF revenue. The expectation was that student organisations would compete with each other for funding.



Unsurprisingly, student organisations refused to cooperate, instead insisting that 2012 should be a transitional year, where each group negotiated funding at a round table in order to ensure stability for the services that each organisation provided.

It seems, however, this year, the university is far more wedded to sustaining the 'Capital Sinking Fund', despite not being able to tell student organisations where this funding will go.

So what is the 'Capital Sinking Fund'? Essentially, it is a \$2 million pool of money, taken from SSAF revenue, to be administered by Campus Infrastructure Services (CIS). It is unclear at this stage whether the money will go to student organisations, or if student organisations will have any say in the direction of funding. Skeptical yet?

My problem with the 'Capital Sinking Fund' is not so much the paternalistic desire of the university to seemingly ensure our infrastructure is up to date (a decision we could surely have made on our own). My problem with the 'Capital Sinking Fund' is that the

university has provided no reassurance to student organisations that students will decide how to spend the money, or if it will at all go to students and student organisations. Consequently, until these concerns are addressed, or the 'Capital Sinking Fund' abolished, the SRC will not endorse or support its establishment.

What is most interesting about this scenario is that the University expects student organisations to reach an agreement over funding, in a similar fashion to our successful process last year.

Yet, with \$2 million taken out of the pool, and each organisation wanting to expand services, it is clear that this will be impossible. Particularly because it will mean a funding cut to student organisations.

The intention of the SSAF legislation is pure. Complications arise in the administration of the SSAF, because it goes straight to the university. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the University to ensure an ethical distribution process of the revenue, and it is the responsibility of student organisations to advocate on behalf of students, and hold the university accountable.

I do not see, in a time where students see themselves as paying more that it should be right, or ethical, for a situation to arise where student organisations take a funding cut. I would also not be doing the right thing by the SRC to simply

sit back and accept this, particularly given that the intention of the SSAF is to expand and improve the student experience.

Consequently, until the university is in a position where it deems itself capable of explaining in greater detail the 'Capital Sinking Fund', the SRC and students in general, should continue to oppose its existence.

Student organisations have, for a long time, played an important role in building community at Sydney University. This is something that should continue, particularly at a time when more and more students are enrolling in the higher education sector.

Investment in the student experience through well-funded student organisations will see the retention of students and a positive morale on campus.

This is something your SRC will fight for, because students' money should go to students.



**STUDENTS'
MONEY TO
STUDENTS**

**ACT NOW
CREATE CHANGE**

NATIONAL UNION OF
NUS
STUDENTS

For more information about the SRC, visit: www.src.usyd.edu.au

General Secretary's Report: Slicing the SSAF Pie

general.secretary@src.usyd.edu.au

The 'Capital Sinking Fund' is causing consternation, writes **Tim Matthews**

Well, it happened again.

I was hoping that I would be able to get to the end of my term as General Secretary without having to either: (a) write another *Honi Soit* report bitching about the manner in which the university intends to (or actually does) distribute your Student Services and Amenities Fee; or (b) having to redraft the SRC's budget (for the third time, now). Alas, the good Reverend Doctor Spence had other ideas – and here we are.

On August 23 you would have received an email from everyone's favourite full-time Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), and part-time evil henchman, Derrick Armstrong, outlining the University's plans for the 2013 SSAF allocation. He outlines three aspects to the allocation:

1. Student organisations will have to contest the entire funding and

“justify their value proposition collectively” via a consensus allocation submission.

2. The university will create a 'Capital Sinking Fund' of \$2m to fund nonspecific capital works.
3. The agreements will be multi-year.



It's the second point that is currently causing student organisations consternation. In 2012, we abandoned

most hopes for service expansion, and arrived at a division of the \$10.5m of student money on offer in a way that was satisfactory, if not ideal. Now, the university plans to remove \$2m from that pot, and make us go back to the drawing board. So, in the University administration equivalent of the Joker snapping a pool cue on his knee for “tryouts” in *The Dark Knight*, student organisations have to negotiate amongst themselves for a slice of a pie that is shrinking before their eyes.

So what is the benefit of a 'Capital Sinking Fund'? Well, it's a bit unclear. It goes without saying that all student organisations have capital works that they would like to commission (particularly Sydney University Sport and Fitness and the University of Sydney Union). Anybody who has forgotten what sunlight looks like down in the

SRC dungeon can attest to our own need. But the problem with the Fund in its current iteration is twofold. Firstly, there is no guarantee that projects by your student organisations will be prioritised or even recognised under the allocation of the fund. Secondly, there is absolutely no student input on the manner in which the fund is set to be distributed, being decided instead by the faceless men (and women) of the university administration.

So we're in a rut. We recognise that you are all paying more money now for university in the reasonable expectation that it will yield improvements in your student services and amenities. Trust us, we WANT to expand your student services. But with the pool of funds shrinking, it's back to the negotiation table, and we can only hope we arrive at an outcome that you are happy with.

Education Officers' Report: A Fighting SRC

education.officers@src.usyd.edu.au

David Pink wants the SRC to continue providing student support services

A fighting SRC needs a fighting fund

From its underground dungeon below the Wentworth building, the SRC has had some extraordinary successes this year.

You will hopefully remember the staff cuts campaign. The SRC, seemingly a dwarf in the world of university, managed to almost entirely stop the staff cuts, forcing the university to reconsider the allocation of millions of dollars. The SRC punches above its weight, and



does so because of ordinary students like you. It's through grassroots campaigns, not through 'lobbying', that we've fought against the discriminatory LifeChoice anti-abortion society, shut down university plans to merge subjects in the Science faculty and - with the National Union of Students - halted plans by the Federal government to defund the Higher Education sector. The SRC has existed for nearly a century, and has won massive victories more years than not. But it needs a budget, a fighting fund, and this is where you come in.

The SRC is the fighting voice of all undergraduate students on campus but what we do costs money. Right now the university is considering the SRC's funding for next year. Six different associations, some run by students, others not, will apply for funding.

More than most associations, we need a good deal, because we have very little capacity to raise funding ourselves – we offer non-for-profit services. This year, with more and more student coming to our caseworkers, we must move forward simply to stay where we are.

The university has made clear it intends to strip \$2 million of Amenities fee funding from the direct control of student organisations, and instead re-direct students' money to capital works. The fetish current university administrators have for buildings will mean less student services and the crippling of education campaigns only a year after every single one of you has been forced to pay an extra \$250 in fees.

We may well need your support. Compared to the other associations applying for funding, the SRC is a comparatively small fish, and has

nowhere near the backing on Senate. Through rallies, petitions, referendums and elections our strength comes from the student body – you.

Spread the word, let people know how much your SRC matters to you. Contact fellows of senate, Deans of your faculty, and the Vice-Chancellor to tell them that you want a good deal for the SRC. Keep an eye out, either later this semester or early next year we may well be running a campaign to make sure the SRC gets an outcome that reflects its value to students.

Whoever you vote for in the SRC elections, make sure you cast a ballot. It is important that as many votes as possible are recorded, because this shows the vibrancy of the SRC as an association, and strengthens our case for funding.

International Officer's Report: Get involved!

international.officers@src.usyd.edu.au

Ronny Chen believes international students need to fight for their rights

International Students' Collective fights for Equal rights.

This week we have two messages to international students:

- (1) Come to our collective meetings, and
- (2) Vote in the elections.

FIRST MESSAGE: COLLECTIVE MEETINGS

The university is legally obligated to consult international students and their representatives regarding how they spend the SSA fees. That's MILLIONS OF DOLLARS! If you want the university to spend \$2 million on KFC, you should let us know. If you want the university to build a new library, you should let us know. If you want the university to



hire a full-time model for your maths tutorial, you should let us know! If you want free IELTS classes, you should let us know!

And how do you let us know? Come to our collective meetings. They are every Monday 1pm at New Law 030. There will be free food! And if you want us to get pizza, or Subway for lunch, you should email us or call the SRC and let us know that! We have important issues to discuss - issues that affect all of us.

As an incentive we are offering chances to win FREE bus tickets to whoever

comes to our meetings. Just remember to bring your student ID card and we'll get that sorted.

So, remember every Monday 1pm New Law 030!

SECOND MESSAGE: ELECTIONS

I have a feeling that most international students don't give a fuck about elections. But this year it REALLY IS DIFFERENT! You get to choose who to represent YOU at the university level. And whomever you choose can actually CHANGE how the university

spend money. And that's MILLIONS OF DOLLARS! If you have anything that you don't understand about the elections, please refer to the report of our sexy secretary Tim Matthews about two weeks ago in *Honi Soit*. Otherwise just send us an email and we'll answer your questions!

PLEASE VOTE!



CAMPUS SECURITY

As the chalk settles on Eastern Avenue I can look back on my first week policing the student elections as a success. They called me crazy. They said there was no point I stay on campus each and every night, prowling the pavement, to ensure that no electoral guidelines were violated. They said, "Samir, mate, you're only contracted on to do the day shift, if you'd like to transfer to the night shift I can email HR I guess, but you can't just try and take these guys' jobs".

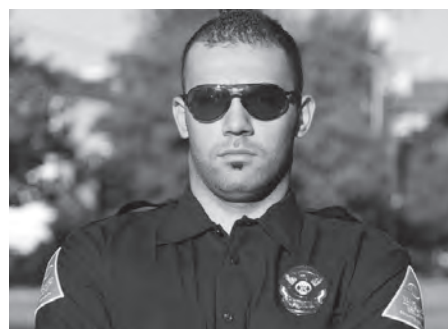
"I don't need pay, that's not why I joined the force", I said. "I joined the force to make a difference, to help people, to be the change I wanted to see in the world. Being a campus security officer is not just a job, it's a calling..."

"Don't you have a family to go to

home to? Loved ones to take care of? A wife?"

Pah, a wife! I'm married to this job and she's about all the woman I can handle. So I've been sleeping rough for the last seven nights, doing my rounds of the notorious hangouts in between short naps in the graffiti tunnel. It hasn't been easy. I've had some long, cold, lonely nights, my only relief coming in the form of Roger, the hobo who rummages through the bins at Manning after hours, who snuggles up next to me in my sleep. It's worth it though, just to be able to rest easy knowing that no student politicians are gaining an unfair advantage and that the reason the graffiti tunnel smells like cat food and urine sometimes is because Roger eats there.

For the most part my week was uneventful – all quiet on the Camperdown front. It wasn't until the third night that I realized something was amiss. I'd just startled some innocent international students by jumping out of the bushes behind Fisher to ask them if they'd seen anything suspicious. Some details got



lost in translation, but once I'd calmed them down enough to stop them from handing me their wallets in tears – presumably to check the validity of their student cards – I managed to get some answers. They kept blubbering about an unshowered, unshaven, half-deranged man dressed in blue pants and a dirty hi-vis jacket. When I pressed them for more details they just kept pointing at me. This could only mean one thing: the deviant was behind me! I turned and stared into the dense foliage by the tennis courts. I could see nothing. Turning back to the international students I found that they had fled in fear, running through

Victoria Park screaming: "Help! Crazy man! Help!" I was torn. How best to uphold my duty to protect these students? They were running from an, as yet, unidentified threat lurking in the bushes – possibly crazy, definitely dangerous. Should I stand my ground and confront the menace? It was good in theory, but if I couldn't see him how could I be sure that he hadn't managed to slip away unnoticed and was pursuing the students as we speak? There was no way to be sure of their safety unless I was right there with me. It was decided then. I ran after them into the night yelling: "Stop! Crazy man! Stop!"



Another Day, Another Drink with Dr Rupert Thorogood



Awoke with the shakes. Calmed them with a shot of Tanqueray. I generally try to avoid alcohol before breakfast but sometimes, alas, it cannot be helped. Yesterday one of the more keen-eyed servants at the Footbridge Station noticed my trembling fingers as I reached for the banana bread she was proffering. Had she been 30 years

younger I might have taken her around the back for a 'breakfast roll', but I'll just have to hope she doesn't start asking questions. I might be nearing 60, balding, and pissing gin, but I'm not going to settle for banging tuckshop ladies just yet. Incidentally, it turns out not even a hangover the size of Poland can make that banana bread edible.

Getting increasingly nervous about the future. I know Spence is after me, and if I don't get a paper published by year's end, I'll be banished faster than Lear's Cordelia.

Spoke with an old colleague from that lost year I spent at UNSW. Apparently he is editing some niche cultural studies journal, with more zeros in his salary than readers. I took him out for dinner last week in a terrifyingly vain attempt to have him co-write an article with me. The first hurdle was immediate: when he suggested we dine at Quay I knew I had to cancel the reservation I had made at Thai La-Ong 2. Happily I remembered he was once rather active in the Labor Party and as such was only too happy to partake in yum cha at the Marigold.

The whole affair became rather nauseating, with Steven pompously rattling off seven years of academic achievements while I consoled my raging jealousy with a bottle of Pinot Gris. The humourless waitress didn't appreciate my joke about her 'pork buns', and to add insult to injury, my Visa card was overdrawn and I

think Steven lost all respect for me when I dropped my new Nokia 3310 in my chicken and sweet corn soup.

So, alas, there will be no Kent to my Lear. This particular mountain I must scale alone. And that loneliness has stirred some dark thoughts indeed. I have noted, for instance, that the university's extensive plagiarism policy nowhere prohibits lecturers from copying students' work. A few judicious dips into the thesaurus and some citations of dead people and I'm sure at least one of their essays could be transformed into the sort of tripe that the fucking *Journal of Cultural Transactions* would publish.

But not now. I am laying helpless and deflated on the couch. Landline is on the television and the remote control is missing, buried under a pile of unmarked papers, empty bottles and sadness. The host's face looks like a Merino and it has enflamed my temper. Oh to be a sheep, roaming the countryside carefree, concerned not with Vice-Chancellors or former colleagues or maybe going to jail for a bit of upskirting. Good night.

Generic Arts Student

So my Centrelink scheme failed. Despite the fact I swear my mum drinks enough sauv blanc every night to qualify as a North Shore alcoholic, the government didn't believe it was unreasonable for me to live at home. What bullshit. I suppose I could always get a girlfriend who lives at college...but I'm not going to need a place to stay near campus much longer.

I've decided to take the band on the road - I don't even need an Arts degree. All the Philosophy I need already sits in my heart. It's like what Nietzsche said: "Without music, life would be a mistake." He just totally gets me.

As usual my parents lost their shit when I told them I was going to drop out

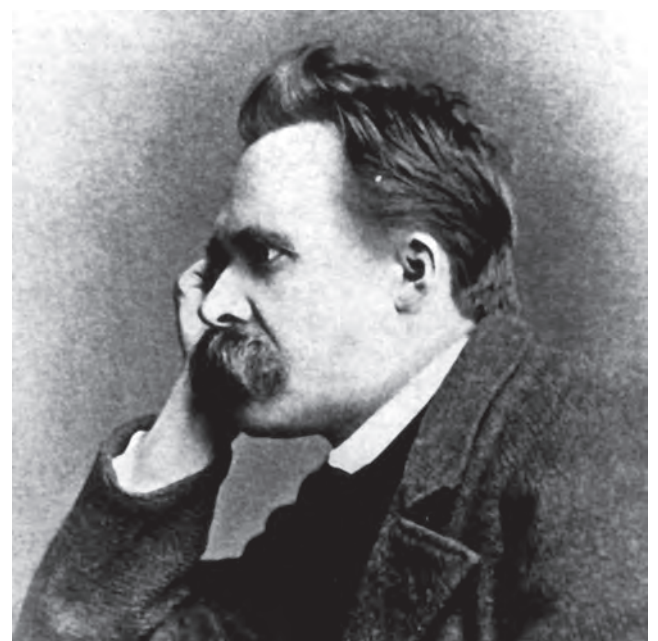
to focus on the band. We're called The Postsets and we play a mix of post-modern pseudo punk with a dash of synth driven dance beats. We're waaaay more alternative than any of that Triple J stuff.

I write all the lyrics and play lead guitar. We sing about things like the destructive semiotic messages in mainstream media, and the cross-section of totalitarianism and feminism in 21st century Scandinavia.

I told my sister my plans first and fuck she was a total bitch about it too. It wasn't good enough for her to be an 18 year-old upstart who beat me by more than 10 ATAR points in the HSC, no, she had to go and be all perfect in following mum and dad's plans. They always want

to compare me to her, but I'm my own person, you know. I keep telling them I'm going to gather more life skills hitchhiking around Australia than I ever would inside the walls of their sandstone prison.

They keep talking about needing to focus on my 'future prospects' but I'm totally chillaxed about the future. Sex, alcohol, drugs, sleep, music – that's all I need and in that order.



I fucking love this guy, aside from the eugenics...

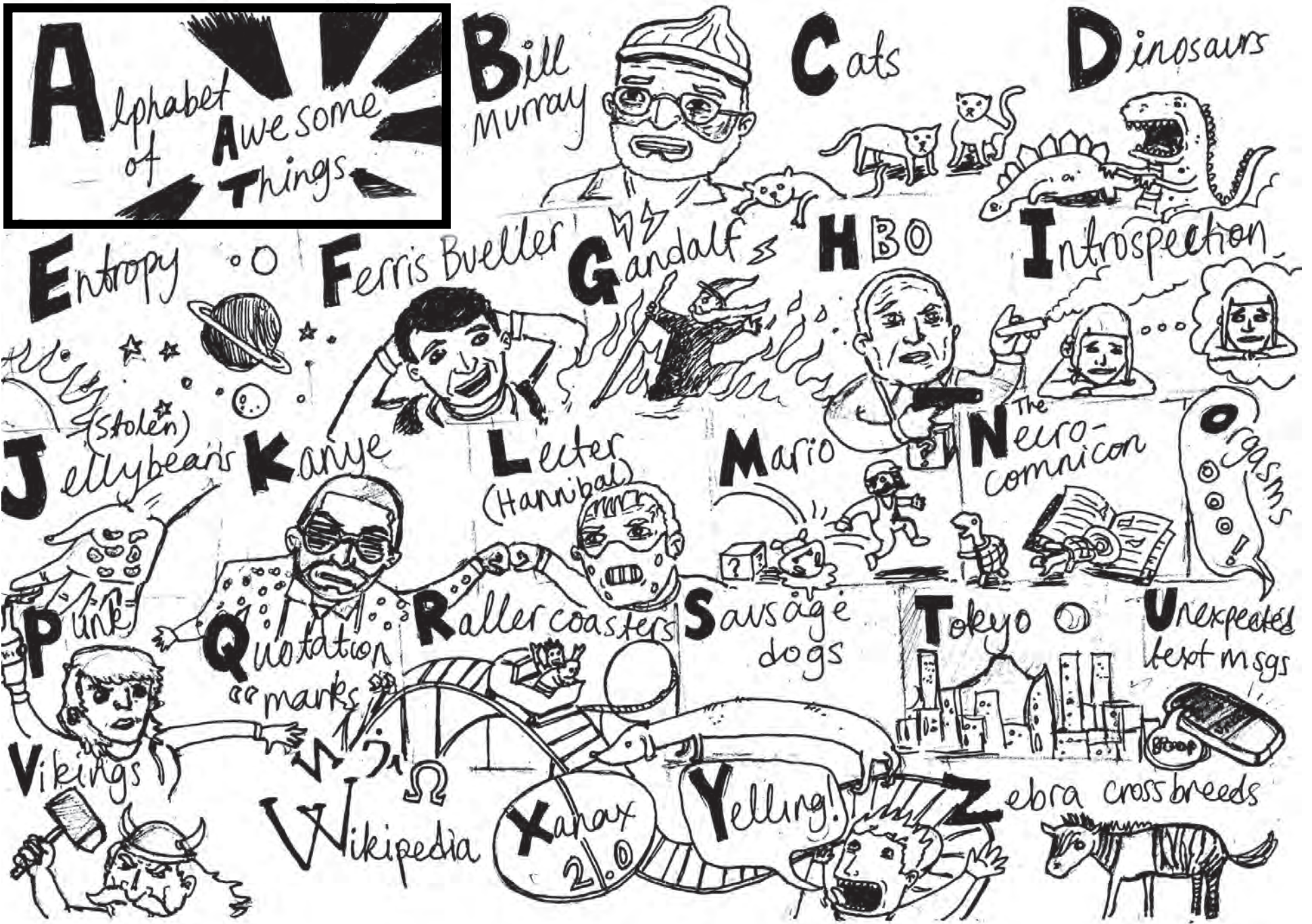


Illustration: Bryant Apolonio



The Association of Private Schools of New South Wales Limited

The Ivory Tower, Sydney, NSW, 2000
 Phone: Uh, the servant usually answers this...
 Fax: No-one actually still faxes do they?
 Email: CEO@macquariebank.com.au
 ABN: 72 445 611 030

Hon Adrian Piccoli MP
 Minister for Education
 Governor Macquarie Tower
 Level 34, 1 Farrer Place
 SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Ignominious Socialist Scum,

We at the Association of Private Schools of New South Wales are writing to express our disgust and disapproval of the recent proposal to cut State funding of non-government schools by \$66.7 million in 2013.

Are you insane? Have you forgotten whose side you're on, Adrian? We know the Nationals have some fairly 'left field' ideas about the subsidisation of the agricultural sector, and by all means muck about with some cows in your spare time - we all own hobby farms, for tax purposes - but remember, you're part of a Liberal government. We know Barry's got to save money somehow but let us assure you this is not the right way. If there's anything our party - and we do say our party, Adrian, as this board wields a fair amount of influence on Macquarie St. - it's private education. How else are we to ensure that our precious, wealthy, white children only grow up with other precious, wealthy, white children? How else are we to ensure that the future generation of leaders is utterly disconnected from reality? How else are we to maintain the blatant elitism that we hold so dear?

We understand that you are labouring under the erroneous belief that only government schools should receive government funding. We appreciate that logically that would make sense. We acknowledge that our bloated private education system is already awash with money and that means testing is the most equitable method of determining funding. But let me ask you this: if this motion is passed who will pay for the third artillery range at King's? Who will pay for Ascham's fourth performing arts centre? Who will pay for the renovations to the ten-metre diving platform that Scots' ancillary aquatic centre so desperately needs? Our exorbitant school fees? Our corpulent private investments? Our affluent alumni network? Probably. But that's not the point. John Howard reformed education funding for a reason: because he, and every other reasonable person, knew that the best education system is based on socio-economic status, gender segregation, and a white monoculture.

So, we must ask you, please reconsider your proposed funding reform because, while we would never be so indiscreet as to resort to threats, if those Shore boys need to wait another year for the extension of the stables at their fifth equestrian centre, let it be on your head.

Sincerely,
 The Association of Private Schools of New South Wales

Signature



HONI SOIT OPINION COMPETITION 2012

LIMBO

The **Honi Soit** Opinion Competition is almost over!
It's your chance to win **\$1500!**

The theme for the opinion competition this year is 'LIMBO', and submissions are still open - but closing soon.

Judged by **Joe Hildebrand**, entries should be between 700-800 words, and the winners will get **cash prizes** and their work published in **Honi Soit**.

Deadline: Midnight, Wednesday 26 September 2012, emailed to opinion@src.usyd.edu.au.

Include: Full name, year, degree, faculty, student ID number, email address and phone number

The Opinion Competition is made possible by the generous donations of one of the University's most supportive alumni.