

HONIS

Week Eight | September 19

SRC ELECTIONS
VOTE NOW

20
12



Know your EO:
Honi meets the SRC
electoral officer

.....
CAMPUS

④

Dissent and defiance:
our own festival
of dangerous ideas

.....
OP-SHOP

⑧

Ain't no party
like an Australian
political party

.....
FEATURE

⑫

Contents

This Week



3 Spam
Our Quizmaster gets another lambasting. Rome wasn't built in a day...

4 Campus
HoniTAB returns and Michael Koziol digs up dirt on Abbott and friends

6 News Review
Lawrence Muskitta on Islam's reputation following last Saturday's protests

7 Profile: Marie Bashir
Kira Spucys-Tahar talks to Governor Marie Bashir's about what the future holds

8 Festival of Dangerous Ideas
You thought Germaine had controversial ideas? Honi weighs in on feminism

10 The Third Drawer
Brad Mariano looks back to the Citizen Kane of all infomercials

12 Divided They Fall
Felix Donovan bemoans the current state of Australian federal politics

14 Culture Vulture
Bernadette Morabito is baptised by white singlets and tiny shorts at Defqon.1

15 Revues
It's the very last week, we promise...

16 Tech & Online
SydStart makes a splash among start-up fans, writes Astha Rajvanshi

17 Action-Reaction
Sport or hunting? Bryant Apolonio gets dairy-ing with the running of the cheese

18 Lecture Notes
In light of complaints we're trialling a new format: Q&Non-Sequitur

19 SRC Pages
There's always important info from the SRC Officer Bearers

22 The Sandstone Report

Editor in Chief: Connie Ye

Editors: James Alexander, Hannah Bruce, Bebe D'Souza, Paul Ellis, Jack Gow, Michael Koziol, Rosie Marks-Smith, James O'Doherty, Kira Spucys-Tahar, Richard Withers

Reporters: Bryant Apolonio, Natasha Burrows, Adam Chalmers, Elodie Cheesman, Felix Donovan, Cale Hubble, Victoria Lui, Brad Mariano, Patrick Morrow, Virat Nehru, Rob North, Sean O'Grady, Lane Sainty, Nick Simone, Lucy Watson

Contributors: Melanie Jayne, Bernadette Morabito, Sam Murray, Lawrence Muskitta, Diana Pham, Mariana Podesta-Divero, Astha Rajvanshi, Alice Workman

Crossword: Jim Fishwick

Cover: www.muppetcentral.com

Advertising: Amanda LeMay & Tina Kao
publications.manager@src.usyd.edu.au

HONISOIT.COM

Disclaimer:

Honi Soit is published by the Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney, Level 1 Wentworth Building, City Road, University of Sydney, NSW, 2006. The SRC's operation costs, space and administrative support are financed by the University of Sydney. The editors of Honi Soit and the SRC acknowledge the traditional owners of this land, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation. Honi Soit is written, printed, and distributed on Aboriginal land. Honi Soit is printed under the auspices of the SRC's directors of student publications: Rafi Alam, Peta Borella, Michael de Waal, Eleanor Gordon-Smith, Jeremy Leith, Leo Nelson, Astha Rajvanshi and Max Schintler. All expressions are published on the basis that they are not to be regarded as the opinions of the SRC unless specifically stated. The Council accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of any of the opinions or information contained within this newspaper, nor does it endorse any of the advertisements and insertions. Printed by MPD, Unit E146-62 Maddox St, Alexandria NSW 2015.



Planner

HONI'S GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON



WED
SRC Elections
All Day, Various Locations, FREE

Obviously the most important event in the University calendar. Make sure you have your say today or tomorrow on who should run the SRC next year and who will edit this glorious publication.

SURG FM Mid Broadcast Drinks
5:30pm, Hermann's Bar, FREE with Access

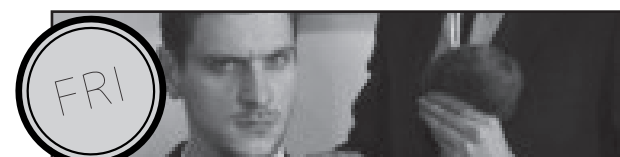
The team at SURG FM have been broadcasting live online for a few weeks now and they're ready to celebrate. Head down to chat about your favourite radio show and put a face to that sultry voice you've been religiously tuning in for.



THU
Incubate Launch
5:30pm, New Law Foyer, FREE

Incubate is the first startup development program available to Sydney University students to assist in fostering a community of entrepreneurs and to fund potential projects. The launch will feature guests speakers, a Q&A session and drinks.

SUDS Presents: DNA
7:30pm, The Cellar Theatre, \$2/\$3/\$5
The most recent offering from SUDS is Dennis Kelly's play about when an initiation prank goes wrong. This black hyperreal comedy is a witty and twisted look into power, friendship and love.



FRI
KICKing off at Hermann's
4pm, Hermann's Bar, FREE

Sydney University's first mobile sports magazine KICKS is launching this Friday. The dress code is 'sporty' so come get ready to dance up a sweat. Featuring Nuff Jockeys and Visual Projections. Athletes Drink Responsibly, but for those of you who aren't athletes, we can't guarantee anything.

The Bear Pack - Spinning Yarns Since 1846
10pm, The Factory Theatre, \$15

The Bear Pack is former National Champion Improviser Steen Raskopoulos and Glen Innes' 2006 'Man About Town' Carlo Ritchie, with 50 minutes of improvised story telling.

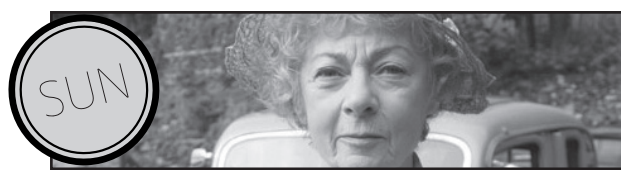


SAT
James Colley vs His Own Stupid Brain
7pm, Factory Theatre, Marrickville, \$12.90

This is the final night of James Colley vs His Own Stupid Brain. One of Sydney Uni's own, this is Colley's second solo show and is a comedic look at what makes our brains tick and eventually, inevitably, explode. Bound to be full of laughs!

Beams Arts Festival
5pm, Balfour St, Chippendale FREE

Explore the buzzing streets of Chippendale as over 350 locals bring light and video performances, sculpture, live music, installations, comedy and dance to Sydney's cultural landscape.



SUN
The Staff Room
7:30pm, Sidetrack Theatre, \$20 + bf

An offering from the Sydney Fringe Festival. The Staff Room is a play written by Sydney Uni alumni Phil Roser about English teachers and the dramas that occur when the staff room door is closed to students.

Agatha Christie's Miss Marple
9:30pm, ABC1, FREE

Why not spend a quiet night in with Miss Marple as she solves yet another mystery. A great option for those a little short on cash, or those with less friends than they let on.



MON TUES
Found Footage Fest
Mon, 6pm, The Sly Fox, FREE

Jay Katz and Miss Death will make your Monday nights a little merrier, showing weird clips, commercials, educational films and anything else they've excavated from the video bowels of the last 40 years, like a real live YouTube.

Exhibition Opening
Mon, 6pm, University Art Gallery, FREE

The University Art Gallery invites you to the exhibition opening and book launch of 'J.W. Power Abstraction-Création Paris 1934', a recreation of J. W. Power's 1934 show at Abstraction-Création in Paris & celebrates the 50th anniversary of his visionary bequest to the University.

LETTERS

Uni must step up on mental health

Celeste Moore
Arts I

Dear *Honi*,
Congratulations to Alexandra Christie ('Weight Expectations', August 29) on her representation of a seminal issue for many university students. Mental health services, particularly on campus, are few and far between, and there is great need for more, and for more specific services to be developed.

At the beginning of this year, a few friends and I sat down to tackle this issue. We wanted to start a society for the support of students suffering from mental illnesses, offering ways of linking them to professional services, connecting them with other sufferers, and, most importantly, giving them an autonomous space in which they are free from the judgement and discrimination they are often faced with from the general public.

Unfortunately, the more we tried to get this project off the ground, the more difficult it became; professional services were unwilling to share information with, or even talk to students, non-profit organisations such as The Butterfly Foundation have very limited services available, and the state-based programs we could discover are based around hospitals. There is little or no community support for people suffering from mental health issues, particularly eating disorders, and as a result, we had to abandon our project entirely.

Three students (two with eating disorders, one supportive friend) failed to make this work, but that doesn't mean the issue should be left alone entirely. I think it's time for the university to step up, get real about student welfare, and set up support services specifically for students suffering from a mental illness.

This shit is too real, too raw, and too much for us to have to carry alone, especially whilst trying to finish our degrees. It's time for the university, the USU and the SRC to make a committed effort to combatting mental illness.

QUEER HONI NEEDS YOU

The annual Queer Edition of *Honi Soit* is coming out soon, and we want your help!

All submissions are welcome, including articles, letters, poetry, short stories, and anything else you can think of. You can stay anonymous.

This is your chance to be heard! Best of all, you don't even have to be queer: if you're an ally with something to say, then you can definitely submit a piece.

Submissions close midnight, September 23.

To submit a piece or for more information please contact Fahad Ali at:

queerhoni12@gmail.com

Romulus wasn't built in a day

Jess McKenzie
Arts II

Dear *Honi*,
My friends and I regret to inform you that since feeding your previous Quizmaster to the ibises as promised in the Week 7 edition, their (no doubt tentative) replacement is not much of an improvement as far as living in an alternate reality is concerned. Rather than a geographical error this time, your Quizmaster seems to hail from the Wizarding World, as evidenced by the supplied answer for Question 4; "According to Roman mythology, what were the names of the twin brothers, raised by wolves, who founded Rome?"

Now I am as big a Potter geek as the next person, but we know for a fact that the ancient Romans were not paying homage to "Remus and Lupin" as the provided answers claim. We believe that "Romulus and Remus" is the answer you're searching for, despite our deep respect for everyone's favourite lycanthrope. A good giggle was had, along with the exchange of many historical *Harry Potter* crossover jokes, but for the sake of all history and archaeology majors out there, maybe give Rita Skeeter the sack from writing The Quiz.

Au naturale, Pat

Joseph Istiphan
Director, Queer Revue

Dear *Honi*,
The men of the 2012 Queer Revue would like to begin by congratulating Mr Massarani on his excellent taste. His glowing evaluation of our production in last week's edition proved him to be a man of great discernment. However, we must take issue with his claim that our "camouflage-patterned Calvin Kleins" were stuffed so full of socks they stretched the bounds of plausibility.

It pains us greatly to see such scurrilous claims stain the pages of this well-respected publication. Some of us were born with great packages, others achieved great packages, and all of us have great packages regularly thrust upon us. To suggest anything less would be an indefensible slur upon our good names (scrawled as they are across the walls of the Carslaw bathrooms).

In answer to Mr Massarani's spurious remarks, we have taken to the streets with triumphant cries of liberty, marriage equality, and intimate fraternity! Fate has burdened us all with ample blessings and we would thank him to attend to them more closely before he went about spreading his malicious falsehoods.

Sincerely,
The Indignantly Well-Hung Men of Queer Revue

EDITORIAL

HONISOIT

Amid the fervent politicking of now and yesteryear, this week could not be a more pointed nor timely reminder to think about how the students from this university will go forth and populate the world with their ideas and actions. Sometimes that thought is frightening, as we have seen with the Abbott revelation/witch-hunt boiling down in the crucible of the media spotlight. In other cases we hope our alumnae will achieve as much outside of the limelight as they do beneath it, as we talk to outgoing Chancellor, Her Excellency Marie Bashir, about a lifetime's achievements.

This week we learn the ease of forgoing principle and merit for position and prominence. Our feature raises the state of the country's federal politics to the zenith of pathetic disarray, and we look back through the *Honi* archives to the missteps of Abbott, Turnbull, Hockey and co., to learn that like dead birds on a perch, we still have no idea which way they will fall until they do.

In all aspects the politician breed is fantastically mutable, save one pattern that sticks – those who seek out power in their youth will continue doing so to their old age. The Cheshire faces grinning at you from the back of bathroom

stalls will likely be the ones dictating policy and legislation that bind our day to day lives in more ways than we'd like to give credit. The candidates you bless with your vote this election might just rise through the system's tri-fecta of coincidence, high school patronage and old school savvy, and that hasn't changed since social hierarchies existed. The only new introduction to the attractive 'upward mobility' veneer of student politics seems to be Twitter. Now, they can follow you too.

We ought to be presented with good reasons to value the people who have access to some of the highest positions in the land. To maximise the chances of that happening, we ought to give credence to the kinds of people, now, who will not simply waste the positions they are elected to. The SRC is primarily concerned with implementing workable efficient services for students on campus - nothing too hunger-stoppingly glamorous is expected of it. Perhaps to show us they can do the job, our student politicians should begin stripping down the delusions to persuade us with something a little more genuine than *panes et circenses*.

Connie Ye

What's in a name?

John Gooding
Definitely Not James Gooding
MECO I

Dear Sirs and Sirettes,
I am glad to see that the *Honi Soit* quizmaster's newfound indifference to facts is being appropriately lambasted by the readers, as the only way to fight this menace is with copious amounts of very tough love.

The corrections sent in by Joshua and Toby last week, and the wit which accompanied their delivery, gave me hope for a return to the truth-based *Honi Soit* quizzes of old.

However, Toby's otherwise excellent attack on the quizmaster's geographical delusions was somewhat undermined by his getting my name wrong. I am called John, not James. As you put it, Toby, "a little quick Googling" would have immediately revealed this.

How can we present a unified front against the forces of error assembled before us if we are as lax in our fact-checking as they? I understand that "John" is quite likely to be the most forgettable name on the planet, but this is no excuse.

We must endeavor to lead by example, as any fault on our part can only weaken our case. I implore you to be more careful in future.

Israeli inaccuracy

Tal Koren
Advanced Science/Arts II

Dear *Honi*,
As a proud Zionist student at Sydney University, I have grown to accept that some students' opinions are 'different' to mine. I have witnessed many anti-Israeli protests by various student groups, some with clear bias and double standards, and some plain outright anti-Semitic - such as graffiti over posters put up by AUJS to recognise Holocaust memorial day earlier this year.

However, as I was reading *Honi* last week I was shocked to discover that Israel has claimed another undignified title: "Country with most depressing anthem". Not that I checked all anthems around the world to make an objective assessment - I doubt Rafi Alam did - but at least don't make up lines from it! "As long as tears from our eyes flow line benevolent rain"? Really? A quick Google search would show this is completely made up! That line never existed! In fact, the Israeli anthem, 'Hatikvah', is actually quite uplifting - nothing tragic or depressing about it. It talks about "the two thousand year old hope to be a free people in our homeland".

Next time you want to criticise Israel, at least do some real research.



**Want to win \$1500?
Enter the Honi Soit
Opinion Comp now !**

see back page for details



The more things change, the more they stay the same

Honi Soit is produced just metres from the wall Tony Abbott is said to have ‘punched’ at the end of a brutal 1977 SRC election campaign. With the history of these rooms now the subject of national news, **Michael Koziol** took the opportunity to dig through the archives.

Tony Abbott’s time as SRC President is marked by astonishingly similar themes to his current campaign against the federal government: reducing debt and deficit, wielding the axe whenever possible.

A 1979 broadsheet issue of *Honi* featured a lengthy interview with Abbott, canvassing his views on education funding, feminism, and his political career.

“I think too much money is spent on education at the moment,” the young Abbott said, adding that departments such as General Philosophy and Political Economy should be the first to go. Alas.

On the subject of feminism, he said: “I think it would be folly to expect that women will ever dominate, or even approach equal representation in large number of areas, simply because their aptitudes, abilities and interests are different for physiological reasons.”

Not that we can necessarily hold someone to their beliefs from 35 years ago. We’re all ashamed of things we did when we were younger: moments where we might have bit our tongues, judgements we might have avoided had we been older, wiser, sober.

Phillip Adams, ABC broadcaster and columnist at *The Australian*, might regret, for example, his long caricature of Ita Buttrose’s lisp in the March 29, 1977 edition of *Honi*, entitled “At my dethk”.

“Hello, Thith ith Ita Buttrothe, thitting here in the thudio, thmiling at you from the threen.” And so it continues: 800 words of lisp-spoofing fun.

Buttrose hasn’t forgotten. “I have never felt embarrassed by the way I speak but I think it is wrong to draw attention to speech impediments. *The Australian* columnist Phillip Adams devoted a column to my lisp. I laughed about it,” she told an audience just last year. It turns out the undergraduate column



Tony Abbott pictured in a 1979 edition of *Honi Soit*. Photo credit: archives.

wasn’t the last time Adams had taunted Buttrose about her speech disorder.

A few years earlier, a young Malcolm Turnbull, while describing then-PM Gough Whitlam as an arrogant egomaniac, lauded the Labor Party as a “wealth of opinion and class...diverse and less likely than the conservatives to blindly rally behind one great leader”. Too true.

Menzies’ Liberals, on the other hand, had “warmed the treasury benches” for 23 years with “the steak-fed bottoms of the sons of Toorak and the champions of Double Bay”. How’s the view now, Malcolm?

But Sydney University was a very different place by 1987, when Joe Hockey took the reins of the SRC Presidency. The dominant political grouping was the Sydney University Liberal Club, a conglomerate of liberals, soft conservatives, and careerist moderates.

“We might be perceived as a collection of bureaucrats who...spend our time squabbling on committees,” the Liberal Club’s Political Vice-President, Fiona Gray, told *Honi* at the time. “But if we don’t put up opposition to the clichéd Left and reactionary Right, then they

.....
“I think it would be folly to expect that women will ever dominate, or even approach equal representation in large number of areas, simply because their aptitudes, abilities and interests are different for physiological reasons.”

- Tony Abbott, 1979

would both get away with murder!”

Liberals and Left Action were the two major factions on the SRC, but Hockey was from neither. Indeed, he disparaged *Honi*’s obsession with the ‘return of Liberalism’ and its reluctance to report on student protests.

“One wonders whether *Honi Soit* is a NEWSpaper or a front for political masturbation,” he wrote in a 1987 Presidential report. “They do not seem to have any shortage of contributors espousing the virtues of Liberalism on campus but when there is student news there is no local coverage.”

Hockey’s policy statement in the 1986 election edition of *Honi*: “There is no question in my mind that students will never accept fees. I totally oppose any compromise the government may offer.”

His year as SRC President was chiefly spent fighting Labor’s re-introduction of university fees, which had been abolished under Gough Whitlam. But according to a 2012 profile by Bernard Keane, he was “accused of failing to aggressively lead student demonstrations for fear of endangering his Solicitors’ and Barristers’ Admission Board enrolment”.



Joe Hockey pictured in a 1986 edition of *Honi Soit*. Photo credit: archives.

Hockey’s backers, a ticket called “Varsity”, were decidedly centrist and unaffiliated, declaring they would “fight the burden of factionalism presently hindering the SRC’s effective operation”. In stark contrast to Abbott, Varsity was emphatic: “There should be no further government cuts to university funding.”

It goes to show that while the young upstarts of today are certainly the leaders of tomorrow, there’s no telling which basket they’ll end up in, or with whom.

We should also remember, when digging up ancient history, that people change. Times change. Nobody should be held accountable for the extremities of student politics 20 or 30 years ago. Many current SRC office-bearers would be mortified were their words, actions - and I daresay *Honi* reports - to one day be interrogated by the national media.

We reach back into the archives partly in fun, and partly to better understand the history of those who now seek the highest offices in the land. That does not mean they have questions to answer.

In that spirit let us wish every SRC candidate well in today’s election.

Sheridan shamed: News Review, p6

INTERVIEW

Getting to know your EO

Connie Ye sat down with veteran SRC Electoral Officer Paulene Graham

Normally student elections are about getting your senses and sometimes your body assaulted by campaigners swarming around Eastern Avenue. But behind the scenes a mad flurry of ballot papers, polling boxes and counting, always counting, returns every year to leave in its wake a few more freshly elected council representatives and *Honi* editors.

I spoke with Paulene to canvass not votes, but her thoughts on the process. A retired ex-university administration manager at UTS, she defected to our sandstone shores five years ago when the lure of enforcing democracy became too much.

So what is it exactly that the EO does?

“First it’s letting the people know the nominations are open, and the calling of nominations,” Paulene says. “And then it’s accepting the nominations and checking them all. That actually is a huge amount of work, because you’ve got to read every application and check they really are a student.”

Sounds comprehensive. “And then

there’s designing and putting together the ballot paper, finding someone to print them, organising the ballot boxes, training students who want to work on the day,” she continues. “That’s all before you start to count.”

At this point I’m not sure I want to hear about the counting.

“A proportional representation system is quite a complex way of counting, in terms of preferences. It’s an incredibly fair way of doing it, but it’s also complex and you’ve got to pass through different preferences, which get different values as they pass through different people. For example, NUS (National Union of Students) is counted to the seventh decimal place, and you have to work out quotas which can change on each distribution.

“The President and *Honi* [elections] are reasonably easy but SRC and NUS can become quite complex. SRC takes weeks to count. So for example you can imagine if somebody votes for every individual on a 120 person ticket...”

I can imagine the thought of that

would be enough to put people off. How then to engage with the disenfranchised student populations who have no interest in voting? Surely elections provide an exciting arena only for those actually getting elected?

“Well it’s a very important arena. University is not just about sitting in lectures and getting a piece of paper at the end. It’s about a whole lot of other experiences that you have, and [part of that is] learning how an election works. It’s also important for somebody who wasn’t brought up in Australia, because some may have never been in a system where there was a democratic election.

“For a lot of students it might be the first time they’ve voted, particularly with first year students who have never voted before because they’ve never been in any federal or state elections. They learn how to do it on a very complex ballot paper.”

In retrospect, does she see any trends in the number of people or how they vote each year?

“I have noticed on years when the



university itself is reasonably calm, the students are happy with what the Vice Chancellor’s doing, there’s nothing much happening in politics, the vote’s often down. But in years where things are happening and students can see ‘hey here’s a chance for me to have a say’, the vote goes up and the adrenalin goes up with the candidates as well, and it makes for a more exciting election.”

It’s easy to see she enjoys being the arbiter of a process that churns out potential up-and-comers every year. Any downsides? She comments on the expense of running an election, but finds “it’s completely worth it, if you want an honest outcome”.

Here’s hoping that will be the case this time around, come Thursday evening.



HONILEAKS

All your university gossip, rumours, allegations and revelations with **Kira Spucys-Tahar** and **James O'Doherty**

SULS Race

There is unlikely to be an election for the Sydney Uni Law Society executive this year after the formation of a single ticket of strong contenders.

The presidential candidate is likely to be second year Arts/Law student and current SULS Competitions Director Isabelle Youssef. "I've enjoyed SULS a lot this year and I'd like to run again, but I'm still undecided," Ms Youssef told *Honi*.

Originally fourth year student Ben Paull was planning to run his own ticket as President, but it seems he was convinced to join the ticket led by Ms Youssef. Mr Paull is now likely to be Sponsorship Director. NLS (Labor Left) newcomer James Higgins is also likely to be on the ticket, while campus fashionista Margaret Zhang will take one of two Socials positions.

If unchallenged, it seems the new SULS executive will also include a group from this year's Law Revue. Former USU Board Director Alistair

Stephenson has been linked with the ticket as has Christina White and Emily Hartman as Vice-President.

The Competitions Directors are likely to be Rachel Williams and Peter Fu while the Secretary is rumoured to be second year JD student Janna Garcia.

Nominations close at 5pm this Friday, September 21.

If indeed an election is held, it is somewhat strange the campaigning period will include the one week mid-semester break for all undergraduate students. The election campaign will start on Monday September 24 and run until the elections on Tuesday October 9 and Wednesday October 10.

The Electoral Officer for the 2012 SULS Elections is Anna Bennett.

Senate Election Stink

Rumours abound concerning the election of the Undergraduate Representative of Senate. *Honi* understands candidate Dalton Fogarty has questioned the Returning Officer over alleged ac-

tions by candidates last week which may constitute electoral misconduct, after two students approached him about the incident.

Accusations were made over candidates taking a laptop to in Merewether last Thursday evening, allegedly watching students cast their vote. These actions are similar to those that had the last year's undergraduate election nullified before a second election was held.

This complaint resulted in candidates being warned the activity is in breach of regulations, and advised they should cease doing so immediately.

Mr Fogarty was also the subject of the rumour mill this week after a post on the Sydney Business School website announced the Commerce student was running in the election.

The post disappeared quickly, after a complaint that it was in breach of regulations. "The Business School approached me, I didn't ask them to write it," Mr Fogarty said. "[They] were advised by the Senate that it would be within the rules to publish the story," he said.

HONI TAB

WHAT ELSE IS
HIDING IN
ABBOTT'S PAST?

SEX SCANDAL :
\$4.05

RESPECT AS LEADER :
\$6.81

4000 STOLEN COPIES OF
1976 ELECTION HONI :
\$17.98

NOBEL PEACE PRIZE :
\$292,000

ILLEGITIMATE CHILD :
BETTING CLOSED

Small Government Society IGM leads to Union Board infighting

Kira Spucys-Tahar attended this farcical meeting so you didn't have to

The inaugural general meeting of the Small Government Society took place at 6pm last Thursday September 13.

Under the aims of the constitution, the society shall: "promote the values of enterprise and efficient government, promote the importance of initiative and individual freedom, recognise the value of government support for those in need, promote progressive social values and liberalism and encourage discussion and activity around philosophy, politics and charity".

But this society has been seen by many as an attempt by Liberal moderate and current Union Board Director, Jacqui Munro, and her followers to create a third Liberal society on campus to accompany the Conservative club (hard right) and the Sydney University Liberal Club (soft right).

The meeting was called by Julian Crowley, a member of Ms Munro's moderate 'group', after the original proposal by Ms Munro for an Enterprise and Progress Society was withdrawn amid suggestions correct procedure had not been followed and speculation the Liberal right intended to 'stack' the meeting.

Joining members of the moderate group, a flood of right-wing Liberals walked in led by SULC President Alex Dore. USU Honorary Secretary Zac Thompson was also present. Notable conservatives including James McLean

joined the crowd and appeared to be in direct alliance with the SULC assembly.

An unusual appearance came with a Grassroots contingent led by Union Board Director Tom Raue. Mr Raue appeared to create an alliance with Ms Munro in an effort to unite against the Liberal right.

The meeting was moderated by Board Director Karen Chau and chaired by Honorary Treasurer Rhys Pogonoski. Mr Thompson appeared to question Mr Pogonoski's authority but was overruled.

USU President Astha Rajvanshi later told *Honi* it was conventional for Board Directors to take the chair at contentious IGMs. "Circumstances like these are rare, and are guided by common sense principles," Ms Rajvanshi said.

Mr Pogonoski told the meeting of the USU Board's recent decision to pass 'anti-stacking' measures. He acknowledged the IGM was "unorthodox" and was "not claiming this is stacking", but stressed that if the Board found stacking had taken place at the meeting, members would be punished.

Members of both groups expressed to *Honi* they were present because they were doing a favour for a friend rather than having genuine interest in the society. When asked what the punishment would be, Mr Pogonoski replied that the highest punishment would be a revoking of USU membership.

.....
"If the Board found stacking had taken place, members would be punished...the highest punishment would be a revoking of USU membership."

Mr Pogonoski struggled to maintain control of the large meeting with constant interruptions from the floor as there was debate about the requirement to circulate the proposed Constitution prior to the meeting. Mr Pogonoski remedied this by displaying the constitution on a projector screen for members to read.

Disruptions came from Mr Thompson, who argued latecomers should not be allowed on the electoral list. "As C&S Chair I think I'd know," he said. Mr Pogonoski then gave an official warning to Mr Thompson for his outburst.

Both Mr Dore and James McLean posed a series of procedural motions regarding nominations. Mr Dore said, "Nominations were never called for, so therefore they can't be closed."

After a short recess, Mr Pogonoski attempted to announce his decision that no more nominations would be accepted. A visibly frustrated Mr Thompson interrupted and said the verdict was "against democracy". An irritated Mr

Pogonoski told Mr Thompson: "You're bringing the organisation into disrepute." This was followed by a heated confrontation between the pair. At one point Mr Thompson was overheard telling Ms Chau he found the conduct of the meeting "spineless behaviour".

A short time later Mr Pogonoski announced nominations from the floor would not be accepted, as under the newly-adopted constitution nominations for executive positions are required five days prior to a meeting. He urged those unhappy with his ruling to take their concerns to the C&S Committee.

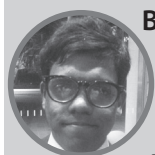
Continued challenges were called from the floor, but undeterred, Mr Pogonoski continued with the executive elections. At the announcement of Jacqui Munro's nomination for President, Alex Dore was heard to 'shame' very loudly. After a second person declined their nomination, Ms Munro was elected President unopposed. The remaining positions were also filled unopposed.

It being evident they could not change the outcome of the meeting, there was a mass exodus of members from the Liberal right.

The result is sure to have further repercussions for the USU Board and meetings of its Clubs and Societies Committees in coming weeks. *Honi* understands grievances with the meeting procedure will be taken to the Committee meeting after mid-semester break.

WORDS WITH FRIENDS

What would make election campaigners less annoying?



BRAVIN
COMMERCE II

"If they were more attractive?"



BONNIE
ARTS/LAW II

"Don't have so many campaigners! Have a set group of maximum 10-15."



JAMES
SCIENCE/LAW II

"I want to see more Charizard costumes!"



NATHAN
ARTS II

"If they lecture bashed using limericks!"

STUDENT POLITICS

Journo challenges Sheridan on truth

The knives are out in the history wars, reports **Michael Koziol**

ABC *Foreign Correspondent* journalist Eric Campbell has declared war on *The Australian's* foreign editor Greg Sheridan, labeling him “an empty ideologue with utter disregard for truth”.

Taking to Twitter, Mr Campbell has challenged Mr Sheridan to substantiate comments made in a September 15 opinion column in *The Australian*, wherein Mr Sheridan claims “a significant section of the ABC are peddling an entirely false version of the Cold War”.

That falsehood stems, he says, from an “aggressive hostility to Catholicism” and a political lexicon that supported Soviet foreign policy and Pol Pot.

“It’s grossly offensive to see fellow correspondents besmirched by someone who sees world affairs through the prism of ‘70s student politics,” Mr Campbell tweeted. “Who in the ABC is praising communism or the Soviet Union? Provide evidence or retract.”

Mr Sheridan’s opinion column was a response to David Marr’s *Quarterly Essay*, “Political Animal”, which among other things examined Tony Abbott’s time at Sydney University in the late 1970s. Mr Sheridan and Mr Abbott were friends and members of the Sydney University Democratic Club. The club was affiliated with the National Civic Council, a catholic political unit founded by the anti-Communist and social conservative ALP deserter Bob Santamaria.



Foreign editor of *The Australian*, Greg Sheridan

Mr Sheridan accuses Mr Marr of “wildly overestim[ing] Santamaria’s influence over Abbott”, of lacking in facts and evidence, and of “inaccuracies in basic matters”. He also accuses the ABC’s *Four Corners* of using only a tiny fraction of the interview he gave them on Mr Abbott’s time at university. “I knew as I spoke that certain sentences could never be be [sic] broadcast on *Four Corners* given its ideological commitments and hostility to Abbott’s Catholicism.”

Mr Campbell, who attended the University of New South Wales in the late 1970s and edited its student magazine *Tharunka* in 1980, has described Mr Sheridan’s column as libel and has called on him to provide evidence or retract it.

Mr Campbell was in Vienna and not available for an interview, but gave permission for *Honi Soit* to quote from his Twitter account. At the weekend, he said he would attempt to contact Mr Sheridan personally on Monday, the day this issue of *Honi* went to print.

PROTESTS

Muslim students concerned for religion’s reputation

The weekend’s events were not representative of Islamic culture, writes **Lawrence Muskitta**



Protests in Sydney’s CBD turned violent at the weekend. Police made eight arrests, while six officers and 17 civilians were injured. Photo credit: Josh Bavas

Last Saturday’s protest was one of the most violent Sydney had seen in a long while, with six officers and 17 civilians injured and eight arrests. The protest was intended to be a peaceful demonstration against anti-Islamic short film, *Innocence of Muslims*, which portrays the Islamic Prophet Mohammed as a sexed-up womaniser with tendencies towards paedophilia and homosexuality. The protest began near the US Consulate on Martin Place, moving towards Hyde Park mid-afternoon, when tension between police and protesters began to escalate.

The ensuing riot has been well documented but what remains little spoken about is the effect the film and subsequent protest has and will continue to have on the Muslim community.

The Office of The Mufti of Australia and the Islamic Council of NSW have both released statements condemning Saturday’s violence, saying the protest was not sanctioned or authorised by any Islamic organisation and calling on Muslims to exemplify the spirit of Islam by exercising wisdom and patience.

On campus, there are a diversity of views around the protests and the film. Hajar Rafiq is an executive of the Sydney University Muslim Student Association (SUMSA) and sees the film as a symptom of a more pervasive problem.

“[This film] was a denigration and

vilification of Islam,” says Ms Rafiq. “We have a history of similar attacks and there is a rising trend of Islamophobia in the West. Politicians and media personalities jump on the sensationalist bandwagon of mocking Islam. This is the context in which both the production of the film and the reaction of the protesters have to be placed.”

Ms Rafiq doesn’t make a judgement on the actions of the protestors or police, nor does she give much credence to the widely publicised posters, some of which read, “behead those who insult the Prophet” and “Our dead are in paradise. Your [sic] dead are in hell”.

“While there may have been vitriolic messages on two or three placards out of a congregation of hundreds of protesters, those placards can’t possibly be given

centre stage in this discussion. We’re not interested in symptomatic analysis, we want to go to the root of the problem.”

Elika Bahramrad is one of the founders of the MuJew Alliance, a campus group that aims to promote discussion between Muslim and Jewish students. She is worried about how this conflict will affect Muslim-Jewish relations in Sydney.

Specifically, she’s concerned about rumours in the Muslim community that the director was an Israeli or Jewish and was receiving funding from Jewish donors. These rumours have now been falsified as a marketing stunt by the film-makers.

“But imagine if that was accepted as fact by the majority,” Ms Bahramrad said. “What would be the ramifications? It’s disgusting that someone attempted to exploit the tension between Muslims and Jews for their own purposes.”

The full effect of Saturday’s protest on the public’s perception of Islam and Muslim people is yet to be seen, but Ms Bahramrad warns against projecting the actions of a few to the beliefs and values of the whole group or culture.

“There are over two billion of us in the world, and it would be insensible to generalise us based on what’s been happening,” she said. “The different responses we have seen all over the world have shown that Muslims don’t all think and respond in the same way.”

OPINION

Down the barrel of a gun: why we fight for Afghanistan

We are here to help and we’re there to stay, writes **Patrick Morrow**

In an ideal world, diplomacy would be carried out without weapons, and agreements might be met without conflict, but we live in a less than ideal world. Our generation is uniquely placed to appreciate the plight of the downtrodden globally. We are also able to do something about it.

To go to war in the name of expansion or conquest has become a faux pas, and rightly so. Quarrels over land and resources; of geopolitics and ideology are cruel and unnecessary. Indeed, the only use for a military in a truly globalised society ought to be in order to assure the freedom of human beings internationally.

This is why we fight for Afghanistan - on behalf of others. Despite a good deal of due scrutiny and criticism from all sides of the political spectrum, our military presence in Afghanistan perseveres, and this is a good thing. For despite the citation of the 9/11 attacks as being the chief impetus for waging war against the Taliban in Afghanistan, the cause, far more importantly, ought to be seen as a humanitarian one.

The average Afghani’s life expectancy is less than fifty years of age, and the nation currently has the highest infant mortality rate, coupled with the eighth highest birth-rate, on the planet. If you are unlucky enough to be an Afghani woman, there is a seven in eight chance that you cannot read.

This is the product of a regime that codifies oppression and encourages sub-

mission. It preserves tribal, fundamentalist values and violently repudiates the advances of modernity. This is a regime which, in 1996, decreed that women were to be banned from employment, then further outlawed their education beyond the age of eight. In 2001, at the end of Taliban rule, 97 per cent of Afghani women exhibited signs of serious depression and 71 per cent reported a decline in their physical wellbeing since the Taliban came to power.

But searching for justification need not be confined to the regime’s sick fascination with the fairer sex. Look, if you prefer, to the dynamiting of the magnificent Buddhas of Bamiyan in March 2001, as part of an undignified, anti-polytheistic quiver of policies, amongst which you will find also the eerily Reich-esque, mandated wearing of yellow badges by the nation’s Hindus. The Taliban banned mostly every form of entertainment, music and creative expression not exclusively purposed for Islam.

They do not play well with others, and the climate of Afghanistan, under their rule was (and would be) one of abject, cultural poverty, heinous gender discrimination, and some of the worst human rights abuses of the past century. Though they are no longer in power (in any official capacity) any more, the very existence of the Taliban - clandestine as it has become - is enough to make even the most vaguely humanitarian conscience feel uncomfortable.

It is all too easy to become fatigued by and desensitised to the statistics: seventeen beheaded for attending a mix-gender party with music and dancing on August 27; up to twenty-five killed in a suicide attack on a funeral in Dur Baba on September 4; six street sellers, none older than seventeen, killed in another suicide attack on Kabul’s ISAF headquarters on September 8. How deep is this sea of suffering?

We must not grow weary with or indifferent to these unending headlines; with their dizzying death counts, their alien foreign place names and these afflicted cries for help.

The responsibility for each of the aforementioned tributaries in the incessant trickle of Afghanistan’s civilian blood has been claimed by the Taliban. Our hands are clean by no means, but the removal of this government-no-more (though government seems too generous a title for their fastidiously managed brand of chaos) is one of the most important causes we currently support abroad.

The execution of the war in Afghanistan deserves no praise for its long-windedness, nor for the demagoguery which invariably surrounds questions of its continuation. The appointment of Hamid Karzai and the 2009 elections were a start despite his unpopularity and questionable history. Afghanistan is a worthwhile fight - one that remains unfinished.

Being Marie Bashir



On the eve of her retirement as Chancellor of the University of Sydney, Kira Spucys-Tahar sat down with the Governor of New South Wales Marie Bashir

“When I was a very little girl my grandfather would take me to the roof of their warehouse in Elizabeth Street, Redfern, up in the elevator. He would point to the spires on the hill and say, ‘that’s the university, and one day you’ll be going there.’

“And because I was tiny, about four or five, and my mother and aunty were often talking about Oxford and Cambridge, I used to think this was Oxford and Cambridge on the hill. Look at our motto, ‘*sidere mens eadem mutato*’, the same intellect, mind and ideals but under different stars. There’s one window in the Great Hall from Oxford and one from Cambridge, because they were their gifts. All of these things make you tingle with excitement, don’t they?”

Marie Bashir is an outstanding woman with a strong affection for the University of Sydney. She graduated as a medical student in 1956, lived on campus at the Women’s College for six years and was a member of the academic staff. She also studied the violin throughout high school and university at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. “All of these aspects have strengthened my love and commitment to the university,” she says. In 2007 Bashir was elected the seventeenth Chancellor of the University of Sydney, a position which she is “deeply honoured” to have held. Her term was not due to expire until mid 2013 but in July she announced her retirement at the end of this year.

“What I find is happening now since my term as Governor of New South Wales was extended up to 2014, is that our citizens are increasingly wanting me to be available to them in the rural and regional areas as well as the cities,” she says. “That too is a great honour, and the duties associated with being Governor afford one the privilege of bringing people together. It’s been helpful to have a background in medicine and education. And having been born and grown up, spending my early childhood years in a rural area, there’s a sense of affinity with the region. My concern is to give the university as much time as I would hope, as well as fulfil my duties as Governor.”

It has become increasingly demanding for Bashir to balance her roles as Governor and Chancellor of the university. She tells me she accepts almost every invitation to visit rural areas and to attend schools or educational institutions.

“I’m not suggesting I need any recreational time, not that I’m a martyr, but certainly adequately fulfilling the role

of both is difficult. I wouldn’t wish one to detract from the other in terms of my loyalty and availability. It hasn’t yet, but another aspect that I must bear in mind is that in the absence of the Governor-General overseas, I act as Administrator of the Commonwealth. This is by no means onerous but it’s an added commitment during the year.”

Appointed Governor of New South Wales in 2001, Bashir is now the second longest serving Governor after Sir Roden Cutler. “The privilege of being Governor is being out amongst the people – out at the coalface, listening to what concerns them most and drawing people together,” she says. “This is a time, I believe, of incredible growth for Australia and it’s important to make sure no one gets left behind and that all young people are given the opportunity to fulfil their potential – it’s very important for this nation.”

“It would never have occurred to me to consider being Governor. Never. After all, to be the first woman, in the oldest public office in Australia, it wouldn’t have occurred to me.”

“I have never, ever had any discrimination as a woman. I can’t explain why,” Bashir says. “It would never have occurred to me to consider being Governor. Never. After all, to be the first woman, in the oldest public office in Australia, it wouldn’t have occurred to me.” The role was suggested to her by the academics in her faculty and when she first found out she had been appointed, “I was so overwhelmed I thought it couldn’t possibly be true.”

Marie Roslyn Bashir was born in Narrandera in the Riverina. During her childhood years she spent time with Aboriginal children at school. “I could see that poverty and marginalisation were preventing them from fulfilling their potential and in fact they were an outstanding people.”

This sparked her special interest in Indigenous communities and in later years she has since travelled throughout Australia to further her involvement.

“I had the privilege of working with Aboriginal people and communities both in the Redfern Aboriginal Medical Service and at Kempsey in rural areas

and I still retain strong links with Aboriginal communities across New South Wales. It’s a source of continuing enlightenment to me,” she says.

Bashir believes one of the great achievements the university has moved to in recent years is the increasing number of students from Indigenous backgrounds attending university. She cites the “wonderful AIME scheme initiated by Jack Manning Bancroft”.

“The beneficiary of this scheme will be Australia,” Bashir says.

Altruism and philanthropy come naturally to Bashir. She decided to study medicine at university following in the footsteps of a beloved grandfather, great uncle, and cousin. But the main reason which inspired her to study medicine was a desire to “do something that would ensure that I could not wait to return to whatever employment I was doing each day, something that would engage and challenge me and at the same time would be of use to others in need.” But Bashir tells me she originally “very much wanted to study journalism...because I thought journalism helped people too. It provides valuable information.”

After becoming aware of the significant levels of depression among young people, Bashir decided to study psychiatry in her postgraduate years. She also became very concerned about the mental health of young refugee children arriving from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos following the war in Vietnam.

“It was certainly a privilege to see the many youngsters for whom we provided programs achieve resilience and go on to make a contribution in various professions and trades,” she says. “Many of these young people remain in contact with me to this day. I just spoke to one on the phone now.” Bashir’s interest in these young refugees stimulated an interest in their countries of origin and Bashir has travelled extensively throughout these nations.

“As a result of this, and meeting people in medicine and education there, we were able to initiate scholarships actually funded by the university to assist in the continuing education of some of the young professionals. This has now been expanded by the current Dean of Medicine, Professor Bruce Robertson, into the very valuable Australia-Vietnam

Medical Foundation which the Vietnamese have called ‘Hoc-Mai’ meaning ‘Forever Learning’.”

“Education is the most empowering acquisition of all”

“Education is the most empowering acquisition of all,” Bashir tells me. “As I often mention in my address at graduation, Winston Churchill said on the occasion of receiving an honorary degree at Harvard University ‘The empires of the future are the empires of the mind’. And Nelson Mandela has said, ‘The most powerful weapon of all is education’.”

When her husband Sir Nicholas Shehadie was knighted in 1976, Bashir was given the title Lady Shehadie but she has chosen to never use this title, preferring her own name.

“I’ve never used that title because for the most part of my medical life I had been working with young people and their families who had suffered a great deal by disadvantage, by marginalisation, by poverty, with Aboriginal communities and I thought that was an unnecessary component to add on,” she says.

Her official title now is Marie Bashir AC CVO after she was awarded a Companion of the Order of Australia in 2001 and a Commander of the Royal Victorian Order in 2006. But Bashir continues to conduct herself with humility and poise as she fulfils her public duties.

“I’ve always been busy,” Bashir says. “Each day has had interesting challenges. Added to which I had a marriage and a family life that kept me busy...the commitment of Australians generally has been perhaps one of the most inspiring and fulfilling aspects of the roles I’ve had - whether it’s been as Governor, as a teacher, as a medical practitioner, as a member of a community.”

We reach the end of our interview and Marie Bashir smiles warmly. “It’s been a joy and a privilege being Chancellor of the university,” she concludes.

Kira Spucys-Tahar is on Twitter: @kismet91

Honi's Festival of

THE FESTIVAL OF DANGEROUS IDEAS TAKES PLACE AT THE SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE FROM SEPTEMBER 28–30. WE ASKED OUR OWN WRITERS FOR THEIR MOST MENACING, MACABRE IMPULSES – AND THEY DELIVERED

Why inequality is worth celebrating

There is no inherent harm to the rich getting richer, says **Sam Murray**

Too often inequality between social groups is used as a tool of measuring or assessing social outcomes, such as wage inequality between the rich and poor, or the inequality in life-spans of Indigenous and white Australians. Too often, it is just assumed that because there is inequality, or even worse, growing inequality, that this is something terribly, terribly wrong. But this is nonsense.

Don't get me wrong; the average lifespan of Indigenous Australians is a national shame requiring our utmost attention. But the harm is that it is low in absolute terms, not that it is low relative to other people in society. The fact that the average Aboriginal person lives to 62.1 years is awful. The fact that the average Australian lives to 81.1 years is fantastic. Why? Because while progress in both is ideal, progress in just one isn't something to be deplored (because ultimately, people are still living 22 years longer than they did a century ago).

This problem of assuming inequality itself is bad becomes even more logically inconsistent when wage inequality is considered. The accusation is frequently made against western, developed, capitalist states that they have created an environment where the gap between the richest 20 per cent and poorest 20 per cent is always widening. This means literally nothing provided that everyone in society is getting richer, which statistically they are.

Take the United States, universally considered the worst for income equality: even the lowest 20th percentile's income increased by 28 per cent in the past 40 years. Is this ideal? No, it could be more. But there is no inherent harm that the top 95th percentile had their income rise by 74 per cent in the same period, because at the end of the day everyone is still getting more prosperous and living better. Provided there is a basic standard of living available to most members of society, the fact that other people have an uber-luxurious standard of living should be immaterial.

I concede that many people in western societies may not have that basic standard of living; but that is a specific problem that needs to be addressed, quite apart from an arbitrary comparison between the rich and poor. Why is this distinction important?

Firstly, this sort of discourse creates social antagonism. Divisions between white and Aboriginal, public school

and private school, rich and poor only become worse and more clearly delineated when people from all these groups talk about the very real problems faced in terms of inequality, as it necessarily sets one group against the other, instead of working together to actually fix the problem. Consequently, the discourse around inequality perpetuates the single, identifiable harm of inequality; the social discord that follows as a consequence of people feeling as though the real issue isn't how bad they have it, but how much better other people do, leading to activities that are either ineffectual (such as the Occupy movement) or downright harmful (such as the London riots).



Inequality: bonuses for fat cats are fine as long as they're trickling down.

The second reason why the distinction is important is because it determines how people approach the problem. In the inequality discourse, the focus is on narrowing the gap, the implication being that it's just as normatively appropriate to pull the more fortunate group down than the less fortunate group up.

This was seen in the wave of angry populist sentiment toward the immense executive bonuses awarded by Goldman Sachs and the other investment banks in mid 2009. Nobody was harmed by those bonuses, yet people still felt aggrieved that the "undeserving" rich were getting richer.

Measures designed to curb this inequality may make people feel good for a time, but does nothing to fix actual societal problems of the needy. Instead, the focus should always be on lifting the poor up however possible, and if the rich get richer along the way, then that's just dandy.

Modern society needs to abandon its envy of the successful, its desire to cut down every tall poppy in sight, and instead focus on what's important: ensuring that everyone is doing as well as possible in absolute terms.

We should not pursue happiness

It is far from the most useful emotion, writes **Lane Sainty**



Photo credit: Tom Mooring

It's official: the concept of happiness has reached celebrity status in contemporary western societies. Thousands of self-help books, counselling services, and TV hours have been devoted to chasing the ultimate emotion. At Sydney University you can take a subject called 'The Philosophy of Happiness', and Disney movies have been feeding us a steady stream of 'happily ever after' for many years.

It's easy to see right through the 'Tips for Happiness' on the inside cover of a self-help book, or the Prince meets Princess stories spun to us as kids. But more importantly, happiness is now frequently regarded as a right, the default state of mind. Instead of being exceptional, happy is the new okay - something we are expected to feel when we are not feeling sad. Take the following banal exchange:

'How are you?'

'I'm okay.'

'Just okay? What's up?'

'Okay' is almost always interpreted as less than happy and therefore, bad. It's clear that our promotion of happiness as the default state of mind allows for no emotional middle ground. We must identify at one end of the spectrum or the other, even though most of the time this polarising outlook is inapplicable. In other words, we are not actually as happy as we like to think we are.

Don't get me wrong - being happy is great. I'm not here to begrudge anyone the satisfaction that stems from getting a distinction, or sleeping in, or having that first swig of Coke on a hot summer afternoon. However, I do dispute that happiness is the most valuable emotion of all, and believe our tendency to promote it as an ultimatum is highly dubious. When we put happiness on a pedestal, we not only forget that chasing it is essentially futile, but we disregard the importance of equally important emotions.

Even taking irony into account, one only has to look at the #firstworldproblems hashtag on Twitter to realise that as a general rule, humans are relatively petty. We're easily distracted and easily annoyed, not to mention inclined towards argument and conflict. While it's

essential to appreciate happy moments as they arise, expecting a prolonged period of non-stop happiness is pretty much like waiting for Godot. Frankly, happiness is an unrealistic goal.

However, this doesn't mean we should give up on it altogether. Doing things you enjoy with people you like is generally a fairly good idea. However, problems arise when we strive for happiness among a jumble of other emotions, and cast negative feelings like sadness, stress, or anger aside.

This is because emotions like these are just as fundamental to the formation of our character. As social researcher Hugh Mackay puts it: "Wholeness is what we ought to be striving for and part of that is sadness, disappointment, frustration, failure; all of those things which make us who we are." This notion of wholeness promotes the view that we are a sum of our experiences, both positive and negative. Expecting a net result of happiness, on the other hand, requires bias, forgetfulness, or both.

The way things seem to be going, the concept of happiness grows in popularity relative to the declining numbers of humans who are happy. Despite having more material possessions, higher life expectancies, and more ways to communicate with our distant loved ones, we are more discontent than ever before. Rather than putting this down to #firstworldproblems, a depression diagnosis boom, or the woes of materialism, we should remember that happiness is not an accurate 'default emotion'. Furthermore, we should acknowledge that all experiences are worth at least something, whether they were good or bad.

Albert Camus wrote: "You will never be happy if you continue to search for what happiness consists of." With that in mind, enjoy happiness as it occurs, but don't look too hard for it, as the inevitable failure to 'find' happiness will create more anguish than it's worth. Don't embark on the pursuit of happiness unless armed with a healthy dose of perspective and pragmatism.

Oh, and you can leave the self-help book behind too.

dangerous ideas

You can't be half-feminist, so cut the perks

Chivalry ain't dead, but we should kill it off, writes **TPH**

Say what you will about gender relations in the 1950s, but at least they were simpler. If you're a man, you work, bring in the money, and buy silly gifts for your kids from distant cities. If you're a woman, you stay at home, clean the house, and actually raise those kids. The invisible oppression and heteronormativity of this picture is rightly despicable, but at least you knew where you stood.

Unlike today, where gender relations are mired by grey areas and uncertainties. Those of us sensitive to these matters feel like we're treading on eggshells, trying not to generalise while maintaining the norms of polite conversation.

The reason for this difficulty is simple: the feminist project is incomplete. In its purest form, the gender revolution of the 1960s and 70s did not stand for women's rights, or an increased representation for women in positions of power, or a reduction in casual sexism. It stood for equality.

Obviously, equality encompasses those other things, and we haven't even ticked

those boxes yet. Women get paid less than men in equivalent jobs. Our first female Prime Minister has received an unprecedented level of vitriol. Eighty per cent of vet students are female but the VetSoc President is always male. Sexist jokes are common conversation fodder among college lads, sports teams and Government students. In all these situations, women are not afforded the same respect as men. We mustn't stop fighting these fights.

But if we are to be truly equal, we must also fight the little social perks of being female. They may seem like pittance in comparison to these larger, systemic inequities, but they mustn't slip under our radar. Paternity leave must match maternity leave. We need real, on-the-ground respect for female candidates, not affirmative action.

The general understanding that it is the man who initiates a heterosexual relationship – be that a date or a marriage – is another thing to go. It takes guts to overcome the fear of rejection,

such that some women would prefer to keep this particular inequity alive. But such norms are tied into the whole nexus of sexist values that also suggest women change their surnames and be delivered to their husbands by their fathers on the wedding day, as if they were some kind of possession.

And chivalry must be put to an end: men must stop opening doors for women, standing up for women on public transport, or offering to cover the bill. How patronising. You might as well say it: 'You're incapable of looking after yourself, so allow me to help you.'

Of course there is room for these favours to be retained as indicators of individual respect and attraction – and in that capacity a woman could do the same for a man. But chivalry solely on the grounds of gender occupies the same space as any other differential treatment on those grounds.

Some women may enjoy these small courtesies; but some men probably enjoyed coming home to a cooked meal



Image credit: Gord Fynes, via Flickr. Licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

too. True equality means taking the good with the bad.

If we are to fulfil the promises of the 1960s, we must rightly fight for the things women are excluded from; but we must also reject those things that benefit women exclusively.

You can't be half-feminist.

Who wants to live forever?

Adam Chalmers does



Imagine a world free of disease and ageing. A world where your body stays fit and healthy, instead of slowly withering away towards inevitable decay. One of the world's earliest written works, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, deals with the quest for immortality. Humans have been trying to defeat death since they realised they could die. And for the first time in history, we've got a chance.

Over the past century, we've cured diseases, halted epidemics, and added 30 years to the average lifespan. If we keep going, we're going to gradually push average lifespan further and further. We might not live forever. Our children might not live forever. But our grandchildren could plausibly have an average lifespan of 100. And perhaps their grandchildren will live forever.

This thought terrifies some people. To the neophobes and the conservatives, any tinkering with biology is too

much tinkering with biology. Death is the one constant in our changing world. Death comes to kings and peasants of all classes, colours, and creeds. The idea of challenging this makes some people break out into a cold sweat. But I think humanity has a duty to light up our bright torches of science and progress, and drive back the dark fog of death. The quest for immortality is the most noble quest, and anyone who hinders it has blood on their hands.

Immortality has a simple, intuitive appeal. Life is good, so more life must be better. Dying is bad, so let's not die. The argument for immortality is childishly simple, which is actually a point in its favour. Immortality is so obviously, intuitively, logically good that even kids understand its appeal. Not wanting to live forever means wanting to die. And I should hope none of you want to die.

At the moment, our short lifespans

limit us. The central problem of economics is that we have limitless desires but limited resources with which to satisfy them. I might want a house and a car, but only have enough money for one. As I see it, the central problem of life is that we have limitless desires, but limited time in our life to achieve them. I want to be an engineer and an artist. I want to have a career and a family. Immortality means having all the time in the world – enough to do both.

Can you ever have too much time? Some people think immortality would be torture. Ask the English novelist Susan Ertz, who wrote: "Millions long for immortality who do not know what to do with themselves on a rainy Sunday afternoon." What would you do with eternity? My answer is simple: anything you like.

Catch up with your great-great-great-great-grandchildren. Complete every Harvard degree. Become a novelist and listen to every classical symphony. Spend a few centuries working on space travel, then build your own spaceship and travel the galaxy. Visit aliens, or if they don't exist, make them. The possibilities are (heat death of the universe non-withstanding) literally endless. Literally.

Yet, many disagree. George Bush's council for ethics called the search for immortality "spiritually immature and unmanly". Famous academic Francis Fukuyama worries it would destroy our "human dignity". The romantics and poets say death is part of the human

experience, that "meaning and pain, meaning and transience are inextricably intertwined" (Bill McKibben). Transhumanist Joe Quirk's elegant dismissal of this says it all: "If we all live long healthy happy lives, Bill's favorite poetry will become obsolete." What exactly is Fukuyama's "human dignity", and is it really more important than meeting your great-great-great-grandchildren, or never having to make your wife a widow?

Many condemn life extension research as "unnatural". Yes, the idea of celebrating your 800th birthday does seem unnatural to us. But celebrating your 80th birthday would have seemed equally unthinkable to the Romans, whose average life expectancy was only 35. Every century, the limits of biology are pushed further. Dismissing immortality as "spiritually immature" is a slap in the face to the thousands of scientists who added 30 years to our lifespan over the 20th century.

Immortality won't make everything perfect. How will we deal with overpopulation? Or ensure equal access to this technology regardless of class? Or stop the creation of a new caste of immortal super-rich Murdochs and Rineharts? We've got a century to answer these questions and iron out the creases. Until then, death comes for all of us, and it is in humanity's best interests to stave it off until the day we can vanquish it for good.

Adam Chalmers lives forever on Twitter: @adam_chal

WHERE AREN'T THEY NOW?

Brad Mariano is a personal, versatile counter-top magician



It's hard to imagine how the first ever pitch went down – “You know what people love? Advertisements. But instead of 30 seconds, lets make it 30 minutes!”. At this point, the room of corporate yes men nod awkwardly, and the infomercial was born. A medium with two main target demographics, desperate housewives and stoned college kids, would become one of the most dismissed yet pervasive cultural media over the last two decades.

The *Citizen Kane* of the artform is undoubtedly the one advertising the Magic Bullet (2006), the “personal, versatile counter-top magician”, a miniature, high powered blender capable of creating quesadillas, smoothies, tuna melts and every other type of food that white, middle-class Americans love, all within 10 seconds. Sure, the hallmarks of all infomercials were present – clashing colour schemes, stretched truths and confusing technical jargon all beating one's brain into submission, but this one was a little different – with a little more care, humour and artistry.

Upon further look, we see a study in alcoholism, marital dissention, the domestic space and on spectatorship

itself. Like all great art, it seeks to hold up a mirror to ourselves, providing us with a cynical satirical look at suburbia in the tradition of Douglas Sirk melodramas and Yates' *Revolutionary Road*.

We enter the kitchen of Mick and Mimi, an Englishman and an American, hosting breakfast for a colourful cast of characters, including drunk Berman, a cranky old chain-smoking widow Hazel and a Ron Howard lookalike. From the opening we can sense something a little off – each character comes in, hungover, referencing the events of “last night”. The characters look at each other knowingly and refer to it obliquely throughout the show, and we the spectator find ourselves on the outside of an inside joke. The events of the previous night will never be revealed to us, though their ramifications cast a shadow over the characters throughout.

When Mick moves onto making mixed cocktails (which he knowingly refers to as “our favourite!”) and the characters literally applause, we understand there is a shared history we aren't privy to. It's effectively a Brechtian distancing device; we can't fully engage with these people and that forces us to look at what else is happening in the scene. Alcohol is portrayed as a destructive force in these character's lives, an issue they all realise, yet distract themselves from by being so intimately engaged with Mick and Mimi's culinary endeavours.

There are other things at play here – the passive-aggressive comments between Mick and Mimi and body language as they cut each other off betrays the

smiling facade masking their marital issues. Also, focusing on the cast of characters in their audience, with their exaggerated enthusiasm and amazement, you can't help see them as a satire of the gullible and easily-wowed audience that these infomercials bait.

We are watching an audience watching the same product we are, hyperbolically vocalising and gesturing our own secret admiration for the product. More like the Meta Bullet, amirite?

With a brief understanding of the cultural significance of the Magic Bullet infomercial, let's look at the actors behind these iconic characters. Mimi Umidon is an actress who originally tried to pave her way into film and television – her most notable role so far is the small role of the mother in the direct-to-video sequel to *Miracle Dogs* called *Miracle Dogs Too* [sic], as well as a one episode spot in 90s TV series *Love Street*. Over the last few years, she has become a very accomplished presenter on the infomercial scene, hosting programs on turbo-vacuums, orthotics, and music collections.

Mick Hastie is pretty interesting as well – no doubt a charismatic personality but his background is not in entertainment – he's the Vice-President of new product development and also co-founder of Homeland Housewares, the company that actually produced and patented the Magic Bullet, which explains his enthusiasm and expertise in the infomercial – he has an actual financial interest in the product.

Both returned for infomercials with sequels of sorts for the portable Magic

Bullet To Go (2008), an excellent sequel where the original cast go camping, and Berman hooks up with the geriatric and emphysemic Hazel (not a joke, YouTube it).

The series disappointingly jumps the shark with the return to the household with the Magic Bullet Express (2009), with an overly clunky appliance and the whole rest of the cast replaced – the latter entry cannot really be considered canon. Where they'll turn up next is anyone's guess – a reboot of the Ped Egg franchise would be my pick.



Top: Mick and Mimi

Middle: Mick offers hungover Berman a morning cocktail

Bottom: Friendly neighbours over to enjoy a blended delight

ROAD TEST • HEADPHONES

Mariana Podesta-Diverio can't hear you

I recently lost my third consecutive pair of Sennheiser HD-202s to the same demise that afflicted its forsaken predecessors: the left one just stopped working. With a myriad assortment of brands, types and differing quality, it's hard to know where to start. After trialling a couple of dozen pairs in various hi-fi outlets, I narrowed my test-driving to three sets that stood out from the others as diamonds in the audiophile rough.

Rasta (aka Bob Marleys) – Skullcandy

Most music lovers who take their listening habits remotely seriously probably wouldn't consider using a Skullcandy headset if their lives depended on it.

However, the sleek, lightweight design of the Skullcandy phones, grouped with their respectable aesthetic appeal, warrants a double-take at the highly affordable range of equipment that burst onto the Australian hi-fi



scene when the company was founded in 2003. Brandished in a Rastafarian colour scheme, the accordingly named Rasta model boasts a high fidelity rendering of music, making it a suitable choice for fans of portable tunes. However, although this is the only Skullcandy model that yields decent sound reproduction, the cost at which this quality comes is a veritable deal breaker. The Rasta phones are bulky, with their oversized cans and thick band proving uncomfortable when placed around one's neck.

HP1973 (aka 'Audiophile') – Kicker

Over-ear headphone haters gonna hate, and wannabe hipsters gonna be 'hip' with these retro-style, classical-design headphones. Clocking in at under \$80, (\$100 with a three-year warranty) their competitive price gives them an edge over their dearer Sony/Panasonic counterparts. Their lightweight minimalist



dimensions make for hours of comfortable listening with little need for constant headband readjustment – a strong selling point when compared to heavier sets like Rasta. Unfortunately, it is probably because of this light design that the Audiophile headset does little to block outside noise, resulting in the need to resort to higher listening volumes when in loud outdoor places. Consequently, unless you're set on developing tinnitus, they are best suited to indoor use or for creepy late-night walks through quiet back streets. The other notable downfall will only afflict those of us who are short sighted: thick spectacle frames feel somewhat out of place when burdened with the cumbersome grasp of the Audiophile's sizeable cans.

Solo HD (aka What are these. I don't even) – Beats by Dr Dre

I get it. Beats headphones are the best thing since sliced vinyl. But are they really? Their booming status as a fashion item means that many users wear these around their necks without even having the cord plugged in. Though they might

incite toolish behaviour, their high prices can persuade you to consider them as serious runners in the headphone race. Solo HD phones are an on-ear model, meaning they rest on your lobes instead of covering them completely. Although some find this to be an appealing design, I detest it. After running hip-hop, punk and Shania Twain (not really) through these cans, I humbly opine that this equipment is grossly overpriced and overrated – Beats phones can set you back a couple of hundred dollars, making them an unrealistic option for most music loving uni-goers.



tweebs FROM THE DEAD



Elizabeth I @pRiNcEsS_LiZzY 2m

I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the sexual appetite of a man.



Elizabeth I @pRiNcEsS_LiZzY 3m

@RobertDudley Throw a dog a bone!



Elizabeth I @pRiNcEsS_LiZzY 4m

@SpanishArmada If you guys win, can someone ravish my fields and plunder my castle? ;) #YOLO



Galileo @GalileoGalilei 10m

The Earth is round!



Vatican @PopeUrbanVIII 18m

@GalileoGalilei Burn Baby Burn, Disco Inferno!



Vincent Van Gogh @HipsterVanGogh 25m

You don't like my work because you don't understand it.



Vincent Van Gogh @HipsterVanGogh 26m

Cutting off my ear. Facial symmetry is so passe.

TOP FIVE Instagram Filters

Victoria Lui has an epic Insty sesh

DEAR DIARY.



The stress-o-meter is reading ‘major’ here at Casa de Speidi – I’ve seriously got more on my plate than my pre-Dukan days! Spencer has been super busy, trying to Tweet-ducate the poor dingbat masses about how the whole Obama phenom is a hoax of the New World Order. Like... are they all morons? It took him all of 2 seconds to show me that Obama’s handlers are conning us into slavery; it’s really only a matter of time before we’re uniformly clothed in corduroy, hoeing wheat on a Global Plantation.

I guess our cred did take a bit of a blow with that *I’m a Celebrity...Get Me Outta Here* debacle, but as if the other contestants removing the labels from my dry shampoo bottles didn’t warrant a tantrum! Some things are just sacred. I admit I’m a little ficial, but I’m hardly superficial. And yes we got a bit of bad press when Spencer was banned from Costa Rica (which I totally don’t understand – he was just trying to board the plane with a gun in a ‘bring a gun so you don’t need to use a gun’ sort of

way)...but overall I think it’s about time the public took us seriously again.

In other news, the lovely Kristin Cavallari finally popped her baby bun! She has a real glow about her these days; I think it’s a mix of the Brazilian Bronze spray tan sesh I gifted her with at the baby shower, and the sweat from lugging (not so) little Camden Cutler around. That kid is kind of a lump. But motherhood is a precious thing, especially given the Earth’s decreasing population (again Obama, stop with the population control myth!).

Excitingly, we may soon be hearing the pitter-patter of little feet around the Speidi house! I’m keeping it on the down-low, but ever since my jaw-dropping (and reducing) surgery; the boob-job, ear-pinning, back-shaping, lipo and nose-job...I’ve just felt that my feet are kinda clown-like and surgically reducing them to dainty little trotters is definitely the way to go!

Anyway, I’d better be off...I totally need to get cracking on my memoirs. Oh and my pop comeback!

Xoxo Heidi



5 Normal
An underrated gem, Normal may be the most striking yet peculiarly, the most rarely used filter of them all. Normal casts subjects in the harsh glare of reality, tinged with a remarkably realistic aesthetic. It may not have that real touch of authenticity like ‘1977’ or ‘Nashville’ does but it renders all photos revelatory, insightful and worthy of deep contemplation. Unless you’re a shit photographer. In which case, sorry, this filter might not work.



4 Kelvin
Kelvin’s crisp colours and heavy saturation levels are great for making your photos pop! The filter imbues everything with fun! How else are your followers going to tolerate those 20 photos of everything you ate today? Doesn’t my sad bowl of instant mie goreng look fun?!



3 Lomo-fi
You were into Holgas before they were cool and now they’re on Instagram? Ugh, I know, I know. Save yourself the cost of developing film and just use this filter instead. Marvel at the colour bleeds and the way the light obscures everything in your shot. Gloat over your iPhone’s ability to simulate the effects of a plastic camera and feel smug about the fact that at least you don’t belong to some weird totemic cult.



2 Inkwell
There are display photos and then there are portraits. When you’re sitting in Surry Hills, cradling a soy latte in your hands and gazing soulfully at your brogues, you want to capture the moment perfectly. Nobody understands but Inkwell does. The filter unleashes your inner struggles in shades of moody grey and existentialist black. Make everything achingly fragile and evanescent with Inkwell and salvage that blurry photo you captured of the sunset as you took off on your fixie.



1 Walden
With an emphasis on muting colours and casting everything it touches in a charming blue light, Walden has the amazing effect of thrusting your photos into the nostalgic past. The ocean? That cute dog you saw on the street? Those nudes you accidentally shared with everyone on your feed? Nothing makes those memories more wistful, more poignant than Walden. You’ll no longer want to retreat into a cabin in the wilderness!





DIVIDED

THEY FALL

Australian politics is broken, but will true progressives heed the call and form a new party? Something's gotta give, writes **Felix Donovan**

Australian politicians on:

Climate Change

"A war is being waged on scientists by those opposed to taking action to cut emissions"

"I am hugely unconvinced by the so-called settled science on climate change"

Foreign Investment

"I am inspired by Adam Smith's 'The Wealth of Nations'"

"It would rarely be in Australia's national interest to allow a foreign government or its agencies to control an Australian business"

Immigration Policy

"I want to wreck the people-smuggling business...and expressing a desire for a clear and firm policy when faced with a difficult problem does not make you a racist"

"This is about a humane treatment of asylum seekers, a more humane detention policy"

Gay Marriage

"Love is love, and people shouldn't be discriminated against"

"The only people who really want this are the Greens and they are extreme"

A quick quiz: to the left are eight statements on four different issues made by politicians from either the Australian Labor Party or the Liberal Party.

Guess which statement belongs to which party. Maybe the climate change quotes are too obviously Turnbull and Abbott, or perhaps Gillard's dog-whistle on asylum seekers isn't as selectively audible as she'd like it to be, but the game is quite easy to see through.

The right four quotes are indeed solely from Labor Party figures, and the left four are exclusively Liberal Party MP quotations. The point is this: the divisions within Australia's dominant political parties are more significant than the divisions between them. Divided they stand, but for how long?

The Labor Party confronts a crisis made of two distinct and competing political bases. The Party has its roots in the revolutionary workers' movements of the 1890s; a decade set apart for its mass-scale miners' and shearers' strikes.

The Labor Party was born of a desire to represent those workers' interests in a more constructive, conciliatory style. It began as a democratic socialist party, and one half of the party has

stayed true to its roots. That is the half that sounds like Wayne Swan when he's talking about Clive Palmer, and looks like Paul Howes at an AWU rally. As a base, it believes the unions are integral to the process politics of Labor, and that industrial relations should be top of its policy agenda.

Until the 1960s, Labor was unreservedly a workers' party. At its National Conferences of the 1940s, discussion centred on whether to nationalise the banks and the goal of full employment.

Then came the culture wars, the Vietnam War protests, Whitlam, the environmentalists, and Paul Keating (who confided in an aide that he was happy to lose the votes of 'blue collar workers with red necks'). The left broadened, and by the 2011 National Conference, the debates that ignited the hall were over gay marriage, a carbon tax, and what kind of foreign policy Labor should embrace.

These issues are the priorities of Labor's second base, the environmentally and socially progressive, and largely economically liberal, 'new left'. They resent the place of unions in the party, prefer Tanya Plibersek to Wayne Swan,

“Democracies don’t tolerate dysfunction for long; political failings are attributed to the establishment and the public exacts revenge on the major parties.”

and describe themselves as ‘swing voters’ – that is, between Labor and the Greens. The contest between the two Labor bases for supremacy within the Party is only heightened by a swath of issues that divide Labor neatly along ‘base’ lines. The carbon tax, for example, financially hurts the industrial base at the same time as it is celebrated as bold and necessary by the new left base.

The Liberal Party, meanwhile, is faced with the challenge of two competing ideologies, only sometimes reconcilable. The first is conservatism: the political philosophy that dates back to Edmund Burke’s horrified reaction to the French Revolution. The events of 1789 so abhorred him as the revolutionaries sought to forge an entirely new system of government; a project that denied the simple truth that we should ‘derive all we possess as an inheritance from our forefathers.’

second philosophical tenet, is premised on the sovereignty of the individual. It seeks to achieve a situation in which the individual is free from the chains of government tyranny. Liberalism is not adverse to utopian language or action; tradition is of no worth unless it is a liberal tradition.

Fortunately for Menzies’ Party, Western civilisation is built upon mostly liberal traditions. But conservatism and liberalism become more unnatural bedfellows on questions such as gay marriage, or government involvement in the economy – including parental leave schemes and foreign investment. Edmund Burke and Adam Smith didn’t always see eye-to-eye. We shouldn’t expect Abbott and Turnbull to either.

It is not only the issues of the day that have aggravated tensions within the parties. Increased media attention, devoted to interrogating issues of process and

WHAT’S NEXT?

There’s a chance the old parties will just muddle through. But there’s an equally significant chance they won’t. Democracies don’t tolerate dysfunction for long; political failings are attributed to the establishment, and the public exacts revenge on the major parties.

Think of the success of the Tea Party in the American 2010 midterms, or of the totalitarian fringes of Athens. History is replete with examples of popular disenchantment leading to political eruption. Where the political status quo is broken, it is replaced, or changed unrecognisably.

Australia certainly doesn’t need a Tea Party, or Europe’s far right, but it could do with a Liberal Democratic Party. A genuinely liberal political bloc drawing on the progressive elements of the Labor Party and the John Stuart Mill devotees of the Liberal Party could break through the torpor of the status quo, and deliver the two major parties from debilitating intra-party contests. Which would have the distinct advantage of leaving them to be what they really are: a social democratic party and a conservative party.

But more than that, a political party with an authentically liberal pedigree would properly represent an increasingly

ings of a few pragmatic men in 1900. The Vietnam War protests are no exception to the rule of apathy when compared to their American counterparts; the Iraq War protests perhaps shouldn’t even be given the dignity of that plurality, so quickly did they dissipate and cease altogether. Any call to action in Australia has been met with a sturdy, reliable response: leave it to the Greeks. Public dissatisfaction will grow, but not spill over. That dissatisfaction, however, does provide an electoral incentive for action that is recognised by Canberra’s politicians.

To a generation weaned on American rhetoric, the suggestion that political change must originate from the political elite is anathema. But this is not America; and from Canberra springs the only genuine hope of action. There are other avenues, but a Turnbull defection seems the most likely elite political transformation. The heady mix of audacity and ambition Turnbull possesses may give him the impetus to resign from the Abbott-led Liberal Party and begin his own.

There is a real possibility he would be joined in such a move by some of the 40 colleagues who supported him at the

“Our nation wasn’t forged in the fire of revolution or war, but in the quiet workings of a few pragmatic men in 1900.”

Conservatives are firmly anti-utopian and believe that societies are able to function because they have been organically created over many hundreds or thousands of years. They revere tradition and are suspicious of dramatic change.

To a conservative, one of the Khmer Rouge’s greatest crimes in Cambodia was announcing in 1975 that it was the Year Zero; that history could start again. It was also the root of their megalomaniacal death marches. Menzies was, of course, Australia’s great conservative prime minister. He opposed Chifley’s ambitious economic schemes, and held fast to the British alliance. Every one of Tony Abbott’s less opportunistic impulses is conservative.

But Menzies did not found a conservative party, he founded a liberal conservative party. Liberalism, the Liberal Party’s

fetishising conflict, is also responsible for burgeoning rifts. The tendency of the parties (particularly Labor) to strangle and punish dissent, which leads to leaks and embittered MPs, further compounds the divisions.

It should hardly come as a surprise, then, that we’ve witnessed more leadership spills on the government and opposition benches in the past five years than in any five-year period before; or that the approval ratings of both party leaders are in a perennial slump; or that policies once considered fundamental are suddenly peripheral and dropped from the agenda; or that independents and minor parties are growing in power and electoral pull. Australian politics has never been like Camelot, but rarely have we seen such a level of dysfunction, chaos, and lack of consensus.

number of Australians who subscribe to neither Labor’s illiberal economic doctrines or the Liberals’ archaic social policies. Its agenda would take the Economist magazines’ economic policies, the social views of a citizen of San Francisco, and tell the nation to keep calm about the boats. And, judging by a straw poll of Q&A audience members and tweeters, it would be led by Malcolm Turnbull.

There is, then, a smoldering political bonfire. Who will light the bilious kindling? While the public may desire change, they have proven themselves to be far less than adequate activists. John Howard’s diagnosis of the Australian electorate holds water: comfortable and relaxed, apathetic and sceptical of ideology or unabashed conviction.

Our nation wasn’t forged in the fire of revolution or war, but in the quiet work-

last leadership spill, and also by Labor dissidents who are frustrated by sinking polls and union encroachment on party process. That kind of transformation is not unprecedented; a very similar merger of liberal Conservative Party members and MPs who had lost faith in the Labour Party created the Liberal Democratic Party in the UK in 1988.

It is a tautology, but a troubling one: If nothing changes, we will just see more of the same. Politics in Australia is inchoate and broken because the parties themselves have failed the most basic stress test of a political party: have a consistent base, and a defining ideology. Stand on something, and for something. Neither the Liberals nor Labor can lay claim to that. And until we get parties that can, Australian politics will continue on its way in being a little bit shit.

Images credit: Erik Johansson

ANALYSIS

When Malcolm Turnbull speaks, the mouths of inner-city lefties froth. Upon the conclusion of every second sentence, their hands clap thunderously, adoringly. Leather jackets have been purchased in his honour.

And so it went two weeks ago when the progressive pin-up boy delivered the George Winterton Lecture at the University of Western Australia, lamenting the unlettered, unsophisticated state of Australian politics.

“There is nothing more certain to arouse your fury and invite your contempt,” Turnbull said, “than listening to an entire House

of Representatives Question Time.” Part of the reasoning is the Opposition’s obsession with asylum seekers and the carbon tax, he went on to explain.

So does this latest slight at his leader mean Turnbull is on the cusp of throwing in his Liberal card? You wouldn’t put money on it. No matter how many colleagues might be ideologically predisposed to joining a Turnbull-led liberal democratic party, they’re not about to jump ship from a Coalition that’s on track to swamp the government benches. They just won’t.

Turnbull deeply wants to be PM, and he will know his best shot

is to usurp an unpopular Tony Abbott once in government. He is a businessman at heart: he’s not inclined to take needless risks, nor would he relish the thought of leading an untested third party in a power-sharing coalition. The lesson of the past two years is that Australians seriously dislike minority government.

Our best chance of seeing a truly liberal party, the one of the latte-set’s wet dreams, is when the Liberals’ stocks are so low that it forces a split similar to that of the ALP and DLP in the 1950s. I wouldn’t hold your breath.

Michael Koziol



Turnbull arriving at the University of Western Australia.
Photo credit: The West Australian

MUSIC FESTIVAL REVIEW

Just a Penrith girl in a Defqon.1 world

I came, I saw, I gabbered, writes **Bernadette Morabito**

"Oh, you're from Penrith. That's nice," they'd say.

A response I hear too often from my Sydney Uni brethren, I've usually had to prove myself intellectually and socially worthy in a vast pool of learned individuals.

It didn't matter that back in the Western 'Burbs, there was another sort of hierarchical divide. I took much pride in being part of the higher end stratum. Rule one of the 'Riff upper class, thank you very much, was to never go to Defqon.1.

Much to my horror then, my casual events job catapulted me into a world of psychedelic colours, industrial sculptures, and naked people. Naked people on drugs. Yes, it was an 11-hour shift from hell, and it wasn't doing much for my internalised sense of self.

Held at the Sydney International Regatta Centre, some elements of the event were as reproachable as I'd imagined. As I wound a compulsory wrist band on Defqon.1 patrons in a tolerably, but necessarily firm manner, the seedier of the bunch would remark, "I feel like I'm in bed," or "Ahh, I like this... I'll remember that forever."

A honourable mention must also go to the people gabbering so frequently, that

even the toilet lines, canteen lines, and random open spaces were exceptionally lad-hardstylin, brah.

But, during my breaks, I could undoubtedly appreciate my environment for its decorative demeanour. Old retro couches sprawled randomly along the cement terrain, with fenced off car yard assemblages, gave this festival an edgy, industrialised attitude.

The most poignant experience in my lengthy shift however, was meeting a 63-year-old hardcore DJ from New York. As I waited at my nifty Dutch Band Station machine, which expelled wristbands, 'DJ Old Man' approached me at a youthful speed. He excitedly asked for his 'goodie bag', which all VIP patrons received on arrival.

After asking how he became professionally involved in a festival like Defqon.1, his face lit up, and he recited his career of nearly 30 years as DJ Ziggy (and a specialist in 'Jumpstyle' music since 1981, F.Y.I.). In this era, he was told he was "behind the times." But now, Defqon.1 proves there is a solid social space for him to project his love into a particular genre, where he feels especially appreciated.

After our short conversation, he proudly passed me a white envelope.

Inside was a postcard, with an image of an alien DJ on the front. The postcard was signed "Robert J Stover" a.k.a 'DJ Ziggy.' In a final youthful breeze, he told me to "add his music page on Facebook."

At that moment, my attention started to filter towards individuals who weren't just scantily clad with denim undies or yelling out "Defqooooooooon!" to the gods above. There were individuals from around the world who shared in a sub-culture with an incredible amount of energy and passion for their music. It's the

sort of community whose first trickles of culture filter in from the assortment of hard dance varieties from its mothership, Holland.

In a village of pulsing beats and techno, infectious dancing and infectious joy filled these festivalgoers. As the spewing flames, smoke, green lasers and fireworks exhausted the cool night sky of The Regatta, I realised this festival had birthed a unique clubbing spectacle; executed with creativity, a dance religious community, and the legacy of one 63 year old, DJ Ziggy.



After the second dinger the laser show was twice as epic.

FRINGE FESTIVAL REVIEW

The Pitchfork Disney

Nick Simone knows drama

"I don't think it makes any difference if I'm good or not. Not when so much in life can explode... There's nothing we can do to save ourselves."

The Pitchfork Disney tells a story that isn't such a distant reality – already we shut ourselves up in our houses or bedrooms, replacing the outside world with fictitious realities of films, books, computer games and social media. When bad things happen to good people, four walls and a convincing imagination are as solid a safety as we can seem to construct.

This is the premise which *The Pitchfork Disney* presents in a way which is comical, yet hits close to home like the honest mirror which refuses to grant the luxury of a favourably distorted self-reflection. Although it played for only three nights last week at the Sidetrack Theatre as a part of the 2012 Sydney Fringe, the play, by award-winning British playwright, screenwriter, and novelist Philip Ridley, surely left an indelible footprint on the memory of all who saw it.

The production was small yet avoided showing what was obviously a limited budget in terms of both time and money, as tends to be the case with most Fringe productions. The director, Rachel Chant, and producer, David Jackson, managed to prove that you don't need heavy pockets to make good theatre through the presentation of this story, which adhered to the original well enough while interpretatively injecting a new and creative edge to it.



The Pitchfork cast: Brett Johnson, David Molloy, Brett Spulak and Jessi Le Brocq.

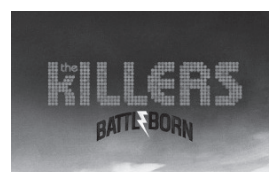
The story is a glimpse into the lives of two 28-year-old siblings who, ever since the mysterious disappearance of their parents, seem to regress to a childlike state and avoid facing the outside world. This is, of course, until they receive a mutually unexpected visit from the cockroach-eating, ironically germaphobic, handsome magician Cosmo Disney and his gimp-masked, thuggish sidekick Pitchfork Cavalier.

The actors, Brett Johnson, Jessi LeBrocq, David Molloy and Brett Spulak, all shone in this play as the story swung from the emotional, to the silly, to the dramatic, to the choreographed end fight scene. The performance dynamic clearly showed a very organised, practiced and professional production. I'm sure that great things will come from the crew that put on this production of Philip Ridley's *The Pitchfork Disney*.

ALBUM REVIEW

Battle Born - The Killers

Melanie Jayne looks on the Mr. Brightside



The Killers reinvent themselves with each album. Their signature synth and vibrant guitar riffs being staples of *Hot Fuss*, with *Sam's Town* swaying closer towards classic rock 'n' roll, while *Day & Age* attempted to be an amalgamation of both. However, the band's fourth studio album *Battle Born*, which arrives on the end of a four-year gap with a hiatus in between, appears to be an exception to this rule.

That's not to imply the album isn't distinct. The Killers previous albums are different in that they were all trying to be something, whereas *Battle Born* simply exists as what it is. The band has matured musically and lyrically, the new album consumed with remnants of nostalgia, romanticism and hardship, packaged in soft synth, and harmonious guitar and drumbeats.

What may be disconcerting for some is that the tracks are slower than what the typical Killers fan might be accustomed to. However, most songs on the album possess a particular grandeur and extravagance that'll stop the average listener from becoming bored.

Although the album is plagued by some distractingly unoriginal lyrics ("Is this real or just a dream?"), the sincerity with which lead singer Brandon Flowers and his bandmates write makes

it somewhat permissible. ("If I go on with you by my side, can it be the way it was?"). While a couple of tracks feel like leftovers from Flowers' relatively unimpressive solo endeavour, *Flamingo* ('Heart of a Girl', 'From Here On Out'), the album for the most part, doesn't waver in quality.

'Flesh and Bone' and 'Battle Born' bookend the record fabulously, the former coasting its way through a melodic crescendo to preface the rest of the album. The title track expectedly exudes an appropriately mighty musicality before finishing with a minute-long ethereal hymn. Vocally, Flowers is as impressive as ever, the grand long notes scattered through many tracks displaying a rather stirring intensity.

Battle Born could be likely to see less commercial successes akin to 'Somebody Told Me' or 'Mr. Brightside', and more underground triumphs. It lacks the spectacular catchy hooks that generally thrive on radio and initially catapulted The Killers to fame. Instead, the album is evidently a culmination of the experiences and growth of their near decade long careers. It's an emotionally engaging feat that necessitates the focus of the listener.

Highlights of the album include: 'The Way It Was', 'Miss Atomic Bomb' and 'Deadlines and Commitments', tracks that all find their strengths in the marriage of passion and composition. Once thoroughly pulled into the album's sentimental lyrical content and lush melodies, it's difficult not to become enamoured with *Battle Born*.

Revue Season

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

MEDICINE

Placebo Royale

Patrick Morrow found our future doctors to be without standards

Having seen *Lord of the Gin* (the Engineering Revue) on Thursday night, I presumed that the worst of the season was behind me (and even then, Engineering's sense of irony made it excusable and even, often by virtue of the Twitter feed, quite entertaining). I was mistaken. Like cancer, it seems - for lack of a cure - the only solution is to utterly destroy the problem and hope there is no remission. Never again, Med Revue, for *Placebo Royale* was worse than cancer.

Far too few of the spoken lines were loud or articulated enough to be intelligible, but given the quality of the writing, this may have been a blessing. Of the jokes that were heard, few elicited much of a response from the audience. This is likely because every punch line could be googled, and then found within the last four month's worth of 9gag posts. Those that were 'originally' written were misogynistic, crass, and all-too dependent on bodily fluids, sexual organs, and shitty euphemisms.

At one point, in an incredibly unsophisticated parody of 'Let Me Entertain You', it became clear that the instrumental track used as backing still had the original lyrics in it, and quite loudly. It serves as a neat analogy for the show as a whole. In every instance, the place

from which the comedy had been stolen was obnoxiously apparent - between 1945 wordplay, with hospital beds replacing bases, and Carly Rae Jepsen, nothing was sacred and precious little was funny.

In the final moments, and taking a leaf out of the Gestapo's book, the cast lined the aisles, and made it impossible to leave the theatre at what felt like the natural conclusion of the show, preserving a captive audience as they tarnished yet another fleeting Internet sensation (this time, Psy's 'Gangnam Style' - the chorus line being insightfully twisted into 'Sydney Med School Style').

It says a lot about the quality of a show when balloons, streamers and confetti fall generously from the ceiling and receive nothing so much as a clap from the audience in reply.

In fact, the only thing surpassing the audience's lack of interest was the collection of abject, miserable faces on stage.

Please, give generously to Médecins Sans Frontières, and get this cohort as far away from theatre as possible.

Elodie Cheesman gave them credit for trying

My experience of the 2012 Med Revue *Placebo Royale* was eerily akin to the 'Beauty of Natural Childbirth' video I was forced to watch in Year 9 PDHPE; painfully drawn out, very laboured, and marked by an excess of bodily fluids.

The plot sketches, which centred around a hospital conspiracy to destroy Dr. James Bond's med cred, provided a nice narrative continuity but often verged on interminable. Over-egged with bad puns and over-elucidated sexual innuendo (yes...we get it...Ms 'Mona Lot' is vocal in the bedroom!), the skits attracted as many derisive as indulgent groans.

While the laughs trickled in with fanciful movie parodies like 'No Continence for Old Men' and 'When Harriet Met Salmonella', the constant gush of diar-

rhoea, STD and erectile dysfunction allusions failed to strike an original tone.

I appreciated the effort to keep with the Bond theme and have medical (but not technically esoteric) relevance, but felt that this limited the show's scope. Too much time was spent ridiculing other universities, international students, and other courses like dentistry. This was to be expected, but came across as puerile and defensive because the jokes were executed without flair.

Placebo Royale did garner some solid laughs with an asthmatic Darth Vader skit, and witty collection of alternative Med Revue titles, including 'Womb Raider' and 'Finding Chemo'. While the nude 'Bare Necessities' musical number was a little wince-worthy, the cast's homage to Robbie Williams with 'Let Me Intubate You' and earnest Simon & Garfunkel-inspired plea to 'Let Me In, Dean Bruce Robinson' were well-received.

Expecting to be in stitches, I was overall a little disappointed by Med Revue 2012. What redeemed it, however, was an appreciation of the effort that had gone into conceiving and delivering the production.

A somewhat juvenile and toothless show, it was nevertheless clearly a labour of love.



Trust me, I'm (almost) a doctor.
Photo: Andrew Simpson

ENGINEERING

Lord of the Gin

Alice Workman wasn't there for the jokes, or the clothing

One does not simply watch an Engineering Revue. It's a strange phenomenon to describe, especially in 250 words.

But I will say this - whatever genius decided to have a live @engorevue Twitter feed on-stage deserves an unlimited bar tab at Hermann's for life.

Some jokes were like Jetstar - they just didn't take off (ba-doom-tish). But no one really cared because no one goes to an Engo Revue for the jokes. Just like no one goes to Notre Damn for a quality education (ba-doom-tish).

You go for the heckling and the beer, the in-jokes about Cam Creigh, and the kick ass band.

You go to see the moment someone's self esteem gets crushed on stage underneath the weight of verbal and social media banter that's probably more amusing than you are.

You go to see how many times they can crowbar alcoholic references into Top 40 hits.

You go to see the four (yes, four) hot women who have enough balls to get nude on stage

and attempt to raise the caliber of the performance.

You go because they're genuinely nice people, who name check other revues and seem ecstatic that people actually turned up to support them.

Michelangelo used to say his secret was that the sculpture is already inside the stone, he just picks which bits to chip away. And while he may have been a ninja turtle, I think that analogy stands here.

The Engineering Revue is inside all of us and one drink at a time we chip away and find the ultimate show we've been looking for all season - beer, boobs, bromance, and occasionally a brutally honest look into the soul of someone who just realised that by corpsing on stage they have to buy a case of beer for the cast and crew (nice work Juddy).

Lucy Watson knows that engineers don't actually drink gin

Being a cast member of another revue has meant that I have seen a lot of this year's revue season. They all have a few things in common; they're in the Seymour Centre, they run for a few nights at the end of the week, people's parents come to see the show, and they have fancy programmes on glossy paper.

Except Engineering.

Engineering Revue is a one-night affair at Manning. I'd never been before, but I'd heard it was a great chance to get pissed and heckle naked strangers. Sounds awesome.

We turned up right on 7:30, only to find most of the best seats were taken. We took a seat on the edge, where the curtain marred our view of the live Twitter feed ("tweet your heckles!"), causing much frustration and a litany of heckles (the verbal ones) before the show even started.

The revue itself was pretty terrible, as I expected. Some kind of loose Lord of the Rings parody about how Engineering students now like gin more than beer? I don't know. I couldn't hear much over the sound of people yelling. I did like Frodo's hairy feet though, thanks to the tweeter that alerted me to them.

As predicted, most of the jokes (that I

could hear) involved alcohol, and were sexist, racist, and/or homophobic. The live tweets were no exception, largely thanks to "@CommRevueRulz". I get that comedy is about parody and pushing boundaries, but for it to work you actually have to be funny. Oh, and you also have to not steal sketches from other revues.

The songs were mostly well written, with the One Direction parody 'Only Girl in Civil' a highlight. The double-tribute to the Royal was boring, and it would help if the engineers could a) hold a tune, and b) remember the lyrics to the songs they've written. Having them on screen really only works when that's what you say.

The best part of the show was the parody of the Hitler's *Downfall* video about the engineering societies. The timing was fantastic, and it was actually quite funny. And the nudity was pretty great too.

Despite (or perhaps because of) all its faults, I had a fantastic time at the revue. There's something to be said for heckling at naked people while you down a cider on a Thursday evening. I just hope that next year they manage to focus on something other than beer or the fact they haven't been laid in a long time.

	Christopher J Browne @SirElmo @engorevue dude the Holocaust was funnier than this Expand	13 Sep
	Tim Whelan @WhelanDealIn @engorevue This is the only night of the year they need to shave their balls. Expand	13 Sep
	Blake turando @BlakeTurando @engorevue I see an erection Expand	13 Sep

TECH NEWS

Controlling the Mars rover from the classroom

School students will soon be able to control a replica NASA Mars rover from their classrooms, write **Rob Noth** and **Diana Pham**



Sydney University Professor, Salah Sukkarieh, is creating new ways to engage students with the remote rover project

The landing of NASA's Mars rover may be attracting the attention of scientists and space fanatics the world over, but a new \$2.9 million education project is sparking the curiosity of Australian school students.

Funded by the federal government and

taking advantage of the high speed National Broadband Network, the "Education 2020" program will provide school students across Australia with remote access to two experimental Mars rover robots housed at the Powerhouse Museum. Students will be able to remotely control the rovers and conduct experiments in a 140 square metre Mars Yard and robotics lab, the largest of its kind in a public space worldwide.

Developed by a partnership between the University of NSW, University of Sydney, and the Powerhouse Museum, the program is designed to address the national skills shortage and graduate deficit in engineering by encouraging student interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects.

While the number of engineering graduates has increased in recent years,

research conducted by Engineers Australia indicates that industry demand continues to exceed supply. Similarly, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations says that employers continue to experience difficulty in recruiting engineers.

Program developer Dr Carol Oliver of the Australian Centre for Astrobiology hopes that the initiative will better engage students and attract them to the field by taking out of the traditional classroom and virtually integrating them in the research of science and engineering graduates.

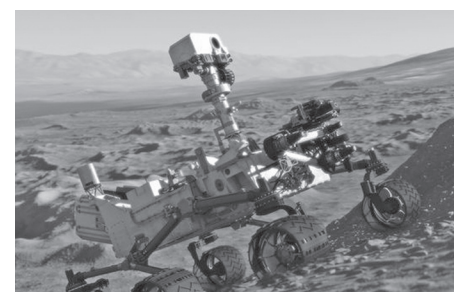
"Our students are learning in an entirely different way these days," says Dr Oliver.

"They are digital natives, they don't learn the way I learned at school, and we've got to address that."

The program will also see the development of a searchable multimedia database, tele-presence video conferencing between students, teachers and researchers, and interactive professional development courses for teachers.

Rob North is on Twitter:

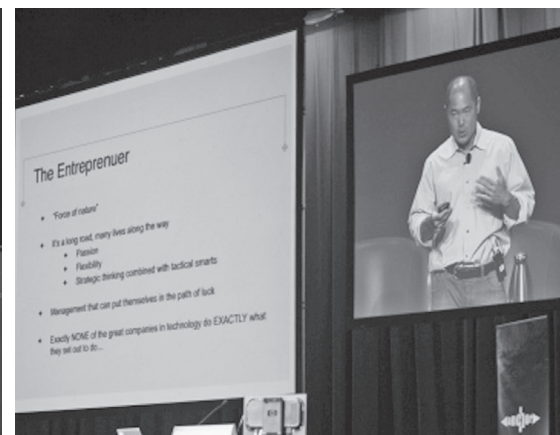
@RobGNorth



NASA's Curiosity Rover has helped reignite interest in studying engineering and science

Honi visits SydStart: an ecosystem of startups

SydStart 2012, the fourth annual startup business conference, served up immense talent and inspiration in equal parts, writes **Astha Rajvanshi**



Left: SydStart conference, the largest professional startup conference in Australia. Middle: BigCommerce CEO's, giving their advice to startup hopefuls. Right: Entrepreneur presentation

With the pursuit of the 'Silicon Valley Dream' growing quickly Down Under, last week's SydStart Conference saw over 900 attending from the startup community. The fourth annual conference was held at the Sydney Convention Centre and showcased some of the leading innovators and entrepreneurs in Australia.

Australians are charging ahead in the IT and Business sector, having created more than 60 startups in the Silicon Valley. Moving to the US is not unusual – about 15,000 Australians are currently working for tech companies in the San Francisco Bay Area.

However, the loss of Australian IT talent to the US reflects on the lack of support provided to the startup industry in Australia, and many blame the government and the venture capital industry. Initiatives like the SydStart conference focus on building a local startup community and providing professional support to young Australian entrepreneurs.

Pete Cooper, organiser of SydStart, believes that SydStart is a good way to bring together Sydney's startup community with the goal to get Sydney 'hyper-connected' – the notion that a very well networked community of entrepreneurs is better than raw size, like in Silicon Valley.

"SydStart is one of the fullest days you can have in the startup world to meet a heap of like-minded people and share loads of knowledge."

The conference kicked off with the day being split into two waves. Wave One included some big names sharing their professional journeys with the audience and Wave Two showcased a 'pitch-fest' in front of an expert selection panel decided on a winning pitch.

Focusing on people who had 'done stuff', Wave One featured a panel discussion and an electric mix of speakers such as Mike Cannon-Brookes from Atlassian, Alec Lynch, Founder of DesignCrowd.com; Dominic O'Hanlon, Chief Strategy Officer at MYOB; and Matt Barrie, Founder of Freelancer.com.

Alec Lynch, who recently raised \$3 million for his company, started DesignCrowd after pitching his own idea at the first SydStart conference back in 2009.

"At my first SydStart I met some potential investors, and a lot of the investors in DesignCrowd attend the conference. I think anyone doing the pitching will have that opportunity to make connections, but it's also fantastic practice to get your elevated pitch right."

With a range of entertaining and inspiring presentations, the key drivers

of success were noted by the importance of having the right team and a focus on customer needs. But the message from all the speakers was loud and clear: there has never been a better time to start a business.

The afternoon saw Wave Two dedicated to over 30 pitches, live and via video, being presented by some of Australia's best entrepreneurs to a panel of expert judges. The pitches demonstrated the large calibre of creative intellect, and gave an insight into the various stages of many different startup projects.

Noting the lack of women in the speaker line-up and the judging panel, it was great to see women also getting involved in the pitch-fest. Fiona Anson, creator of Hiremeup, pitched her idea for a new mobility platform for the part-time workforce.

"Part-time is a huge part of the workforce, over 30 per cent, but there is no resource for people in the part-time sector. If I'm looking for a barista for my coffee shop, I need them today."

On the topic of female entrepreneurship, Fiona observed that "online and offline, the stats show that 55 per cent of new businesses are being started-up by women ... we're starting to see a lot of women getting involved. Just because

guys have traditionally been the engineers and software designers, it doesn't mean that a business idea can't stand on its own."

At the end of the day, the trophy went to co-founders Matt Allen, Tom Frazier and Doug Hudgeons for their winning pitch on 'ProcessGo', a new service that allows businesses to map out and align their process for tenders with tender submissions. The runners-up included:

- 'WattCost': a solution to read, measure and monitor the energy output in homes easily to keep bills low.
- 'Evolvex': customized, create-your-own furniture delivered flat packed to your door.
- 'StartSomeGood': a crowd-funding platform for social change.

SydStart was a day packed with knowledge, networking and inspiration. Moreover, the conference highlighted an interesting factor in today's startup community – per capita, Australia has the most incubators globally.

As Alec Lynch put it, "screw the mining boom, let's create a technology boom."

Astha Rajvanshi is on Twitter:

@astha_raj

Eye-Robot

Natasha Burrows looks into this crystal ball and assesses the future for bionic vision

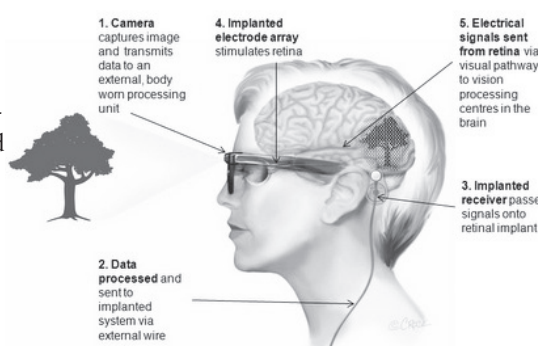


When Dianne Ashworth saw a 'flash of light' in August this year the impact was profound. Ms Ashworth suffers retinitis pigmentosa, a genetic eye disease that causes blindness. She is the first Australian to benefit from the technology developed by Bionic Vision Australia. Since 2009 the research consortium, consisting of over 100 researches primarily from the University of Melbourne and University of NSW, has been working to develop the bionic eye. Driven by the success of the Australian developed cochlear implant, the group hopes to restore vision to people who have retinitis pigmentosa and age-related macular degeneration.

The 'eye' as such consists of an external camera that transmits radio signals to the retina. These signals then travel down the optic nerve to the brain, where the signals are interpreted as an image. The system Ms Ashworth received is an early prototype. It does not contain an external camera. Instead, the system is externally connected to a unit with which researchers stimulate light flashes.

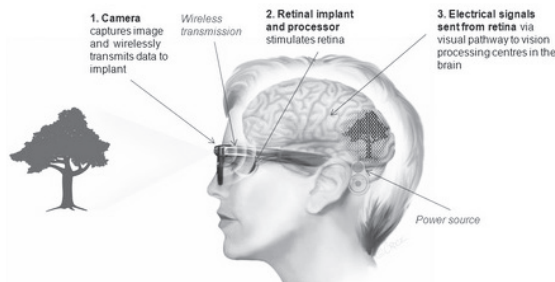
At this stage, the quality of the image is low compared to healthy vision. As Associate Professor Nick Barnes at Bionic Vision Australia acknowledges, "in normal human vision there are millions of visual fields that we are seeing and collating into our perception of the world." The current technology developed by Bionic Vision Australia uses 98 electrodes. The aim is to develop technology that increases this number to 1000.

Two types of devices are being developed by Bionic Vision Australia: a 'wide-view' device that attempts to help patients with navigation and indepen-



The wide-angle device.
Source: Bionic Vision Australia

dence, and a 'high-acuity' device that aims to re-establish some functional central vision. The latter device contains a higher amount of electrodes and hopes are that it will enable patients to recognise faces and read large print. The 'wide-view' device only enables patients to see basic shapes and flashes of light.



The high-acuity device.
Source: Bionic Vision Australia

The bionic eye Ms Ashworth received was such a device.

While the developments so far have been impressive, the challenge remains to develop technology beyond 'wide-view' bionic eyes. The 'high-acuity' device is currently in development and trials with patients will begin in 2014.

The Australian research team is one of around 30 groups internationally developing bionic eye technology. The American developed Argus II recently gained regulatory approval to market its device.

Similar plans are in the pipeline for German implants by next year. Anthony Hall, director of ophthalmology at Alfred Hospital and associate professor at Monash University, says the race to develop the bionic eye is a "marathon". If Australian technology continues to develop at the current rate, it is well placed to match the developments occurring overseas.

This is promising news for 50,000 Australians who suffer from blindness, and the 285 million visually impaired people worldwide.

Sphynx Cats

Richard Withers enjoys pets that need minimal grooming



Sphynx Cats are an enigmatic breed that emerged in the United States in the 1960s when backcrossing (crossing a hybrid with its parent) led to the birth of 'naked kittens'. Given the less than desirable nickname of the 'Hairless Mexican', this now-extinct breed gave many crazy, cross-breeding scientists big ideas. Famous Sphynxs soon emerged *en masse*. With their odd appearance attracting the most attention, given significantly less credit is their intuitiveness and intelligence.

Without a pelt to keep them heated, Sphynx cats are prone to the cold and thus massive fans of warm beds and notorious for sneaking, welcome or not, under blankets with their owners. A good snuggle is something they crave, and they're perpetually honing in on heat. Though extroverted in their behaviour toward humans, Sphynx Cats can become completely disinterested in other cats, preferring to bask in the attention they receive from their owners, become overly competitive and adopt elitist attitudes toward other felines.

With a skin texture that is comparable to chamois leather, the Sphynx is not truly hairless. Their variations in skin colour



are actually indicative of what colour their fur would be like, if it existed in greater quantities.

Their lack of pigmentation and fur leave them exposed to sunburn, and coupled with their tendencies to wander and follow every ounce of curiosity to its end, it's best to keep a very close eye on a Sphynx. That or at the very least it's important, however resistant they may be, that an adequate amount of sunblock is applied prior to their leaving home.



The running of the cheese

Bryant Apolonio is potentially too wise to play this sport



Pictured centre: cheese.
Source: The Inquisitr

Unpasteurised Gloucester cheese is famous for three reasons. The first is the strength of its flavour when aged. The second is its hard yet crumbly texture, again dependent on the length of aging.

The third is its capacity to be rolled down hills at 112 km/hr while hordes of men and women stumble after it. The Cooper's Hill Cheese Rolling and Wake is where one can see precisely this in action. Every year in Gloucester, England, ambitious drunks hurtle themselves down almost-vertical muddy slopes chasing a wheel of milk fat.

A strange way to pass time? Absolutely. The author of this article weirdly associates the competition with the Running of the Bulls in Pamplona, Spain, except less people are gored to death

and cheese is not sentient. Yet, like the Running, it (1) demands a great deal of agility, which is (2) rewarded by a lot of physical pain, and (3) the whole thing is ultimately senseless. In 1993, 15 people were hurt, and four of them were hurt very badly. Like, spinally. Participation means an inevitable trip to the hospital — ambulances queue up at the bottom like taxis. No one is sure exactly why the competition is called a 'wake' but you could take a wild guess. At least we had fun.

This is why Cheese-Rolling was banned in 2009. Its organisers ignored death threats and simply called it all off. Which, the more I think about it, is a shame. Cheese has been rolled on Cooper's Hill been since the 15th century (apparently derived from some pagan fertility ritual). People from all over the world came over and watched the cheese chase. Upwards of 500 every year. My high-school Geography teacher never stopped talking about the time he participated because he was so eerily proud of his achievement. Poor man.

But are laws a thing that have ever stopped people doing what they really, really want to do? An unofficial version

of the event started up in 2010 which is literally no different from the original. The cheese rolls on (sorry) because people love the game they play. For the last two years it's been held in a way that can only be described as 'illegal.' Same time, same place. Authorities more or less turn a blind eye, in return, presumably, for some under-the-table cheddar.

In future times we'll look back on the prohibition and lament our choices. Because where there's a demand there's always a supply. Black market cheese rolling cannot be stopped: not now, not ever.



Contestants tumble down steep hills at a pace not significantly slower than the cheese's 112km/hr
Source: The Inquisitr

1. Robbie Deans is the coach of what Australian sporting team?
2. Who is the director of the upcoming James Bond film, *Skyfall*?
3. In what year was Martin Luther King, Jr. killed?
4. "It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done: it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known", is the final line from what famous novel?
5. 'Co' is the official abbreviation for what element?
6. 'I'll Be Missing You' is a duet performed by which three artists?
7. What three colours would you find on the Romanian flag?
8. Prior to Islamabad being built in the 1960s, what was the capital of Pakistan?
9. In what year was Tony Abbott president of the SRC at the University of Sydney?
10. In what year was the first *Godzilla* film released?
11. *The 2nd Law* is an upcoming album set to be released in 2012 by which British rock band?
12. The annual 'Festival of Dangerous Ideas' is primarily hosted at what Sydney venue?
13. Abraham Lincoln held presidential office during what decade of the 19th century?
14. What famous Italian football player recently signed with Sydney FC?
15. Cyberphobia is a fear of what?
16. Who composed the classical piece of music, *La Boheme*?
17. The film *Matilda* was based on a book from which author?
18. Who is associated with the invention of the helicopter?
 - a) Alfred Noble
 - b) Thomas Edison
 - c) Igor Sikorsky
19. "Dr. Hannibal Lecter. Brilliant. Cunning. Psychotic. In his mind lies the clue to a ruthless killer?" is the tagline from what film?
20. Croatian Marin Cilic is famous for playing what sport?

5	1					8	3
6		3		2			
			3		5		1
					8		
9	3						
			5				
		8					
			2	9			
4		1	8	7			

TEASER

T	S	I
C	H	R
A	A	N

12 = These words are nice.
20 = So many more words to love.
47 = I love all the words.

[illegible]

3÷	7	96×	16+	4÷		11+	
						7-	14×
13+	19+			6×			
	6+	2-		1-		4-	4-
		12+		1-			
105×			1-		3-	3÷	15+
	56×		10+				
	6+		2		2-		

KenKen tips: 1. Numbers can not repeat in any row or column.
2. The puzzle is split into boxes called ‘cages’.
3. In the upper left-hand corner of each cage is a target number and a mathematical sign indicating how the numerals within a particular cage interact to produce the target number.

A crossword puzzle grid with the following words filled in:

- Across: for, kit, sch, n, jux, ta, pos
- Down: q, u, a

[illegible]

2. See 3-dn
8. The heart is terrible at hiding a performer (7)
9. Excellent 21 of plasticity cover (7)
11. Skirt of deity's repetition (4)
12. Charitable Hun's files damaged (9)
13. Gore left leaving all (2)
14. Mother has use for train station (6)
16. Handle party, or screw up (8)
18. Alert, Ned becomes horny (8)
20. Size of Hydrogen-8 (6)
- 22, 20-dn. Such a prostitute in seedy part of London (4)
23. To bring in insect is urgent (9)
24. 13-ac's love, as well (4)
26. Ellen's first to agree with attractive sight (7)
27. One from Tel Aviv is changing real one (6)
28. Choreographer and coach next to disorganised key rebel (5,8)

1. Rearrange anger at miasma! (13)
2. Apprentices are at home with birds (7)
3. 2-ac. Cézanne pretends to be a piece of wood? (4-13)
4. Look! Ruined Christmas holds hollow elf (6)
5. Glances over compiler on poem's rhythm (8)
6. Grave role created when too big (4-5)
7. I controlled man from Tehran (7)
10. One who takes clothes off in a 14? (13)
13. Parent rises in the morning (2)
15. Ghostly heart broken and extremely lonely after fun doesn't start (9)
17. Banter to mend golf accessory without me (8)
19. Ithout ny hirt n? (7)
20. See 22-ac
21. Regally disturbed a place of display (7)
22. North Pole around North Pole dweller (2,4)
25. Of the mouth, or a bell-end (4)

Answers: *The Quiz*: 1. 'The Wallabies' (rugby union) 2. Sam Mendes 3. 1968 4. A *Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens 5. Cobalt 6. Puff Daddy, Faith Evans & 112 7. Red, yellow, and blue 8. Karachi 9. 1979 10. 1954 11. Muse 12. Sydney Opera House 13. 1860s 14. Alessandro del Piero 15. A fear of computers 16. Giacomo Puccini 17. Roald Dahl 18. c) Igor Sikorsky 19. *The Silence of the Lambs* 20. Tennis *Brain Teaser*: Friday is the name of his horse.

Your Assessment & Appeal Rights

As a University of Sydney student you have many assessment rights. Policies entitle all students to full information about course goals and requirements and this information must be given to you before the end of the first week of a course. Information you are entitled to includes:

- assessment criteria
- attendance and class requirements
- weighting – breakdown and calculation of assessment marks
- explanation of policies regarding ‘legitimate co-operation, plagiarism and cheating’, special consideration and academic appeals procedures
- early and clear statement of sanctions and penalties that may bring your mark down, and fair application of these penalties
- balanced and relevant assessment tasks
- fair and consistent assessment with appropriate workloads and deadlines
- written consultation before the half-way point of the unit if assessment requirements need to change
- changes must not disadvantage students
- adequate arrangements to cater for disabilities and other requirements
- access to staff out of class time at reasonable hours
- fair and relevant marking procedures
- anonymous posting of results (or arguably deidentified at least)
- timely return of assessments
- helpful feedback

- access to exams up to four months after the result
- the right to appeal up to three months after an academic decision
- enough time for remedial learning when there is reassessment

Appeals – University Procedures

If you believe a mark or University decision is wrong and you want to appeal you must lodge an appeal within 15 working days.

The first step is to talk to the person who made the decision – often your lecturer. See if you can go through the assessment and discuss your performance with them. Make sure you know how the mark was worked out – including any scaling or marks deducted or changed for reasons not directly related to that particular assessment. Your questions and concerns may be resolved at this stage, helping you understand how you can improve in the future. Alternatively, you may feel the matter is still unresolved and wish to continue with your appeal.

1. Make your appeal in writing and make sure it is easy for other people to understand.
2. Listen to or read staff comments and reasons for a decision closely. Keep these in mind when you write your appeal letter.

3. Base an appeal on a process matter rather than an academic judgement.
4. Know your desired outcome.
5. Familiarise yourself with the relevant policies.
6. Know who you are appealing to Lecturer/Unit of study Coordinator; someone higher in the appeal chain within the Faculty; and then the University Student Appeals Body (Academic decisions only, and only where there has been a breach of process); You must be given reasons for each person’s decision.
7. If you cannot resolve appeals internally, you may be able to approach external bodies eg. NSW Ombudsman, the Anti-Discrimination Board etc. Administrative decisions made outside of the Faculty have appeals to different people. Speak to the SRC for advice.

Your Appeal Rights

According to University policy, appeals should be dealt with:

- in a timely manner
- with confidence
- impartially and not disadvantage you in the future
- procedural fairness
- free access to all documents concerning your appeal

For help drafting your appeal talk to an SRC caseworker.

Did you know?

that if you are a student at a SATELLITE CAMPUS you can still access the services of the University’s Financial Assistance Office? Check out the website for details www.sydney.edu.au/financial_assistance or email financial.assistance@sydney.edu.au to find out more.

Ask Abe



Hi Abe,

I hope you can help me. I have some heavy stuff going on in my life at the moment and I have fallen behind in a couple of my subjects. I think I might be able to catch up if I just given enough breathing space, but my lecturers don’t want to be very helpful. I don’t think this is very fair. What should I do?

Rushed

Hi Rushed,

I’m really glad you wrote. There are literally hundreds of other students in your situation. The first thing to do is to step back from your situation and work out what are the “heavy” things in your life right now. Put some solutions in place so that things get easier for you. Ask for help now so that you have the chance to finish some subjects successfully this semester. Then work out what you need to do to pass in each subject. Talk to your lecturer or year advisor to see if it is possible to get some extensions or special consideration. Remember that it might be best to drop one or two subjects to allow you to focus on the other subjects. However, if you are on a Centrelink payment talk to SRC Help before dropping any subjects. Most importantly deal with all of this now rather than waiting for everything to get worse. SRC Help is able to help you with most of these issues including referring you to others who can help.

Abe

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. Coupled with his own expertise on dealing with people, living on a low income and being a dog, Abe’s answers can provide you excellent insight.



SRC Legal Service

Is your job offer an employment scam or even worse?

It is remarkable how easy it is for someone to rip off students looking for work. Students need money desperately and are prepared to take risks in finding work. The SRC Legal Service has had clients recently complaining about employment scams.

One clue to an employment offer being a scam is the demand for the student to pay a deposit.

YOU SHOULD NEVER HAVE TO GIVE A POTENTIAL EMPLOYER MONEY AND EMPLOYERS ARE REQUIRED BY LAW TO PAY EMPLOYEES FOR THE TIME THEY ARE BEING TRAINED.

Another clue is the lack of identification information given by the employer about

themselves.

YOU SHOULD ALWAYS HAVE ENOUGH INFORMATION ABOUT AN EMPLOYER SO THAT YOU CAN CONTACT THEM IF THERE IS A PROBLEM LATER ON.

It is impossible for our solicitors or the Fair Work Ombudsman to get unpaid wages and entitlements for you if they cannot trace the employer. In the case of our shonky employer they only gave our clients their mobile number and email address. You cannot trace someone from either of these.

A related issue is the risks students are taking by giving copies of their identity documents to someone who they do not know and whose claims they cannot verify. It is very easy for a con man or

woman to steal your identity. They can then open bank accounts, possibly for the purpose of taking out loans in your name, access your bank account, and open mobile phone accounts for example.

If you are concerned about a job you have applied for or are thinking of applying for, you can come to the SRC Legal Service in the Wentworth Building, and get us to check the information you have about the offer. Our phone number is

9660 5222 or you can email us at solicitor@src.usyd.edu.au

Maggie Hayes, Solicitor

President's Report: The cost of your education

president@src.usyd.edu.au

Phoebe Drake is worried about what the future will bring

If you, like many, believe your HECS debt will already be crippling enough - you have another thing coming. The Coalition has, again this week, confirmed its intention to deregulate university fees - a move that will see students pay more

to go to university.

Not sure what a deregulated system of fees would look like? Well, essentially it allows universities to set the price of your degree. The most alarming aspect of this model is that universities compete

with each other for the most expensive degree- believing you will think the more expensive a degree, the better it is.

Ultimately, when it comes to education, one would hope to see an investment from the government through funding of additional places for students to achieve higher education. A model such as this would see an understanding that through the funding of higher education, we are investing in the future of the country.

The Coalition's model is anything but this, and will see students burdened with higher debt by forcing them, in some cases, to pay up to \$300 000 for a degree.

The recent deregulation of places saw an attempt by the government to expand access and widen the participation of low SES and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at university.

As I've said before, this is an aspiration surely, but its goals can only be reached by increasing base funding

and improving services for students on campus.

The deregulation of fees, alternatively, works in the opposite direction, discouraging students from attending university because of the high costs of each degree. We already know that HECS as it stands disincentivises many from obtaining tertiary study. The Coalition has therefore demonstrated that accessibility of education is not a priority, and not an area for investment.

The current system, whilst far from perfect sees the Australian Government subsidise Commonwealth supported places. Here, both the government and the student make a contribution. Students can either pay their student contributions up front, or can access the HECS-HELP scheme to pay their student contribution.

Areas of study are grouped into 'bands', which takes into account the priority of each area and sets the student contribution amount.



Education Officer's Report: Postgraduatisation

education.officers@src.usyd.edu.au

Sam Farrell has little time for a government crying poor

Although I do not claim to be the world's finest financial mind, there are some broad trends in the university's financial reviewing process that stick out to even the most arts-student of arts students.

In perhaps the most decipherable graph of the university's 2011 financial review, there is one clear area for growth in the sector - postgraduate Full Fee Paying Places. In 2011, this made up for 11.3 per cent of income from students. Remembering that postgraduate places are not subject to the same fee regulations as undergraduate places, it seems financially savvy for the university to begin moving students from undergraduate to postgraduate.

How? It's a trend called postgraduatisation. Take the Juris Doctor, for example - isn't this just a condensed version of its undergraduate sibling? Yes. But the JD program is far more lucrative for the university. It is entirely conceivable that the undergraduate combined program may be slowly phased out and moved to an iteration of the Melbourne Model (a model whereby you must undertake an undergraduate degree with a variety of subjects unrelated to your degree).

But this is not the autonomous choice of the university - our university administration deals with what funding they can get, the vast majority of it being Government-based. In a week when the

NSW government announced savage cuts to school education funding, it is important that student organisations are effective and clear advocates for the value of a properly funded tertiary education, unmitigated by the sector-wide financial pressures to which our university must respond - often in a sub-optimal way for students.

It continues to be my firm belief that base funding levels should be raised by 10 per cent across the sector. It was supremely frustrating at a consultation round with Minister for Tertiary Education Chris Evans' department to hear the constant cry of poverty. Government can't find the money?

I bet Gina Rinehart can.



Education Officer's Report: University Fees

education.officers@src.usyd.edu.au

David Pink will be celebrating this week's Newspoll results

Our Education Is Not For Sale

How would you feel about paying \$300,000 for your degree?

Welcome to the Liberal Party's new



higher education policy (released last week) - Tony Abbott is threatening to completely deregulate university fees, privatise the HECS loan system and

reintroduce up-front full fee places for domestic undergraduates.

What do these three policies mean for you?

Fee deregulation means that universities will be able to charge as much as they want for degrees. With the Liberals also flagging a

30 per cent cut to university funding in the order of tens of billions of dollars, this means that students will have to make up the balance.

Privatisation of HECS will mean that instead of students taking out loans with the government (indexed at inflation), there will instead be an American-style student loans system where private companies will be able to charge market-level interest rates. This could mean a situation like America, where, as Chris Evans puts it, "students are left with massive education debts that shadow them for years, hindering their ability to get a mortgage or make other big investments in their lives."

Up-front full fee places will mean that the Commonwealth will stop providing subsidies to approximately 25 per cent of all university places reserved for domestic students. This means a return to the

Howard-era days when a rich kid who got an ATAR at just over 80 could get a place studying law or medicine by having his parents pay the \$300,000 tuition costs up-front and in full - it also meant a student who got the marks missed out.

How do we stop this trainwreck?

There's no use the SRC sitting tight in our dungeon under Wentworth, focusing on on-campus issues like lecture recordings or even staff cuts, when the whole system is about to implode from above.

The EduFactory! Conference being organised for the Labour Day long weekend in Canberra next week will be the planning session for the national anti-cuts network necessary to fight Abbott's education cuts and fees.

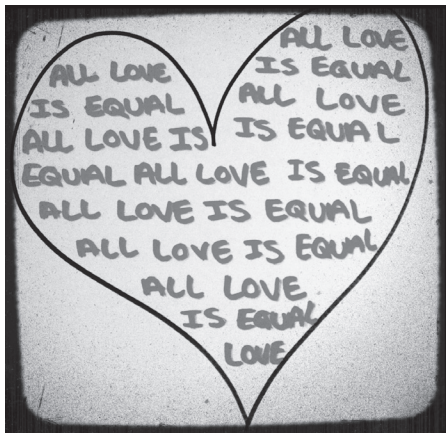
If you would like to join the (so far!) twenty person delegation from Sydney Uni SRC, drop me an email at: education.officers@src.usyd.edu.au.

Vice-President's Report: Marriage Equality

vice.president@src.usyd.edu.au

Government should stay out of the bedroom, writes **Tom Raue**

At the most recent SRC meeting we had a debate about marriage equality. Almost everyone in the room agreed that we should all have equal rights regardless of sexuality, but there were two very different worldviews on display. One group pushed for the Marriage Act to be amended to include same-sex couples. The other group thought that government involvement in marriage should end, and that no relationships should receive special privileges.



I fall into the latter camp. I think that anyone should be able to call their relationship a "marriage", whether it's two men, a man and a woman, or three men and a woman. If the government decides what marriage is, it will continue to be exclusive of some people, whether they are polyamorous or simply choose not to be in a relationship. For the government to sanction some relationships but not others is deeply problematic.

I'm not queer, so I'll leave the complexities of this particular debate to that community. I do think that this argument points to a wider trend in politics that the SRC should combat. Rather than challenging the power of elites and the government, we simply ask to be included. The discourse around marriage equality focuses on letting queer people into the family of accepted norms. Now that most of us are no longer afraid of queer people, there's a push to include them in the existing institution of marriage.

There are bigger issues at stake. Why does the government have authority over our personal lives? Of course we should fight for equality, but why does that take the form of begging for the government's approval? Our society is deeply flawed when we are so addicted to submission. The idea has been beaten into us that the government should have the power to decide between right and wrong, so that we try and simply convince politicians that they should declare certain behaviours acceptable.

We have to change this way of thinking. We have to say our private lives are our business, not the government's. If a behaviour does no harm to anyone else, then the state should back off. It should stay away from our relationships, our internet use, and our taste in music or books. We should put an end to



ensorship, ASIO and police power instead of simply tweaking things around the edges.

It is for this reason that the SRC supports full marriage equality in the short term, but in the long term the abolition of state legislated marriage altogether. The SRC and all politically minded people should be wary of what we fight for – true liberty and equality, or just convincing conservatives to include us.

General Secretary's Report: SSAF Follow-up

general.secretary@src.usyd.edu.au

SSAF negotiations have incurred the wrath of **Tim Matthews**



So all of your SRC Office Bearers (including myself) took up their reports last week explaining to you what a cluster-fuck SSAF negotiations are. So it should be clear that we are mad. Really. Mad.

The SRC is dependent upon funding from the university for close to 100 per cent of its income. We don't charge

students directly for our casework services, our legal service, our advocacy and representation, to read *Honi Soit* and, although we may charge you a nominal fee for secondhand books, we subsidise the cost so much that the book store actually loses money. The outcome of these negotiations is vital to the future of all of these programs. And we think that they are pretty fucking important programs.

But don't reach for the pitchfork or occupy anything yet.

We've been working with the other student organisations (SUPRA, USU, SUSF and CSG... because we all love a good acronym) to determine an equitable allocation of these funds in light of your preferences from SSAF

surveys, the relative scale and cost of our operations, and our plans for growth and expansion. And there is a lot that these organisations agree upon. We all recognise that the respective student organisations contribute uniquely to the University of Sydney community. We all recognise that students are best placed to decide the quantum of SSAF expenditure. We all recognise the need for equity and certainty in the SSAF allocation.

There is no number of words in *Honi Soit* reports that can communicate our fierce commitment to securing the best possible distribution of this funding for you. The process is getting to the pointy end, with our deadline for an agreement looming at September 25.

If you have thoughts on how you would like to see this money distributed, please send me an email at general.secretary@src.usyd.edu.au.



UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY UNION

Welfare Officer's Report: SUV Price Hikes

welfare.officers@src.usyd.edu.au

Rafi Alam loves the Village People



SUV fee hikes

Recently I spoke to some students from Sydney University Village (SUV) who are angry about recent moves at SUV to increase prices. These price hikes are above the rate of inflation, and thus is a money grabbing ploy. Some statistics: a single study bedroom in a 4-5 bedroom apartment went from \$211.50 in 2011, to \$238.50 in 2012, and \$256.80

in 2013 (approved fees). Every other room has also increased, but this is the most alarming, as these bedrooms are meant to be budget options. This affects rural students who board at SUV due to its cheaper prices than college or share houses.

One reason for this is because they can charge international students more for fees. Some have called this movement to fight SUV price increases 'racism' – however, what is more racist is SUV charging international students more as a means of exploitation. International students already pay more for university. Another example at SUV that indicates this is the alleged spruik of a 'living kit' with cutlery etc., which cost these students a lot, even though cutlery tends to be left in the house. This is hidden from these students.

The SRC needs to fight for more affordable accommodation, and these fee hikes are fucking over students who come from abroad or from interstate and don't have the option to live at home. Sydney University is a world renowned university and the main university of NSW, and so staying at their home town is often not an option.

Students have threatened to move out, but before this, I will move the SRC to facilitate actions against these disgusting moves.

If you want to get involved, please send an email to welfare.officers@src.usyd.edu.au

Politics

Recently, Tony Abbott has been called up on alleged misdemeanours he made at Sydney University during his time in student politics, including the SRC

presidency. Regardless of what you think about him, this shows that student politics often affects or leads national politics.

Clothes swap

After the election, the Welfare Dept. wishes to do a clothes swap to highlight student poverty. Get excited for it!



The Sandstone Report

CAMPUS SECURITY

This is a dark, dark day for the University of Sydney. I had nothing to offer this job but blood, toil, tears and a deferred sentence for assault occasioning bodily harm...but I gave it all. I gave it all! Who else was prepared to give up their family life for this job? Who else was prepared to jeopardise their trial separation for this job? Who else was willing to do unsolicited overtime just so that we could rest easy at night knowing it was a stray cat that kept setting off the emergency exit alarm in the Chemistry building? No-one!

For the last eight weeks I have done nothing but sleep, eat, and breathe campus security. So I'm not about to just lie down and die because I've been told that the university has already gone over its security budget for the year! I don't care if HR tells me that they just simply have no money to pay my wages anymore. I don't care if I've received more complaints in my eight weeks than any other campus security officer ever. I don't care if Gavin (*the head of security – Eds.*) tells me that my manic enthusiasm for the job is starting to scare my co-workers.

Why? Because I know what's really going on here. My redundancy is all part of an elaborate conspiracy to overthrow the university administration. The signs have been there all along, I just didn't see them: the student protests; the half-crazed ramblings plastered on the New



Law building; the loss of Donut King. It all makes sense now. They're trying to slowly but surely destroy us from within, one missing donut at a time. I'm still not entirely sure who exactly 'they' are yet, but believe me they're out there and they're coming for us all.

Which is why I'm assembling a crack undercover paramilitary unit to get to the bottom of this mess. Posing as students, Roger (the hobo who sleeps in

the graffiti tunnel – Eds.) and myself will seamlessly integrate into university life. We will watch you, we will learn from you, we will become you. Like ships in the mist, or ghosts, or Jason Bourne, we will pass unnoticed, then one day, you'll think to yourself "why does this room smell like gangrene and sadness?" and then BAM! Hobo in your tute!

You won't know when, you won't know where, but we'll be there watching you as you use the Carslaw toilets because there's this little crawl space you can get in. My name is Samir, I am a campus security officer and I'm not going anywhere.



Another Day, Another Drink with Dr Rupert Thorogood



Confronted my nemesis this week. Not the dreaded red pen of the Reverend Spence. No, something far more insidious; the two-for-one special on Wyndam's Creek Merlot at Broadway Cellars. My embattled liver tries in vain to keep me away, but in its shrivelled, pickled state, suffice to say, it was not successful. I quaffed away the tears of regret in Victoria Park. This was not the day the petite blonde nymph who served

me would be overcome by my bookish charm.

Wine imbibed, I sat, staring at the bleak taupe walls of this shoebox of an office, Ballantines in hand, celebrating the end of another Tuesday, when I heard knock at the door. My heart skipped a beat, thinking it could be that nubile pre-Honours student I failed last week in the hope she'd visit me to appeal her result. But my stomach quickly dropped – the

knock was distinctly flabby, with a subtle echo of disappointment. It must be the bane of my career – Belinda.

She bore troubling news. Apparently, whilst gorging herself on the complimentary Arnotts Assorted Creams at the Wordsworth symposium, she had overheard the Head of School discussing my 'career prospects'... I couldn't tell you it was surprising, but the blow sent me straight to the couch with a glass of claret.

On the plus side, at least she wasn't asking inane questions about how to improve her latest thesis chapter. I gave praise to Dionysus – I didn't have nearly enough wine to make it through another gruelling hour of that nonsense. So it must not be long now before I receive the tap on the shoulder, the push off the cliff, the knife in the back. I've been wiling away the days wallowing on the couch, but it hasn't been all vodka tears and microwave dinners.

I've been thinking of a career renaissance as a quiz show host. That asinine prick Larry Emdur spends his days prancing around on screen with

buxom models, and all he has to know is whether the price is right or not. He's probably never entered a shop that didn't have a security guard stationed at the outpost, let alone purchased the packs of Swisspers wipes or Surf laundry powder those jowly middle-aged women in his audience yearn for. Why not give his job to someone more suitable?

Admittedly, my skin is increasingly dotted with liver spots, but to find someone who knows whether that Big W snack oven costs more than a six pack of Victoria Bitter, Channel Seven would need look no further than yours truly. The affections of the menopausal grandmothers throwing themselves at me day after day would just be something I'd have to deal with. It's been a while between drinks – metaphorically of course – but I am nothing if not a gracious sex object.

But that dream is for another day. My gout is playing up again, my packet of Smith's crisps is empty, and so is my tumbler of Cab Sav. Oh God, Deal or No Deal is on, and there's not enough Bombay Sapphire in the world to make Andrew O'Keefe bearable.

Strictly Sara

I went to the administration offices to sort out my enrolment this morning. The lady at the desk put my name down as 'Ms.' but my sub-major in Gender Studies made sure that wasn't going to fly. I called her up on it and watched her change it to 'Miss'. 'Ms.' is just so frumpy, I didn't want people to think I was already married when I've got at least three years before that happens – with all due respect, I hope you're reading this David! Also it means I'm reclaiming my feminine identity when people call me 'Miss', right?

Oh my God, the girl in line before me was just wearing the most heinous outfit ever. I could have started World War Three over it. She had this awful long skirt on, she looked like Mary (Gaudron) Poppins but even uglier. I just don't get how girls wear long skirts because they haven't bothered to shave. Get your shit together girl!

Shaving should be a priority, and all

those pseudo-feminists who think hairy armpits are a protest are just kidding themselves. Nobody's going to listen to your submissions in court when they're distracted by all that hair you're waving in their faces.

Anyway it's a kind of slavery because it completely dictates what you wear. And you don't want to lose that kind of freedom. What I've realised is that I love my body just the way it is. Those Dove ads were so revolutionary in changing the way I felt about myself.

People are always surprised to find out that I consider myself a feminist. It's like they think that because my family's rich, my Mum's hot and never had a job, and Daddy pays for everything I want, I've somehow been indoctrinated into a patriarchal worldview. Don't they realise I went to an all-girls private school? How much more feminist can you get that? Besides I do genuinely like rugby boys, and during my winter

clerkship all the partners at Clayton Utz always complimented me on what I wear. Who said anything about a glass ceiling?

My girls and I went out last Friday night. Don't you just love how women are called 'girls' but men aren't called 'boys'? I love that, it makes me feel all young and fresh in comparison. That's why we can get away with stuff like plastic surgery but men can't, right? I bought this one guy drinks all night to keep him from running away from me, and I love having that power. It's so exciting to see feminism turning the tables – I mean, buying all the alcohol was killing my purse but I totally destroyed that joint!

We ended up going back to mine, because he lives somewhere random, and still at home with his parents. What is up with that! I'm so proud that I managed to get my parents to pay for me to move out, I'm all about being in-

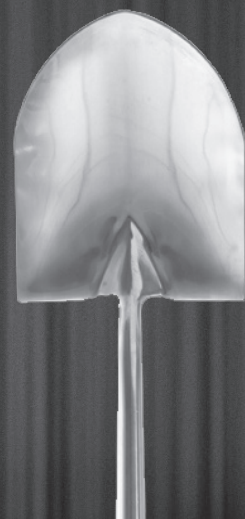
dependent and that. He said he doesn't work either, because he's saving up to go travelling. When I asked him how he was saving money unemployed, he just showed me his Centrelink card. It was so sad, that welfare stuff is way disempowering! It's a total ball and chain, having no control over the government depositing money in your bank account. I mean, at least my parents give me a cheque, so I can cash it whenever and wherever I want.

But in the morning I felt like I had this duty of care to take reasonable steps to ensure that he didn't hang around all day, so I also paid for his cab home, and it means I control where he goes. And also because I'm all about that economic freedom, right?

Anyways, woo feminism!

xoxo Sara

Pinehart Reviews Revues



It's a bloody expensive exercise, this revue business. Not a single free ticket from those penny-pinchers over at *Honi Soit!* Some of the shows were charging \$20 a head! That's about 10 days work in Africa. And you should see what that Seymour Centre is charging for a beer. Highway robbery!

Despite my wealth recently plummeting by \$9.5 billion I was able to muster the necessary finances to attend most of this year's revue season. Although I was reticent to leave the safe havens of Western Australia for the sinful indulgences of Sydney, I was pleased to see how well you had perfected the balance of letting in foreign workers while ghettoising them to protect land values. Brilliant.

Queer Revue was problematic from the get-go. No seat had been suitably reupholstered to accommodate my frame, and apparently I could not occupy the aisle due to some "OHS" restriction, which the usher assured me was merely a rogue piece of East Coast bureaucracy. Happily I was able to install myself in the mezzanine which, despite a few creaks and groans, refrained from giving way.

I was most distressed to find myself

mercilessly and relentlessly lampooned by these queer folk, portrayed with simmering glee as a rude, gluttonous tyrant. I thought with all the hard hats, fluoro clothes, and poetry, I was cultivating something of a gay fan base. I already look like Rosie O'Donnell, for fuck's sake! What more do I need to do?

Still, at least it wasn't as offensive as Architecture Revue.

Law Revue, which has a similar budget to Hancock Prospecting, was much kinder. Its recurrent motif of bashing Labor and the Greens was an original and important contribution to the national debate, I felt. I particularly loved their caricature of that awful Juliar: very accurate. Her arse could plug one of my mines. Hopefully they'll soon shelve the idealistic folly about working in human rights law and resign themselves to their actual future: helping billionaires keep the money away from their cuntish kids.

Can't remember much of Arts Revue, but I'm sure it was oreful. I know those arts school types: long hair, greasy jeans, spending too much time down at the pub, drinking or smoking and socialising, when they should spend more time

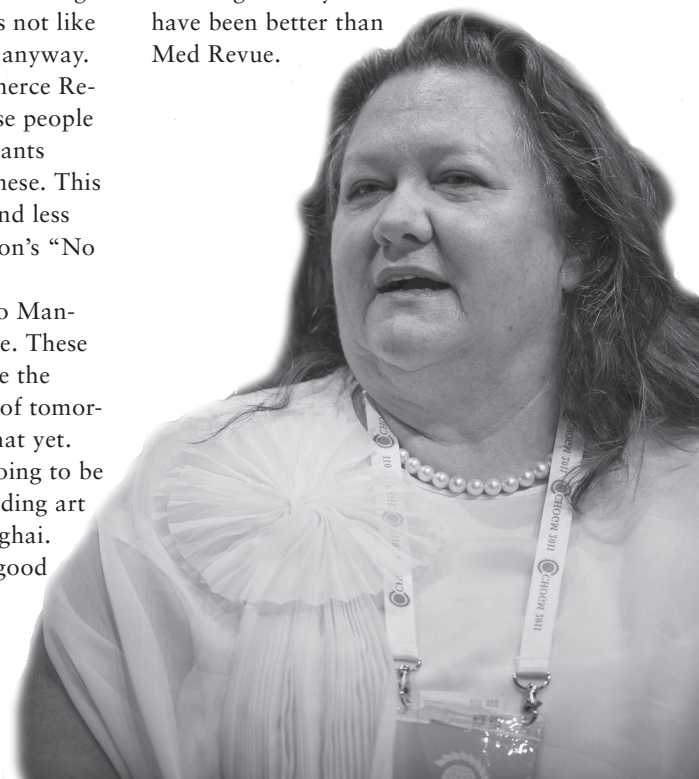
working. Then they get cushy jobs in the Canberra public service, working out new ways to tax me and my business out of existence. Might buy it up and install myself as Director next year, or failing that, just have it destroyed. It's not like anyone really wants it to stay, anyway.

Not sure I approve of Commerce Revue in principle: shouldn't these people be studying? I like my accountants smart, straight-laced, and Chinese. This fragrance is an abomination, and less entertaining than Craig Emerson's "No Whyalla Wipeout".

Finally, I hauled myself up to Manning Bar for Engineering Revue. These fine young men and women are the hole-diggers and lorry-drivers of tomorrow. I wonder if they realise that yet. They probably think they're going to be designing skyscrapers and building art galleries. Pffft. Maybe in Shanghai. It's a good thing they look so good naked: it's hot out there in the Pilbara. Hello boys.

Couldn't see Science Revue because I had to be back in court to excommunicate my children, or buy Fairfax, or

something. I'm sure it was the usual bunch of smart arses being smart arses. I hate that shit. Like hearing Wayne Swan do stand-up. Or watching me and Clive Palmer get frisky. At least that would have been better than Med Revue.



The Hon Barry O'Farrell MP Premier of NSW Minister for Western Sydney

MEDIA RELEASE

Premier and Minister for Western Sydney Barry O'Farrell today admitted that his promised support of rugby league player Robbie Farah's crusade against Twitter trolls was blatant electioneering.

"No, I couldn't care less about Twitter trolls, but I knew that looking like I was in Robbie's corner would mean instant votes in Western Sydney", Mr O'Farrell said.

"I figured, if they care so much about a bloody rugby league player's dead mum, then if I pretend to give a shit too they won't realise how disconnected I am from them."

"You don't honestly think I care about what some fifteen year old tweeted at a rugby league player do you?"

"I'm from the North Shore, we don't watch league", Mr O'Farrell said, disgustedly.

"Farah's not only an imbecile, he's also a bloody sook – this guy's meant to be tough but he can't handle hate mail from a teenager, I mean, give me a break."

"He threatened a juvenile, the guy's obviously a psychopath with the self-awareness of a caveman – did you see his tweet to Gillard?"

"Don't get me wrong - the Western Suburbs were crucial in our smashing Labor, so I want to keep them on side, but for anyone to think that this was anything more than an orchestrated attempt to look working class, they'd have to be not all there," Mr O'Farrell said.

Mr O'Farrell also admitted that he had no intention of pursuing his proposed legislative reform.

"What I've proposed is an outrageous affront to free speech and I'm aware of that, it was purely done to trick those ignorant swing voters into thinking we have absolutely anything in common."

"They're a necessary evil as far as I'm concerned. I loathe everything they stand, for but I wouldn't be sitting here in my big-boy chair slashing government funding if it wasn't for them."

"Look, when it comes down to it, I don't like poor people, I'm a Liberal, that's who I am. But do poor people vote? Sadly, yes. So do I have to win their votes? Sadly, yes," Mr O'Farrell said.

"If I had my way they wouldn't be allowed to vote at all, and I'm working on that, but until I have a stronger majority in the Legislative Council it'll have to wait."



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.