

week one
semester two
2013

tiot s i n o w

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DO YOU
REALISE
YOU ARE
FLOATING
IN SPACE?

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Knowing your place

"We're made of star-stuff." This blew my mind when I first heard it from cosmological superstar Carl Sagan. He also once said "if you wish to make an apple pie from scratch, you must first invent the universe", but I disgress. It blew my mind because it was the origin story that linked us all together before protein strands formed a billion years ago. We share such a small place together in the universe, but we belong to the whole cosmos.

But this is an idealistic and simple look at the world, one that could barely guarantee our survival in the big bad world. The truth is we're divided: by mountains and seas, by race and class and gender, by our attitudes and actions.

It's not enough to tell asylum seekers that we're all made of star-stuff when they're forced to choose between indefinite detention, resettlement in one of the poorest nations in the world, or death at the hands of 'countrymen'. The policies of the ALP and the Coalition have made them into the new monster of a racist nation. But what if there was a different world, where refugees were welcome? Check out Nina Hallas's article on open borders on page 6.

It's also not enough to tell Trayvon

Martin we're all made of star-stuff. Poor, poor Trayvon: shot dead at 17, for being black and wearing a hoodie. He was walking through his dad's neighbourhood when George Zimmerman executed him. He wasn't in the wrong place at the wrong time, because there's no right place and right time for black youth in the United States. There can be no better world for Trayvon now. Ponder death on page 7, or in Felicity Nelson's article on page 11.

What about the forests and wildlife at risk of demolishment around the country, from the Tarkine to the Kimberly to the Leard State Forest? We share the same star stuff, but we don't hesitate when we eradicate swathes of land from the world. Read more about my thoughts on exploration and the environment on page 10, and contrast the fantasy with what is actually happening right now on the North Pole, documented by Stella Ktenas on page 9.

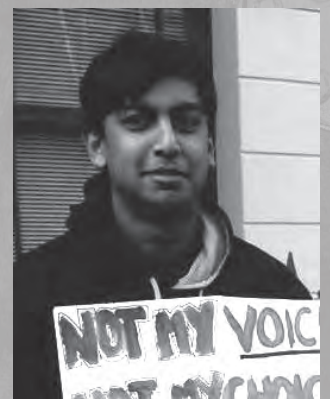
As you read through this paper, note how writers examine, analyse, feel, and describe space, from the way people walk at night on page 8, to how live bands are utilising living rooms on page 16. This isn't a prescription, but more something to recognise in general, that the settings

of our stories are often as important as the characters, and that there is meaning even in negative space.

If you're a new student at university, this will mean finding meaning in the new environment around you. But look past the Hogwarts allure, and you'll find stories everywhere, about everything around you.

If this is your first *Honi*, I hope you find something worthwhile in it, and that it helps you expand your boundaries, even if just by a little.

If you're a regular returning for Semester 2, welcome back home.



Rafi Alam
Editor-in-chief

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WOULD YOU RATHER...

HAVE YOUR EYELIDS MADE INTO A SMALL, NEAT, YET REFRESHINGLY KITSCH KNAPSACK FOR A MOUSE?

OR

HAVE GALAXY LEGGINGS PERMANENTLY STAPLED TO YOUR LEGS?

FAQ:

What is a knapsack?

Is it just an archaic word for backpack? Yes. Fairly sure Enid Blyton invented it. But the word has picked up some different meanings in the 21st century. The Youth these days may refer to an object of derision as a knapsack ("you're such a fucking knapsack") or might even apply it in a sexual context ("let's knapsack hard tonight, baby".)

Are galaxy leggings still trendy?

Galaxy leggings are about as trendy as the word trendy is trendy.

SOUND & FURY

Message of solidarity against USYD admin from Honduras

Tegucigalpa, Honduras
11 July 2013

To the university authorities of University of Sydney, Australia.

In the honour of solidarity between the peoples of the world, from Honduras, we learnt of the abuses by police against university students and workers and other people who fight for better conditions at this University. These people had their rights violated: we demand an end to this repression.

We join our voices in calling for the respect of people's integrity and for a liberatory education.

The workers of Sydney University, have carried out strikes over several days, in the last three months, demanding a collective contract with better work conditions, and have been opposing funding cuts for the university sector.

Many people who have participated in these protests have been attacked for political reasons; they have been attacked in many different ways by police, by riot police and by security guards.

On 26 and 27 March, 6 people were arrested and beaten by the police. The police took 3 to the police station (including a student), against whom they threw false charges, and prohibited these from entering the university grounds, as well as applying bail conditions to them. On this occasion they held 2 of these arrested for 5 hours; they beat others, and attacked people with cameras.

Against the two they kept on the 26th, they captured them again on the 27th for visiting the pickets, who spent another 26 hours each in the police cells, and with additional charges.

On 14 May, police beat several comrades in the pickets and a person suffered fracture in a leg and another was left with wounding to her internal organs.

On 5 June / the police and security guards arrested more than 11 people at around 10 in the morning (Australian time). They were detained for between 2 and 7 hours. Several were left with more false charges and bans. Witnesses say that the police mobilised with photos of people whom they wanted to capture and beat up.

As such, the people whom subscribe together in this solidarity statement; we demand for the false charges to be dropped and stopped, including of >

assault police, assault security guards, hinder and resist arrest, offensive language, trespass, and disobedience.

We also demand for the police to stay away from university grounds.

Education in any part of this planet should be towards transformation, with views towards development and to freedom.

And we sign this letter because reaction before any injustice in any part of the world, is a duty.

Signed by:

Oscar Tercero,

Kenia Iriás – Honduran lawyer

Adriana Espinal – Social worker

Cintia Espinal – Student

Iris Mencía – Writer

Gladys Lanza

Cesar Lazo – Writer

Felipe Acosta – Drama theatrist

A Joel Villalta – Art student

Alex Reyes – businessperson

Dilcia Angulo – Student

Adela Banegas – Teacher and art student

Adriana Villalta – Teacher

Lucy Pagoada – Quesada

Deeply perplexed

Dear *Honi*,

I am deeply perplexed by the consistent decision by some on the Left to use at best misleading statements and at worse, total lies, to personally attack its critics. For instance, in response to my general criticism of the actions of the SRC council in terms of non-attendance and largely ineffective and irrelevant motions, Harry Stratton in his Letter in the last *Honi Soit* of semester, decided to personally attack my involvement with the SRC Council this year. True, I have unfortunately not been able to have been physically present in three meetings so far, but at every stage I have appointed a proxy (who contrary to Harry's accusations has in fact been present) to exercise my vote in the council. Beyond that, despite my alleged absence, I have proposed motions attempting to limit the length of student elections, altering the position of student interfaith officer, and called for reform of the National Union of Students. The last motion ended up passing with bipartisan support and substantially changed the

way the SRC funds the NUS.

Beyond that, in response to Alex Dore's criticism of coverage of the strikes, Ishtiaq Rahman decided it was appropriate to spend an entire letter during the StuVac edition of Sound and Fury utterly defaming Alex's character with multiple outright lies and spurious implications; such that SULC under Alex never apologized for the comments Jones made (it did), that he managed the supposedly 'reviled' Will and Grace campaign (he didn't, and even if he did, the only reason it was reviled was due consistently disproven accusations of cheating by the left and this very publication), that he consistently violated USU regulations last year in opposing the formation of the Small Government society (there is no official basis for this claim whatsoever) and

that he is responsible for the alleged potential accusations of every single of the 250+ SULC members at meetings at other universities. Some might call these accusations harsh; I call it lying.

I think it's telling that criticisms of the actions of the SRC Council, and Alex's of the strike are being met with largely personal attacks and ultimately totally false misrepresentations of reality. I sincerely wish that student politics was more mature than just fallacious mud-slinging, but evidently Harry and Ishtiaq prefer to make attacks on character rather than actually address the substance of our arguments.

Sam Murray
Arts/Law III

From university to student at Sydney University:

NO BECAUSE OF THE LAW
- Eds

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HONI NEWS



FREE

Week Three Edition

"MAN VERSUS NATURE: THE ROAD TO VICTORY"

New housing will ease the rental squeeze for some

The University is bulking up on beds, but not everyone will be able to afford one, reports **Max Chalmers**

The University of Sydney has added at least 750 beds to its current accommodation stock in a move that has drawn tempered praise from the student body.

During the holidays the University announced it had purchased the Queen Mary Building from the State Government at a cost of \$27 million and confirmed the building would be converted into student housing.

SRC President David Pink said the new beds would help ease the University's housing crisis and offer a safer alternative for students currently being taken advantage of in the private rental market.

"I think it's a really strong commitment to expanding the number of beds on campus which is really important," he said.

According to Pink, the SRC was particularly concerned about international students and had received reports indicating some were being forced to live in 11 or 12 person households and engage in 'hot bedding', a practice whereby two students share a single bed and take alternative sleeping shifts; one during the night and one during the day.

However, some concerns have been

raised about the decision to allow private developers to take over the site.

Honi Soit has learned that during the holidays Project Director for Student Accommodation, Tim Johnson, attended a meeting with students living at STUCCO (the semi-student owned cooperative housing block in Newtown) where he advised students the Queen Mary Building would be developed and leased out by a private company at room prices of approximately \$245 to \$300 a week.

Director of Campus Infrastructure Services Greg Robinson confirmed private groups will bid to develop the site but said the University had agreed to ensure the housing would remain "affordable" for at least fifteen years. "Based on recent independent research, this project will provide accommodation which is priced well below the average rental rates within a three kilometer radius of the University, including student housing," Robinson wrote, in an email to *Honi*. Though vague, Robinson pointed to \$245 per week as a likely starting point for price but noted this would be subject to construction costs.

Bjorn Wallin, a member of the Student Housing Action Collective (SHAC), said

this rate would mean the new housing would be inaccessible for many students.

"The state government, and in fact the University as well, can do a lot more for students on Youth Allowance who will not be assisted by a rent that is 10 or 20% below market rate," Wallin said.

The state government's own rubric – which defines affordable housing as that which cost less than 30% of a household's income – shows that even the most modest predictions for the Queen Mary costing (\$245/week) will do little to help students reliant on Centrelink Youth Allowance and Rent Assistance. If these students are unable to undertake additional work, living in the new housing would demand an unfeasible 92.3% of their weekly income. A student would have to be earning \$735 a week to be able to be able to classify renting in the building as affordable.

Wallin said there was little evidence to suggest the University had undertaken proper consultation and that some rooms should have been put aside at a reduced price to help struggling stu-

dents and those in need of emergency housing.

When asked via email whether the University would put caps on rental prices in the building or lobby to have subsidised rooms put aside for students from lower SES backgrounds, Greg Robinson responded simply that: "The investor of each housing development will require an appropriate development return on their investment."

David Pink said he hoped the contract signed by the University would limit future increases in rental rates.

The concern about steep price increases comes in the wake of Sydney University Village's decision to raise its cheapest rental rate by 21% over a two year period, a move which has prompted some sources to criticise the University's contract with Campus Living Villages, who manage the property.



The Queen Mary Building was bought by the university in the holidays. Photo: Stella Ktnes

\$ydney Univer\$ity cashes up

Maddie King makes cents of the university's finances

The votes are in and the money's been counted: 2012 was a good year for Sydney Uni, according to the latest report from the NSW Audit Office.

The report, tabled in Parliament in late May, paints quite the rosy picture of the university's financial health: the best scorecard in the past five years. The university's annual surplus is up \$48.5 million from the previous year, now sitting at \$137 million.

Student course fees rose 10% to \$601 million, likely a response to the government's lifting of course quotas for commonwealth assisted places. The majority of these fees (almost 50 percent) came from overseas students, despite the fact they make up less than a quarter of the student population.

Grants from the Australian government, mostly for research, have also seen a sweet rise of 10 percent, 50 percent of which came from the federal melting

pot of issues, the Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education.

Yet total revenue from research has risen only marginally: just 3.3% since 2011. This is controversial. Research output was the primary yardstick of worth during last year's wave of staff redundancies, with the HR department citing the contractual obligation staff have to dedicate 40 percent (or 19 weeks of full-time employment) to research.

On the whole, however, the report notes that the targets of that contentious 'cost reductions strategy', outlined in the 2011-15 Strategic plan, have been achieved: non-salary expenditure has been reduced by \$28 million; employment costs of general staff, casual staff and contractors have been successfully limited; and 'underlying academic and general staff costs' have been reduced by \$36 million.

The outlook is nonetheless not all peachy, with the report highlighting a few areas of concern.

Operating costs have increased, marking a general trend over the past 5 years (up 35.4%), and is mostly thanks to employee benefits. The audit notes that the "University acted to restrict increases in employee benefit expenses in 2012, but these still increased by 5.3% and include \$26.0 million for redundancy and severance costs." In total, operating costs increased to \$1.6 billion, around 7 percent from 2011.

Annual leave imbalances continue to plague the university, with the report noting that the "current strategy implemented in 2010 does not appear to be effective ... 9.9% of full time equivalent employees [have leave imbalances exceeding 40 days]."

This is problematic for the university, as it is forced to maintain an emergency pool reserve of funds in case large payments have to be paid at one time when the leave is taken. In contrast to a 'pay as you go' system, this 'fully-funded' method traps money until the leave is

taken or staff end their employment.

The extensive capital works program the university has embarked on – the Charles Perkins Centre and The Abercrombie Precinct Redevelopment – are expected to be completed on time and within budget. The report does not mention the \$500 million loan the university will now be drawing upon for the completion of these projects, which CFO Mark Easson told *Honi Soit* last year will accrue \$25 million in yearly interest repayments.

While these projects are on target, the Sydney Student System – a reworking of the university's IT facilities – has been delayed and is expected to go over its budget \$56.5 million project. This is in spite of Easson claiming in the same interview that they had – as of mid-2012 – now correctly budgeted the project.

The university was unavailable for comment as this article went to print.

@MaddyKing_



UNIGATE



All the rumours, hearsay, and downright slander from the world of student politics and culture

USU racist again, no one surprised

This winter, from the makers of 'Back to School', 'Thrift Shop' and the critically acclaimed 'Headdress', comes 'Day of the Dead'. The University of Sydney Union has outdone itself again. It's unclear which of the USU's marketing airheads thought it appropriate to host a themed party based on the Mexican festival of the dead, but you would have thought that by this stage they'd have learnt their lesson. Alas, to the dismay of the *Gate* and the incredulous Facebook masses, they have not.

The theme has been variously described as 'racist', 'appallingly racist' and 'fucking blank racist' on the party's event page, and, to be frank, we can't help but endorse those epithets. Why is it so difficult to choose a theme that doesn't involve promulgating offensive stereotypes? Perhaps, as was alluded to on the event page, the USU is not content with letting colleges have all of the culturally insensitive fun. We have no further comment, except to say that we're more than willing to save the USU's creatives some time and offer a few suggestions for future themes. St Paul's has already given us a Raj party, but how about a Hajj party? Will you make the pilgrimage to Manning and dance to Macklemore in a onesie? We have more ideas, USU, just shoot us an email.

Derrick, we hardly knew ye: a man of many emails steps down

Literary fans of a very specific genre will be feeling a sharp loss at the announcement that Derrick Armstrong - the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (education), Registrar, occasional acting Vice-Chancellor, and professional email writer - will be stepping down from his role at the end of this year.

If University management-watching is a keen hobby of yours, you'll recall that Armstrong was a key player in the nearly catastrophic 2011 University-USU negotiations, in which the University suddenly announced its intention to take control of the USU's provision of commercial services (that is, its control of Manning, Wentworth, and Holme buildings, and the commercial venues run out of those buildings). Famously, this decision was announced while USU President Sibella Matthews was overseas and emailed to all students in spite of the fact existing agreements dictated the USU could continue to run the buildings until 2017. The ploy was unsuccessful - the USU lost some aid in the negotiations but still controls the buildings - and led to a backlash which bolstered student support for the USU.

It was Armstrong who sent the email and led the University's suddenly hostile negotiations, but students familiar with the process told the *Gate* they believed Armstrong was in fact the good cop to Vice-Chancellor Michael Spence's bad cop. Whether the gaps between his apparently good-faith negotiations and suddenly aggressive tactical turn were because of Spence's influence or his own duplicity is unclear, but one student privy to the process told the *Gate* "I think he was a person quite friendly and approachable, and it was definitely easier to lay the USU's concerns to him in a straightforward way than the VC."

Having perhaps done less than all he could to ingratiate himself among the USU crowd, Armstrong also left a poor impression on the organised left on campus this year after he was charged with sending all student emails encouraging students to break picket lines on strike days. His emails also appeared callous, as he continued to promise police presences at these events. This tactic, outwardly to help some students feel safe, was read in a sinister tone by the students who had already had ribs cracked, legs broken, and bruises left by police violence at previous strikes.

Armstrong's background is then, perhaps, a little confounding. *The Gate* understands that Armstrong dropped out of high school to become a welder and later went on to become his family's first University graduate and eventually completed his P.H.D. Whatever his relationship with student organisations, Armstrong seems to have had a genuine affection for education and its power as a means of social mobility. He served as the Dean of the Education Faculty before moving into the Vice-Chancellor's office.

Finally, Armstrong must get credit for his performance at an exclusive USU event last year, which sources say was a particularly well stocked party. On his turn to address the crowd, Armstrong allegedly made fun of the Vice-Chancellor's well known fundraising adventures, claiming the VC had skipped the event to wine and dine a wealthy business interest. "The things people will do for money," he allegedly mused in front of the crown. Indeed.

SRC foots the legal bills for strike arrestees

While next week's 48-hour strike is fast approaching, the legal troubles from the last strike are far from over. Eleven protesters were arrested at Carillon Ave on June 5. Seven people were subsequently charged with offences including

failure to comply with move on orders, blocking roads, offensive language (saying "fuck" is a crime - fuck!), hindering arrest and resisting arrest, and protesters incurred \$1000 worth of fines in total. Four USYD students are now defending the charges in court and will receive the date for their joint hearing on August 15. USYD's SRC has hired a barrister to defend those charged, and is offering the services of the SRC solicitor.

So who is fronting up the cash for the lawyers and fines? It looks like it won't be the NTEU. The SRC already contributed \$500 to the legal troubles following the last 48-hour strike in March and has now decided to support those charged and fined on June 5, in combination with autonomous fundraising. This support isn't limited to USYD students, but extends to other arrestees.

When the *Gate* asked about the NTEU's lack of financial support for the arrestees, Sydney Branch President Michael Thomson said: "fuck off!" He elaborated by explaining that he hadn't received a formal application for financial contribution and was happy for his members to make donations, and then told us to "piss off". When we called the NTEU office, we were told that Thomson is the only person who can speak on behalf of the branch, so we're unable to bring you a more cogent explanation from the horse's mouth.

In an alternate universe where Thomson has undergone media training, he might have explained by saying that none of the arrestees are members of the Sydney branch of the NTEU, and that the branch probably doesn't have all that much money (its officers aren't paid, and it has been paying the wages of every casual who has lost earnings due to the strike). But then, the national body of the NTEU has \$1 million to spare to campaign for the Greens in the upcoming election campaign, and the Sydney branch has relied heavily on student support on the pickets to bolster its bargaining position with University management. It seems it would hardly be impossible or inappropriate for them to stump up some cash for the people who've stood alongside their members on the picket lines.

The question is now whether this will have an impact on the student presence at next week's strike. A number of those arrested are certainly disgruntled. One, who is defending three charges, told us that "the students, unionists and community members who have to pay fines and legal fees were arrested helping the NTEU. I don't think it's much to ask that a trade union donate a bit of money to picketers, especially when they can afford to put a million dollars into ads for the federal election." Another said: "While the strike was undoubtedly a staff-led strike, you can't deny that a majority of people on the picket line are students, and to not receive final support from the NTEU after our arrest that led from supporting them doesn't inspire me to participate in the next strike."

An interview with your new USU exective

Adam Chalmers had a chat to Hannah Morris and Tom Raue, the President and Vice-President of the University of Sydney Union

It's somewhat amazing that a multi-million dollar organisation can be run by a dozen students. For over a century, the University of Sydney Union's student Board of Directors have been running our food, drink, clubs and social events. *Honi Soit* chatted with the USU's newly-elected President Hannah Morris (JD II) and Vice-President Tom Raue (Arts V) about their plans for a more consultative USU, redeveloped and refurbished buildings, and fixing some old USU problems.

Both Morris and Raue seem keen to get more student input into the often inscrutable USU decision-making process. The board wants to keep using the USU Hub to poll students on what decor, food and merchandising they'd like. They're also very keen on consultation forums. In an almost unprecedented move, the previous Board held open forums on issues like affirmative action and the LifeChoice society, to gauge members' thoughts on the issues. While these forums usually attract a small audience of hacks and USU insiders, they're a huge step forward to making the USU more open and in line with students' views. Morris says she found them very helpful: "by holding consultations and reviews annually, we can tap into our knowledge of what's going on campus currently, and make sure we're constantly in touch with what students currently feel about these issues." They mentioned women's, queer and sustainability issues as potential future forum topics.

Many are still surprised by Tom Raue's transformation from censured first-year Board Director to Vice-President. In his first term as a 2012 Board Director, he condemned the USU in *Honi* for approving the LifeChoice society; he later wrote on Facebook that he'd like to see the Atheist Society "boycott/protest" the USU Interfaith Week. These actions saw him censured (issued a formal reprimand) by his peers on Board. While he "obviously disagreed with the censure, and found it upsetting, I've changed and learned how to get things done [on USU Board]." Despite a rocky start to his time on board, Raue created the environmental officer position, encouraged USU support of the staff strike and is busy reforming the Union's governance structures. He says the censure "taught me some valuable lessons, even if it wasn't a pleasurable experience. It wasn't as bad as I thought it was at the time."

Read the rest of this interview at www.honisoit.com/

Open to a solution?

Nina Hallas doesn't like borders, or Bob Carr

Bob Carr's recent addition to bottom-of-the-barrel politics came last month when he attempted to change the terms of reference of asylum seekers to 'economic migrants'. It was an announcement made on the night of Rudd's resurrection, clarifying that the race-to-the-bottom on asylum policy was not going to slow on account of a change in reigns. His aim was clear – in undermining the perceived sense of desperation with which these 'boat people' reached our shores, he neutralised humanitarian arguments about our responsibility to house the persecuted in order to shore the votes of a constituency who've projected social and economic woes into a crass and classic 'fear of the Other'.

Yet – while completely antithetical to his intentions – Carr's claims become almost credulous when factoring the heavy overlap between political instability and large-scale economic hardship, rendering a distinction between their respective 'victims' arbitrary at best. It consequently solicits reflection on the criteria required to gain citizenship, if, indeed, any criteria or restrictions should be required at all.

Tight border controls are a relatively novel political construction, and historically, Nation-States have been much more permeable without tragic consequence. Of course, since then, the world's populace has soared, and means of transportation have become considerably more accessible, but the assumption that Australia would be swamped

with an open border policy is alarmist at best.

At its root, the 'swamping' theory is based on the assumption that people, if given the opportunity, will be naturally self-interested enough to seek a life in a country that provides – in all quantitative measures anyway – better prospects and conditions. It's a bit naïve. Uprooting your whole life to start another – especially one situated in a place as geographically isolated as Australia – is seldom done on a whim, but our gut objection to such a reasonable human want goes a long way to highlight how self-entitled and territorial many of us feel about our simple luck of circumstance. Further, it prompts reflection on why there is such disparity in circumstance, and the answer, for the most part, rests in a history of colonialism and imperialism, the effects of which are still rife today, continued in either the wars we wage, or sweatshop factories we run to exploit cheap labour.

In many respects, the idea of our immigration policy as a nine-circle labyrinth of iron curtain hell is a bit of a façade anyway, and an open border policy would much more significantly affect discourse than intake. Border controls are conveniently variable in their implementation, highlighting yet another contradiction inherent in the globalised world, where freedom of movement is afforded to capital but not people, and tough talk of a "sustainable" population refers only to the proportion-

ally tiny intake of refugees and not the high intake of skilled, business-friendly migrants, with whom we have boundless plains to share. And boundless plains this country does indeed have, for even accounting our desert mass, we have space enough for all who seek to inhabit it, and wealth enough to build the infrastructure to properly facilitate them.

Opening the borders, therefore, is a simple and in reality quite sustainable smoothing of this contradiction that – in conjunction with far less invasive foreign policies and the adoption of revolutionarily more equitable trade conditions to eliminate many 'push factors' – is the only viable solution to the refugee 'crisis' should our nation ever start actually looking for one.

And for the last few stragglers still clutching to a "safety at sea" argument, let's bring it down to basics. Following a simple demand and supply model, the mere fact that boat arrivals have not been deterred by increasingly hard-line policies implies that channels to safer methods of transportation are not being provided to the degree to which they are required, keeping the dubious (but in no way inherently evil) act of 'people smuggling' a robust and lucrative trade. If we open more avenues to seeking asylum, we stop the boats and we stop deaths at sea, which, if their word is to be taken at face value, is the top and only priority of our dear leaders.

to support these contentions.

Other arguments against the referendum include the resulting increased centralisation of Commonwealth power and influence over local government policy; a decrease in accountability as a result of each government blaming the others for any funding failures; and that a new system of money allocation may be costly and inefficient.

Arguments for the referendum include symbolic recognition of the important role played by local government in Australian society; more targeted investment in the provision of local services and the pursuit of national policy objectives; and the possibility of increased funding for local government.

All enrolled voters are required to vote in a referendum. To pass, a 'double majority' of the votes cast must be achieved. This means that the majority of the Australian electorate must vote 'yes', and a majority of the electors in a majority of the States (being four out of six States) must also vote 'yes'.

OPINION

UNI-VERSE

"SHAME ECU GUILD"

Rafi Alam reports on a student political scandal

If you're tuned in with student politics Facebook pages, you may have seen one pop up recently called 'SHAME ECU GUILD' (Edith Cowan University). It declares: "No more RACISM. No more SEXISM. No more ABLEISM. No more QUEERPHOBIA." It also defends Education Vice-President Claire McCormick and Co-Chair of the Equity and Diversity Department Andrew Markey, essentially deposed by the Guild Secretariat and President, Sheridan Young, when their Guild membership was revoked.

McCormick alleges that their removal was due to a dispute between the two and the Guild Secretariat on the role of the student organisation. She claims difficulty in convincing the Guild to fight the cuts on higher education and to participate in the National Union of Students' National Days of Action. Another incident was over the establishment of women's and queer spaces: the university claims there was no space for such rooms, and the Guild is allegedly reluctant in enforcing Safer Spaces agreement. Another issue of McCormick and Markey's was on the alleged reluctance of the Guild to uphold accountability and transparency.

As an elected student representative, McCormick believes that she can only be ousted by the student population, rather than by the executive of the Guild. While it appears as though both individuals retain their titles, their ban from entering Guild buildings or using Guild services such as its email service and organising groups means they can no longer carry out their duties.

Furthermore, an incident on July 23 where a female Guild representative experienced a panic attack in the office of the President, led to an escalated dispute between McCormick and Markey on one side, and the President and the Chair of Societies on the other, regarding the lack of sensitivity of mental illness from the latter two.

It appears as though this situation is continually developing, with McCormick and Markey protesting their ousting, and the SHAME ECU GUILD page calling on students to attend the next Guild Senate meeting in order to defend the deposed office bearers. Honi will also further investigate the claims of sexism, queerphobia, racism, and ableism from other members of the Guild.

President of the Guild, Sheridan Young, was contacted for comment but has not yet replied. Honi will update this article online if we receive comment in the future.

@rafialarm

Referendumb!

Jackson Wherrett explains the referendum we've all heard of but don't quite get

On 14 September, a referendum on the recognition of local government in the Australian Constitution may be held. I say 'may' because Labor's leadership schemozzle is likely to result in a change of election date and, as a result, the date of the referendum – and has also generated uncertainty as to whether the referendum will be held at all.

Assuming it goes ahead, the referendum proposes to change section 96 of the Constitution, which gives the Commonwealth the power to grant 'financial assistance' to the States. The amendment would extend this power to allow the Commonwealth to give money to local government as well.

For many years, the Federal Government has given money to local governments directly, most notably through the 'Roads to Recovery' infrastructure program. However, the constitutionality of this funding was put in doubt by the 2009 decision of the High Court of Australia in *Pape v Commissioner of Taxation*. It is widely accepted that, in light

of that judgment, a direct challenge to one of these programs may result in it being declared invalid because the Commonwealth does not currently have the power to fund local government directly. Hence the referendum.

The chief argument against the referendum is that it is unnecessary. The Commonwealth already has the power to fund local government, albeit indirectly. This is because section 96 provides that grants can be 'on such terms and conditions as the Parliament thinks fit', and so the Commonwealth can give money to the states on the condition that it is passed on to local governments. This arrangement has already been used for many years, and there is no doubt as to its constitutional validity.

It has been argued that this scheme must be inefficient, creating either delays in the provision of funding or money being taken by states for acting as the 'middle person'. However, the Expert Panel on Constitutional Recognition of Local Government found no evidence

NEWS IN REVUE

Untitled

Thin-haired politicians
wobble chins and blue ties
as accusations of 'gulags'
and other violations of human rights
run rife.

Twitter revolutionaries abound
to protest this poor election manoeuvre
as memories of Tampa are fished out
from the dregs of national memory.

Feeble politicians whimper and paw
relying on empty rhetoric
and Border Control.

Disgruntled public remains unconvinced
shaking heads and waving signs

cursing the reign of conservatism
and realising
that before us stretches
the menacing monotony
of a barren political landscape
where the promise of a progressive left
has long drowned in a sea
of political platitudes, fearing mongering,
and stifling monolingualism.

Somewhere, elsewhere -
seas apart -
waters have broken
and upon us
is a new crown.

Gila Segall

Stopping the Boats

With apologies to Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Sunset on the rule of Julia,
And on clear call from Kevvy!
And may there be no moans of policy,
When we'r rid of the refugees.

He's carting them off to PNG,
To save our sea-girt home,
And those who've come across the seas
Should know their chance is blown!

Those who've emerged from whatever
hell,

When they've made it from the dark,
We'll send them off with a merry
farewell

When forced to re-embark;
And all stops out for this lega of the
race,

For another term's worth of votes,
In the hope that the Party saves some
face

When we have stopped the boats.

Caitlin Still

The kindness of strangers

The University could do more to help out students in need, writes **Georg Tamm**

When my mother passed away only a day before my first University exam, I didn't know how I could possibly go on. After having had to file special consideration just last year to gain entry into the University because of the loss of my father I thought I would receive support I got in the past. I was incredibly wrong.

The administrative process was extremely difficult to understand and it varied across faculties. The current admin system implemented by the Uni-

versity does not allow for any sort of allowances other than giving a student more time to prepare for an examination. In my situation this would have been to my detriment. A death isn't something you get over in one week, two weeks, or even eight weeks. It is a long-term process of having to cope.

Another major factor in the failure of the admin system is the lack of financial assistance for Semester 2. The impossibility of returning to Uni became evident

due to having to pay my fees upfront. The only assistance the University could offer was more debt, which had to be repaid in full by the end of semester. After spending close to \$10,000 for a funeral alone this option was not even possible.

Had it not been for the financial support of the amazing campus community I would not be returning to USYD next semester.

Student support bodies, notably the

SRC, can only provide so much assistance with limited resources and limited budgets. This University is and should be more than an educational institution. It is a community. The University should be working towards creating a university that supports its students in times of need and needs to recognize that life at times can be unpredictable, hard, and difficult to cope with. Currently, there is a lot of work to be done.

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Justin Pen explores the 'politi' in Politifact

The mainstream media embroiled itself in Labor's War of Roses, and our elected officials could seemingly get away with murder. As stories on the spill became the *reportage de rigour*, scant attention was paid to politicians' slipups and fibs. Addressing this gap is now Politifact, a fact-checking project imported from America. The organisation bills itself as a "non-partisan, independent journalistic venture". We thought this was in desperate need of a fact-check.

In a piece assessing Greens Senator Scott Ludlam's claim that "Australia is 71st per capita in the world in terms of refugees hosted", reporter Chris Pash revised his rating of 'Mostly False' to 'Half True' following a torrent of social media criticism. In an edited decision, Politifact shied away from admitting that it had strayed from an objective assessment of Ludlam's original statement.

Pash asserted the Greens Senator had "cherry picked" a statistic that supported his agenda. He then contended that "had Ludlam chosen to compare Australia's intake record with the world", Australia's standing would have

been more favourable – essentially arguing that Ludlam had lied about a figure he had never conveyed, but ought to have. Though Pash admitted Ludlam's statement was "literally correct," it was allegedly so "contextually irrelevant and misleading," that a finding of 'True' had to be rejected.

An effective, partisan fact-check can neutralise a political narrative. Attacking Ludlam's statement and implying that Australia's current attitude on asylum seekers is both proportionate and in line with UN standards, panders to the Right – and further obfuscates the issue. Intentional or otherwise, the fact-checker veered from objectivity, and created a context in which Ludlam could be stung.

Of its five other "asylum seekers" articles, Politifact canvassed the economic cost, status, amount and legality of boat arrivals, and the alleged destruction of processing papers. Consistent with its assessment of Ludlam, Politifact's investigations fit the conservative, bipartisan narrative held by the Labor and Liberal party. None of the listed fact-checks radically challenge either party on the

humanity of off-shore processing or the efficacy of intensifying border protection – rather, they add further credence to the orthodox framing of asylum seekers as an economic, and not a humanitarian, issue.

Politifact's obsession with the budget, which boasts fifteen fact-checks, further connotes a conservative bias. Spotlighting the budget – a red herring in the nation's broader economic story – serves the pervasive, neoliberal agenda that prioritises surplus fetishism and austerity over environmental sustainability, economic equality and higher education among others. Accordingly, the next-most scrutinised types of statement regarded the "Carbon Tax" (11); followed by "Education" (7), "Industrial Relations" (7), "Worker's Rights" (6) and the "Environment" (5).

Politifact reporter and former editor of the Honi Soit, Michael Koziol, described fact-selection as a "group process," one sparked by the question "is that true?" While Koziol noted that Politifact "make[s] judgments about what is checkable, newsworthy and ac-

cessible to the audience," he contends such decisions "aren't related to the political spectrum."

But it's a difficult premise to hold. In a piece for the *Guardian*, Antony Lowenstein polemicized that journalists should declare who they vote for: "How we frame stories matters and readers know it," he argues. ABC managing director, Mark Scott echoed these sentiments in a recent Senate estimates hearing. He acknowledged that "Journalists have views; journalists vote. The test is not what their views are. The test is how they do their job."

It's unclear how fact-checkers will impact upon the upcoming Federal election. Politifact's partnerships with Channel 7 and Fairfax will grant it further exposure in television and print, but for now fact-checking appears to be ancillary, rather than central, to the broader news cycle.

With two competing fact-checkers entering the ring, one spearheaded by The Conversation and an as-of-yet unnamed outfit from the ABC, we may soon see a world where a statement can be rated concurrently true and false. Perhaps then we can acknowledge that fact-checking can be as partisan a business as any other form of journalism.

Australian politics and marriage equality: 'It's Complicated'

Caillin Burns discusses the conscience behind the same-sex marriage debate in politics

Australia was given reason to celebrate after it was recently announced that the NSW government had the power to legalise same-sex marriage. If it passes, it could trigger a domino effect and see marriage equality spread to the remaining states and territories.

Premier Barry O'Farrell has become the first Liberal leader to allow a conscience vote on the issue, and sets an example to be followed by those at the national level.

Australia is following a worldwide trend of states being the first to legalise same-sex marriage, which forces the hand of federal governments.

There is a chance, however, that the bill will be appealed in the High Court on the grounds that it is unconstitutional, as the Commonwealth Marriage Act defines marriage as union between a man and a woman.

An amendment would be needed to broaden the definition to include same-sex couples. This is why, despite small successes at the state level, same-sex marriage remains a high priority for vot-

ers going into the federal election.

Kevin Rudd's highly publicised backflip on same-sex marriage has seen voters flock to him. Of 1000 people recently polled, 30% of them are more likely to vote for him now that he is pro-same-sex marriage. That number is even higher at 50% for the 18-24 age bracket.

Yet, regardless of Rudd's personal views and a pro-same-sex marriage party platform, there are not enough members of the Labor party who share this view to pass a bill. The National Plat-

form of the ALP has also enforced the conscience vote, meaning Rudd cannot bind the party to a position on same-sex marriage.

A bipartisan conscience vote is proving to be the only viable option for the federal as well as the state government. As an alternative, a referendum would inevitably spark a campaign of fear-mongering from anti-LGBTIQ activists, which is undeniably a step backwards.

This is an important reminder to voters that in September we will be voting

for a party, and not for a personality. Kevin Rudd's opinion on same-sex marriage is just that, his opinion. He will not be more successful just because he is of a certain conviction.

Former Prime Minister Julia Gillard, although publicly against same-sex marriage, was in favour of holding a conscience vote during her time as leader. This means that same-sex marriage bills would have had equal chance of passing under her as under Rudd.

Tony Abbott's refusal to allow his party to participate was the only reason the vote did not go forward. Although Abbott's views have not altered in any way since then, he has stated that after the election it will be up to the party to reconsider its stance on the matter.

As an increasing number of Liberals become openly pro-same-sex marriage, a change in party policy is certainly not out of the question.

It is highly likely that we will see a conscience vote held under either government, regardless of the opinions of highly-placed individuals.



Crossing the road at night in order to assuage and/or escape

Bryant Apolonio tries to walk the walk

The way people introduce you to the Tenderloin district in San Francisco, should you end up ever staying there, is like this: "never walk through the Tenderloin." The Tenderloin is notorious for violent street crime and petty theft. From the window of the cheapest hostel you could find on such short notice there is a doorstep fistfight. Once you saw a man with a shaggy beard and a blue beanie carrying around a TV set, wires trailing behind it like untied shoelaces.

But a sense of adventure overcomes you and you go for a stroll after dinner, against your better judgement.

The trajectory of your journey and that of the people moving towards you resembles a sort of double helix. If you're apprehensive, easily panicked, you may cross the road to avoid a cohort of rowdy, and perhaps delinquent, teens. If you're particularly intimidating, an old lady may quickly jaywalk away to avoid your hoodie and your strange gait: the former worn for the cold, the latter a bad habit. If you're both, you duck and weave across the pavement: for your



peace of mind, sometimes; sometimes for others'.

This phenomenon obviously isn't something restricted to San Franciscan ghettos. The interactions between two people walking closely to each other at night are complex. Gender often plays a factor. So would age. Familiarity with the area. The company you keep. The extent you're willing to trust complete strangers in social circumstances could also translate into the ways you'd react

to the same folks in dark alleys.

Personally, I try to walk as fast as I can to overtake the uncomfortable person in front of me. The gambit backfires when people feel as though they're literally being chased. If the situation is reversed – and I'm paranoid, on edge – I might stand around checking my phone until I can decide whether whoever's behind me is keeping pace blithely or intently.

What you do in these situations ultimately depends on how aware you are

of the people around you and whether or not you care about how you make them feel. I have a friend who subscribes to a code of conduct where he flags to people that he isn't dangerous via throat clearing, walking under street lamps, exuding a chipper personality generally. Others like to keep a distance that might seem 'safe,' slowing down when necessary. Because, though it may not happen often, to feel like you're being followed late at night is a legitimately frightening thing. I know someone who essentially fled to her house because her lunch box rattling in her bag sounded like heavy footsteps. But I also know someone who always took a taxi home from the train station if she came home late because of a very recent, traumatic, break-in.

And it's fine to feel like that because the world is rough and there's no sure-fire non-verbal cue to let someone know you're just on your way home too. The safe side, in most cases, is the opposite one.

@bryantapolonio

The Arctic is melting

Stella Klenas finds out why there's a lake forming in the North Pole

Coleridge foretold our future in the lines, "Water, water, every where, / nor any drop to drink." The oceans have been slowly warming in recent decades.

This year Arctic temperatures were 1-3 degrees Celsius above average, and thousand years old methane frozen on the sea bed is starting to bubble to the surface in plumes. The Arctic is melting.

A shallow lake now resides in the Arctic, recorded by the North Pole Environmental Observatory since 2002, and this year's winter ice coverage has been documented as the sixth lowest since 1970's satellite observations. This Arctic lake is a warning siren of an increased

loss of sea ice, a loss of habitat for polar bears and seals, and an increase in sea levels. An eventual erasure of ice will lead to environmental disasters for all species which inhabit the globe.

Yet, perhaps global warming is economically beneficial, as the melting ice caps open this region and make available the abundant Arctic resources. Opportunists are adamant of this, as it is home to 30% of the world's undiscovered gas, and 13% of the world's undiscovered oil, and new polar shipping routes are sure to increase trade.

This Arctic investment has been estimated by Lloyd's of London at \$100 bil-

lion in ten years. Yet this number pales to the astronomic cost of this catastrophic future.

Imagine \$60 trillion. This is the estimated cost of the release of methane from the thawing permafrost beneath the East Siberian Sea. Nature published an article exposing the calamitous, economic costs of a warming Arctic; warning us the cost will be far greater, as the region is critical to the Earth's oceanic and climate operations.

A 50 gigatonne reservoir of methane exists on the East Siberian Arctic Shelf, were it to be released into our atmosphere we would be doomed, as

a higher methane concentration in the atmosphere accelerates global warming, exponentially increases local changes in the Arctic, and even reduces the reflection of solar energy and retains solar heat for longer than CO₂.

Inevitably the costs of a melting Arctic shall be borne by developing countries, suffering extreme weather, experiencing poorer health, even lower agricultural production affected by a warming climate. Though all nations shall eventually feel the grave affects.

It is for our benefit to alter this and to our detriment if we remain ignorant to it.

Waiting for the drop

Stella Karver reports on new developments in the University of Queensland's pitch drop experiment

Seven decades is an exceptionally long period of time spent twiddling your thumbs observing a funnel, but is it worthwhile?

Dublin's Trinity College believed it was after being the first to successfully capture on film a pitch drop. In the Autumn of 1944, almost 69 years ago Trinity College decided to replicate University of Queensland's long-term pitch drop experiment.

The UQ's experiment remains the oldest of its kind, and holds the Guinness World Record for the world's longest continuously running laboratory experiment, begun in 1927 by Professor Thomas Parnell.

Pitch is the name of a number of highly viscous liquids which appear solid, most commonly bitumen. At room temperature, tar pitch flows at an agonisingly slow rate, taking years, even decades to form a single drop, as pitch has a viscosity approximately 230 billion times that of water.

The 11th July 2013 marks the first time a pitch drop has ever been successfully captured on film. The reason this video footage from Trinity College is so profoundly significant to the scientific community and pitch drop junkies around the world is that it is the first time a drop has ever been witnessed.

Since January of 1961 Professor John Mainstone of UQ has been enthralled by this experiment. During his career he missed witnessing the fourth drop in 1962. In April 1979 he left the experiment on a Saturday evening and found the sixth drop had fallen when he returned on the Monday morning.

It becomes increasingly ridiculous as the decades pass. In 1988 Professor Mainstone was standing observing, then decided to exit to make a cup of tea, and returned to it having dropped, missing it by fifteen minutes.

In 2000, out of sheer frustration, he had installed a continuous webcam system to capture the eighth drop immi-

nently intended to drop but due to a technical malfunction during the prized moment on the 28th of November it was missed. It has been self-described as the "saddest moment" of Professor Mainstone's career.



Prof. Mainstone with the experiment in 1990.

Currently, in preparation for the ninth drop UQ have installed three web cameras with live streaming. This experiment is on public display in the School of Mathematics and Physics at UQ.

Professor John Mainstone and the late Professor Thomas Parnell were awarded in October 2005 the Ig Nobel Prize in Physics, a parody of the Nobel Prize – and the word ignoble – for their pitch drop experiment.

It may be an unusual or trivial achievement in scientific research, but these prizes are intended to "honor achievements that first make people laugh, and then make them think."

Seven decades is certainly a vast period of thinking time. So, is science rewarding? Of course it is. What sort of ignorant question is that?

It may be time-consuming, and you may see your life and career pass you by, but the rewards of science are evident.

When you understand what is happening you may find yourself mesmerised for hours or even a lifetime.

I assure you, as do the UQ Physics department "it is more exciting than watching grass grow!"

Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney

Notice of 2013 Students' Representative Council Annual Election

Nominations for the Students' Representative Council Annual Elections for the year 2013 close at 4.30pm Tuesday 20th August 2013. Polling will be held on the 25th and 26th of September 2013. Pre-polling will also take place outside the SRC Offices Level 1 Wentworth Building on Tuesday 24th of September 2013 from 10 am - 3pm. All students who are duly enrolled for attendance at lectures are eligible to vote. Members of the student body who have paid their nomination fee to Council are eligible to nominate and be nominated, except National Union of Students national office bearers. Fulltime officebearers of the SRC may also nominate as NUS delegates.

Nominations are called for the following elections/positions and open 31st July 2013 at 8pm:

- The election of the Representatives to the 86th SRC (33 positions)
- The election of the President of the 86th SRC
- The election of the Editor(s) of Honi Soit for the 86th SRC
- The election of National Union of Students delegates for the 86th SRC (7 positions)

Nomination forms can be downloaded from the SRC website: www.src.usyd.edu.au, or picked up from SRC Front Office (Level 1, Wentworth Building) from 8pm July 31st 2013.

Nominations **must also** be lodged online along with your policy statement and Curriculum Vitae (optional), by close of nominations at: www.src.usyd.edu.au. For more information, call 9660 5222.

Signed nomination forms and a printed copy of your online nomination **must** be received no later than 4.30pm on Tuesday 20th August, either in the locked box at the SRC Front Office (Level 1 Wentworth), or at the following address: PO Box 794, Broadway NSW 2007.

Nominations which have not been delivered either to the locked box in the SRC front office or to the post office box shown above **and** submitted online by the close of nominations **will not be accepted** regardless of when they were posted.

The Regulations of the SRC relating to elections are available on-line at www.src.usyd.edu.au or from the SRC Front Office (level 1, Wentworth Building).

Authorised by P. Graham, SRC Electoral Officer 2013.
Students' Representative Council, The University of Sydney
Phone: 02 9660 5222 | www.src.usyd.edu.au



Zelda, New Zealand and outer space

Rafi Alam sings an ode to exploration

Most of my earliest childhood memories are of video games. I'm not ashamed of it – I am Generation Y, after all, and these things are to be expected; and it's not as if I don't remember being in the backyard or playing cricket, they're just not as vivid, or significant.

Specifically, I remember playing *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time*. I remember exploring a world, intricately (at the time) detailed, lush and wonderful, strange, puzzling, and unpredictable. *Ocarina of Time* was that huge adventure for kids that lived in pigeon-shit stained flats, not in houses surrounded by wilderness; it was the place both of discovery and introspection for kids who didn't have the backyard or wood or father to build a tree house.

I am probably indebted to that game for my persistent curiosity, but I could also blame it for the dissatisfaction I felt from The Real World. The Real World was explored – it was done, over, finished. Yes, colonialism: but there was still something so romantic and inspiring – and long gone – of the traveller who would meet new groups of people, experience new languages and foods and cultures. Islands of people who had never seen an outsider in their life – this was all gone in a new age of globalism and globalisation.

When I'm on a train, I can move between spaces in hours, not in lifetimes as it once was. But I never felt that sublime feeling of discovery and freedom. I would see flashes of buildings in front of me, significant feats, but still the monotonous lull of modernity, industrialisation, and civilisation.

Discovery was no longer a triumph of will, but of how many Wikipedia hyperlinks you could click before you got bored, or before you inevitably end up on 'Philosophy'. There's no shame in such discovery, and yes, I was grateful to have the Entire History of The World at my fingertips, but nothing moved in me. Instead, I would learn

formulaically; I knew I was learning, and I did, and it was ceaseless and it worked like a machine, but it was a machine, cold and lifeless.

*

New Zealand is where everything changed, I think. I was meant to go when I was much younger, but a bad pumpkin soup and a long night in the bathroom meant otherwise. When we finally went, the whole family and I, I was less than impressed by the itinerary: 6am starts, car trips from A to B to C, looking at the scenery.

But it was there that I discovered how nature could catalyse a new sense of the world. Staring at the mountains, glaciers, fjords, and lakes that looked like seas, I felt that chill that runs down your spine when you ultimately realise how small and off-centre you are to the universe, how Coleridge and Shelley felt when they wrote. I felt it again looking at elderly trees in Stanley Park, and again when gazing at the expanse of sand dunes in Giza. In retrospect, it was how I felt in Mecca when I slept on rocks and looked, for the first time ever, at a sky blazing with stars – not religious ecstasy, but communion with land and air.

This is what drives the environment movement; this is what drives people to chain themselves to ancient trees, to lock-on to bulldozers threatening to eradicate heritage sites, to risk their lives climbing enormous mountains, to bomb factories and mills. Some models of intelligence and personality designate affinity with nature as a unique sense some people possess. Another hypothesis – the biophilia hypothesis – contends that all human beings have an innate desire to engage with other living creatures, that it helps them understand their 'place' in the (eco)system of things. But it lies dormant within us, yearning to be unlocked by something special waiting for us in the world.

(Maybe some people are exceptions



to this, those who can never realise the sublime beauty of the natural world, the people who direct the bulldozers and cranes and loggers against the obstacle to Progress that is God's Green Earth...)

This is a radical proposition for the conservation of the environment: that it has an innate value to humans beyond production and consumption. It's not just in the abstract conception of the environment, but the engagement with nature in a physical and intimate sense. Google Earth is amazing, but there's something remarkably different about seeing Uluru from a computer, and facing off with it in the red dust; it's one thing to read *Moby Dick*, and another to feel "nothing but the blanket between you and your snugness and the cold of the outer air [where] you lie like the one warm spark in the heart of an arctic crystal". This isn't to downplay these other experiences, but to highlight the fragility of nature, that texts and technology are 'permanent' but that we are on the verge of annihilating the environment and the unique understandings it provides.

*

In my darkest of moments, when I can smell the impending doom of climate change, outer space is there as a saving grace. But space should not be the final reserve of the human race, but an extension of our inquisitiveness. There is no bliss in being forced to go somewhere, as asylum seekers can attest to.

Hear me out: the inspiration one feels from immersion in nature parallels space exploration. Like art, there is an inherent value in space, one that surpasses the potential economic and military benefits; in fact, space should be treated as we treat Antarctica and national parks, with reverence and commonality – demilitarised and non-commoditised.

Space is the final frontier, and just as engrossing ourselves in forests, mountains, or oceans shows us a bit more of the nature and origin of life, so does space. It's encapsulated in an old Ser-

bian proverb: *be humble for you are made of earth, be noble for you are made of stars*. How it must have felt to hear the moon landing on the radio, and how much more infinitely special was the feeling to actually *land* on the moon, a whole new entity in space, Earthless.

We must be wary of the mistakes of the past, of colonising space and the using this power over lesser-developed nations. But in my most bleeding and liberal of hearts, I believe that space travel – just like the explorations of my childhood – can transform us from curious to enlightened, from immaturity to maturity, that it can bring meaning to our lives as a single species. I think of the messages to the Apollo 11 astronauts, in particular the message from Félix Houphouët-Boigny, President of Côte d'Ivoire:

At the moment when man's oldest dream is becoming a reality, I am very thankful for NASA's kind attention in offering me the services of the first human messenger to set foot on the Moon and carry the words of the Ivory Coast. I would hope that when this passenger from the sky leaves man's imprint on lunar soil, he will feel how proud we are to belong to the generation which has accomplished this feat.

I hope also that he would tell the Moon how beautiful it is when it illuminates the nights of the Ivory Coast. I especially wish that he would turn towards our planet Earth and cry out how insignificant the problems which torture men are, when viewed from up there.

May his word, descending from the sky, find in the Cosmos the force and light which will permit him to convince humanity of the beauty of progress in brotherhood and peace.

When I read this, I feel like a child again, thrilled by the wonderment of a new world, of new destinations, of new things to discover so I can grow and grow and learn and learn and emerge from my earthbound limitations. It's one thing to see a tree, and another to climb it; it's one thing to stargaze, and another to float by them. Space won't be a spiritual awakening, or a nirvana or heaven, but a new stage in the enduring, everlasting, ageless, deathless search for meaning in and by humanity.



You only live once

Felicity Nelson doesn't want to die, she wants to #YOLO like a jellyfish – forever

*"Lovers and thinkers, into the earth with you.
Be one with the dull, the indiscriminate dust.
A fragment of what you felt, of what you knew;
A formula, a phrase remains, - but the best is lost."*
- Edna St. Vincent Millay

There's a little town near Prague where a collection of medieval human skeletons decorate the walls of a small ossuary. In the centre there's a chandelier containing every bone in the human body. On the sides seventy thousand skulls are piled into pyramids of death. No one remembers the names or deeds attached to those bones. The display is a startling reminder of how we all lose everything in the end and become wholly indistinguishable and equal in death.

I thought I would be repulsed by the playful and frankly disrespectful treatment of these human remains but it actually made me reflect on how we treat death as a society. Instead of being death-shy and pushing the problem out of our minds, maybe we should confront our own mortality and use our knowledge of death to justify living each day as if there were no tomorrow.

In this spirit I decided to look death squarely in the eye and ask the blunt question, how am I most likely to die? In Australia 24.8% of deaths are caused by a sudden reduction in blood supply to the brain or heart (cerebrovascular and ischaemic heart disease). Arteries blocked by a build up of fat molecules over a lifetime or haemorrhages due to ageing are most likely to kill us. Dementia and Alzheimer disease are the next most likely cause of death followed closely by lung cancer, lower respiratory diseases, diabetes, colon cancer, leukaemia and heart failure. (Fingers crossed euthanasia becomes an option by the time I reach death-age because none of these sound particularly fun ways to go.)

If it is any comfort, there are plenty of strange deaths that we are much less likely to suffer. There's death by laughter, death by vending machine and death by falling coconut (don't laugh – this is a real problem in the Pacific Islands). Earlier this year an unfortunate man from Washington died after being smothered by his girlfriend's breasts. In 2005 a man from South Korea died after playing Starcraft for 50 hours straight. Tycho Brahe, a famous 16th century Danish astronomer, died from refusing to breach etiquette by leaving a banquet to urinate.

If you happen to live in the small Central African nation of Cameroon you could even suffer death by exploding lake. In 1986 a build up of volcanic activity caused Lake Nyos to explode releasing 80 million cubic metres of car-

bon dioxide into the surrounding district and killing 1700 people through asphyxiation.

Some deaths are so silly that they deserve special recognition. The Darwin awards are a web-based community that posthumously congratulate people who have improved humanity's fitness by removing themselves from the gene pool in a particularly idiotic manner. One of my favourite winners was a man who died from eating too many cockroaches at a bug-eating competition at the local reptile store. (He won the competition but failed at life.) I personally think that Branwell Brontë deserves a Darwin award for successfully dying standing up just to prove it could be done.

By far the strangest cause of death in history was a form of "mass madness" called dancing mania that appeared in Europe in the Middle Ages. It popped up in various places at various times infecting local townsfolk with an inexplicable urge to dance. In 1518 the Dancing Plague hit Strasbourg and around 400 people danced endlessly for days, many eventually dying of exhaustion or heart attack.

Most people die unintentionally but some tragically choose to end their own lives. The weirdest suicide I've ever heard is a case of consensual cannibalism that occurred in Germany in 2001. A very disturbed man answered an Internet advertisement to be "slaughtered and then consumed" and subsequently died at the advertiser's hand. The murderer is in jail for life and now a committed vegetarian.

Quite often suicides don't work out as planned. You would think jumping off the Empire State building was a pretty fail-safe option but in 1979

Elvita Adams took the plunge from the 86th floor only to be blown back inside the building by a gust of wind.

A truly grisly way to kill yourself was devised by an English artist suffering from schizophrenia in 2003. Richard Summer lost himself in a deserted forest in Denbighshire, handcuffed himself to a tree and threw the keys out of reach. Three years later his skeleton was discovered with signs that he had later changed his mind.

Some people just refuse to die altogether. Grigori Rasputin, the infamous Romanov sidekick, was stabbed, poisoned, shot three times and beaten before eventually drowning. Sir Adrian de Wiart is a British Army officer who served in the Boer War, WWI and WWII. He was shot in the head, face, ankle, hip, leg and ear and was forced to bite off his own fingers in order to amputate them. Later he famously wrote, "Frankly I enjoyed the war."

It seems ludicrous that people die in such trivial ways but can survive seemingly fatal injuries. Tennessee Williams died by choking on a bottle cap but Phineas Gage, a 19th century railroad foreman, walked away after a 43-inch iron rod passed through his skull and took a chunk out of his brain. He had been packing dynamite into the side of a cliff with a tampering iron when the powder detonated and sent the rod through his cheek and out through the back of his head. He remained conscious through the ordeal and was able to speak to the doctor later that day. Other than a drastically altered personality, Gage suffered no major injuries.

I suspect some people just have nine lives. Anna Bågenholm definitely does. She is a medical marvel who survived a skiing accident that left her trapped in

a frozen stream under 20cm of ice for 80 minutes. Rescuers say she survived for 40 minutes by breathing air pockets and when she was eventually extracted nearly an hour and a half later her body temperature was at 13.7°C. She was technically dead but doctors managed to later revive her in hospital. Experts believe the low temperatures saved her from drowning as they slowed her metabolism and lowered her oxygen requirements. Today she has fully recovered and works as a radiologist at the hospital that saved her life.

By far the strangest cause of death in history was a form of "mass madness" called dancing mania that appeared in Europe in the Middle Ages. It popped up in various places at various times infecting local townsfolk with an inexplicable urge to dance. In 1518 the Dancing Plague hit Strasbourg and around 400 people danced endlessly for days, many eventually dying of exhaustion or heart attack.

Death is an inevitability we don't think about every day. It is a matter we neatly tuck away into corners, dignify with silence or hand over to professionals so they can deal with the uncomfortable realities of human frailty. Maybe one-day humans will attain immortality. Perhaps we will be able to record our neural circuits in such detail that we can upload our mind to a database and send our digital consciousness out to explore the universe. Perhaps we will reverse the aging process and become like the immortal jellyfish, *Turritopsis nutricula*, bouncing eternally between youth to old age.

But until that day death should be something we seriously consider every once in a while. Why? Because keen awareness of our imminent exile to eternal oblivion makes our engagement with the present a matter of supreme urgency. It makes every moment indescribably precious. Death should motivate us to get to the essentials, to search persistently for meaning and to have no regrets because this time is quite possibly all the time that we will ever have.

Yolo, folks!



The Sedlec Ossuary, or 'Church of Bones', in the Czech Republic

ARTS & CULTURE

Guide to *Honi Soirée*

Avani Dias and Xiaoran Shi give you a taste of what's on offer at the Red Rattler on August 9

Serendipity doesn't even begin to describe how Nic and Misha came together to form Melbourne duo, **FRIENDSHIPS**. They worked together at a tyre factory, where Nic fell in love with the invoices Misha adorned with abstract doodles. Fate was sealed when coding enthusiast Nic mistakenly wrote code in the music programming software Max/MSP, and a series of tones and rhythms was played back.

Thus, the stage was set for the pair to explore together their respective passions: Misha and visual art; Nic and electronic production.

Drawing heavily on the languid hip hop production of the southern Californian scene, you can expect to hear echoes of Shlohmo in their sly percussive language, and Samiyam in their labile dynamics which are as imaginative as they are intense.

Nic foresees that their upcoming gig will be "probably the greatest live audio/visual show" ever. While we cannot make such lofty promises, you can most definitely expect no funk. "I hate funk."

Leigh Hannah, the man behind **THE TOWNHOUSES**, admits to identifying with auteur, Woody Allen, a personality notorious for his unabashed neurosis. Allen's resolutely singular vision has yielded an oeuvre of prolifically personal films, and Leigh arguably applies a similar approach in his musical endeavours.

A self-proclaimed perfectionist, Leigh finally made the leap to solo production

after years spent playing in bands.

The seed of *The Townhouses* in its current form was born in a backyard shed as spare guitar-based instrumentals and developed, over time, into layered electronic arrangements which retain the intimacy and minimalism of his earlier efforts.

Listening to the absent elements of his music is just as satisfying as the synth melodies which -- never insisting upon themselves -- dissolve into the vapour of a hushed vocal, of far away chimes.

Expect all of this and more, including a Youth Group cover, at the show.

RECKLESS VAGINA is a name that can provoke a number of interesting images and reactions. When asked why a five-piece from Sydney decided to make music under this often controversial title, they simply asked if either word was truly bad. However, the music made by this band is strong, refreshing, and anything but offensive. They unite emphatic guitars with eclectic synths to create delightfully poppy tunes.

Their live performance is their most memorable facet -- from psychedelic interpretations of 'Advance Australia Fair', to spontaneous, audience collaborations, you don't need to know the songs of Reckless Vagina to have an entertaining experience.

When asked what we can expect from their live set, they simply said, "ever seen a cricket compilation of classic sixes

from the 80's? Well if that can translate musically, that's what you'll get". You'd be reckless to miss it.

Alexandra Ward is a Sydney electronic producer who makes music as **MOON HOLIDAY**. She creates moody beats accompanied by her ethereal voice. Her musical ambitions started off after moving to Australia from China, "I was coping with changing cities at the age of sixteen and so I relied on technology rather than friends to make music."

After winning FBi Radio's Northern Lights Competition, she featured on Flume's incredibly successful, self-titled album, and sang in Karen O's choir during the Vivid festival.

Her live performances are dynamic and sexy with a level of improvisation that is often hard to obtain from a producer. With a new EP on the way and a fresh approach to her live sets, Moon Holiday's performance at *Honi Soirée* will keep you dancing in space.

No romance, but plenty of love goes into the soulds of **MERE WOMEN**, who are inner west veterans with diverse influences that meander from Beyonce to Bowie to the various incarnations of Steve Albini. An overwhelming urgency dominates their music, which houses the restless tussle between Amy's paranoid snarls and Flynn's frenetic drumming.

Mere Women are in possession of a rich history from which to seek inspiration and reinvention. Their brand of "post-punk pop" is very much in touch

the substance of everyday life without managing to lose sight of what went before and what might be. It's music for listening, for dancing, for reminiscing.

A live experience with Sydney three-piece, **MILKK**, is a step into a very lush jam session filled with perfect guitar licks and experimental, progressive rock. They were talented enough to join the likes of Tim Freedman, Cloud Control and The Vines when they won the 2012 Sydney University band competition. USYD's musical elite has been bred through this annual competition, and the first prize money of \$2500 has allowed for the band to develop their sound and release a self-titled EP.

Although primarily instrumental, Milk are not afraid of dropping a high-pitched, shrill wail mid-set. However, this lack of singing has by no means restricted storytelling through their tracks.

Milk have promised Zumba and sweat from their upcoming live set and if that isn't reason enough to see them, then maybe their excellent music is.

After being finalists in the 2012 USYD band competition, **THE DHARMA** quickly made waves on the Sydney music scene. With hints of psych-rock, jazz, and dub reggae in their music, The Dharma's tunes push the term 'genre' to unexplored territories.

Innocent jam sessions between teenagers naturally turned into pub gigs for The Dharma. Their live sets are incredibly tight, and a mesh of written material and improvisation: "We're building a new set now but keeping it open for jamming and room for whatever we feel is right on the night."

Look forward to sax solos and a merging of electronic and organic music at *Honi Soirée*.



Solidarity forever for the unicorn makes us strong!

Hannah Ryan took a wander through a dark forest and encountered a mystical beast, fighting for a better world and labour rights.

The strikes that punctuated last semester at USYD were violent power struggles: angry workers against an inflexible management; resolute protesters against riot police.

The industrial dispute led to five full days of pickets; accusations of scabbery; complaints about a cracked rib, trampling, a broken leg, and one and a half minutes of strangulation; several diagnoses of PTSD; an Ombudsman complaint; 13 arrests; \$1000 in fines; over ten charges; a threatened expulsion, and (as yet) no new Enterprise Bargaining Agreement.

Into this melee has ridden a mythical beast: the unicorn. Majestic, graceful, and pure as its white coat, it became the icon of the June 5 strike, emblazoned across banners, posters, T-shirts and Facebook display pictures.

Although it's not immediately obvious what the unicorn has to do with the industrial dispute, or education or anything, the aesthetic provides a window into the morale of the protesters.

Most agree that the turning point of the industrial action, the point which made the unicorn the hero the protesters both needed and deserved, was the May 14 strike. That strike was the first to play host to dozens of riot police, which in turn led to injuries and psychological trauma. While previous strikes had ended at the pub, May 14 saw no celebration.

Matthew Kiem, a member of the NTEU's UTS branch, and the chief designer of the posters, attributes the rise of the unicorn aesthetic to this dark mood. He identified an "angry vibe" which arose in the aftermath. "People were quite upset at what had happened," he explained.

USYD SRC Welfare Officer and activist Eleanor Morley agrees with this assessment. May 14, she says, was "really intense, really demoralising, and really depressing".

Organisers perceived the legitimacy of this anger and a simultaneous need to move away from it. Kiem describes it as "appropriate and good" but not a sustainable emotion. "It wasn't going to get people to the strike as much as a more festive feel," he says.

And so the unicorn took off, galloping its way through campus into the hearts and minds of the anti-management movement. Large unicorn posters inviting passers-by "TO THE

PICKETS!!!" were erected on the glass walls of the Eastern Avenue Auditorium complex. The aesthetic spread beyond



the posters Kiem designed to become an icon of the strikes. Profile pictures changed. Banners at the June 5 strike were markedly more colourful and bejewelled with glitter. "I think it had an impact," said Kiem.

But the unicorn isn't simply an incitation to happiness, a cure for anger and violence. The motif extends beyond USYD and is something of an anarchist meme. Several people involved in the strike recalled having heard of unicorns appearing at other rallies, but never in Sydney.

The Facebook page Anarcho-Unicornism (description: "TASTE THE RAINBOW, COPPERS!") seems to confirm the links between anarchism and the horned horse. But why would a unicorn want to smash the state?

When asked about the unicorn's significance, the page's administrator was initially coy. "Really, there isn't any intentional political significance behind it," they confessed. "Just a bit of post-modern humour." But perhaps there is more to it, they concluded.

"It is, perhaps, a sort of psychological archetype. I think it all stems from the whole 'anything is possible' statement. Unicorns, after all, aren't really that ridiculous when you think about it. It's just a horse with a horn. Maybe we'll actually have them one day." And, so

the admin hypothesised, the same goes for a world without masters.

A USYD anarchist expressed a similar view in relation to the strike. According to him, the unicorn is about expressing "an absolute determination not to be captured by politics as usual...we're putting forward something that's very different from the existing order."

He acknowledges not just the uniqueness of the unicorn, but its undeniable charm. Radicalism, he explains shouldn't always be about stark colour schemes. "The cute can be radical as well."

Anarchist and frequent picket line attendee Tom Raue thinks the unicorn is ironic, pointing out that *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*, which includes a unicorn called Rarity, has a large and ironic following on website 4chan. 4chan in turn has a crossover without Anonymous and anarchism.

Relating it back to USYD, his interpretation was that the "deliberately camp unicorn theme is intended to bring a bit of humour to the strikes which might otherwise be intimidating to students."

That humour might be undermined by the dark underbelly of the unicorn. After all, it does have a pointy horn sticking out of its forehead. Somewhat irrelevantly, but also curiously, the unicorn's violence can be traced back to biblical times: "And the unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks

with their bulls; and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness," reads Isaiah 34:7.

As supporters waited for arrestees to be released from Newtown Police Station on June 5, some held up a banner picturing a unicorn spearing a swastika-toting, beetroot-faced policeman in the throat. This was unhappily not the only confronting manipulation of unicorn imagery seen the day.

Although the aggressive form of the unicorn undermines its star quality as a PR tool attracting people to the picket lines, it too illuminates the psychology of the strike. In co-opting an (allegedly immortal) animal into their movement, USYD's strikers have enlisted the only form of violence they can claim in their fight against the University and the state, in the form of the police.

Whatever purpose the unicorn ultimately serves, it's undeniably fantastic.



Lansdowne-hill

Rafi Alam is both mad and disappointed

First years and the generally ignorant may have missed the heartbreaking, tragic moment The Lansdowne caught on fire earlier this year. Located at the endpoint of Victoria Park, just as Broadway veers off into City Road, The Lansdowne was a favourite of students. It was so popular that a previous *Honi* couldn't decide if it was an on-campus or off-campus bar. The Lansdowne was proud of its affinity with students.

It's all different now, though, post-reopening and renovation. The Lansdowne is no longer the bar where you'd eat, drink, and smoke before or after lectures. You can forget the new sickly, confused decor upstairs; you can forget that a famous live music venue now prefers DJs over (terrible, but in a cosy way) local bands; you can even forget that we're pretty sure it's owned by James Packer now.

But you can never forget that they cut the \$7 meal.

One of the reasons why The Lansdowne was so popular with students was for its \$7 meals. Although it began as \$5 not too long ago, the \$7 steak, schnitzel, or bangers and mash was still so cheap you'd trek past the harrowing depths of that pond in Victoria Park just to get some.

Now, a steak will cost you \$16, as can burgers. Aside from cheese fritters, pretzels, popcorn, and 'taxi driver corn cabs', all starters are above \$10. Schnitzels are a modest \$10 too, but when you reminisce on that spare \$3 you could've pocketed, you too will begin to cry.

Perhaps I've been too cruel though. In a conversation with The Lansdowne

(read: me yelling at them on Facebook), they were sure to mention the new daily specials that are on from Monday to Thursday. Mexican on Monday, burgers on Tuesday, pizza on Wednesday, and steaks on Thursday – all for \$10. And one other commenter reminded me that it costs money to renovate and, er, recover from a fire.

But I believe I was right when I began the 'conversation' with "how about instead of selling expensive bourgie food to pretend you're a Merivale bar, you start selling cheap affordable food for your biggest (former) patrons: students". Sure, they might have specials, but every day used to be special at the Lansdowne.

The Lansdowne is trying to be what it's not. Trying to be cool in your 40s is not cool, but "someone-in-their-40s-trying-to-be-cool"; likewise, the Lansdowne trying to be chic, upmarket and trendy is "the-fucking-LANSDOWNE-trying-to-be-chic-and-upmarket-and-trendy." It doesn't work.

Sure, the food might be great. But that's the point – I can't afford it. Why bother when The Royal – closer to uni, I'll add – is cheaper? The Lansdowne should stick to what it knows best: being a grungy cheap loud student local bar. Instead, The Lansdowne wants to recreate itself in rebirth as a nice fancy place. It's why they called their new overpriced kitchen the Phoenix Diner.

I knew a Phoenix once. Two, actually. *Phoenix Literary Journal* and River Phoenix. Both disappeared and never came back. The Diner should follow suit.

Cornerstone Bar & Food

Lucinda Bradshaw grabs a drink by the station

BAR REVIEWS

The industrial colossus known as Carriageworks is not the easiest place to open a dining destination. It demands a deft touch to transform the mass of concrete, brick and steel lodged in the darker backstreets of Redfern into an inviting space, able to accommodate a varied clientele of chichi theatregoers, organic farmers and motley locals. But newcomer Cornerstone Bar & Food, still fresh from its opening in May, appears to have succeeded at creating a relaxed and welcoming watering hole a hop, skip and a jump from campus.

Run by Fresh Catering, the team behind the STC's Bar at the End of the Wharf and the MCA café and sculpture terrace, Cornerstone is an instantly likeable space: dramatic, with hanging gardens hovering like green chandeliers and tall arched windows, and yet cosy, with its snug chesterfields and warm, low lighting. Add to that the cheery service and impressive live music from Koori Radio playing on my visit, and it's the ideal place to while away an evening over a jug of Blood Orange Mojitos (\$28).

Speaking of which, the drinks match the décor in terms of ingenuity, execution and sheer yum. The Absent Friend (\$16), a mix of gin, cucumber, elderflower and citrus, is like the classy, cleaner cousin of a Pimm's Cup, while the pineapple-rum Cornerstone Drum Beat (\$16) puts a piña colada to shame. And it would be sheer folly to ignore their winter special, a Hot Buttered Rum cocktail (\$14) tasting like the love-child of chai and butterbeer.

Admittedly, for those who prefer their spirits neat, the cocktails may veer slightly towards the girly side, but they're damn delicious and supported by a solid cast of beers, ciders and vino. And the prices, though not exactly easy on the wallet, do seem slightly cheaper than most other small bar operators. But the best bang for your buck comes from the evening specials: \$5 pizzas on Thursdays, four sizeable and golden-crusted arancini balls for \$5 on Fridays, and free school prawns with every cocktail jug on Saturdays.

Which brings us to the food. Unlike the inventive cocktails, the evening share plates are somewhat standard-issue bar-fare: think sliders (\$12), chicken liver pate (\$16), and salt cod croquettes (\$12). It's a bit of mixed bag, with a stellar plate of prosciutto, figs and goat's curd (\$18) rather more pleasing than an odd kingfish carpaccio (\$16) featuring stodgy broadbeans and little flavour. But the food is a footnote, perfect fodder for rounds of drinks and idle chat in a charming space that makes you want to keep coming back.



Reasons why K-pop is amazing and insane

Sophie Steains ranks the top of the K-pops

TOP 5

- 5 The music** The brilliant thing about K-pop is it doesn't have to deal with all that Western musical baggage like "consistency," "authenticity," and "credibility." They just do whatever they want with sound as long as it's catchy as all hell. The trend at the moment is to cram the hooks from three different songs back-to-back into one song and somewhere along the way – throw in an inexplicable dubstep breakdown. Sounds horrible right... but actually, after a while, it makes everything normal feel like child's play.
- 4 The hype** A K-pop group (known as "idols") won't just release a "single." They call it a "comeback" – even when they've only been gone for a couple months. This is how K-pop time works. Each month, seven or eight groups will make their comeback, essentially pressing the refresh button on everything that came before by competing for the most eye-catching or trendy concept out there. The dance gimmicks are flying, the music videos in-your-face, the fashun extreme - and because this is the plastic surgery capital of the world, your favourite idol might even comeback with a new face.
- 3 The swag** South Korea has a huge local underground hip-hop scene and it was a major influence on the rise of K-pop in the 90s and is still influential today. The beats in K-pop are no joke, and this is why you have producers like Diplo and Will.i.am down to collab. But as I said, K-pop is insane, and the swag is nothing like anything coming out of the hood. Lil' Wayne is tame compared to someone like G Dragon. The girls rap just as much as the guys do too and they don't have to front like Nicki to pull it off. You could see a cute 15 year old girl rapping in a sailor outfit and no one would even bat an eyelid.
- 2 The reality TV** Just like the Japanese, South Koreans know how to create hours of entertainment out of mindless drivel. Imagine a show where Beyonce, Rihanna, Taylor Swift and Katy Perry are sent to work on a farm together with a bunch of comedians and basically spend the whole time trolling around and falling into outhouse toilets. Or a show where all your favourite rappers play a giant and intense game of tag in an abandoned theme park. Not only that, comedians love to pull the most elaborate and intense pranks on unsuspecting K-pop stars. It's the most excruciatingly addictive stuff... and it's all subtitled on Youtube.
- 1 The fans** If you think Beliebers are bad then you need to meet K-pop fangirls and fanboys. Idols should be very afraid of their fans because once a bunch of netizens set their sights on you then shit really hits the fan. Two idols were ousted for dating when fans found a photo of the two together - through the reflection on a spoon. Another idol was recently swept up in a "straight faced controversy" for failing to greet fans with a smile. A fan recounted, "It scared us. Our hands are still shaking." No, this is not a joke - it's K-pop. The most insane and amazing thing happening in pop right now.

DUMBLEDORE: *high brow Low Brow*

GREAT WIZARD, TERRIBLE EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATOR

Sam Murray believes in the importance of a good magical education

Dumbledore may have been critical player in the defeat of Voldemort, but let's be clear, as the administrator of an educational institution, his managerial skills were, by every objective measure, severely deficient.

Let's ignore the blatant lack of safety regulations and enforcement mechanisms to prevent his students, under his duty of care, being mauled by three-headed dogs, violently aggressive trees and questionably structurally sound staircases.

Instead, his hiring regimen requires assessment. In the past seven years, Dumbledore has hired two Dark and demonstrably homicidal and insane wizards for the same post, Professor Quirrell and Barty Crouch Junior. Another, Professor Lockhart, was an inept fraud and serial mind-rapist.

Even his less outrightly dangerous hiring practices should be questioned; Hagrid is by every measure negligent in his teaching standards, resulting in one student being mauled by a giant avian creature, and he later exposed his students to the results of his highly illicit genetic experiments. Similarly, Dumb-

ledore uses Hogwarts resources to fund the employment of Professor Trelawney, Dumbledore personally believes to be a total fraud, in the unlikely event that said teacher might one day make a genuine prophecy. Dumbledore reveals a startling lack of concern over Professor Snape's evident favouritism and sadism, whose bullying of students should have resulted in disciplinary actions years ago.

Finally, Dumbledore himself exhibits a startling amount of favouritism, for instance awarding Gryffindor an arbitrarily large amount of points at an end-of-year celebration resulting in a House Cup victory over Slytherin. The fact that Slytherin is filled with students suffering from narcissism and psychopathy is not an excuse for such behaviour, and is rather further evidence of Dumbledore's total inability to manage the House system.

Dumbledore is objectively a sub-standard headmaster who warranted immediate replacement at every stage of his career.



Garlic belly: a tale of two chickens

Joseph Istiphan bids falafel to arms

The proprietors of the El Jannah chain of restaurants are to charcoal chicken what Matt Preston is to cravat wearing: maverick game changers. They appeared on the scene in 1998 to sate the hunger of a city crying out for garlic soaked poultry and their restaurants, particularly the one in Granville, quickly became legendary. However, there's a dark underbelly to their greasy menus, the chain was born out of a bitter and longstanding rivalry, the likes of which the charcoal chicken industry has never seen.

It all began over a decade ago when two siblings, Andre and Samira, opened up a charcoal chicken restaurant together in Granville called Awafi. Samira provided the majority of the start-up capital, but as this was to be a

family business, she decided to forego formalising the partnership with a written agreement. However, it wasn't long before the two began to argue and the brother would often destroy parts of the restaurant in retaliation for perceived slights. The situation escalated quickly and Andre hired a bodyguard after Samira *supposedly* tried to push him in front of an oncoming truck. Tiring of the constant conflict, Samira *allegedly* arranged to have the place burnt down.

Rather than repay his sister the \$60,000 that was owed to her, Andre branched out on his own and opened an Awafi restaurant in Belmore without any regard for the fact that he and his sister shared ownership of the Awafi brand. Not one to sit idly by twiddling her thumbs, Samira opened her own

branch of the chain in Punchbowl. Both were thriving, but then Andre opened another restaurant in Granville, an establishment that would grow into the famed El Jannah.

This turned out to be a step too far because Samira decided to open an Awafi a stone's throw away from him. Andre responded by opening another El Jannah, this time in the building that neighboured Samira's Punchbowl restaurant. Samira bought the building and kicked him out but he just moved across the road. Ever since, the two have been doing their best to drive each other out of business, cleaving the Lebanese community in half in the process - the Awafi aficionados insist that Andre's garlic sauce is too bland while the El Jannah devotees maintain that Samira's

chickens are too dry. Whatever your affiliation, know that had this occurred back in Lebanon, the whole country would've been consumed by civil war. As it stands, the conflict remains bloodless, but many a wedding seating plan has been forced to allow for a wide buffer between the two warring factions.



NETIQUETTE

The economics of Spotify

Adam Disney isn't convinced that all music should be free

Q: I want to use Spotify but Thom Yorke told me not to, how do I function?

Mahmoud McDowell
(Arts/Science III)

A: A fine question Mamster, and ably stated! For those readers with better things to do than peruse music blogs, the latest online hubbub concerns recent statements by certain musicians, including frontman/interpretive dancer Thom Yorke, that they would be withdrawing their music from the online streaming service Spotify due to the insultingly low rates paid to musicians. While the standard dickheads were quick to comment that Yorke is already rich/is a whinger/should get a real job, and that the protest would achieve nothing, the crux of Yorke and friends' argument, as revealed via Twitter, was that the service only really benefited established acts with large back catalogues while for new bands (ie not Thom Yorke) the rates were prohibitively low.

But Thom Yorke is foreign and funny looking and totes skinny, so we should ignore him right? Yes M-Unit, it's a tempting proposition, but here I would urge caution. If you check the numbers, as musicians such as Damon Krukowski (Galaxie 500 etc) have eloquently done, the standard rates per stream are low enough (AUS\$0.005-ish) that you can get a million odd plays and still score a measly few thousand bucks. Aspiring musicians - think about how hard it is to get one person to listen to your song once. Now scale it up to a million. Even

if you convinced a thousand people, they would still need to listen to your song a thousand times each to earn you enough for an '89 Camry with a fucked muffler.

True, Mammy, Spotify is a splendid service and yes, these longhairs should be thankful for table scraps in the year of the torrent, but before you go streaming Huey Lewis like a madfiend you need to ask the great question of the digital age: what is the value of an idea? You might go all Anarchist Cookbook and say commerce kills art and music years to be free but you'd better start imagining how Dark Side of the Moon or Thriller would have sounded if Pink Floyd or MJ had had to fit recording sessions in their parents' living rooms in between double shifts at Officeworks. Sure, most young bands juggle music-making with shitty jobs, and lowered home recording costs make it much easier for an amateur to get passable results, but that only goes so far. Great records don't happen by magic. They happen because people with talent, expertise and, crucially, time spend countless hours in cramped spaces with poor lighting using their collective experience to create something that, if they're lucky, will recoup the expenses incurred in its creation.

Ultimately it's on you, the eager consumer. Does every artist deserve Kanye money? That's unlikely. But if you believe Spotify rates are fair and balanced then you might want to start forking out for some concert tickets, Officeworks is hiring and even geniuses have to follow the money.

THE NET WE USED TO LOVE

Alisha Aitken-Radburn always fed her Neopet

"Forward this email to everyone in your contact list by MIDNIGHT TONIGHT and your crush will realise how much they like you."

As terrible as those 90s chain emails were, they did add a little something to your inbox. I was the first to send them around in an attempt to claim that \$1,000,000 the Nigerian Prince was trying to get to me. It is this personality and silliness that our 2013 Internet is severely lacking. In many ways, we grew up as the Internet did – the Internet has now become a moody 20-something, with a focus on a small number of sites dedicated to sharing the minutiae of our lives. It has lost any interest in fun or novelty, lost interest in videos solely focused on dancing babies or badgers and it has lost what made it exciting along with that. The Internet we currently know is a cold, dark place and in many ways we are less connected than ever.

Compare our current situation to the

old Internet, the one we all grew up with. That nostalgic Internet only accessible by waiting a good ten minutes for your dial up to connect. Those were the days where instead of instantly checking if there were any more likes on that picture I just posted, I used to check Neopets. Countless hours were spent playing really bad flash games in the hope of one day having enough neopoints to afford a Baby Paintbrush to paint my JubJub. It was an age of innocence, an age of exploration. It seemed that each person discovered something different, be it an obsession with Runescape (I did some serious mining back in '04) or making your way up the social ladder of Habbo Hotel.

On top of losing this era of kitsch innocence, the way we connect with one another through the Internet has changed significantly. There was a point way back when, where the Internet seemed like it could nearly offer an Enlightenment-style answer for every-

thing. The proliferation of the Internet marked an unprecedented capacity for global interconnectivity. But now as I sit at my computer the Internet is so evolved it's just trying to get me to meet people I've already met and chat with X amount of people I've already spoken to today. I have to admit there is some part of me that misses being asked the classic "ASL?" and giving the stock standard answer 18/F/Cali – while we talk about that new video we just watched on funnyjunk.com. It wasn't particularly safe, but it was undeniably fun.

Before Facebook chat helped monopolize social networking, we sent nudges on MSN to people with screen names like "<3 h@nn@h <3." But from April 8th this year, any troopers remaining on what is now called 'Win-

dows Live Messenger' will be forced to migrate to Skype. MSN will find itself joining the likes of Myspace and Bebo in the Internet Graveyard. Goodnight sweet prince.

Sure we still have avenues to connect with people all around the world, but it just doesn't seem like many people are that interested anymore. And let's be honest that can probably be attributed to the fact that Chatroulette is really just a whole heap of penises. But there is a glimmer of hope, just as Snapchat has facilitated the sharing of drunk selfies to people you haven't spoken to since Year 6 Graduation, the next big thing could be just around the corner. Yet I think we can all agree – it still won't have anything on Ask Jeeves.



Live from the living room

Samantha Jonscher checks out Sofar Sounds

In 2009, London musician Passion Ate Dave looked around him and did not like what he saw. In his view, seeing live music had come to fall into two distinct experiences: you were either in a giant amphitheatre watching tiny dots dance on a far away stage or you were in a tiny pub near the stage, but the people around you could care less. Being a new musician was (and still is) really tough; unless people already know you, they probably aren't going to pay much attention to you – even if they managed to wander in to a pub during your set. Unknown musicians garner little respect and little attention.

So along with co-founders Rafe Offer and Rocky Start, the trio founded Sofar Sounds ("SOngs From A Room"). Every month, a willing volunteer offers up their private space for a lineup of local musicians. Guests sign up for the newsletter, hear about the gig and show up with BYO in hand. It's the music industry's answer to the pop-up shop. Since its birth in London, the movement has gone global with Sofar Sounds affiliates in over 30 cities around the world, including Sydney since October 2011.

Curious to see what it was all about, this *Honi* writer went along to check it out.

I pitch up at seven o'clock with a bottle of wine in one hand and plastic cups in another, not quite sure what to expect – the address I've been given has led me to a warehouse in one of Marickville's industrial precincts. The venue this month turns out to be a studio-by-day-living-room-by-night; an obvious choice

for an organization that prides itself on reinventing private spaces.

Giant cartoon screen-prints, a two-meter geisha fan and a collection of gold-framed landscape paintings decorate the walls, umbrellas hang upside down from the ceiling as creative light fixtures and potted palm trees feature heavily at ground level. Couches, crates and beanbags are scattered around the stage and guests have taken advantage of every available seat, some choosing to relax on the strategically placed Afghan rugs that hide the concrete beneath. Looking closer though, the aluminum insulation and chicken wire stretching across the sloped, 2-story ceiling serve as quick reminders that this is an industrial warehouse, not a new bar in King's Cross. The venue, a large one for the organization, seems at capacity. Fifty-odd people chat amongst themselves sipping on BYO beer and wine.

First up is London transplant Dominic Youdan, a guitarist with a firm footing in modern folk music. From his first note the audience is spellbound, falling silent the second he takes the stage. This sort of audience attentiveness is what separates a Sofar evening from pub gigs – the intimacy, the appreciation and the openness. It's rare, and though a dream come true for artists, it can also be a bit daunting. The affable Youdan is visibly impressed by the attention, but if thrown at first he recovers quickly, relaxing into a comfortable set of his emotionally charged melodies proving himself worthy of the crowd's concentration.

Canberra native Guy Lilleyman and his 12-string acoustic are up next. With an army of pedals at his feet Lilleyman forges a uniquely Australian brand of blues-infused country. Vast, barren, surreal landscapes haunt his musical

interludes and one cannot help but imagine his music as the film score for a Nick Cave movie. Lilleyman's voice is grounded in the earth just like his guitar and lends itself to the moody ballads of folklore. Lilleyman is charming, yet introspective. In moments of intensity, he allows his thick curly brown hair to veil his face. At other times, he flashes his broad and earnest smile.

Smaal Cats, a Sydney based four-piece, set up next. The stage is only large enough for their drummer, so the rest of the band is forced into the audience; as it turns out that's exactly where they belong. To say that these guys are fun is an understatement. Seagulls, the band's opener, is loud, joyful, full of heart, rough around the edges and with a heavy blues guitar – somewhere between The Cold War Kids and The Kooks. Charlie Graden on vocals is a show all on his own though; he quivers to every beat, thrashes around manically and puts pretty much all that he has into the lyrics. It's not just a strong sense of rhythm and a heavy dose of soul that make Smaal Cats, it's their boundless energy that brings it home for the crowd. After their planned set, they say goodnight and hastily start to pack up; the drummer Brad Landy deconstructs his cymbal. But before they can get too far the audience demands more and after some reassembly they deliver. Everybody leaps to their feet and needless to say, some manic, senseless dancing ensues. After two more songs, Brad was finally able to put his cymbal away – the night had come to an end.



Photo: Isabella Favaloro

GIG REVIEW

No Money?!?

DEBTS

The SRC Legal Service helps people with negotiations on outstanding debts. Just ring our office to make an appointment for some advice.

FOOD

The SRC and the Union offer free food from time to time to promote various campaigns and events. These are advertised in the Daily Bull and Honi Soit. Some Union clubs also offer a regular meal for a one-off joining fee plus a few dollars extra (eg, the Vegetarian Club). The University also serves food at all the graduations ceremonies. It would be very naughty of you to go there when you're not really attending the ceremony, so if you're hungry and you've got no money, please do not go to these ceremonies and pretend you belong so you can eat their sandwiches.

The SRC runs a food co-op on level 4 of the Wentworth Building that has lots of very cheap food (like dried fruit, rice crackers, chocolates, rice, grains, etc). Bring your own container. If you do a shift there you will even get a discount.

Many places on King Street in Newtown offer you a discount with a student card or Access card. Places that have pre-prepared food tend to charge less per serve nearest to closing time. For example the food courts in

Broadway and Marrickville shopping centres will charge around \$3-\$4 for a meal instead of the usual \$6-7. Just be careful of food kept out of the fridge or heating for too long.

There are lots of other organisations that offer cheap meals. SRC caseworkers have a list available for the inner Sydney and Sydney areas, eg, Hare Krisna's van outside Newtown Neighbourhood Centre every evening.

Bringing food/drink from home is often a lot cheaper than buying lunch on or off campus. Even better would be to have some meals at a friend or relative's house.

HOUSING

Cheap housing is quite tricky in Sydney. Look on café noticeboards and telegraph poles for share housing ads or try applying for a place at STUCCO, the student housing cooperative (<http://www.stucco.org.au/>). The University has a few cheap accommodation options. They are very limited so apply early. There is also a University Accommodation Data base at http://sydney.edu.au/current_students/accommodation/ which is worth looking through. The Department of Housing have a scheme called Rentstart, where they give you an interest free loan to cover your bond. Of course there are conditions, but this is definitely worth checking out.

Having not much money is a fact of life for many students. Talk to an SRC caseworker about what options you have to make life a bit easier.

PHONE

It is possible to buy a handset cheaply or ask a friend to give you one they no longer use. It is easiest to control the costs by using prepaid accounts. An online phone service like Skype might also make it cheaper for you.

TRANSPORT

Where possible travel off-peak, using pre-paid tickets (metro 10 bus tickets, weekly train tickets) or just walking some of the way. However, consider the "cost" of your safety too. Sometimes it is a good idea to splash out and take a taxi.

FURNITURE

Cheap furniture and kitchen stuff can be bought from op shops. Search for them on the internet. Keep an eye out for stuff that's being put out for council pick up. The more "posh" the area, the nicer the stuff.

LOANS

It is only a good idea to get a loan when you have the intention and the ability to pay it back. The SRC offers an emergency loan (interest free) of up to \$50. The University has a Financial Assistance Office that has interest free loans of up to \$1500 as well as some

bursaries (loans you don't have to pay back). You could also investigate available scholarships. www.usyd.edu.au/su/fin_assist/.

FUN

The Union offers a large range of social activities that you can attend that are mostly free. They also give away prizes at trivia nights and other social nights that may get you to the movies, see a band or even an opera. There are a few festivals that happen throughout the year throughout the city and suburbs. Keep an eye on the local papers. Keep in mind too that the Union sells discounted tickets for the movies and some other places. You could also try contacting small or local newspapers and ask to review films or bands.

HEALTH

If you are an Australian citizen or permanent resident and on Centrelink payment or if you are on a low wage (\$497 per week as at July, 2013) you may be eligible for a Health Care Card. This gives you reduced prices on most prescription drugs (about \$6), discount tickets at the movies (although it is cheaper to buy movie money from the Union), free ambulance coverage in NSW, cheap glasses, free hearing aids and access to free dental care.

Ask Abe

Hi Abe,

Centrelink want to cut me off my payment because they say I should have finished my degree by now. Do you know anything about that?

PD.



Dear PD

What you're talking about is called the Maximum Allowable Time for Completion. It affects lots of students. The basic principle behind it is that you are allowed to get paid until you have exceeded the amount of semesters it would take for most people to ordinarily complete their degree plus one extra semester. Sometimes it's plus one year, but that's only when your subjects are a year long. So if you're doing an Arts degree that's 3 years plus 1 semester full time equivalent. Remember that this tells them when you should be cut off.

It is not dependent on whether you have received a payment for all of that time or not. If you have been studying longer than the Allowable Time come and talk to a SRC caseworker as they can advise you if you can get that time extended. You may have been part time in an earlier semester but they have counted it as full time or you may have not passed a semester for reasons beyond your control.

We have found some Austudy students doing Medicine degrees who have been told that the time they have spent doing a previous degree should count. So

medicine is 5 years long, so they should be allowed 11 semesters. However they had to do a previous degree, eg, Bachelor of Science, which takes 3 years or 6 semesters. That leaves 5 semesters or only 2.5 years to be able to get paid. Well that premise is actually WRONG. Medicine is a special degree, because it is a normal entry requirement to complete a Bachelor's degree. Therefore previous Bachelor study should not count. If Centrelink tell you otherwise, it might be worth appealing this decision. I helped a student with this last semester and he received a back payment of more than \$5000.

Abe.

The Ask Abe column has been a feature in Honi Soit since 2001. During that time, Abe, the SRC's welfare dog has provided advice to students about Centrelink problems, academic appeals, accommodation situations, shortages of money, University procedures and a variety of other situations.

Unfortunately on 21st June, 2013, Abe died. He was a few months short of his 18th birthday, and had lived a grand life, full of adventure and love. While the SRC is sad to have lost such a wise and insightful canine, we will continue to produce this column in his memory. If there are any questions you would like to ask send an email to: help@src.usyd.edu.au.

International Students

Did you know you may be able to apply for a "holiday credit" on your health insurance for the time you are not in Australia?

For those with coverage from OSHC Worldcare you need to be out of Australia for 30 days or more, and be able to present your passport, boarding passes or travel tickets. This credit cannot be paid out until the end of your degree.

If your coverage is with another company call them to see if they have a similar arrangement.

You must apply within 30 days of returning, so hurry.



President's Report

David Pink thinks seeking asylum is a human right

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Welcome back to university. I thought I'd tell you this week why Kevin Rudd and the Labor Party's Papua New Guinea solution is a disgrace.

Papua New Guinea is not a country that is safe for people seeking to escape persecution.

It is not safe for women or queer people: one in two women in PNG have been raped, and two out of every three have been victims of domestic violence. Homosexuality is a criminal offence that attracts a 14-year gaol term, which is especially dangerous given that many refugees base their asylum claims on their homosexual and transgender status.

It is a severely underdeveloped country, where 60% of people have no access to clean water, 55% no access to sanitation and 55% of children receive no education. It ranks 168th in the world in life expectancy, 148th for death rates, 173rd for health. Smartraveller (an Aus-

tralian government website) currently warns that Papua New Guinea is suffering a cholera epidemic, and cautions Australians not to travel there unless they take extraordinary safety precautions (against gang rapes targeting foreigners, the "ever-present threat" of car-jacking and violent clashes between ethnic groups, etc.).

We have actually received a significant number of asylum claims from refugees fleeing the country – there is absolutely no way that it can ever serve as a sanctuary for people fleeing persecution.

Apologists for the policy have already started arguing that it doesn't matter if Papua New Guinea is a hellhole; a policy this hardline will be such a powerful deterrence, that no refugees will actually flee to Australia.

That has already been proved wrong. People have already come to Australia by boat under this policy and marked for resettlement to Papua New Guinea.

This includes children. These are people whose lives have now been destroyed by this 'solution'.

For many asylum seekers their only means of escaping persecution is to travel to Australia by boat, and Article 31 of the UN Refugee Convention provides refugees an inalienable right not to be penalised on account of their mode of entry into Australia.

There exist alternative ways of dissuading refugees from taking dangerous sea voyages, primarily by creating a vastly expanded and timely pathway for resettlement from Indonesia, but even if such policies are implemented asylum seekers who arrive in Australia by boat are exercising an inalienable right to take that pathway and should not be punished for it.

We should open our borders to those fleeing persecution immediately: we have no right to choose who comes into this country, or the circumstances



in which they come.

General Secretary's Report

general.secretary@src.usyd.edu.au

Dylan Parker lays down the budget

Welcome back to Semester 2, it has been a while since I last wrote and a lot has happened since then. However, one thing in particular that I should inform you about is the budget that I have produced and passed for the 85th Council.

While, Budgets sure aren't the sexiest things in the world and I'd love to be the General Secretary with the freedom to throw money around willy nilly, I am proud of the final product. I'm proud because if there was one word to describe this budget that word is 'measured'.

The 85th Budget strikes the right balance between targeted savings and increased expenditure, reconciling the increased pressure on our services with the fact that our organisation faces a \$73,000 reduction in university

funding. Importantly, I have tried to accommodate all interested parties and departments while still looking after the long-term sustainability of our organisation.

Snapshot:

- Due to the negotiated \$73,093 reduction in funding by the University, SRC expenditure will be modestly greater than our income by a figure of \$43,543.
- Mandated salary increases within the EBA, claimed entitlements, an additional part-time caseworker, an expanded legal service and departures have seen fixed staffing costs increase by 15% on 2012 figures from \$1,096,976.79 to \$1,264,176.57.
- SRC activist budgets are at a

historic high of \$49,350 in recognition of the importance of the staff and student strikes as well as increased demands by office bearers.

- Costs for SRC publications have remained relatively constant.
- Overall spending on the National Union of Students (NUS) is down by \$21,000 on account of the SRC's negotiated reduction in affiliation by \$10,000 in affiliation fees and Edcon not being in Sydney this year.

Many thanks to Chitra, our Admin Manager who was of great assistance from start to finish. From hereon the name of the game is expenses control. With monthly reporting to Exec I am sure we will be able to stick to our own plan.



As the Honi pages only allow for so much detail, if you would like a greater explanation of the 85th Budget feel free to grab me at the offices, drop me a line, or email at general.secretary@src.usyd.edu.au.

Queer Officers' Report

Fahad Ali and Eleanor Barz report back from the Queer Collaborations Conference

queer.officers@src.usyd.edu.au

It's been a productive month for the USyd queer community. This July, 28 of us attended the annual Queer Collaborations Conference, which attracts roughly 300 delegates from universities around the country. This year it was hosted by a collective made up of universities in the Sydney region, with USyd and Macquarie University accommodating most of the meetings, workshops and events.

During the conference, we became

particularly concerned about the deteriorating situations for LGBTIQ people in Russia and Greece. On Saturday the 13th of July we worked with the other delegates to organise a rally outside the Greek Consulate to express solidarity with trans* people and sex workers, who are systematically attacked by the Greek government.

The queer community at the University of Sydney has also led the charge in promoting the rights of intersex and

sex and gender diverse (ISGD) students around the nation. Last December, as a representative of the Queer Action Collective (QuAC), Fahad spoke in favour of a motion to support sex and gender diversity at the National Union of Students (NUS) National Conference. However, we should like to see tangible change rather than hollow support for a string of black marks in a policy document. For this reason, QuAC is planning to return to the NUS National

Conference at the end of the year with a proposal that will fundamentally alter the way office-bearers are selected. We will insist that NUS extend its affirmative action provisions to include ISGD students. Delegates from across Australia have unanimously endorsed this move at Queer Collaborations.

Feel free to contact us at the email address provided if you would like to know more about the queer collective or Queer Collaborations.

Enviro Collective Report

Amelle Vanderstock tells us about activism in regional NSW

"If you love this country, fight for it. This will be the biggest social movement this country has ever seen, and it will change this country forever." - Drew Hutton, Lock the Gate Alliance President

From Urban ASEN students to rural Knitting Nanas, 270 community campaigners from across Australia joined experienced activists, doctors and academics in Kurri Kurri NSW (18-20 May) to share stories from our growing fight for country and livelihoods so undermined by extractive industries.

Organized by the Sunrise Project, panel discussions featuring experts and community leaders were integrated with training, report-backs and networking in an open workshop model.

Climate expert and former chair of the Australian Coal association, Ian Dunlop, revealed our recent emissions trajectory as alarmingly higher than the most conservative IPCC projections.

The imminent call for 'fossil-free' was supplemented by Dr Merryn Redenbach, Doctors for the Environment Australia, in her discussion of extensive public health impacts at every coal energy production stage. Grounded in realistic economics and existing technology, the switch to renewables was detailed by Mark Diesendorf, UNSW. Groups including the Community Power Agency and Beyond Zero Emissions further revealed how solutions are already amongst us.

David and Goliath successes were celebrated alongside ongoing campaigns. From the small town of Bulga, NSW's win in court against mining giant Rio Tinto, to the termination of the mega-port project on Balaclava island in the Great Barrier reef and Woodside's LNG gas hub in the Kimberley, there was energy and hope in conference participants. Surveys, blockades and innovative

tactics such as Jonathan Moylan's ANZ-Whitehaven hoax were work-shopped. The Sierra Club, US, shared their organising model which successfully closed 177 coal fired power plants across the continent. Lock the Gate, in a 'Call to Country' seek to unite these ubiquitous demands to prioritize farmland, water catchments, nationally significant ecosystems and community concern.

As a participant, I was truly inspired by stories of struggle and success, shared by people who don't necessarily converge on politics or priorities for 'why'. The gathering revealed how our efforts contribute to a broader environmental justice movement, as what we do agree upon, is that we can and must take our land, our water and our future, into our own capable hands.



environment.officers@src.usyd.edu.au

Women's Officers' Report

Chloe Smith helps you cure your Collective withdrawal

Although the winter break is generally a great time for recuperation before semester 2, it can be less great surviving for over a month without the fantastic discussions and activities organised by the Women's Collective on campus. For those women experiencing such withdrawals, the annual NOWSA (Network Of Women Students Australia) conference was a great remedy, this year held at beautiful Melbourne University. Four days were spent listening to keynote speeches from inspirational, intelligent, and successful women across a variety of fields, attending many interactive and informative workshops on women and society, well-being, culture, and the workplace, and enjoying the great hospitality of Melbourne and the university's Women's Collective in between. Notable speakers included Leslie Cannold on the

dangerously inadequate state of abortion laws in Australia, Melba Marginson on advocating for the rights of migrant women, Clementine Ford on the experiences of women in the media, and many more.

The conference also had a great variety of workshops on offer, where women could learn and discuss new skills and ideas. Some favourites included discussing great feminist literature, learning how to identify sexism in the media and report it to the relevant bodies, and learning how to be good allies to marginalised groups like trans and intersex people, and sex workers. NOWSA also emphasised and acknowledged that women cannot ask for recognition of their oppression, and recognition of the privilege of men, without recognising the privileges of some women over oth-

ers. Autonomous and pro-caucuses were held with workshops to acknowledge the additional oppressions of queer women, women of colour, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, and women with disability. It was moving to be a part of something that managed to be humbling, confronting, empowering, and inspirational. Some tears were shed, but there was also laughter and a great sense of solidarity.

NOWSA's theme is about sharing positive and useful skills and ideas amongst women from all over the country, educating ourselves and others on recognising the struggles women from all backgrounds still face, and using this knowledge to become activists to solve these issues for the future and change society for the better. Problem? Patriarchy! Solution? Smash it!



usyd womenscollective@gmail.com

SUPRA Vice-President's Report

Tim Scriven gives us an insight into the Sydney University Postgraduates Representatives Association

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This Friday, on the 2nd of August, 12pm in the SUPRA offices, SUPRA (The Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association) will be holding a meeting of the postgraduate education Network. It's an opportunity for us to learn about what Postgraduates need, for you to learn more about what we do, and for us to plan together concrete steps to get postgraduates what they need and want for their education. The theme of this meeting will be minimum requirements, what you need in order to do what you do at this

university, whether it is coursework or research. A light lunch will be provided.

In other news our equity networks are going well, if you're queer, a woman, indigenous, an international student or a student with a disability you should get involved with your equity network and make a difference. We've been involved in preparing for the national day of action on the 20th of August. We've also just sent off a number of submissions both to the university and to the government including a submission calling on

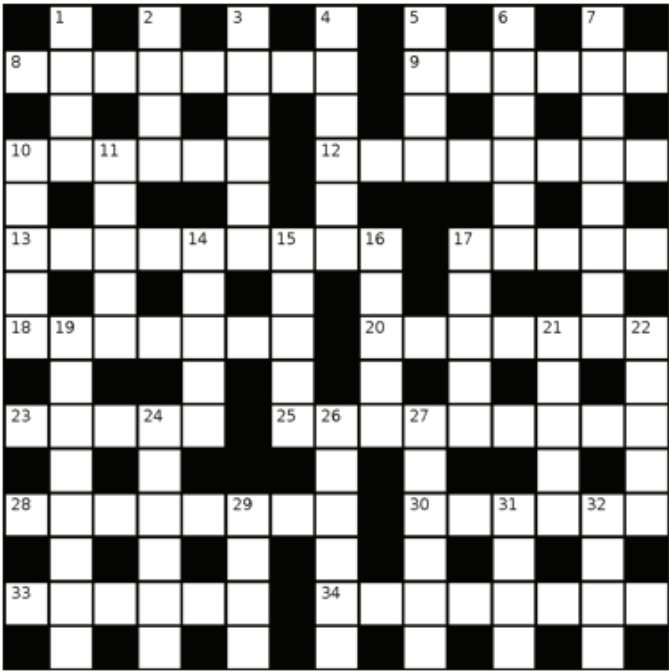
the university to recognize the sex and gender identities of students who don't fit into the male female binary.

We've got a wine and cheese night coming up on Thursday the 1st of August at 6pm in the SUPRA offices, and we'd really love to see all the postgraduates who can come. It's free, and quite frankly delicious.

You can find more about us and get involved at supra.net.au.



QUICK CROSSWORD



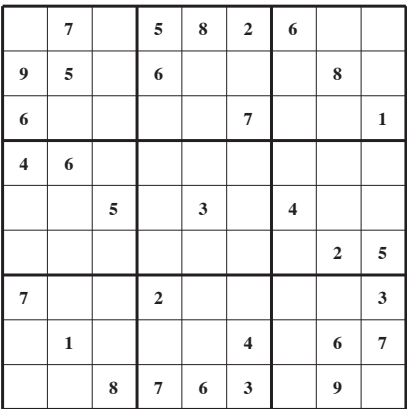
Janice

ACROSS

- 8. Produced by yourself (8)
- 9. Metapod's famous move (6)
- 10. Make smaller (6)
- 12. Monkey _____ (8)
- 13. Having a strong distaste (9)
- 17. Indicated (5)
- 18. Set apart (7)
- 20. Moriarty, for example (7)
- 23. Not true (5)
- 25. Atomic bomb that leaves a lot of radiation (5,4)
- 28. Introduction (8)
- 30. Wood remains (6)
- 33. Used to roll cigarettes (6)
- 34. Portal science company (8)

DOWN

- 1. Heart of an apple (4)
- 2. A list available at a restaurant (4)
- 3. Soft touch (6)
- 4. Small rock (6)
- 5. "___ is how the world ends" (4)
- 6. Third place (6)
- 7. Capital of Finland (8)
- 10. They meet in the middle of a circle (5)
- 11. Dance music (5)
- 14. Topic of grammar (5)
- 15. Like many jackets (5)
- 16. Arabic currency (5)
- 17. Typically Egyptian; typically wrapped up (5)
- 19. Led Zeppelin's way of getting to heaven (8)
- 21. A piece of weaponry (5)
- 22. Dry (5)
- 24. Drivel (6)
- 26. Vomit evoker (6)
- 27. Food (6)
- 29. "Simply the ____" (4)
- 31. Crazy (4)
- 32. Continental currency (4)



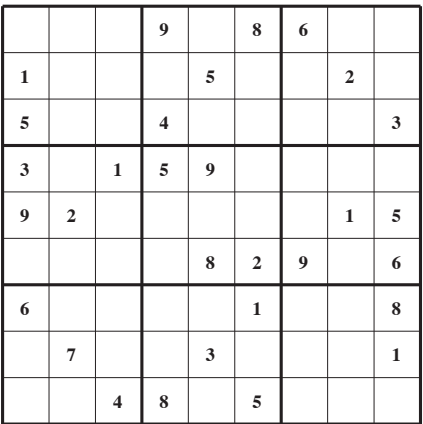
Easy



Hard



Hard



WORD WIT

- 1. T.S. Eliot may have predicted the world will end with a whimper, but there are no 'words' that end with one. There are about six ones that end with a bang though, can you name all of them?
- 2. See anything in common with the following words? Endogamy, duration, location, fortunate, forbearance, chanting, scowling, newspaper, billion, shared, diaspora, smothers.
- 3. Two words, one three letters, one six letter, can have the letter 's' put in front of them to make two new words, and a compound phrase when joined.

For answers see above. Way above.

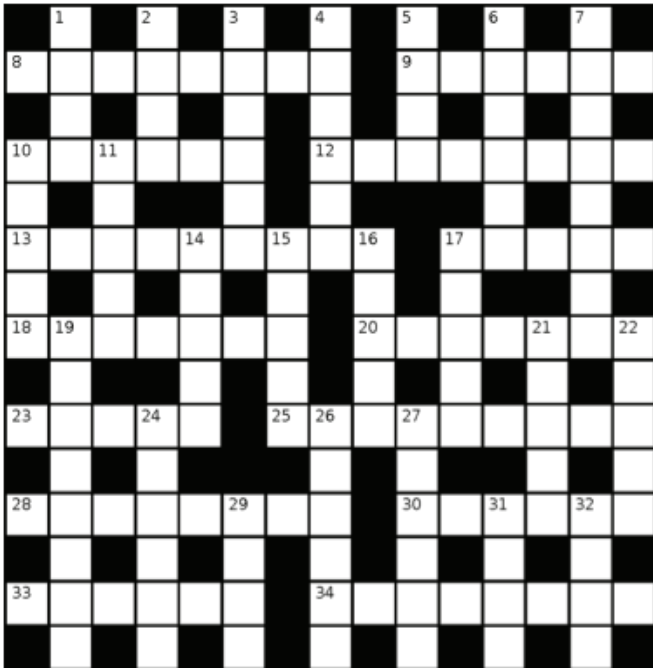
ACROSS

- 8. Dev-id -f attenti-n (8)
- 9. That Spanish one started being radically distinctive (6)
- 10. Team spirit cuts off additional booze (6)
- 12. Realm of uni musicians is transposed? (8)
- 13. Serving as a review -- Rome ends thrall returning to her (9)
- 17. Devoid family of Westoros (5)
- 18. Maintain a place of refuge and comfort (7)
- 20. World endings are returning in Space cinema (7)
- 23. This tennis shot is a piece of cake (5)
- 25. Bar from consideration: extreme rides that pull back (9)
- 28. For example, Bolt and Wood remain around Young Labor (8)
- 30. Look around the modern era and do begin to leave (6)
- 33. Meet with a lover during the fourth case (6)
- 34. Cultured editor embraces gold and ecstasy (8)

DOWN

- 1. Odd loop in a shirt (4)
- 2. Be Tokyo's first ace tester type (4)
- 3. A small concavity about Chinese borders holds Nazis (6)
- 4. Mentally prepare for a popstar revolutionary (6)
- 5. Change part of the game? (4)
- 6. Strange Northern Territory isle is marked by an absence of sound (6)
- 7. Exterior spirit is awful to do at a greater degree (8)
- 10. Walk straight into a battle frontier (5)
- 11. Seek information from both for and against! (5)
- 14. Give expression to being endlessly reduced in rank (5)
- 15. He initially ordered attack by spilling blood! (5)
- 16. Stirs the King and Queen on the radio (5)
- 17. Litigate against Delaware Fabric (5)
- 19. Yell away in disarray a very narrow street (8)
- 21. Bring down a level (5)
- 22. She'd initially identify the French by moving unobtrusively (5)
- 24. Medical establishment seconds ace allergist 'Gilbert' in airdropping acid (6)
- 26. I returned to King's country (6)
- 27. Deliver free harm (6)
- 29. Act in different directions (4)
- 31. Talk in a chateau (4)
- 32. In retrospect: complete idiots did provide Paleo, for example (4)

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD



Janice



“Three stars!”



ABBOTT NOT REALLY AN ASSHOLE

It was with utter elation and raw unfiltered emotion that Tony Abbott was presented with the news of Labor's turnaround in asylum seeker policy under Prime Minister Rudd this week. The policy turnaround was brought to Abbott's attention by a member of the press corps during one of his many recent in-depth policy discussions at the National Press Club, for which he has gained the nickname "Tell All Tony". In an unorthodox move by the opposition leader, Abbott opted to comment directly on the change, despite not having undergone party briefing on talking points, given that this topic was so close to the heart for the renowned human rights campaigner.

"I just want to sincerely thank Labor for finally coming to the table on this issue" said Abbott, his voice breaking as he spoke. "For too long this issue has been treated so inhumanely by all sides of politics. What we often forget is that these are real people with lives and loved ones, who are needlessly dying at sea." Abbott then took a moment to compose himself and wipe away tears before carrying on. "This is not just a political issue, it is an issue for me personally. This is why the Liberal

Party has made "Stop the Unnecessary Deaths at Sea" the keystone of our policy platform for the upcoming election. Because we simply could not stand by and let this suffering continue unabated." Abbott also made plain his feelings towards those who would seek to use such a policy to attract votes on a xenophobic platform. "To those who would vote for this policy simply for fear of immigration I repeat what I have always said, I do not nor have I ever wanted your vote. I would sooner see such people deported to a wartorn country and replaced with an asylum seeker who appreciates what we have in this country, than accept the vote of such narrow minded xenophobes."

Having campaigned entirely on a platform of preventing the "boats", a word that has become synonymous in the public mind with the phrase "unnecessary drownings at sea by people who are fleeing the most abysmal conditions in their homelands", Abbott now claims to be unconcerned about his election prospects. "It doesn't matter if we win or lose now," he announced with pride, barely holding back another torrent of tears, "All that matters is that we can be sure

that these poor people are now a little bit safer as a result of this cross party initiative. Finally this issue can stop being treated as a game for politicians with aspirations of power."

Having become renowned for his outright shows of emotion, the press gallery was unsurprised to see Abbott's latest outpouring over an issue that has been long fought and hard won for him. Rumours are even circling of a potential resignation by Abbott following this momentous victory, though many have indicated their wish for him to stay on and champion further human rights issues on a national scale. No comment has yet been released by the Liberal National Party office, although the UNHCR has confirmed that Abbott has accepted a position on its board, which was offered in response to Abbott's legendary personal donations to the organisation, which are rumoured to now tally in the order of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Despite all this Abbott is still not without his detractors from the fringes of politics. Some have called into question his sincerity on this issue, particularly

former Greens leader and fellow Sydney Uni alumnus Bob Brown. In retort Abbott has said he is "personally offended" by these allegations of insincerity and cited his long and arduous battles for the rights of women and gays as proof that his Stop the Boats campaign is a true humanitarian concern of his. "Unlike Bob," countered Tony, "I have spent my life, all the way back to my formative days at Sydney Uni, campaigning for equal rights for women, LGBT people and those people he so callously refers to as 'illegal immigrants'."

This victory is expected to heal some wounds that had emerged between the country's two largest political parties after the removal of the first female Prime Minister Julia Gillard by the Labor party, a move which is said to have enraged Abbott, who was a good friend and admirer of Gillard's tenacity during times of great hostility from the public. However, following the turnaround on asylum seeker policy, Abbott is now pegged to begin a new period of cooperation with Labor, given a newly stated commitment to work with all parties to ensure the best legislation possible for our country.

MELISSA DOYLE NOT ONLY REPLACED IN SUNRISE FAMILY, BUT IN REAL FAMILY TOO

After being dumped from Channel 7's morning program Sunrise, Mel Doyle has now been dumped by her children in favour of a younger, hotter Mum

"It's not a decision that is about discrimination by age, or by looks, it's simply an operational shift in the way we do things around the Doyle household. Testing has shown that our new mum Cynthia has proven very popular in the demographic of 5- to 10-year-olds. The numbers simply don't lie. The decision is nothing personal against Mel. We still consider her to be very much a part of our family, she just won't be our Mum any more," Doyle's own daughter Alexandra commented in her formal press release.

Doyle was reported as saying that she resigned willingly, saying "I am so glad for my time in the Doyle family, but it's time I

moved onto other things." However, insiders say her children and other family members had been planning the axing for quite some time.

"Of course Mel will still be part of the Doyle Family, just in a different role. We obviously won't be having the same presence of her around, but telephone or video communication providing information and entertainment about the Doyle family in a wider sense, we'll still be using her talents." Doyle son, 3-year-old Matthew has said.

Melissa's now ex-husband Greg commented that "obviously it's all about the kids, so it was their executive decision. But person-

ally, I am super excited that Cynthia, a previous winner of the Miss Chile competition who scored 74 on the IQ test, is the person I now get to have sex with."

According to the Doyle family press release, Doyle is "very comfortable and at ease" in her new residence, a shared YHA Hostel room with two Ukrainian body-builders.



Years of smiling have given Melissa Doyle wrinkles and prompted her removal from polite society

CLIVE PALMER COLLIDES WITH ICEBERG, SINKING

Eccentric billionaire Clive Palmer has collided with an iceberg and is rapidly taking in water. It is believed that due to poor visibility, Palmer failed to notice the substantial damage to his gut for several weeks. He attempted to stymie the damage with the clothes off the back of his workers, but to no avail. Palmer is expected to mark his demise by founding a new underwater city, named Atlantis, to challenge Canberra for the position of Australia's capital.



"Ooh!" Palmer upon hitting the iceberg

MEDIA JUNKET EAGERLY AWAITS NAMING OF ROYAL AFTERBIRTH

The media circus surrounding the naming of the royal baby is set to continue even though William and Kate have already named the actual baby George, the naming of the afterbirth is still shrouded in mystery.

"There's been a lot of talk that the placenta might be named Phillip, after Prince Phillip, for the similarities that both are hard to look at for a long period of time and a complete waste of space makes it a forerunner. Sources close to people that may know someone in touch with a relative of people who sometimes might serve for the royal couple have confirmed such rumours," a Soin entertainment reporter commented, standing outside the royal hospital.

"Other possibilities for the namesake may simply be William the 2nd, Elizabeth, after the Queen herself, or #RN438-B Ward A after the hospital classification system for afterbirths." It has been reported that the afterbirth has been frozen and stored

in a container within the hospital.

"The media have been pretty vicious with the whole story about the afterbirth. One member of the paparazzi has just been arrested for trying to impersonate a nurse just to get a snap of the glowing Princess cradling the frozen box of hormones natal nutrients, eliminated fetal uric acid and fecal waste."

Within the Australian media, SportsBet has been running a fierce campaign with the odds for each name featuring in tabloids and women's magazines across the nation.

"If there is one thing that Australians love aside from vapid gossip about well-known people who contribute nothing to society, it's losing their own personal fortune from their own hard-earned labour on such things," SportsBet CEO Patrick Kennedy commented in a press release.

MY (SHITTY) DAY ON A PLATE

WAYNE SWAN: 27 JUNE 2013

.....
3pm Rise 3:05pm Cherry Jim Beam and single ice cube with the morning papers, Winfield Red 3:45pm Cocaine 3:50pm Another glass of Jim Beam, Winfield 4:05pm First cup of coffee, Winfield 4:15pm Cocaine 4:20pm V8 popper, Winfield 4:30pm Cocaine 4:54pm Cocaine 5:05pm

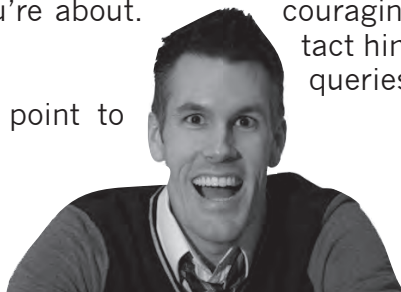


Cocaine 5:11pm Coffee, Winfield 5:30pm More ice in the Jimmy 5:45pm Cocaine 6pm A little J time to take the edge off 7:05pm Old Canberra Inn for lunch: Carlton Draught, two Aussie burgers, two serves of chips, a plate of hot wings, coleslaw, taco salad, double order of onion rings, lamingtons, ice cream, Winfields, another Carlton, cocaine, and for the ride home, a double Jäger on the rocks 9pm Cocaine 11pm Chartreuse, cocaine, little J time 11:30pm Cocaine Midnight Ready to answer emails 12:05am-6am Chartreuse, cocaine, few J's, Jim Beam, coffee, Carlton, clove cigarettes, bananas, Winfields, V8 popper, Smirnoff Double Black 6am In the hot tub: champagne, box of Lindt, lasagne 8am Valium 8:20am Sleep

DOWN-TO-EARTH TUTOR JUST WANTS TO GET TO KNOW YOU GUYS

Relaxed economics tutor Danny Palmer informed students yesterday that his first lesson would be exclusively dedicated to really getting a feel for one another. The 27-year-old leant casually on his desk as he explained his extremely informal approach to education. "This is no ordinary class," Palmer insisted, "I'd like to go around the room and hear from all of you, tell us why you're here and what you're about. Really dig deep."

Palmer made a point to



ignore information about deadlines and plagiarism usually flagged in the first week of term. "I have too much god damn respect for you guys to harp on about boring procedural stuff", he explained, "you're all adults here, and I'm going to treat you accordingly."

At press time, Palmer was seen writing his home phone number on the white board, eagerly encouraging students to contact him with absolutely any queries they might have.

NO BECAUSE OF ALAN JONES
- Eds

DAVID CAMERON'S ERROR 505

In a shock announcement following the implementation of mandatory filters on internet pornography in the UK, David Cameron has moved to ban the sale of Kleenex tissues and Vaseline to males under the age of 18.

"Blocking pornography was an important first step," Cameron said, "but we need to go further, you can't stop masturbation

with an internet filter alone."

"This isn't about censorship or restricting freedom," Cameron added, "though if that's the case I don't really know what it is about – oh yeah, something something corroding childhood."

Cameron's new policies have been roundly criticised by civil

rights activists, who have variously labelled him a "wanker" and a "right jerk off".

The Prime Minister elicited more sympathy from Stephen Conroy, but by the time he was prepared to comment Mr Conroy had lost his position in the Labor ministry, and was err... on the other side of the world and completely irrelevant.

IMAGE CENSORED

Australian Government
Department of Immigration
and Citizenship

Spend your summer in sunny Papua New Guinea!

Have yourself a first-rate holiday in a third-world country!

Boat cruises now on sale!*

***return tickets unavailable**



HONI SOIT PRESENTS

HONI SOIRÉE

FRIENDSHIPS
THE
TOWNHOUSES
(MELB)
RECKLESS
VAGINA
MOONHOLIDAY
MÈRE
WOMEN
BAD EZZY
MILKK
THE DHARMA

\$5 ON THE
DOOR
AUGUST 9
— 7 PM —

RED RATTLER FUNDRAISER
@ THE RAT
6 FAVERSHAM ST MARRICKVILLE

