

Honi Soit



Week 13, Semester 1, 2014

HONI SOIT TOUCH ONE, TOUCH ALL

p.10 *Legal aid funding cuts*
p.15 *Arcade under fire*

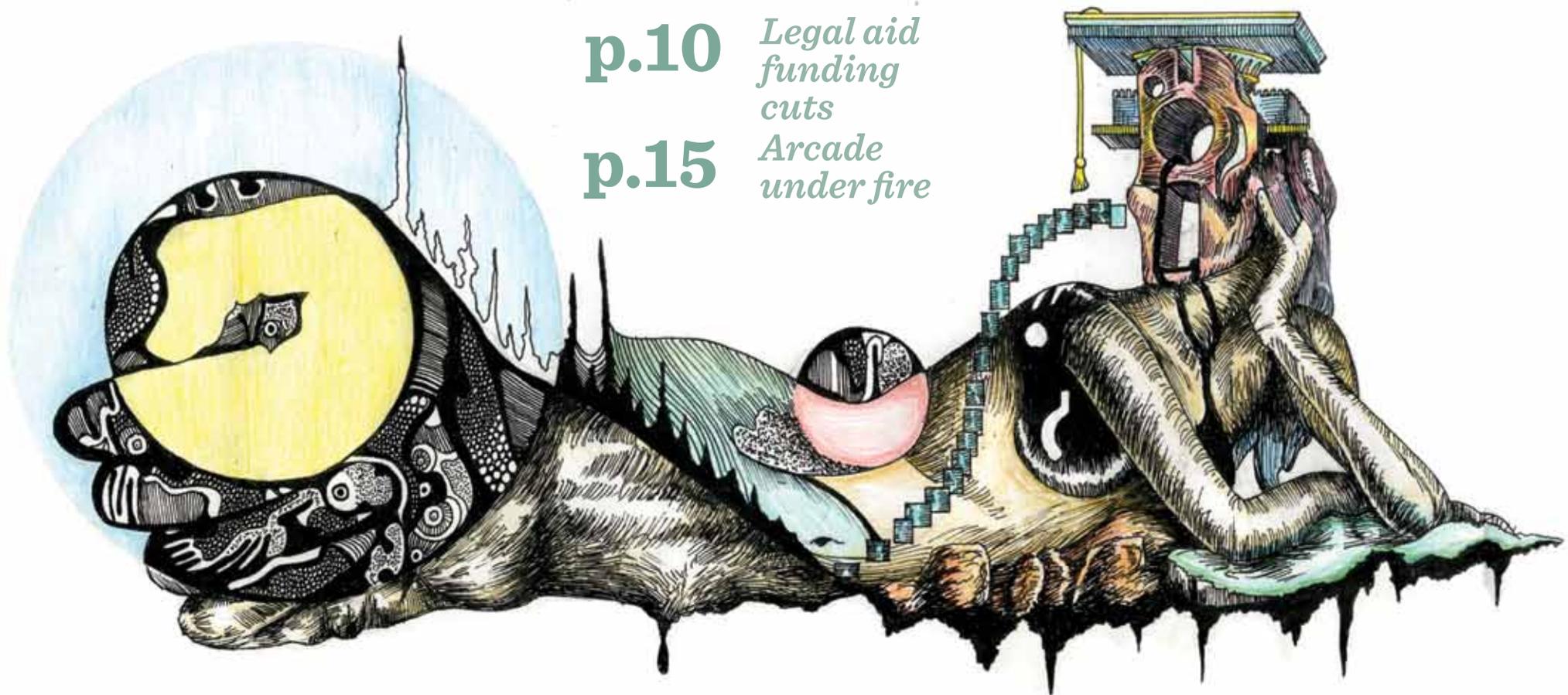


ILLUSTRATION BY MACKENZIE NIX

🔍 Salt of the Earth

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Astha Rajvanshi and Tom Gardner investigate the meteoric rise of Socialist Alternative at USyd and beyond.

“Would you like to sign our petition against the education cuts?”

Student activists wearing ‘Fuck Tony Abbott’ shirts often approach the average student frequenting Fisher library with this friendly request. They usually set up a stall on Eastern Avenue with a hand-painted banner hanging off the edge of the table. Copies of the fortnightly newspaper *The Red Flag* are sold alongside a wide collection of books, newspapers and pamphlets on Marxism.

These are members of Sydney University branch of Socialist Alternative (SAlt), a revolutionary Australian socialist organisation.

They hold strong anti-capitalist views that identify with Trotskyism and the Marxist tradition of “socialism from below”. They believe in changing

the world not through running in elections, but rather by empowering people to “get out on the streets to fight for themselves”.

On campus, they regularly organise protests, campaigns, and weekly discussion groups around the history and theory of revolutionary socialism. Following the Abbott government’s recent cuts to Australian tertiary education, they’ve sought to revive the old ways of activism that defined the sixties and seventies.

Most SAlt members are Marxists who are strongly disillusioned by the current political system. “I found [SAlt’s] analysis of the world –that capitalism is a system that privileges profits over people– as the only analysis ... that explains to me entirely what is wrong with the world and how to overcome these problems,”

said third year Arts student and SAlt member Anna Sanders-Robinson.

Formed in 1995, SAlt has branches set up across Australia with an active membership from the far left of the political spectrum. They regularly advocate for issues including same-sex marriage rights, refugee rights and Palestinian liberation. Last March, SAlt merged with the Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP) on a national level, leading to a surge in their membership.

SAlt, in its current form, was revived on campus at the beginning of last year, allegedly by siblings Omar and Ridah Hassan. Omar Hassan, who joined Socialist Alternative in late 2007, said, “I was considering joining the anarchists, but was turned off by their lifestylism and cliquy behaviour”.

Many speculate that the siblings were “parachuted in” from Monash University, as directed by an internal hierarchy within SAlt’s National Council, to recruit and expand the membership.

The two have since been heavily involved in the Education Action Group (EAG), a cross-factional education activism collective. They, among others, were active participants in last year’s NTEU strikes against staff cuts. At the end of 2013, SAlt occupied the education portfolio of the National Union of Students (NUS) across the country. SAlt member Sarah Garnham was elected to the position of National Education Officer, Chloe Rafferty to NSW Education Officer, and Ridah Hassan and Eleanor Morley (who was recruited later) to Education Officers at the Sydney University Student Representative Council (SRC).

Contents

HONI SOIT ISSUE #12

3	Letters	17	International Students' Column
4-5	News recap for those living under a rock	18	E12 schools
6	More news! Newer news!	19	A letter to Ian Thorpe
7	The Manning Files	20	Of (lab) mice and men
8	SAlt and spice	21	SRC Help
9	Profile: Anna Bligh	22-23	SRC Office Bearer Reports
10-11	Feature: Cuts to the Aboriginal Legal Service	24	Puzzles
12-13	Coverage of the USU Executive elections	25	Survey Results!
14	Race and film in the USA	26-27	Honey Soy
15	We (can't) exist: on trans* representation	28	Meet Dom "A Fucking Winner" Ellis, winner of the inaugural Honi HackBet Challenge.
16	Opinion: protests and police		

We acknowledge that *Honi Soit's* office is located on the traditional lands of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation. We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work and pay our respects to the Elders past and present.

Editorial

In many respects, this semester will probably end as it started.

For the type of person who pre-ordered their readers from the copy centre at the start of the year, exams will be the same breeze as they always are. Your friends will see through your faux-fretting and so will your academic record. Fuck you.

For those whose study locations alternate between the various licensed venues on campus, the semester is only really an inconvenient break between holidays anyway. Enjoy.

By now, most hacks have probably reveled in (or rued) recent electoral outcomes to their hearts' content. For those already rubbing their hands gleefully at the prospect of another election, use the next six weeks of holidays for wise introspection. Could there be more to life than this?

The halfway mark of our tenure as editors of this publication has not arrived with a box marked 'truth'. Given our weekly pilgrimage to the 'Objectivity is Dead' shrine, we hardly expected it to. We remain highly intimidated by our task and the responsibilities that we owe to those who read our publication.

The desire to deliver breaking, student-relevant news has driven our editorial vision for much of this semester. Reporting on the budget, campus protests and all things Raue have occupied many of this paper's pages. We make no apologies for this. We are one of the few remaining newspapers in this nation able to represent student issues from a student perspective in a timely manner.

Some things have certainly changed.

Honi has delivered two autonomous editions this semester. Along with *Wom*n's Honi*, the release of the inaugural edition of *Indigenous Honi* marks a significant development for this publication.

This semester has also been marked by significant developments on campus. Student dissatisfaction is no longer content with private frustration. Support for protests, demonstrations and reform is enjoying a humble resurgence. Even recent Union board elections demonstrate a renewed student focus on transparency and accountability. We will continue to play a role in facilitating and responding to these discussions.

Some things change. Others don't. We'll be there regardless.

Letter of the week!

G'day Youngins,

Well done today. It's good to see that Uni Students still have the passion to demonstrate for what is right.

Please pass on to the Organisers my compliments for the way the March was conducted peacefully. It is difficult to keep angry people organised, but you did it well.

I have a bit of an idea for a song or chant. The old World War II song "Run, Rabbit, Run" can be parodied as follows:

Run Abbott Run

Run Abbott! Run Abbott! Run, run, run!
Run Abbott! Run Abbott! Run, run, run!
Here come the People with their little puns!
Run Abbott! Run Abbott! Run, run, run!

Etc etc etc.

Envoyé de mon iPod,
Max RICHARDSON

Apologies

Honi Soit would like to apologise to University of Sydney Union President Hannah Morris. In Issue 6 we quoted Morris as stating, "I will be providing all informational possible to assist the Board in making this decision," when she actually said, "I will be providing all information possible to assist the Board in making this decision." We'd also like to apologise to Morris for how fucking long it took us to remember to put this apology in the paper.

A word from Caccamo

Dear Honi,

Thank you for your diligent reporting of the post-election complaint process between myself and Liam Carrigan. As I made clear to the Returning Officer, it would have been better for the RO to have made their decision and for Honi to publish the whole story, rather than piecemeal reporting that only added to the stress Liam and I were feeling. For everyone else's knowledge; I did not leak anything to Honi Soit, and in fact am rather disappointed it was put in Honi that early.

The response I've received is a mixture of disappointment and confusion. Why complain at all? Why against Liam? Essentially, this is what happened: with evidence in hand that Carrigan may have broken the electoral regulations, bringing his fair election into question, I decided to appeal to the RO with that evidence. Liam responded to this, and the RO decided, based on his response, that he had not broken any rules. That's about it. I had every right to complain about what I saw as potential regulation breaches – a right others used almost excessively against other candidates. I had every right to ensure that those that were elected did so by the rules.

The only other contentious part of the story is Robby Magyar's involvement. Let me make this clear: this was not a case of Magyar helping me kick off Liam for his own sake. He simply had a laptop on him when I needed the exact wording of regulations and I transposed these into a document. He did not partake in the writing of the complaint, and did not try to persuade me into submitting it. He was only involved because he was around, and he was one of the few Board Directors I knew I could trust at the time. He should not have been dragged into this process at all. If anything, he did what any director should do in such a situation, provide advice to a member.

I have since apologised to Liam for the complaint and the accusations within, as he was just as affected by the accusations of cheating as I was of being petty and trying to kick him off. Neither propositions were true, and I hope Liam and his campaigners have moved on knowing his campaign was honest – and I hope others realise that I was not maliciously pursuing Liam, but instead ensuring that every candidate was elected fairly.

I hope this sets the record straight.

Cameron Caccamo, Arts IV

The pains of campaigning

Dear Honi,

I am writing in response to Amy Davis' letter in *Wom*n's Honi* last week, called 'Dear Hack.' It may not surprise you that as the author of the letter preceding Amy's, called 'Dear White Feminist,' I am a political activist, feminist and hack. I've campaigned in the 2013 SRC elections and this year's Union Board elections, so I'd just like to paint a different picture.

"Hi, how are you today?" "No!" "I'm in a hurry," "I don't care!" "GO AWAY." People literally run away from me when they see me, they avoid eye contact and pull out their phones making fake calls. "Why do you bother campaigning?" "What's the point?" "You never change anything." They reject you, they are rude, they are mean, they crumple up your How To Votes in front of you, just because they can. They complain about you to their friends as they walk away. But the worst, the absolute worst, is when they pretend you're not even

there. They ignore you completely. They pretend they cannot hear you. You are not even acknowledged as a human being. You are a ghost.

Now imagine that, every day, for hours on end, for up to three weeks. It's enough to make people sob, it's enough to cause breakdowns, it is the only thing that has ever made me feel truly depressed.

Because I am a person, and I do have feelings. I campaign because I care about people, and structural inequality, and using the university as a platform to create change. I care so much, I talk to strangers and get rejected, over and over and over again. I believe the candidates from Grassroots are truly different from all the other factions, because Tom Raue went to court over leaking documents for student safety and Bebe De Souza is running the first Sex and Consent Day at the University of Sydney. There is not a doubt in my mind that Edward McMahon will follow in the same tradition.

If you think people will willingly engage in student politics you don't know a thing about privilege. Privilege is being able to go through uni you're entire degree and not fear homelessness when you lose your part-time job. Privilege is never having to think about whether you should buy food or the text books you need for your course. Privilege is never suffering a traumatic experience of violence, and failing all your subjects, because you couldn't afford to see a counselor or therapist. That is why I campaign. You are privileged enough to not care about anything or anyone else, because these issues don't affect you. And it's because you're so damn privileged. Meanwhile, those of us who actually give a shit, get dehumanised and laughed at. You don't have to care about elections and student services because you can, but not everyone has this privilege. That is why I'm passionate about politics. That is why I campaign. I hope that gives you a different perspective on democracy, and elections, and even disgusting political hacks.

Bridget Harilou, INGS/Law II

Might ≠ right

Dear Honi,

Like any politically-minded university student I have followed the events since the announcement of the Budget with great interest. I am not for one actively going out and protesting, instead preferring to remain inside where I can safely express my outrage on social media. Therefore I have a great deal of admiration for those who are willing to actually stand up for the rights of students and fight for them, even if it comes to a clash with the police, as seems to happen increasingly more often these days.

I disagree with most of Tom Raue's politics. I have met him on a few occasions and unlike some others within the Union his genuineness sticks out, but the subject of this letter is not the legal battle he was involved in last year, rather the incident with Julie Bishop. I cannot imagine what it must be like to be the target of what became a slightly violent jostle, not least as a woman. The footage shows Bishop's smugness created a protective aura around her, not discounting the presence of her own bodyguards and campus security who, unlike students, are professionally trained to deal with such situations.

This footage, of course, has proved a double-edged sword. Yesterday (March 23) it was announced that after a review by the University, Raue would be banned from campus grounds for the next month, after allegedly striking a campus security officer. Although the matter is under investigation, Raue has so far not been charged or convicted. Of course, violence ought not to be condoned, but the University has a very selective memory.

REPORTER CALL-OUT

Can you wield a pen? Lots of spare time? Sick of only writing letters? Apply to write for us!

Details: tinyurl.com/report4honi

I'm sure all of us remember the protests last year in which police were invited on to campus and filmed engaged in punching, kicking and shoving students. Such incidents took place again on Thursday evening, when the number of police officers was reportedly about equal to the number of protesters, and the violence of such officers was reported on and witnessed by the mainstream media. Yet never are we given any sense that the University is concerned about the welfare of its students. Never has there been any real acknowledgment of the violence suffered by its students. Always are we given the sense that the University administration is against freedom of protest and on the side of that old saying 'might makes right'.

Elliot Nolan, Arts V (Hons)

Gender error?

Dear Honi,

The recent victory of Austria's Conchita Wurst at Eurovision reminded me of a gender confused article in *Honi Soit* (week 6) that needs to be clarified.

The feature article on the Sydney Biennale opened with a discussion of artist Yingmei Duan. The article stated that 'he is a prominent Chinese artist exhibiting as part of the Sydney Biennale for 2014'. All of this is true besides the small detail that Yingmei is in fact is a female.

My need for clarification may seem a little antsy in this age of androgyny, multiplicity, and drag queens winning Eurovision. But my issue is really to do with the lack of erudite scholarship revealed by this simple mistake.

Subeta Vimalarajah's article was an insightful discussion of sponsorship in the art world but while reading it all I could think about as the mistake make several times in the opening paragraph.

It is clear that Subeta had not seen Yingmei's performance at the Art Gallery of NSW. If she had she would have entered a forest like world in a darkened room where Yingmei would have whispered secrets to her about her life. The experience is so unsettling there is little chance you would forget it, or the gender of the performer.

Am I being to harsh? I will be the first to admit that I have written confidently in essays to mask the fact that I have not actually read all of the required text. But really how hard it is to do a google search to discover that Yingmei Duan as a 'she' and not a 'he'?

Heather, Arts

Getting rowdy with Raue

Dear Honi,

I was extremely saddened and angered to read in the Herald recently that Tom Raue has been summarily banned from the USYD campus. Tom has for some time been an enormous inspiration to students fed up with being asked to sit down and shut up, that their views on not just education

but environmental policy, refugee policy, welfare, women's rights, queer rights, indigenous rights and all sorts of other political issues doesn't matter and won't be listened to.

Students are in many ways uniquely placed to comment on the state of politics in our society. In my experience USYD students are an extremely diverse bunch coming from a range of different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. There are people who've just finished highschool in classrooms with people who have children in the same position. There are people like me who grew up in Darlington and people who grew up in Darwin, or even Dhaka. Many students have experienced hunger, homelessness, mental illness, family problems and problems with drugs and alcohol, and understand the value of social support because of this. Students generally display a keenness for ideas and an open-mindedness that are sorely lacking in the rest of political discourse. I've never heard a federal politician admit candidly that they did not know something, that they had made a mistake and that they were sorry. Those things are for me a totally essential part of the developmental process I am undergoing as I engage with my studies and campus life.

As with the rest of politics, this diversity is squashed the more mainstream and visible the part of campus life under the microscope. The union board elections were recently contested almost exclusively by white middle-class candidates whose priorities are things like parties, beer, bean bags, onesies and neon – not food, shelter, childcare and health services. Many societies are hugely unrepresentative – examples like Law and Debating appear to function more as exclusive clubs for the privileged than as real student organisations. Just as these people are out of touch with the real needs of their constituency because they've never experienced any real hardship, so too disconnected is parliamentary politics from the needs of Australians.

People like Tom are a rare and much-needed voice for this diversity, for views that don't fit neatly within a model of political engagement where people like George Brandis can always make their point and everybody else has to sit politely, grin and bear it, and take any dissent to the ballot box in three years' time. The truth is that the disengagement and disenfranchisement many people feel towards the political system at all levels is not some kind of unfortunate side-effect of what is otherwise a well-meaning and effective system – it is part of the purpose of that system. Politics is a vehicle for legitimising, normalising and actuating the interests of particular sets of people who are not and never will be representative. Students are taking to the streets, to bourgeois sit-down politics TV and to any campus event at which Tory politicians have the gall to raise their reactionary heads because they have no other way of having their voices heard.

It's extremely disappointing therefore that the University has decided to remove Tom's priceless presence from it. I stand in solidarity with Tom, and invite anybody frustrated with the state of politics in this country and eager for change to join me.

Andy Mason, BA/BSc II

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NTEU crushes USYD-branch BDS Debate

Nick Rowbotham reports on the continued controversy within the NTEU about the BDS movement.

The General Secretary of the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU), Grahame McCulloch, has intervened in the USYD branch amidst growing divisions over the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, an international campaign that aims to put pressure on Israel to end its occupation of Palestinian territories.

In an email to USYD NTEU members last Friday evening, McCulloch claimed that the branch had been “caught in a destructive and confusing debate about the Middle East conflict and the BDS campaign.”

“At a time when universities and trade unions are under siege from the Abbott Government, an NTEU Branch as important as the University of Sydney cannot afford the division and fruitless procedural wrangling that has been generated by this ill-conceived general meeting decision,” he wrote.

A USYD NTEU branch meeting is due to be held on Wednesday, at which McCulloch will speak to a motion that overturns a USYD branch vote on May

15 in support of a “broad discussion” around adopting a BDS policy. McCulloch argues that USYD NTEU members ought to respect the decision of the 2011 NTEU National Council not to support BDS.

The General Secretary’s intervention in the matter comes after USYD branch Vice President Damien Cahill resigned from his position last Friday. Cahill initiated a motion on May 23 in the Branch Committee – an elected organising group within the union – that overrode the motion passed by members on May 15.

The Branch Committee’s motion led to outrage from pro-BDS NTEU members, who viewed the decision as an undemocratic snub of the original members’ vote, which passed unopposed with approximately 40 NTEU members in attendance.

The backlash forced the Branch Committee to rescind its decision to bring forward a vote on BDS, and to reaffirm the members’ vote passed on May 15, triggering Cahill’s resignation.

In his resignation letter, Cahill acknowledged that the Branch Committee’s decision to bring about an immediate vote on BDS, ignoring the members’ vote in favour of discussion and debate on the issue, “was an inappropriate response to the issue.”

Cahill alleges that he and other Branch Committee members have been subject to “personal attacks” due to the fallout over the BDS issue, and claims that “some of the core principles of [BDS], in my view, do not align with those of the union.”

When *Honi* spoke to McCulloch, he said he had not been asked to become involved by any member of the USYD branch. *Honi* also contacted Cahill and Branch President Michael Thomson, who both declined to comment.

The BDS campaign has come to the fore at USYD in the last year, with the Director of the University’s Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, Jake Lynch, currently in the Federal Court fighting a Racial Discrimination action

against an Israeli legal group.

The action was filed following Lynch’s refusal to sponsor a fellowship application for an Israeli academic late last year. Lynch’s high profile legal battle has fed into discussions about BDS within the NTEU branch, and has been a factor in the development of a ‘Sydney Staff for BDS’ group on campus.

On its website, the group claims that “Israeli academic institutions deliberately and intensively support the illegal occupation of Palestinian territory” and that Sydney University “has refused to distance itself from the Australian government’s position on the extreme fringe of international public opinion on Israel.”

Student Palestine activists have also weighed into the debate. USYD Students for Justice in Palestine President Fahad Ali asserted in a letter to the Branch Committee that it had “committed a contemptible affront, not only to democratic process, but also to the Palestinian people everywhere.”

Stand with Raue, again

Lane Sainty reports on the latest institution trying to get rid of Tom Raue. PHOTOS BY JUDY ZHU



The ‘Stand With Raue’ campaign has undergone an unexpected revival after USU Vice-President and activist Tom Raue was handed a campus ban for participating in a protest.

Raue was part of a band of students who took part in an impromptu protest against Foreign Minister Julie Bishop on May 18. The protesters, targeting Bishop due to the changes to tertiary education outlined in the recent federal budget, jostled and chanted at her as she entered MacLaurin Hall in the Quadrangle. Several heated scuffles broke out between campus security guards and protesters.

Raue received a letter on May 23 from Campus Security Unit Manager Morgan Andrews, stating he was banned from campus for one month due to his part in the protest. The letter describes two aspects of Raue’s conduct as “not acceptable to the University”, including “attempting to physically force your way through security and police officers” and “allegedly punch[ing] a Campus

Security Officer in the face”.

Raue believes he was singled out for a campus ban due to his prominence as an activist. “It is clear that I was singled out since there were about 20 people who did nothing differently to me at the protest,” he said. “Police and campus security also see me as a ringleader for activism on campus. They don’t understand that activists tend to work collectively without a hierarchy.”

The letter states Raue’s alleged punching of a security officer was under investigation from NSW police. However, a police media spokeswoman confirmed to *Honi Soit* that Raue was not under investigation and no charges had been laid against him.

Raue said he contacted the University to get the ban repealed, but his request for review was denied. “[Campus security] don’t say who reviewed it or what the process was,” he said. He also said he had not been provided with evidence from the University

regarding the allegation that he punched a security officer.

Raue is well known on campus due to the highly publicised attempt to remove him from the USU Board of Directors, an event that inspired the initial Stand With Raue campaign. Since Raue received the letter, the campaign has risen again in an attempt to get his ban revoked.

A rally in support of Raue took place on May 28. Approximately 80 students gathered in the Quadrangle to hear from various speakers. The rally marched a short distance to Vice-Chancellor Michael Spence’s office and, after some difficulty, inserted a declaration of intent into Spence’s office door. The group also plans to march on the Sydney University Senate on Monday June 2 (after this paper goes to print).

Member of the Stand With Raue campaign Tim Scriven said other future actions are a possibility. “At [Monday’s] meeting a letter will be

delivered outlining plans to occupy the quad unless the persecution of Tom and others is dropped,” they said.

Although Raue had deferred his studies for the semester, the ban has meant he is unable to attend his work as a Board Director and must phone in to meetings, which causes several logistical hurdles. “I have already missed an event where I was supposed to meet with university admin on behalf of the USU,” he said. The ban is almost exactly the length of time Raue has remaining on Board.

Raue also said he believes the ban is political. “It interferes with the running of the USU, and discourages activists from protesting in future because people will fear for their studies/livelihood.”

Several questions regarding Raue’s ban were sent to the University, but they did not respond by the time of print.

Ballots and bad habits

The preliminary results for the University of Sydney Union Board elections have been released, with Liam Carrigan, Alisha Aitken-Radburn, Liv Ronan, Ed McMahon, and Kate Bullen making the cut. The three candidates who did not get up were Cameron Caccamo, Arghya Gupta and Callum Forbes.

There were 5339 votes cast this year, with quota (the number you have the beat to ensure you get elected) being 890. If a candidate beats quota in a USU election, their votes flow on proportionally to the second-most nominated candidate on their ballots.

Both Carrigan (Independent) and Aitken-Radburn (Unity) smashed quota, with 1236 and 1129 primary votes respectively. More of Carrigan’s second preferences went to Ronan (Independent) than to anyone else, despite Ronan not appearing on any of Liam’s how-to-votes (HTVs). Carrigan’s overflow was enough to push Ronan and McMahon (Grassroots) above quota, and left Bullen (NLS) a whisker away from quota at 866, and Caccamo (Independent) at 459. The second preferences from Aitken-Radburn then came into play. Aitken-Radburn’s voters were far better at sticking to HTVs than Carrigan’s with

John Gooding crunches the numbers and commiserates with Callum as USU elections draw to a close.

approximately 65 per cent of her excess votes going to Bullen, securing her the fifth and final position.

Returning Officer Miiko Kumar disqualified Forbes for acts including printing campaign material at a facility other than Officeworks, not authorising campaign material, and mass-emailing Wine Society members encouraging them to vote for him. According to Kumar, these actions collectively constituted seven regulatory breaches. As Forbes was disqualified after the election had begun, second preferences for other candidates on ballots he won became first preferences.

Forbes stated that he would be appealing the finding. Even if his appeal is successful the five elected candidates will remain the same, as Forbes would have placed outside the top five. “No response has yet been given by the Electoral Arbiter that I’ve received - though I often seem to be last person informed on matters involving my disqualification anyway,” he said.

“Though I am aware that much of the reputational damage inflicted is now irreversible, this appeal represents one of only few remaining avenues left to me,” he stated in his appeal.

Thousands march against Liberal government

PHOTO BY JAY NG

Andrew Passarello reports on the National Day of Action.

Thousands of university students marched across capital cities last week for the National Union of Students’ National Day of Action (NDA), protesting against the Federal Government’s proposals for cuts to university funding and the deregulation of fees.

In Sydney, students from USYD, UNSW, UTS and other university campuses forced partial closures of City Road, Broadway, and George Street as they marched towards Town Hall, participating in various sit-ins and blocking traffic.

“It was a fantastic display of student resistance to a despicable budget, there were thousands of students here, many for their first time,” Ridah Hassan, Education Officer at the USYD SRC, told *Honi*.

Over 500 students gathered in front of Fisher Library at 1:30pm to take part in the USYD contingent of the protest. Speeches were made by various representatives, including political economy Professor Frank Stilwell, International Students’ Officer Emma

Lau, and NTEU representative Nick Riemer. The students proceeded to march down to Michael Spence’s office in the Quadrangle, continuing the demonstration towards UTS to join the bulk of the action.

Kyol Blakeney, Indigenous Officer at the USYD SRC, said that police were violent towards protestors.

“This riot squad guy, he hit me. He had gloves on – you know when the gloves come out that it’s going to get serious.”

Eventually protesters were largely dispersed across George and Bathurst Street, as those remaining were forcibly pushed towards Hyde Park. Riot squad police had been on duty throughout the protest, with at least two arrests made at George Street.

Prior to the protest taking place, Vice-Chancellor Michael Spence sent an email to all students saying that “the University has not yet determined our final position on these [fee deregulation] changes”, including uncertainty on whether the University would increase fees.



Palmer refuses to budge-t on fee deregulation

Christina White gives an update on the budget.

Confusion over implementation of increases to student fees and HELP debt interest have prompted concern in the university sector, adding to opposition from students and the Palmer United party.

“If you start a course under one system you will finish it under one system,” Abbott said in May. However, fee increases under the government’s proposed deregulation would affect all students enrolling after budget night, May 13 2014, for fees incurred from 2016.

Last week Deakin University and the University of Western Sydney announced they would freeze fees for students for the rest of 2014, which means students enrolling any time this year will not face fee increases for the length of their degree.

The university sector is expecting 160,000 enrolments in the next 18 months, who are exposed to fee uncertainty if universities do not enter agreements to grandfather students from fee increases. The downside of such agreements is that they won’t prevent the government from reducing its contribution to course fees, and reducing public funding by 20 per cent.

Last week, Abbott did not rule out the possibility of universities doubling fees under a deregulated system. However, the Coalition government may be unable to pass the proposed legislation through the Senate as Clive Palmer has said he will vote against it.

In order to pass the legislation, the government needs six votes from crossbenchers and thus must acquire the support of the Palmer United Party when the

new Senate sits in July. Labor and the Greens oppose the legislation, leaving eight senators for the Coalition to convince, three of whom belong to the Palmer United Party.

Palmer said that he supports the deregulation of fees for international students, but not their domestic counterparts. He has also called for ending the HELP scheme and replacing it with free tuition.

Pyne has suggested that only new students would pay higher interest rates on their loans. However, the government’s website states that “the new arrangements will apply to all HELP debts (including those incurred by former students, continuing students and new students) beginning with the indexation of debts on 1 June 2016”.

Under the new system, interest on HELP debt can increase above the rate of inflation (up to six per cent per annum). Currently, student loans are indexed in accordance with the consumer price index (CPI), which sits at 2.9 per cent.

Unlike the HELP system, university fees would be subject to change as of budget night, so any students enrolling after May 13 this year could face deregulated fees.

There was also confusion over a potential policy of collecting student debts from deceased students. Pyne suggested the idea last Wednesday, saying he had no “ideological opposition” to the idea, before Abbott ruled out the proposal the next day.

For more on broken election promises, see national media.

USU receives historic funding allocation

Michael Rees reports on the fun that was the USU AGM.

The University of Sydney Union (USU) will receive its largest annual allocation of Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) funds since the abolition of compulsory student unionism, according to its yearly financial report.

At the 42nd Annual General Meeting of the USU, held last Wednesday, Treasurer Sophie Stanton reported the USU will this year be allocated \$3.2 million in funding from the SSAF, along with \$1.8 million from the University's capital sinking fund.

Stanton also reported that the USU had achieved a budget surplus of \$11,317 in 2013. During this time, the organisation generated a total revenue of \$21,831,624.

USU President Hannah Morris noted that the seat of the USU at the SSAF negotiating table remained as important as ever. In her Presidential speech, she said, "autonomy over SSAF allocation is a gift which we should not give up."

Stanton did not include the sum of the legal costs incurred by the USU during the Tom Raue dispute in her report, as they have not yet been finalised. The Board is also yet to determine whether it will enforce a court order for such costs against Raue.

In her annual report, Hannah Morris spoke to concerns about transparency and accountability within the USU. She said that the board aspired

to be "more consultative as we attempt to make decisions, more transparent in our decision-making processes, and to be held more accountable to the decisions that we make."

Additionally, she asked members to be "critical and constructive in the way you approach the inadequacies you perceive of [the USU], and work with us to find solutions."

Notably, Morris did not mention the controversy surrounding Tom Raue, which has featured prominently throughout much of her term as President.

Amendments intending to replace the word 'Union' with the acronym 'USU' in the organisation's Constitution were questioned by incoming board director Alisha Aitken-Radburn. Current directors Robby Magyar and Bebe D'Souza noted that they had raised similar concerns in internal board meetings.

USU Honorary Secretary John Harding-Easson said that the University of Sydney Union is legally registered as the 'USU'. He also noted that a number of major trade unions use acronyms in official documents and communications.

All 2013-2014 Board Directors were in attendance, with the exceptions of Karen Chau and Tom Raue. Raue was unable to attend the meeting as he is presently banned from campus.

Police clashes mar Pyne protest

Astha Rajvanshi reports on the clashes between protesters and police.

Violent confrontations between police and students erupted at St John's College as Federal Education Minister Christopher Pyne entered the premises to adjudicate the John Howard Debating Cup.

About 50 students gathered near the main entrance of the college on Missenden Road in Camperdown to protest against the Federal government's proposed cuts to higher education.

University of Sydney Union Vice President Tom Raue said the protest was "organised by student activists over the last couple of days in secret, as we didn't want the Liberals to know".

"The main message of the protest was that these attacks are not welcome by students. Liberal politicians are not welcome on the campus that they are destroying," Raue said.

The Sydney University Liberal Club (SULC) hosted the event with Attorney-General George Brandis and Liberal MP Peter Phelps also in attendance.

Over 50 police officers from the NSW Public Order and Riot Squad were present, outnumbering the protesters, and blocked off all entrances to the college as protesters attempted to gain entry.

Pyne's car arrived at approximately 6:30pm through the Missenden Road entry and drove into the underground car park within the college, at which point a forceful confrontation saw a number of students being pushed and shoved to the ground by the police.

SRC General Secretary Mariana Podestá-Diverio described being subjected to police brutality: "One riot policeman punched me in the breast, and another pushed me onto a fallen chair and into a sandstone wall. I was thrown to the ground by riot squad cops twice. My glasses were knocked off my face by one officer who shoved another protester in front of me."

Footage from the scene appears to show a police officer punching a student, and tweets covering the incident report several students being assaulted by riot police.

"I heard several of the riot police talk about how violent they'd been ... one of them joked about how he punched a woman in the face," said Raue.

An argument between police and protesters took place later in the evening. "We're going to be seeing a lot of each other and if you're not civil it's going to get very messy," a police officer was overheard saying to a student.

The event concluded around 9:30pm, with protesters and police dispersing from the premises.

"A few people are a bit shaken up, but overall it was a success because it has gotten a lot of media attention," said Raue.

In a press release issued from their Facebook page, SULC characterised the protest as a "riot" and criticised the tone of the protester's chants.

"This riot was organised by the usual suspects from Sydney University's extremist rent-a-crowd, who have nothing better to do than to disrupt civil debate with their militant tactics," SULC President Alex Dore said in the release.

After the event some criticised the protesters and the Liberal Club for causing damage to property at St John's College and disrupting uninvolved college residents. Two old lead pane windows were broken and a desk was damaged, with the bill for repairs sent to SULC.

"I think college residents didn't like the fact that protesters (or randoms from the street) could have potentially done more damage or entered the building and stolen stuff, which happens often," said one resident of the College.

Georgian villa delays student housing development

The discovery of historic architectural remains has halted construction on a student housing project, writes Ada Lee.

The remains of an 1859 Georgian villa have been discovered inside St Michael's College, bringing student housing construction plans for the site to a halt.

Owned by the Roman Catholic Church, St Michael's College is an 80-year-old abandoned building on City Rd, with broken windows and graffiti on its greying walls.

Plans were underway by private contractor, Urbanest, to transform the decaying site into an 11-story accommodation building with 80 percent of beds promised to students.

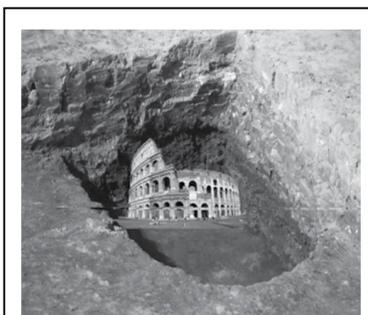
Heritage architect, Otto Cserhalmi, discovered an 1859 Georgian-style villa known as Cyprus Hall encased within the college. His discoveries included an Archimedean spiral balustrade, a Georgian revival fireplace and mantelpiece, and a French door.

"Within 20 minutes we realised we had a building within a building," Cserhalmi told the Sydney Morning Herald. "[The Georgian building] would be considered of heritage significance."

Project managers have indicated that construction plans will be pushed back by almost a year with completion date predicted to be May 2015 instead of July this year.

Lack of affordable student housing has been an ongoing concern for the University. Under its Student Accommodation Strategy, the University is aiming to deliver 4,000 affordable beds to students within the next three to five years. Difficulties with St Michael's College construction apparently should not affect this target. A University spokesperson told *Honi* the college is a "separate project".

Projects that are incorporated in the University's strategy for affordable student housing include the Queen Mary Building and Abercrombie Precinct.



Honi has obtained this exclusive image which clearly displays the architectural remains discovered.

USU botches director ads

Justin Pen reports on procedural failings in the advertisement of 2015 O-Week director positions.

Applications to direct the 2015 O-Week Festival were inadequately advertised by the University of Sydney Union (USU), raising concerns over the USU's appointment of student leaders.

Complaints made to the USU Board and President Hannah Morris from former Campus Culture Directors Penina Su and Eden Tollis allege applications to direct O-Week 2015 were insufficiently advertised between April 2 and May 5 2014.

Applications were reopened on Friday May 23 but were closed again within a few hours. USU President Hannah Morris asserted the "decision was made by the [Human Resources] Director of the USU [Sandra Hardy], who accepts full responsibility for the process".

"Given the USU has a large and successful presence on multiple social media outlets that it leverages for advertising of student positions it is concerning that none of them were utilised here," Su wrote in an email to Hardy.

In a statement to *Honi*, Hannah Morris indicated that the USU had promoted the position on the USU website, homepage and Volunteer email (which reaches 600 students), though failed to use its social media channels.

Former O-Week Director Alistair Stephenson, who co-directed the 2014 festival, said that he had found about the position "through Facebook and the USU website".

The USU has used Facebook to advertise student leadership positions as recently as April 24 this year in a callout for Hermes Student Editors and an INCUBATE Program Coordinator.

"I recognise that I'm in a privileged position insofar that I am actually aware that I have the ability to lobby Board Directors and have the personal connections to do so," Su told *Honi*, but noted that "individual emails of Board Directors aren't available online - I was only able to email them because

I have worked for the USU before."

The incident has also shed light on the involvement of staff in the selection process and sparked further internal review.

"[Hardy] took 2 days to reply to my email - and that reply was 'we'll get back to you.' I had to email her back pressing for a timeline to hear that it would be 'sometime early next week'," Su said.

"The Board [has] recognised the need to create a formal procedure around how decisions are made by Student Leadership Interview panels surrounding the entire process, and where ultimate responsibility for decision making lies," Morris told *Honi*.

She further noted that: "Marketing and HR are creating a Student Employment policy to ensure all channels of communication are utilised in future (Facebook, Twitter, member mail, LinkedIn etc.) to effectively

recruit for student leadership positions."

"Staff and Board directors on the panel do not have a formal procedure available guiding how decisions are made in this context, but it is something the USU is working on in light of this recent event," Morris said.

Despite the early cut-off date, Stephenson indicated that most of the legwork involved in organising O-Week occurred late in the year.

"We had a lot of the 'big picture' stuff worked out as early as May 2013," he said. "We started coming into the office in August of that year, but didn't really get into an intensive schedule until around November."

USU O-Week Festival Directors are paid an honorarium of \$5,000.

At the time of publication Hardy had not responded to enquiries from *Honi*, forwarded to her by Morris.

THE ██████████ MANNING FILES ██████████

METADATA: ROBOTS IN DISGUISE

Fans of metadata-based student journalism (we know you're out there) had a cracker of a weekend last month in the aftermath of the USU board elections.

It all kicked off when Cameron Caccamo lodged a complaint against Liam Carrigan, claiming his campaign had committed a litany of dull regulatory breaches including failure to authorise campaigning material and breaching the spending cap. Caccamo placed sixth in the election, which means if Liam were to be disqualified he would move to fifth place and be elected. It was not to be, however, as Returning Officer Miiko Kumar dismissed the complaint on the basis of Carrigan's response.

"Obviously I'm rather disappointed with the decision, and the way the decision was passed down," said Caccamo. "Having something go against you is difficult at the best of times, but it's even worse when no credible explanation is given." Caccamo initially suggested he may appeal the decision, but decided not to.

Writing from his campaign's Facebook account, Carrigan said "it was upsetting receiving a complaint that questioned my integrity, and even more so because it was from a friend."

Here the tale takes a turn for the mysterious, with evidence suggesting current Board director and presidential candidate Robby Magyar was involved in the authoring of Caccamo's complaint.

Magyar, a member of Student Unity, initially denied being involved with the complaint. However, the metadata of the document revealed it was authored under the name "Robby Magyar".

After this was brought to Magyar's attention, Undergraduate Fellow of the University Senate and fellow Unity member Patrick Massarani called Honi to say he helped Caccamo write the complaint.

Carrigan expressed disappointment in Magyar, saying it was hard "discovering that an individual I will be on board with for the next year has decided to start off our working relationship by attempting to remove me". Despite this, Carrigan said he is "positive and hopeful that the next few weeks can be ones of building bridges".

A BAD CASE OF WHIPLASH

During the chaos of University Slayer Christopher Pyne's visit to USyd, the Twittersphere was ablaze with reports of police violence. Fairfax and the ABC both reported that police had "pushed students to the ground". Students had told Honi they had been "punched", "shoved" and "thrown to the ground".

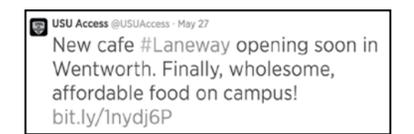
Enscenced in St John's College, NSW Government Whip of the Legislative Council Peter Phelps responded to a tweet reporting police brutality, Phelps tweeted a one-word reply: "Good."

Far from naive, Honi is well aware the state routinely sanctions violence, and even more routinely sanctions poorly thought through communication strategies, but even we were caught off-guard by Phelps' apparent endorsement of police violence.

But rest assured, it was all a miscommunication. Honi has undertaken extensive phone-hacking operations that would impress Murdoch himself, and we can now reveal that Phelps' single-word tweet was an unfortunate miscommunication

wrought by the 140-character limit the medium. Top-secret tweets leaked to Honi indicate Phelps' original message: "The police are a part of a broken institution, which protects the ruling class. The current system must be dismantled. No revolution of the good can ever occur until the police force is abolished." After much paraphrasing and a few bottles of grange, Phelps appeared to have cut every word either side of "good".

When pressed for comment, Phelps transformed into a bat and flew into the cold night.



USU GIVES IT UP

Breaking: USU admits all campus food prior to May 2014 was shit, claims #Laneway will deliver us to new bountiful era.

RAISE THE ALAM

Campus' favorite Facebook personality/troll, Rafi Alam, has made a glorious comeback. He was temporarily banned from Facebook due to a copyright complaint from Alex Dore, President of SULC - their long running rivalry, which has been clogging up USyd's newsfeed since their inception.

In an exclusive statement to *Honi*, Alam said "LONG LIVE FREE SPEECH LONG LIVE KARL MARX LONG LIVE SATAN XXXX 666."

SALting the fields

CONTINUED ON PAGE 1

Astha Rajvanshi and Tom Gardner investigate the inner workings of Socialist Alternative, a Marxist political faction on campus.

By all accounts, this “direct and intentional strategy” for SALT’s revival has been a success. They have gained 20 or so members at Sydney University in the last year, and when compared to Grassroots, an alternative far-left political group on campus that has had a membership of 70 in the last three years, these numbers reflect SALT’s fast and steady growth.

John Passant, a former SALT member who resigned last year, comments that the current political climate gives people the impetus to join the political faction. “There is an angry mood among much of the population. They want action to bust the budget,” he said.

“What Socialist Alternative was able to do, with many others, was mobilise students against the budget attacks in their thousands and show to many students they represented their interests and could get people on to the streets.”

However, Passant’s resignation also reflects a darker side that lies beneath the surface of SALT’s theoretical Marxist exploration, political action and grassroots organising.

“Their perpetual lefter-than-thou mentality ... makes it difficult for non-members to relate to some members in student political contexts,” said Mariana Podestá-Diverio, a former SALT member.

It seems that SALT’s commitment to vanguardism comes with a militant and authoritarian attitude that often alienates the rest of their left allies. Podestá-Diverio explains that many individuals are politically engaged and motivated to work with SALT for common activist goals however, “they must radically reconceive their approach to broad left unity, starting with their rigid and sanctimonious political modus operandi”.

In fact, when members of other political groups on campus were asked for comment, many were hesitant to respond or wished to stay anonymous out of “fear of retribution”.

This fear can be partly attributed to a broader militant approach that another former SALT member, Peter Zacharatos, described as “openly aggressive to other political currents, even those



Photo source: UNSW Socialist Alternative Facebook Page

that have similar beliefs and sometimes identical beliefs to the organisation”.

Most notably, their sectarian squabbling with alternative socialist group Solidarity ends up putting most people off either organisation. “After hearing about this you have to think, ‘why on earth am I wasting my time hating on a group of people that have the same philosophy as our group?’” Zacharatos commented.

SALT’s internal operations have been described by some as “cultish”.

One anonymous Grassroots member accused them of predatory recruitment. “They prey on the vulnerable by finding people who have social anxiety ... making them feel really welcome. They switch between super charming and super nasty and aggressive”.

After initial recruitment, SALT allegedly proceeds by isolating members from their friends by accusing them of being counter-revolutionary, and by exploiting their labour through postering and encouraging further recruitment. “They have a system of abuse [against] anyone who doesn’t stand by what they say,” the anonymous Grassroots member said.

Cam Petrie, another former member of SALT, was weary of their strict internal hierarchy and top-down approach. “I think that’s weird for a Socialist organisation,” he said. He commented that during his time in SALT, “their methods were violent. They were almost cult-like, enforcing ideological orthodoxy in the party. There was no diversity of opinions, none of that. They want a movement without dissenting opinion”.

On the contrary, Omar Hassan believes that SALT is “pretty patient” with those interested

in joining the party. “We encourage people to read some basic Marxist texts, have a few conversations with us about the theory and history of our group, and help us out in promoting upcoming rallies and distributing *Red Flag*. If they dig the theory and can see the point in being activists, they can then join when they’re ready,” he contested.

SALT are proud of their militant tactics including loud chanting, sit-ins, and conflicts with the police. This willingness to engage in confrontations goes to the heart of the criticism hurled at SALT not only by other activists, but also by the broader community and mass media.

Petrie described SALT’s activism as “total crap”.

“Their tactic is to drown out debate, both literally and figuratively. They’ll try and shut down debate even if they don’t shout it down. They’re just making the rest of the student body look bad,” he commented.

In fact, a leaked email alleged to be an internal SALT missive expresses similar concerns about SALT’s activism on Sydney’s campus. “I can’t help but see the early and worrying signs of a divergence in political practice between the branches. No doubt we’ve all been encouraged by the growth of the Sydney branch, but now we’re seeing clear indications that they’re becoming somewhat adventurist in their activism, if not occasionally indulging in ultra-left gestures,” it said.

“At the time, it was explained to me that they operate the way they do in order to get in the media and to get their message out. To be honest I think it can put people off causes and alienate those less radical people,”

Zacharatos explained.

However, Morley disagrees with the criticisms against SALT’s current measures for protest. “There is nothing ‘aggressive’ about the right to protest. If you want aggression, look at the attacks on people’s lives in the budget,” she argued.

These justifications are consistent throughout SALT’s responses. Hassan explained, “sometimes there’s a mood for more radical direct action which can inspire new people to get involved, like the Q&A protest. We make decisions about tactics on the basis of what can help the campaign grow, gain attention and support”.

Despite assertions that SALT engages in actions like these to increase its visibility and drive recruitment, it’s undeniable such tactics have contributed to success of recent protests.

Even Zacharatos admitted “SALT dominate most campaign groups and do some of the key heavy lifting when it comes to rallies”.

For now, SALT’s vanguard revolutionaries are not interested in pluralism, but still manage to achieve success on the far left. Whether it’s building up a brand, controlling rallies, or aggressively recruiting at a university level, these efforts are not going unnoticed in the present political climate.

Although other political activists have attempted to distance themselves from the seemingly indoctrinating philosophy espoused by SALT, little fuss is kicked up in working together. After all, most campaigns require people to work with each other to achieve any more than marginal success.

Ultimately, Morley envisions SALT creating a “radically different society, where the majority of wealth is not concentrated in the hands of a few, in a world which is free of the exploitation and oppression inherent to capitalism”.

When Hassan was asked how long he planned to stay at university to work towards this vision, he responded: “Better people than me have spent their whole lives fighting for human liberation, so that seems like a reasonable thing to aspire to”.



Profile: Anna Bligh

The former Queensland Premier refuses to talk about politics with Dom Ellis.

“I think it’s important that when people have had a chance to be a leader on the public stage they know when to leave the stage, and I think that time has come for me. Like any citizen I’m going to have views on things but I don’t want to be drawn on issues that are currently in play in party politics.”

Anna Bligh and I had very different conceptions of how our conversation was going to play out. Sure, she thought she was being interviewed for the Women’s College newsletter, but ultimately I think it came down to a simple case of mismatched intentions. I had prepared questions about her take on the resignation of NSW Premier Barry O’Farrell and the reconstruction of Queensland Labor, but was snubbed – it’s not her responsibility anymore, or so she says.

Instead, with a very cautious certitude, she walked me through her life and lengthy CV, paying particular attention to her humble political beginnings, her philanthropies since leaving office, and her health – a subject which unfortunately has tainted her career post-politics.

In early 2013, at 52 years old, Bligh announced that she had been diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma, a type of blood cancer. When we spoke – a few weeks ago – she had almost entirely recuperated, but told me that the cancer had slowed her down and forced her to re-evaluate how she might want to spend her remaining years on what she jokingly termed “this mortal coil”.

With a career as extensive and eventful as Anna Bligh’s, slowing down isn’t entirely unexpected, but she assured me that her working life was a long way from over, speaking in depth about her recent appointment as CEO of the NSW Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA).

One of the older charities in the country, the YWCA provides services to disadvantaged and

vulnerable women, children, and young people and their families. “This is an organisation that makes genuine differences in people’s lives,” Bligh said. “It has a long history, a great legacy, and I’m very excited to lead it.”

Despite its title, Bligh explained that the YWCA was a secular organisation and her involvement is based on “very human” – meaning irreligious – charitable instincts. In fact, Bligh had long ago done away with religion, reportedly leaving the Catholic Church when her mother was told she could no longer receive Holy Communion after her divorce. She had little to say on her personal faith, but spoke highly of the YWCA, which she seemed to think was going to be the focus of our discussion.

A former social worker and education minister, working with youth has been a cornerstone of Bligh’s career. And, unsurprisingly, she was impassioned by discussions of her own coming-of-age. She fondly remembered the University of Queensland and the moments that inspired her immersion into politics, emphasising her first year, when she was involved in mass protests against National Party legislation attempting to remove the right to march statewide.

It often takes sustained periods of political debauchery in government to unearth one’s own political calling, and, for a young Anna Bligh, years of hardnosed conservatism and institutional corruption under Bjelke-Petersen’s National government did just that. Bligh said she stood proudly against the authoritarian reign of Bjelke-Petersen and later became involved with student politics on campus, where she would spend two years on the Students’ Representative Council. She also served a stint as Women’s Vice-President of the Student Union, though did not join the Labor party until after university, “some time in the early 1980s”.

“[University] gave me an opportunity to understand how human beings can affect change all around them,” she said. “How they can come together in pretty structured organisations like the student union and make the campus a better place for young people, while facilitating the voice of young people in a much broader political debate.”

Years later, Bligh became a key spokeswoman in that very debate, spending 15 years with what she proudly considered a “very progressive, reforming Labor government”. In 2007 she succeeded Peter Beattie as leader of the ALP, becoming Australia’s third female Premier. And in 2009 Bligh would retain her premiership with a close election victory, making her the first female Premier of any Australian state to be elected in her own right.

However, the final years of Bligh’s career were characterised by disaster, both natural and otherwise. She described the catastrophic 2011 floods as one of the biggest “tests” in her career, explaining in depth how “every river system south of the tropic of Capricorn flooded, with 12 of them reaching levels that have never been recorded”. The period was frantic, “demanding constant decision-making” and supposedly leaving little time for self-reflection. Yet, Bligh was deemed something of a shining light amidst the shroud of devastation and loss that covered the state, even giving the struggling Labor party a glimmer of hope in Queensland.

But soon after, Bligh was faced with a different sort of disaster: a historic landslide. In the 2012 Queensland state election the ALP found themselves on the wrong end of a 15 per cent swing. As was widely publicised, the swing was largely a result of the sale of state assets in 2009, a decision harshly criticised by economists and the public alike and coming off the back of Bligh’s contradictory

campaign promises. Speaking defensively, Bligh conceded very little on the matter, insisting the issue was ultimately to do with communication and she did what was necessary at the time.

“I think people often forget the perilous financial circumstances that the world teetered on in 2009. It was a time when we did not know when the bottom of the financial crisis would be, and state governments and corporations were seeing their credit ratings cut. These were extreme financial times...but in the end, Queensland and Australia survived, but not without making some pretty tough decisions.”

Tough decisions seemed to be part and parcel of Bligh’s political career, which also included a term as the National President of the ALP. Speaking in that federal leadership capacity in the wake of a procedural disaster at Easter Island, she once called for a complete review of the government’s policy on asylum seekers. Cynically, I asked what she made of the development of asylum policy since then, but this time I was met with a slightly more riled tenor and an immediate rebuff.

And that was the general tone of our awkward conversation. Bligh spoke with all the style and rhetoric of a politician but without the proud ideology. It was a strange experience.

Although Bligh disagrees, I don’t think the buck stops with the title and the paycheck. Changing careers is one thing, but a former Premier too cautious to venture into “party politics” is another. Now, when genuine progressive voices are being increasingly drowned out by a government not unlike the conservative, despotic regime Anna Bligh once proudly fought, it’s as good a time as any to voice dissent.

Photo source: News Limited

Widening the gap

Georgia Kriz investigates the government's cuts to Aboriginal legal services.

The media coverage of the Abbott government's maiden budget has been dominated by an uproar against the deregulation of universities, the death of free, universal healthcare and the neoliberal restructuring of the welfare system. To an extent, this is to be expected – there are only so many minutes in a news broadcast, and only so many words can fit on a page.

But these aren't the only stories to tell.

Tucked away in the Attorney General's Department section of Budget Paper No. 2, somewhere between the cuts to the security at Hobart Airport and Screen Australia, \$15 million was snatched from legal aid. Of all the cuts, this was arguably the cruelest. It will directly affect access to justice for the country's most disadvantaged and underprivileged people. It will make many lives tangibly, truly, and absolutely worse.

The Aboriginal Legal Service (ALS) is the principal provider of legal assistance to Indigenous Australians. Overseen by an entirely Aboriginal board of directors, and with offices in every state and territory, every ALS branch currently provides their clients with free legal representation, bail application assistance and help with transitioning out of prison. Supported and welcomed by Aboriginal communities across the country, the organisation is the strongest and most vocal advocate for the legal rights and representation of Indigenous Australians. Its work is now in jeopardy.

"Currently they give us \$17 million. If they doubled that funding, we could start to do a good job."

This is John McKenzie, Chief Legal Officer of the NSW/ACT ALS. I'm sitting in his stylish, yet small, Redfern office on a post-budget Friday afternoon. I have come to hear about how the government's cuts will affect

the provision of legal assistance directly on the ground. As we talk, he smiles a lot, in what seems to be in almost deliberate defiance of the sombre nature of our conversation.

"We're funded solely by the Federal Government," John tells me. "Obviously, this means we are especially vulnerable to funding cuts – we literally have no other money coming in."

Under the Abbott Government's budget, John and his team stand to lose \$650 000 from their working budget over 2014-15. He says they aren't yet sure what this means in real terms.

"For 12 days after that budget was handed down, the bureaucrats in Canberra couldn't tell us which of our programs would be affected." Despite his mild mannered

currently in jails across NSW, approximately 2,300 are Aboriginal. Nationally, Aboriginal people only make up 2.5 per cent of the population.

John is clearly painfully aware of the weight that these figures hold.

"We are simply unable to hold back the tidal wave that continues to build," he says. "As well as having to deal with the cocktail of the disadvantaged – poverty, unemployment, and substance abuse – Aboriginal people view police as agents of an invading state. There is this very understandable fundamental distrust and it just exacerbates all the problems."

In an attempt to combat this dire state of recidivism and incarceration, ALS NSW/ACT

these, and the constant interaction with systemic inequality and oppression. What keeps him going?

"I could say because I believe in those big principles like a fair go and access to justice, and I do. But I think, for me, it boils down to the fact that I believe Aboriginal people deserve the very best legal representations in the most difficult circumstances."

After our interview is done, John walks me upstairs to the main workspace. The bullpen-style office up here is vastly different to the set of offices below. Where John's looked neat and relatively new, these rooms are bedraggled, and smell musty. Afternoon sunlight streams in through dirty windows. Ragged curtains hang off lopsided curtain rods. Teetering piles of thick manila folders crowd every

numerous clients in a variety of courts.

"We just don't have enough lawyers to go round. The turnover rate is massive – we more often than not are in the process of recruiting more lawyers."

Why is there such a high turnover rate?

"Money. Mainstream legal aid lawyers get paid up to 25 per cent more than our lawyers. It's hard to keep people when other agencies are offering flexible hours, so much more money, less grueling work."

Tentatively trying to avoid drawing attention to how fatigued and defeated she and her colleagues look, I ask Sarah if she thinks the work also takes an adverse emotional toll. Her response is immediate and urgent.

"Absolutely. There's so much vicarious trauma. I mean, we're dealing with really disadvantaged people." She gestures, with a limp wrist and an effort, to the piles of folders on her desk. "You could pick up any one of these and you could read the saddest story you will ever read."

She pauses and breaks her eye contact with me. When she looks up again, her tired eyes are angry.

"We get them at the end, when the wheels have fallen off. We know jail isn't the solution, the judge knows jail isn't the solution," she says. "There is no worse feeling in the world than watching your client go to jail. It just happens too much."

Like John, I ask Sarah about the immediate, real-world impact of the Abbott government's cuts. The throughcare program is also at the front of her mind. She explains that she had just gotten off the phone to one of the field officers who will soon be made redundant.

"She was telling me that when they called to give her the news that she would lose her job, she was driving a client who had just gotten out of jail to a service provider. She answered the phone on loudspeaker. And this other woman, the client, just said: 'What am I going to do now? Who is going to help me now?'"

For most Aboriginal people being released from custody, especially in rural and remote areas, the reality is that no-one will be able to help with their specific needs after the throughcare program has been shut down. Although most state and territory Departments of Justice offer transitional support programs, few are tailored

to account for the clusters of problems that affect Aboriginal people specifically. In light of this budget, Sarah says that she is losing some hope for the future.

"It's really unfair. I mean, I don't know what the grand plan is, but at this rate, we'll just dissolve. We could just disappear."

understood, they have been all but drowned out. I get the feeling that, caught in the headlights of these cuts, they have little left to lose.

Felicity is a friendly, if reserved, young Sydney Law graduate, who is sporting coke-bottle-thick hipster glasses, an elephant-patterned cardigan and wooden earrings. She explains to me that

"I get the feeling that, caught in the headlights of these cuts, they have little left to lose."



Pictured: the Redfern Tent Embassy.

Casting aside my hesitation to draw attention to her personal plight, I ask why she persists with the job when she is obviously so tired and sad. "It gives me joy, it really does," she says. "And the clients are unendingly, eternally grateful; they are just such beautiful people."

Although I have only made appointments with Sarah and John, Sarah takes me a few offices down to meet Felicity Graham, the Western Region Principal Legal Officer. It strikes me how open these people are being with me, how freely and frankly they have spoken. I realise they probably haven't been interviewed much; in amongst the choruses of discontented and distressed voices flooding the media, discordantly clamouring to be heard and

she is only visiting Sydney – she lives and works in Dubbo, and has been doing a lot of work on traffic law advocacy in rural communities in that region. She tells me that over the last five years in the local courts of Western NSW, around 10 to 12 per cent of the sentences imposed have been for unauthorised driving offences.

"A huge proportion of the Aboriginal people who are getting locked up are getting locked up for essentially regulatory offences – it's unnecessary. The most common offence that we see is people being sent to jail for driving with disqualified licences."

Felicity explains that this "disproportionate" incarceration rate comes as a result of the necessity of a driver's licence

in rural and remote Australia; when a licence is suspended, it is almost guaranteed to provoke further crime.

"Out there, we call them 'licences to live'. If you don't have a driver's licence then you're cut off from participation in society. We're talking about communities where you need to drive 200 kilometres to go to work, to go to the supermarket, to access healthcare. It just perpetuates. These people break the law again because they have to."

Felicity recently gave evidence to a NSW Parliamentary Committee on traffic law violations, and she tells me that the subsequently released report was promising and presented positive and constructive recommendations.

"The problem is that it is just sitting on a shelf now. The government isn't acting on its own committee's report."

She lets out a hollow, husky laughs when, as the interview is drawing to a close, I ask her if there is anything she wanted to answer that I haven't asked.

"It's a huge topic. I can't even begin to explain. I think the take-home message is that if we are going to confront the disparity, the gap in our society between Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people, we need to confront the gross overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in custody. We need to really well resource our legal services. A cut to resources is only going to aggravate the problem."

I leave Felicity's office and walk out past the crooked curtain rods, the bulging manila folders, the dirty windows, and down the stairs. It is no longer afternoon in Redfern – as I step out on to the street, it is dark and quite cold.

The Abbott government's maiden budget is a blueprint for a vastly different Australia: a leaner, meaner, harsher place. There is no inspirational message to package up nicely here; there will be no reprieve for the ALS staff, nor for the countless number of other good people doing good things across the country who will be affected by these budget cuts.

This budget will create and exacerbate many stories of inequality, suffering and disadvantage. No one story deserves to be privileged above the rest, but they all deserve to be told.

Picture sourced from the Sydney Morning Herald.

"It's like dropping a pebble in a pond: the ripples spread."

demeanour, I can see how angry this makes him; that smile momentarily disappears from his face.

"What we do know has gone for sure is what we call our 'throughcare' program. It has gone from having half a million dollars of funding to literally nothing. Come July 1, it's gone."

The throughcare program targets recidivism, which is infamously rife amongst Aboriginal people. More than two thirds of Aboriginal prisoners will return to jail within three years of their release; many spend the majority of their lives behind bars for consecutive, separate offences. This astounding rate of re-offence only exacerbates an already disproportionately high rate of Aboriginal incarceration. Out of roughly 10,200 prisoners

have placed six field officers across the state and territory whose job it is to identify prisoners coming to the end of their sentences, connect with them, and assist them in their transition out of prison – this is 'throughcare'. "To be honest with you, I could only name half a dozen clients who, through the help of this program, stayed out of jail for more than 12 months – but we consider that a huge success," John says, his smile returned.

"What the policy makers don't understand is that's not just six people – that's six families, six communities. It's like dropping a pebble in a pond: the ripples spread."

John tells me he has worked "on and off" at ALS for over 34 years. It must be so hard, I suggest, especially in the face of cuts like

desk. No-one looks up from their work as we walk past.

John shows me to the office of Sarah Crellin, the Deputy Principal Legal Officer of NSW's south-eastern zone. She's young, but she has tired eyes and a soft, flat voice. I take a seat on a battered couch across from her desk and sink a surprising way into it before realising, detachedly, that it has no springs.

"It's already unfair, and they're cutting it again." Sarah kneads her hands together across from me; her knuckles shine white, red, white, red. "It just isn't fair."

Although Sarah is technically in a managerial position, she tells me she still has court obligations that can see her crisscrossing the city on any given day to represent

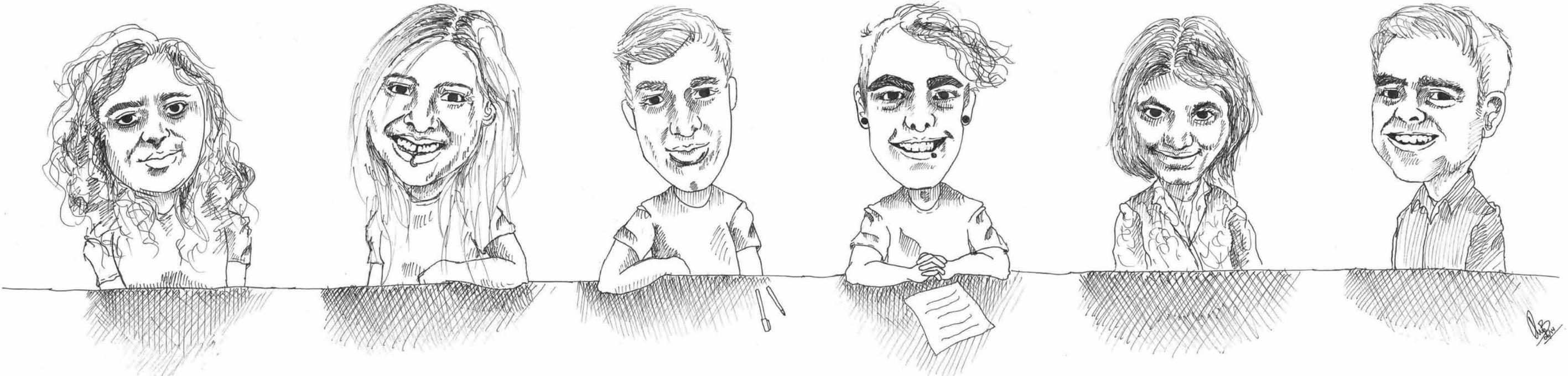


ILLUSTRATION BY MIKAELA BARTELS

From left to right: Bebe D'Souza, Eve Radunz, Kade Denton, Robby Magyar, Tara Waniganayaka, Tim Matthews

USU: Your executive

WHAT ARE THE EXECUTIVE ELECTIONS?

In June of each year, the USU Board Directors meet to elect a new executive. There are four executive positions up for grabs in these elections: President, Vice-President, Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary. Additionally, Women's, Queer, Sustainability, and the newly-created Ethnocultural portfolios are available and can be concurrently held with executive positions. Being an executive member grants the average Board Director more power in the organisation, including reviewing the CEO's contract and remuneration, sitting on a bunch of committees, and having control over what USU regulations mystically refer to as the "day-to-day matters which are not necessary to bring to Board". They also get paid more, with the President taking home over \$26,000 a year. Other executive

In general, two or three of the USU's second-year Board Directors will nominate for each executive position, with the winner decided by a vote of the 11 student Board Directors and, if they choose to vote, the two Senate-Appointed Directors (SADs).

The election is comprised of a series of secret ballots. To be elected to a position, a candidate must receive a majority of the votes cast in that ballot – six votes if the SADs abstain from voting, seven if they don't. If a majority cannot be achieved in the first ballot for a position, a number of scenarios can occur. In fields of more than two candidates, a preferential system is used. The candidate with the fewest votes will be discounted

from the election and a new ballot will be taken, with Directors whose first-preference candidate has been disqualified usually re-directing their vote to one of the remaining two candidates. If a majority still cannot be achieved, or if all candidates received the same number of votes in the first round of voting, the result will be decided by pulling a name out of hat (yes, literally). Alternatively, if all candidates receive the same number of votes in the first round of the election, the hat will be used to decide which candidate is disqualified from the race, and a second round of polling will occur. If a majority cannot be reached, the hat will come out again.

In the months leading up to the election, aspiring executive Board Directors expend unthinkable amounts of time and energy shoring up support for their tilt at an executive position. On one level, this is simply a matter of trying to prove that you're a good Board Director by working hard, taking initiative, and making an effort to realise your election promises. It's also a matter of articulating an incisive vision for the Union that aligns you with some candidates, and differentiates you from others.

But let's not forget that this is student politics, and these are the aspiring Frank Underwoods of our generation. If you get a decent position on the executive, a lot of it will be down to your having managed a junior Board Director's election campaign; promised your vote to other Board Directors for their positions of choice; dealt away your political faction's support in another, unrelated election; convinced the SADs that the other candidates will drive the USU into a black hole

of disorganisation and disrepute; or a combination of any of the above. The number of Instagram photos you feature in with the people whose votes you're courting is also an important consideration.

WHO ARE THE CANDIDATES?

President

Robby Magyar (Student Unity – Labor Right): In Robby's first year as a Board Director, he promoted the need for greater transparency and focused on student welfare issues. He believes his greatest achievement was the Queer Review, which was one of a number of factors that demonstrates his welfare and community stance, and vision as president. In his interview, he was vocal about the disappointing aspects of Hannah Morris' presidency, including her failure to consult with the board. It became clear that there was a divide between first and second year board directors this year, which is something he wants to avoid. He disagrees with how CEO Andrew Woodward runs the Union, aiming to change many damaging bureaucratic elements and moving it into a place that balances financial sustainability with fostering social care and community. Here, the board's shift to a more left-leaning rather than Independent position is something he values in facilitating this plan.

NB: This profile was written by Honi reporter Sophie Gallagher, as Robby Magyar managed the election campaign of the current Honi editors.

Tara Waniganayaka (Indie): Tara speaks eloquently about her year on

Board and presents herself as an inclusive candidate for President. Her passion for the student interest seems genuine, albeit vague, citing the USU's pillars as her guides. In her year on board, Tara has co-organised the USU's Transparency Review and voted against the Raue dismissal, showing her commitment to greater transparency. However, these experiences have not given her more commitment to specificity; she isn't sure where she stands on live tweeting of staff members, and wants to let Board Directors speak to the media, but only when they "add constructively to the debate". Tara concedes that few of her election promises have come to fruition, saying that she decided to focus instead on the USU's priorities and important day-to-day decisions.

Tim Matthews (Indie): Tim has been typecast as a conservative candidate. This is in part due to his vote on the special resolution to sack Tom Raue (which he rejects as a litmus test of progressive politics) and his position on the Senate-Appointed Directors' ability to vote (which is that they should not be on Board, but that if they are, they should be able to cast an informed vote). Tim presented a vision of a more efficient and responsive USU in his interview. When asked about the role of the Union, Tim channelled Hannah Morris' recent AGM speech, suggesting the USU meant a lot of different things to a lot of different people. Tim's USU would consider political causes on a case-by-case basis. However, Tim also expressed skepticism about the Union's role in activism as opposed to the SRC. He cited the SRC's democratic mandate allowed it to pursue more ideological causes.

Vice-President, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer

Bebe D'Souza (Grassroots): Bebe appears to be the most ideologically consistent candidate running for an exec position this year and has been ahead of the curve from the start. She is running for Vice-President. While the Board flipped from one side of the debate to the other on the issue of Raue's expulsion, Bebe supported him before it was cool. She was one of the few in her year to run on a policy of increasing transparency; in the most recent elections almost everyone was doing it. Unlike Robby, Bebe refused to say whether she would renew Woodward's contract, but did suggest relations between staff and Board directors (and her in particular) were strained. Bebe has achieved a comparatively high number of her policies; she has been instrumental in the Transparency Review, the BULL review, and the Ethnocultural Portfolio.

Kade Denton (Indie): Kade Denton was the dark horse of the 2013 USU election, sneaking in to claim the sixth and final spot on preferences. He's even more of an outsider in the executive race this year, admitting during his interview that he was unlikely to get any position, but was interested in Vice-President. When asked if he'd been working towards any of his election promises, Kade explained that he'd "moved [his] focus on Board to other areas," and that "people change". He highlighted as signature achievements the new in-camera policy he wrote (now being implemented) and the Commemoration Day working party, which he sat on to help develop a USyd Commemoration Day Party. The party plan was unfortunately halted by Campus Infrastructure and Services.

Eve Radunz (NLS – Labor Left): Eve was the Wom*n's Portfolio holder this

year. In that position, she focused on collaborating with the Wom*n's Collective, helping to organise events such as Reclaim the Night. She's also been involved in establishing the Health and Wellbeing Week and assisting Robby in his Queer Review. Eve is open about not achieving some of her policies; universal access remains a distant dream and the USU has not significantly broadened the food options available to include halal and vegan food. She is nominating herself for Honorary Secretary, a position in which she wants to see increased USU transparency and investigate the possibility of implementing Affirmative Action in the C&S framework.

SO, WHO'S GOING TO BE THE NEXT USU PRESIDENT?

In the race for president, all three candidates start from the same position of having two safe votes – their own, and the first-year Director whose campaign they managed. Liv will vote for Tim, Alisha for Robby and Liam for Tara. Tim can also bank on Kade's vote, making it 3-2-2 to begin with.

From that point, there are between 5 and 7 votes to win. That number is not set because we cannot be sure if either or both of the SADs will vote. We understand that they have essentially been asked not to vote. The Board has asked Hannah to express their concerns about the undemocratic nature of the unelected SADs casting votes in the election of a student executive. However, SAD Emma McDonald voted last year, and may be reticent to give up a right that the regulations grant her. Both SADs were contacted for comment about their vote but did not get back to Honi by the time of print. If they do vote, it'll likely be for Tim. So Tim's vote ceiling, in first preferences, is five.

The other key variable is which way the NLS and Grassroots caucuses vote. Both caucuses have two Directors, who will very likely vote the same way. This means that if you win either caucus, you're up two votes. If you win both caucuses, you're up four.

Bebe is the senior Grassroots candidate, and appears likely to be the next Vice-President of the USU. She told Honi that her vote would not be going to Tim because they have "disagreed on lots," especially the vote to remove Tom Raue. She and her junior counterpart, Ed McMahon, are currently "100 per cent undecided" between Tara and Robby.

We've heard NLS Directors Eve and Kate Bullen are also torn between Tara and Robby. Close personal friendships and factional interest come SRC elections in September are pushing Eve and Kate towards Robby, but Tara could be an option in this volatile teacup.

THE VISION OF THE POTENTIAL EXECUTIVE

Whichever of those scenarios actually plays out beyond the pages of this paper, and whichever candidate ultimately emerges victorious, the 2014-15 USU Board is likely to steer itself in pretty much the same direction.

This year's junior Directors have been through a baptism of fire after a year of division and infighting on the USU Board. They have seen how unproductive a fragmented executive can be. They've been frustrated by the opaqueness of this year's executive, and have felt a sense of disenfranchisement with the way decisions have been made at the top. They've witnessed a popular backlash against an executive who hasn't listened to the wishes of the USU's most vocal members.

So, despite significant political and personal differences between some of the Directors, they are promising not to allow disagreement to define their term. A premium is being placed on a consultative style of governance that, in practice, should lead to common policy initiatives being sought out and pursued. Some of these common threads have already begun to emerge, largely expressed through the buzzwords that have been dropped into every USU-related conversation in the last six months.

First amongst these is "student control", which speaks to the common desire to give student directors greater power to steer the Union on a course of their own choosing. Directors enunciated this principle in different ways: Tim was concerned that Directors had been sidelined into projects that are not the heart of the USU's operations; Eve thought there wasn't enough staff respect for student directors; Robby was so concerned about the CEO's lack of respect for student control that he said that he would not renew Woodward's contract. Secondly, and with varying degrees of emphasis, is "transparency". All the candidates for next year's executive want to make the USU more open and accountable to its members. Bebe wanted directors' reports to be made public; Kade wanted minutes to be released more quickly.

This election is different from most, in that the candidates all know that the morning after the vote, they're going to have to step back into the boardroom and start putting their shared term on executive to good use. Having seen what can happen on an executive divided, this year's candidates have chosen to define themselves, not against each other, but against those that preceded them.

CINEMATICALY DANIELS

JONATHAN PARKER EXPLORES THE DISCOURSE AROUND LEE DANIELS' FILMS AND AFRICAN-AMERICAN REPRESENTATION IN HOLLYWOOD.

African-American filmmaker Lee Daniels once said: "Every African-American I know has two faces. There's the face that we have for ourselves and the face we put on for white America for the places we have to get to."

Daniels' films represent the duality of African culture – its reality and its perception. Daniels is the man behind *Precious*, an Academy Award winning feature film from 2009, and the far more recent *Lee Daniels' The Butler*. While lauded in some corners, the equally divisive African-American film critic Arnold White has slammed Daniels for his use of bombastic black stereotypes. Despite this, Daniels' importance in contemporary African-American cinema is clear.

American depictions of race in cinema are becoming increasingly polarised. On one hand, a multitude of films about African-American issues seem to be made with a white audience in mind. Many of these films seem to frame their narratives in terms of the antiquated 'white man's burden'. In my opinion, they exist to make white audiences feel better about America's iniquitous past.

Take a look at John Lee Hancock's *The Blind Side* from 2009, a film nominated for the Best Picture Oscar in the same year as Daniels' *Precious*. The film focuses on Leigh Anne Touhy – played by the Queen of Mainstream Sandra Bullock – and her attempts to spur on an impoverished African-American boy Michael Oher (Quinton Aaron) to success as an American football player. Tate Taylor's *The Help* (2011), another Best Picture nominee, presents a similar African-American reliance on white protagonist figures. That film outlines the tale of

a middle-aged African-American maid named Aibileen Clark (Viola Davis) and her experiences of hardship and racism. However, she can only find her voice with the help of a young, white journalist named Skeeter (Emma Stone). Armond White decried the film's vision of black history through a white lens, claiming "this comic melodrama is geared to please a broad audience".

latest film *A Madea Christmas*, which grossed \$52 million, the film was almost universally panned for being condescending and unfunny, garnering six 'Golden Raspberry' nominations. Armond White has condemned Tyler Perry's self-conscious status as a "race hustler" and called his work "clownish[ly] grotesque". African-American director Spike Lee described Perry's

"made to have people talk", and perhaps it is one of the last films to depict black culture with raw sincerity.

So does Lee Daniels offer any remedy to this? His films exist within a strange, untapped middle ground, where it's unclear whether he is trying to appease a white or black market. "I never try to make a film for the masses," claims Daniels, though I'm not sure if we should believe his mantra.

On one hand, Daniels' films seem to reinforce antiquated, 'white' stereotypes of African-American behaviour. The titular protagonist in *Precious* is a welfare-dependant teenage mother, while *The Butler* gives an account of a bunch of white Presidents making progressive, beneficial racial policy reforms. Armond White made the bold assertion that "*Precious* is the most damaging film to the black image since *Birth of a Nation*", arguing that the film would only fulfil racist white peoples' stereotypes of black culture.

On the other hand, as historically dubious as the film is, *The Butler* does indeed champion African-American autonomy – it is because of the eponymous butler Cecil Gaines (Forest Whitaker) that the Presidents change their mind on racial policy, and while White claims the film "trivialises history", he recognises its significance in representing African-Americans as instigators of "social progress". For a film that features Liev Schreiber's LBJ taking a shit, it's worth a watch. As contradictory and stereotypical as his vision might seem, Lee Daniels might just be the racially motivated director to appeal to a truly wide audience.



Does the fact that both these films were made by privileged white men reveal a myopic view of race in American art today? Given the demographics of the Academy – nearly 94 per cent of the members are Caucasian – it's little wonder that these films were lauded by the Oscars.

On the other hand, films made with a black audience in mind are, in many ways, equally patronising. Tyler Perry has explicitly stated his intention to make films for an African-American audience. Yet despite the financial success of Perry's

work as "buffoonery" due to his stereotypes of foolish black men.

Indeed, Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing* recently celebrated its 25th anniversary. Speaking in a recent interview for the Huffington Post, Lee argued that his film "predicted what happened in the LA riots" and "predicted gentrification". His film proposed that an act of ignorance, such as a pizzeria owner exclusively displaying pictures of Italian-Americans in his restaurant, could be just as malicious as an act of racially fuelled violence. Lee said *Do the Right Thing* was

WE (CAN'T) EXIST

CHARLIE O'GRADY WRITES ABOUT TRANS* REPRESENTATION.

People like to ask me what it's like being trans*. It's something I find difficult to explain, but I can say that, for me, it's less about any sense of being 'trapped in the wrong body', and more a case of being left out of my own story. Here's an example.

Last week, the new video for Arcade Fire's latest single, 'We Exist', was released. The video features actor Andrew Garfield as an AMAB trans* person figuring out their** identity. 'We Exist' is a song that details a young gay man coming out to his father. The video features a trans* person played by a cisgender man, who is beaten and presumably killed.

It's hard to say who, exactly, exists here. But as I watch it I understand that, as usual, it's not me.

There's a lot of reasons to be angry about 'We Exist'. It's trans* pity porn, it's a saviour narrative that celebrates allies more than GSD people, it prioritises a single limited narrative about trans* experience, and Andrew Garfield is getting credit for something he's not. Laura Jane Grace, frontwoman of Against Me!, has tweeted: "a homeless Jamaican LGBT youth living in a sewer is going to feel empowered because a cis, straight white male actor in movies they can't afford to see stars in a music video they'll never watch?"

Those accusations are all certainly true. What I want to impress, however, is the genuine violence of being left out of your own story.

As a trans* man, whether I'm in or out of the closet in any given situation, I am constantly editing what I say. I stop myself from telling stories that will make

people question who I am. In interactions with my family I still don't have the opportunity to vocally correct misgendering. And other people will do it for me, too, every time my legal name is used where my real name should have been. Whenever my family or boss talk about me, whenever I get sent mail. In my interaction with my body, too, the feeling is one of being excluded from myself. So I'm used to leaving myself out, and editing around.

It would be nice, though, if popular culture weren't doing it too.

Just calling the song 'We Exist' feels like some kind of cruel joke, because I have to wonder who this "we" is. If the "we" is gender diverse people, then possibly a better title would be "They Exist", or "We Don't Exist", or maybe just "Arcade Fire Seem To Think Every Queer Identity is The Same Thing". If the "we" is cis allies, however, then the title is pretty much perfect. At the end of the video, when Garfield's character (having just been forced to watch an excruciatingly awkward dance number) walks through some kind of death-metaphor tunnel, only to emerge at—yep, you guessed it—an Arcade Fire concert. They're then taken on stage and cheered for by the crowd, which we're supposed to accept as mitigating the fact that we just saw the same character get beaten to death.

I can't possibly articulate how little I give a shit about allies, or what they think of me. I can't possibly explain how furious I am that a story that should have been about queer identities has become, once again, about the cisgender/straight allies who supposedly "save" them. What this kind of representation does is turn a group of people

into a narrative—a homogenous, simplified narrative—in a way that completely dehumanises them. 'Being trans*' becomes an acting experience. At least 'We Exist' has taken the initiative to tell a trans* narrative that doesn't focus on medical transitioning—but it still tells a story that, like so many, begins with the donning of a costume and ends with tragedy. As if to add insult to injury, we're not even allowed to be the ones who are telling that story.

That's not the kind of representation I need, or even slightly want. Not only because it's not even nearly the only narrative that trans* lives follow—not only because, sometimes, it's nice to be shown a message of hope instead of text after text that ends in someone like you dying—it's because there is an undeniable sense of self that comes with being able to express your experiences for yourself.

It's not like 'We Exist' doesn't hit some great moments. Garfield is a brilliant actor, and he brings a lot of what looks like truth to the role. Watching the beginning, where the character, having tried on a bra for the first time, stares at their reflection, and something inside Garfield just *snaps*, I felt something overwhelmingly real that I feel every time I get dressed in the morning.

But the problem is, it's just not enough anymore.

Now, it would seem, we're comfortable with hearing stories about trans* people—but we're uncomfortable with trans* people themselves existing, we'd rather not think about them. I know that Jared Leto, in his infinite wisdom, likes to theorise that you wouldn't

want to "stick a transgender person with only transgender roles, so it goes both ways"—but in truth trans*-identified people, as a general rule, don't get *any* roles. In a narrative explicitly about queerphobia and transphobia, we're still forcibly closeted. Even the recent *52 Tuesdays*, which features a gender non-conforming actor in the role of a trans* man, is more about the daughter than it is about him.

The thing is, the Andrew Garfields and the Jared Letos of the world don't understand the terror about medical fees, about going to the doctor at all, they don't get what it's like to not know what to write on forms or say to tutors. They don't get what it's like to be left out—and they won't, because they're put in where other people should be.

To them, it's just a role. It's just a story. But it's never just been a story for me, and now it's not even a story I can tell myself. I only ever get to be the subject.

The song is called 'We Exist'. But as far as the video indicates, we don't even remotely exist. We're absent, spoken about but never to. In this kind of world, where our experiences are more about the people around us, where other people's words are passed off as our stories, we can't exist. The best way to make someone not feel like a person is to deny them their reflection.

**I say 'they' for lack of a preferred pronoun for the character, because I don't want to necessarily label the character a 'she'.

Violence in silence

Georgia Behrens asks why nobody cares about police violence at protests.

In the past few weeks, the reaction to reports of police brutality against USyd students has been depressingly predictable. Socialists have analogised police officers to farm animals. Right-wing bullies have had their fun blaming victims for what was done to them. And, in the meantime, everyone else has gone about their daily business. Somehow, they're just not interested.

There was a momentary groundswell of concern about police violence after the events of last year's Mardi Gras. Since then, though, everyone appears to have sunk back into the old, comfortable assumptions. Police brutality is something that happens in countries where elections are rigged and Twitter is banned. In Australia, training, protocols and ombudsmen shield citizens against the caprices of rogue police officers. The odd broken leg or concussion is the unfortunate side effect of a service to the greater social good.

People who challenge these assumptions often end up getting lumped into the same category as those who think putting

fluoride in the water supply is a government conspiracy to control our minds. And, as infuriating as admitting this may be, it's not all that difficult to see why. If you're a citizen of middle Australia, you've probably had virtually no exposure to police operations. In fact, it's likely that the most contact you've ever had with the police was from the sheltered comfort of your car seat, when an RBT officer politely enquired if you'd had anything to drink that evening. It's also likely that pretty much the only other time you see the police in action is when they make it into the news for investigating murders or arresting key figures in gangland warfare. There's nothing in your personal experience to suggest that police exert force excessively or arbitrarily. You've never been given a reason to question how they treat those who are abrasive but not unlawful, vigorous but not vicious. You accept that "police brutality" is a bad thing, but you're not convinced that violence at student protests "really counts".

After all, impassioned student protesters don't always look like stereotypical victims of police

brutality. Many protestors are proudly antagonistic towards the police they encounter: they jeer, they swear, they call them pigs. They're often seeking to overwhelm or impede a police presence, which guarantees physical contact between protestors and police. It's not unheard of for someone to swing a punch at an officer.

Although we all learnt in primary school that two wrongs don't make a right, people often assume that any kind of aggression from students towards police automatically delegitimises their claims to having been subjected to brutality. They don't stop to question if "total lack of provocation" should be the only criteria used to determine if a police response was disproportionate or not. They don't ask if saying "fuck" should seriously be treated as an offence warranting arrest. They don't wonder if a fully-armed, muscular police officer really needs to pin a student to the ground to get them to move aside.

For now, no one but the victims of police brutality or their sympathisers are pushing to

question this. Typical mainstream media reports of "violent clashes between police and students" do little to challenge the assumption that police merely exert force in order to subdue wild, unruly protestors. In fact, such reporting probably makes the problem worse, suggesting fundamentally false power equivalencies between police and protestors. And, issues of accountability aside, official police complaints systems are only set up to deal with standalone grievances against individual officers. There are no mechanisms in place that empower people to challenge their cultural norms and practices, to ask the big questions.

These are questions that need to be asked, but, because they don't pertain to middle Australian's interactions with the police force, no one's asking them. People are happy to raise their eyebrows sceptically at reports of police brutality. This scepticism, though, tends to come from a place of assumption, rather than experience. And uninformal assumption about issues as serious as this just isn't good enough.

Sandstone and suffering

Blythe Worthy was at the St John's College protests. | *First Person*

Two Thursdays ago, I hadn't decided whether I was going to go to the stealth demonstration, now known as #pyneatusyd, at St John's College. Stuck in a meeting at my internship in Camperdown, my phone wouldn't stop vibrating, and I checked it to find no less than 34 notifications. The secret planning group for the demonstration, aimed at Liberal Education Minister Christopher Pyne, was abuzz with excited anticipation, and I was convinced to join in. I met them in Manning at 5:30pm on the dot for a briefing before we headed down to St John's to intercept Pyne at the Liberal Club's Howard Cup debating tournament.

My ambivalence turned to uneasiness when I met up with

my friend. She bit her lip distractedly. "I think it's going to be really intense tonight." I nodded, but we met up with the rest of the group anyway. I didn't want to let an opportunity to demonstrate against fee deregulation go to waste and I was keen on covering the demonstration for a magazine I work for, so when the group picked up their banners after a short strategy meeting, we left with them. The few security guards we passed were talking on walkie-talkies. At one point, we had to hide from a group of riot police who meandered past us, completely unaware that the grassy mound to their left hid around 50 activists, bristling with grim determination.

Once we got near St John's a female leader of the protest turned

around. "We're going to have to run now, guys." And, in a fairly scattered group, we did just that. By the time I arrived at the college, protestors were attempting to enter the hall in order to disrupt the proceedings. We already knew we'd be outnumbered.

There was a single security guard attempting to fend off protestors, but no sign of the riot police yet. I was pushed up against the door by the swell of demonstrators and then there was a shout. "Police!" I turned to film the riot cops arrive and they immediately began shoving their way forcefully through the crowd, something we'd anticipated.

The police wedged me against a solid wall of people and then, when

I was obviously immobile, they became more and more forceful. Almost everyone was screaming and yelling, and I felt suffocated by the crush of people around me. I was trying in vain to tell the officer in front of me to stop repeatedly pushing my friend over backwards as there was a chair behind her and his action was only hurting her. Eventually, I was able to drag her a few feet away, and we stood together, chanting and watching the police swarm over the building.

I checked my Twitter and learned that by tweeting about the protest I'd become a target for Liberal troll abuse. I added it to the long list of things I'd known would happen the minute I answered those Facebook messages three hours before.

Scissors, paper, rock, science

Stephanie White challenges you to best out of three

Researchers from the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing have found what they think is a winning strategy in rock-paper-scissors. The research, involving 360 students playing 300 rounds of the game, found that the more successful students were employing a specific approach.

According to the research, if a player wins in one game the probability of that player repeating the same move in the next game is considerably higher than the probability of changing moves. For the other player, if they lose two or more times in a row, they will not play the same move, but instead play whichever move would have beaten the one they just lost to.

So, if you just lost to scissors,

you are more likely to play rock the next turn, and your opponent is likely to stick with scissors. Researchers call this the "win-stay, lose-shift strategy". It comes from the fact that while it is impossible to gain an advantage over a truly random opponent, the human mind is actually quite bad at understanding probability, and assumes a previously successful move will be successful again. It's the same 'logic' that has people thinking that the results of earlier coin tosses or roulette throws make certain outcomes more likely in future, while the events are actually completely independent.

This strategy, whilst only recently subject to scientific evaluation, is not new to professional rock-paper-scissors competitors, who

do in fact exist. The World Rock Paper Scissors society was founded in 2002 and runs international tournaments, many with large cash prizes. Their 2007 championship was even televised by Fox Sports.

So next time you're playing to decide who buys the next round, try and remember this strategy, if you haven't had a few too many by then that is.

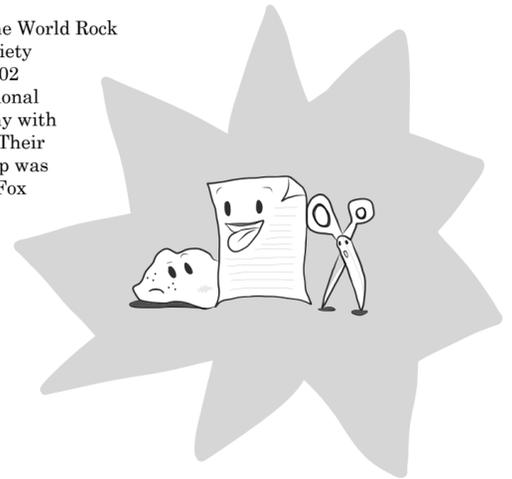


ILLUSTRATION BY ALEXANDRA MILDENHALL

Coming to Australia

Cassie Wu reflects on her time in Sydney.

This is my first time living abroad far away from home. I was not afraid but more excited when I landed and waited in the line at the gate. It was the most horrible moment when I couldn't find some of my luggage. I ran to the officer and described my bag with broken English. Later that awful afternoon, I was told the bag was still at Shanghai airport and that I could get it from the next flight. My life in Sydney started with this first and worst memory.

The air and streets in Sydney were beyond my expectations. However, it has not been easy living here because everything is much more expensive than at home, and I have had language and culture issues. The experience of entering a bank to apply a card for the first time was really tough.

In January of this year, I carried my huge luggage and a worried face into a tiny room with a wooden floor after the taxi turned around and around and finally into a little lane near Central with the number 53.40 turning up on the screen. My first place to live was in Link2, with a beautiful Japanese girl called Haruka. I was too scared to hang out in the busy and confusing city around George Street. She chose one weekend and booked tickets on her Toshiba for a trip to see One Direction at Madame Tussauds in Darling Harbour. We also took a ferry to the boring and small Luna Park in North Sydney, which was my first time standing in the sunshine and

breathing in salty air on a ship. I miss the time I tried to learn a little Japanese from her and then we ended with laughing at midnight. I miss the times when she would put on make-up in the early morning and, as she rushed to school, say 'Good morning' to me as I lazily slept in bed. I miss the time she left for the airport at two in the morning, leaving a bowl of grape fruit and a small piece of paper which read: 'Please eat if you can'.

I felt stupid that I shortened the booking in Link2, but I was lucky to meet Usha in my second place near Town Hall. She didn't busy herself with school too much so we spent all day in the good smelling kitchen. I knew the funny name 'Fusili' of spiral pasta. I liked standing in front of the big mirror, putting the black chocolate mask on my face and scary white mask around her beautiful eyes. I liked hearing her singing Rihanna in the shower. I liked looking up at thousands of firework every Saturday, sitting near the cool water with two cups of Starbucks. I liked taking tons of selfies with the burning red roses from her boyfriend far away in Singapore and tagging each other on Instagram. On a rainy night after I moved out we had pancakes outside and had some drinks in our old place.

It is not always raining in Sydney. All you need is to enjoy a day under the sun. And a few beautiful people.

In the grand scheme of things

There's a small problem with the University's E12 scheme, writes Mary Ward.

Our Lady of Mercy College (OLMC) in Parramatta had an outstanding year in 2013. The independent school – which charges annual fees just shy of \$11,000 per senior student – ranked 93rd on the *Sydney Morning Herald's* Top 100 Schools list, and fielded teams in four of the six grand finals of the state-wide Catholic Schools Debating Association competition. The 125-year-old college has produced distinguished alumni such as businesswoman Helena Carr and federal MP for Greenway Michelle Rowland. Every student has a laptop. OLMC's students play Saturday sport in the Independent Girls' School Sporting Association competition.

OLMC is, by all accounts, a top-achieving and well-resourced private school. It is also one of the schools eligible for the University of Sydney's E12 scheme, an access scholarship system for disadvantaged students.

The E12 scheme was established in 2012 as an early entry scheme for low socioeconomic school leavers. With their principal's endorsement, Year 12 students enrolled in NSW schools can apply on the basis of individual financial disadvantage, or on the basis of attending a school on the list of Educational Access Scheme (EAS) schools during Year 11 and 12.

Scholarship winners are notified in October, before the HSC exams begin. Their scholarship is conditional upon meeting the scheme's reduced ATAR cutoff for their chosen course (this is often a significant reduction: the ATAR cutoff for Physiotherapy is reduced from 98.85 to 85). Upon acceptance of the scholarship, students receive an iPad and \$5,000.

The University Admissions Centre (UAC) compile the list of EAS schools using data from the federal and NSW governments, as well as the NSW Catholic Education Commission. This year, the University of Sydney made 201 formal offers of E12 scholarships. A comparison of UAC's January Offers list and the Board of Studies Distinguished Achievers list reveals that members of the OLMC Class of 2013. Based on the number of scholarships awarded

by OLMC each year, it is unlikely that all of these students were receiving financial assistance while at the college. A University of Sydney spokesperson told *Honi Soit* that school principals are asked to only provide recommendations for applicants who are financially disadvantaged. OLMC declined to comment on their involvement with the E12 program.

Cerdon Merrylands, another high-achieving Catholic school, ranked 90th in the *SMH's* Top 100 Schools list and had similarly high rates of acceptance. Students from Cerdon accepted 14 E12 offers for 2014 entry. Students from the two schools received ten per cent of the E12 entry places available. Like OLMC, Cerdon was placed on the EAS list due to a recommendation from the NSW Catholic Education Commission. Both schools' communities are described as having above average socio-educational advantage on the federal government's MySchool website.

A NSW Catholic Education Commission spokesperson stressed that socio-educational disadvantage is distinct from socio-economic disadvantage, which forms the basis of their recommendations to UAC. "The Catholic sector applies principles similar to those used by the NSW Department of Education," he says.

"NSW Catholic schools in the lowest SES quartile are identified using Commonwealth Government methodology and student-level

information, based on ABS census data and therefore revised every five years."

The University of Sydney spokesperson said that approximately 70 per cent of the E12 intake came from EAS schools last year. It is unclear how many of these students attended fee-paying schools recommended by the NSW Catholic Education Commission.

E12 scholarship recipient Alessandra Bianco, of Mount Vernon in Sydney's southwest, doesn't think her attendance at a school in what she terms a "so-called disadvantaged area" had any impact on her HSC results. The 2013 dux of Freeman Catholic College in Bonnyrigg Heights achieved an ATAR of 99.8 – a mark that would have guaranteed her place in Sydney's Combined Law program even without the bonus points the E12 scheme provides.

"[E12] is just a way of classifying disadvantaged schools and their areas, which seems like a totally subjective thing," she said. "Where Freeman is situated, they take in people from Mount Vernon, Cecil Hills, Abbotsbury; all of the, I guess, higher socio-economic suburbs. But then they are also taking in people from Smithfield and Fairfield, where it is more of a lower socio-economic status area."

She says the paperwork required for applying to the E12 scheme on the basis of individual need seemed too complicated. "The process of having to go through

UAC and submit all of the forms sort of turned [us] off," she says.

It was only when Freeman was added to the list of EAS schools midway through 2013 that she decided to apply. Bianco had always wanted to go to university like her mother, and saw the E12 scheme as "relieving stress" before her HSC exams, rather than providing her access to a tertiary institution she otherwise would not have attended.

UAC equity manager Gordon Clutterham acknowledged that identifying schools in low SES areas doesn't "perfectly" address the underrepresentation of low SES students at university. However, he said that even wealthier students are placed in a position of disadvantage by attending a school with a predominantly low SES enrolment. "The aspirations of those schools are generally lower," he said.

"Those schools are less attractive to experienced teachers, so there is an argument that – even though you may not be individually disadvantaged socio-economically – if you are attending a school that is predominantly low SES, that in itself represents a form of disadvantage," he said.

A change in the funding model for NSW government schools will see revisions to the EAS list this year. It appears unlikely that the methodology behind filling up the university's 'access' scholarship quota with high-achieving, private school students from the Catholic sector will be reviewed.

Reading the blood

Felicity Nelson reports on a recent breakthrough that could change how we see mental illness.

Mental illnesses are as real as a broken leg and are often just as debilitating. Yet, until recently, diagnosis has relied almost entirely on the testimony of the patient – on words alone.

This has strengthened the myth that mental illness is not a real disease, discouraged people from seeking help early and made it very difficult to diagnose disease with the precision and objectivity demanded by the medical profession.

All that could be about to change. Recent studies suggest we will soon be able to diagnose depression, suicidal tendencies, schizophrenia and even paedophilia with a lab test or a brain scan. Being able to detect mental illness with the prick of a finger will immediately and radically alter the situation for patients and the perception of mental illness in society.

It could, very possibly, be the most important development in psychiatry in this century.

Seven people commit suicide every day in Australia. It is a shocking statistic and every single one of these deaths is preventable. It is difficult to reach people at that stage in their depression or anxiety. Many people in the depths of despair remain completely silent out of fear of stigma, fear of forced hospitalisation or, worse, fear that their plans will be thwarted.

We desperately need a method of detecting suicidal tendencies that do not rely on the capacity of the individual to recognize their own problems. This is where blood biomarkers come in.

In a paper published in *Molecular Psychiatry* last year, six biomarkers carried in the blood were identified as predictors of suicide risk, the strongest being a protein encoded by a gene called

SAT1. When combined with clinical measures of mental state, the tests went from 65 per cent to 80 per cent accuracy in prediction of short and long-term suicide risk.

In 2010, VeriPsych became the first blood-based diagnostic aid for schizophrenia. More recently, a team at the Medical University of Vienna developed a reliable blood test for clinical depression. They discovered that the uptake speed of the 'happy hormone', serotonin, in blood cells directly reflected the function of a depression network in the brain.

The use of biomarkers in diagnosing these mental illnesses builds on a decade-worth of research into blood tests for Alzheimer's disease. It now seems possible to identify Alzheimer's in healthy individuals with 90 per cent accuracy five years before they develop symptoms with a simple blood test.

Tendencies towards paedophilia are highly stigmatized in society – with good reason – but study shows that some people are simply hard-wired to have warped sexual preferences. Recently, MRI brain scans have revealed a pattern of brain activity in paedophiles that differs strongly to people who are attracted to adults. We may one day be able to detect paedophilic tendencies before crimes are committed and help people become less of a threat.

One in five Australians will suffer from mental illness this year. The relief that a certain and early diagnosis gives a person cannot be overstated. Proving a physical basis for mental diseases will validate cries for help in a way that education and public health campaigns cannot. These advances will revolutionize the way we think about mental illness and are absolutely certain to save lives in the future.

Fanmail that somehow ended up on our desk

Isobel Yeap was just trying to offer her services.

Dear Ian Thorpe,

I am a professional emoticon designer, specialising in avante garde emoticons. I am also your number one most non-sycophantic fan. I read about you in the paper yesterday and really admired your active lifestyle.

I didn't mean to, but I was seized by the creative muse from above, thrust against my computer, and forced (by the creative muse) to make the following emoticon for you:



I was a bit annoyed because it actually took me ten minutes to make. At the time, I was running ten minutes late for a doctor's appointment. This caused me to miss the doctor's appointment. I had to pay a cancellation fee of \$80.

Currently, I am looking to recoup these costs.

Would you like to buy the rights to the above emoticon for \$80? (Please, I am a poor, starving, diseased artist, and you are a millionaire sportsman. I cannot help it that thinking about you causes me to do such irresponsible but expressive acts.)

If you would not like to buy it (and I understand, because my art is never well-received), I would like to give it to you for free, as a gift.

You're welcome!

It is a gift to express my non-sycophantic admiration for you and your active lifestyle. I think it's great that you are not obese. So many people are these days (if you haven't heard, Google: 'How Ian Thorpe escaped the obesity epidemic', and you will find the blog I have created about you and your active habits, which contains lots of information about why people get fat and

also statistics on obesity in general), and yet, you are not. I do not think this is due to random error. I think it is because you swim frequently. Swimming is excellent for muscle tone and health in general.

As a tip, you might want to consider eating more celery.

Also, please check out my blog: ianthorpeisnotfatobviouslybecauseheswimsheapsyeahhhhhhtumblr.com. And don't just say that you will but not actually do it, because I hate it when my friends do that.

Kind regards,

Isobel Yeap



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A friend in need

Bullies don't stop being bullies after they leave high school, writes Sarah Armstrong.

As a society we've established clear rules for how to act at work and at home. We've established the concepts of 'workplace harassment' and 'domestic abuse' and made clear they are unacceptable practices to engage in. However, there's a conspicuous absence of information or discussion around emotionally abusive platonic relationships. There is no authority or established support system to go to when your friends are cruel, manipulative or abusive. At best, there are ad-hoc mentions of 'toxic friendships' in teen magazines. However, the huge effect this behaviour has on the social life and mental health of victims demands more attention.

The primary goals of emotional abuse are generally about accruing and exercising power at the expense of the target, and

separating them from anyone who might be able to help. Emotional abuse can take many forms, but is often divided into three broad categories. 'Aggressing' involves more obvious tactics such as outright verbal abuse and threats, but also behaviour that might appear on the surface to be helpful. 'Analysing' or 'criticising' someone can often be helpful, but it can also be used to belittle or demean.

'Denying' and 'minimising' behaviours are less direct and thus harder to pin down. These behaviours include calculated refusals to accept that certain situations occurred at all, or trivialising a victim's objection to a situation. These behaviours can make the victim question their perception of what's going on, and start to believe the scenario that's being presented to them by the abuser as what actually

happened. It's called 'gas-lighting' after Patrick Hamilton's play *Gas Light*, in which a husband tries to convince his wife and those around her that she's insane. These kinds of practices demonstrate that emotional abuse can be calculated to isolate as well as simply hurt.

There is no legal definition for interpersonal emotional abuse in NSW, and so victims are forced to rely on legislation concerning tangentially related crimes like intimidation. Outside the workplace, marriage, school, or other similar institutions, there's little legal ability to deal with emotional abuse (the legal scope within marriage is better but still not ideal: for example, only Tasmanian legislation both concretely defines what constitutes emotional abuse of a spouse and considers that practice to be a criminal act).

A general understanding of what to look for isn't always enough, because abuse in platonic relationships is often perpetrated under the guise of a conflict of some sort. People often don't always realise they're actually abusing another person, with well-meaning mutual friends inadvertently propping up internal justifications. Comments like they're "just going through a difficult time," or are "acting really out of character" can give an abuser the impression their actions are acceptable.

Emotional abuse can have a heavy toll on mental health, and this kind of bullying can profoundly affect a victim's ability to fully participate in social situations. It's time we recognise that graduating high school doesn't herald the end of abusive behaviour among friends.

Of lab mice and men

Leigh Nicholson explores how a researchers' pheromones might affect lab mice research.

The history of mouse use in scientific research may have potentially been ruined – at least according to a study by a team of researchers from McGill University, led by Jeffrey Mogil. Their study found that mice become stressed and scared if there are "male-typical" hormones present. This affects a lot of work because behavioural studies are severely impacted by the presence of stress in an animal. Mogil also points out that "pain is a proxy for stress, because stress can, to a large extent, numb pain." Mice that were stressed were up to 35 per cent less sensitive to pain.

While the study showed that it was the presence of "male pheromones and hormones" causing the increased stress levels, there are some conditions to this. If stress-inducing factors were coupled with the presence of "female pheromones", there was no effect as they cancelled each other out. Additionally, after a researcher hung around in the room for a longer than half an hour, there was no effect, suggesting the mice get used to the presence.

Deciding how to interpret and deal with these outcomes poses issues for researchers. For those unwilling to consider animal-free research, Mogil suggests getting researchers to hang around in the room before handling the animals. It is also suggested that researchers should start having to record their sex.

Suggesting that the solution is to force researchers to record their sex based on a hormone-production definition could be alienating for those whose androgens do not coincide with "normal production" as Mogil describes, which is very common and information one might not like to make public to a laboratory. Even just definitively defining the phenomena as "male-caused" creates room for

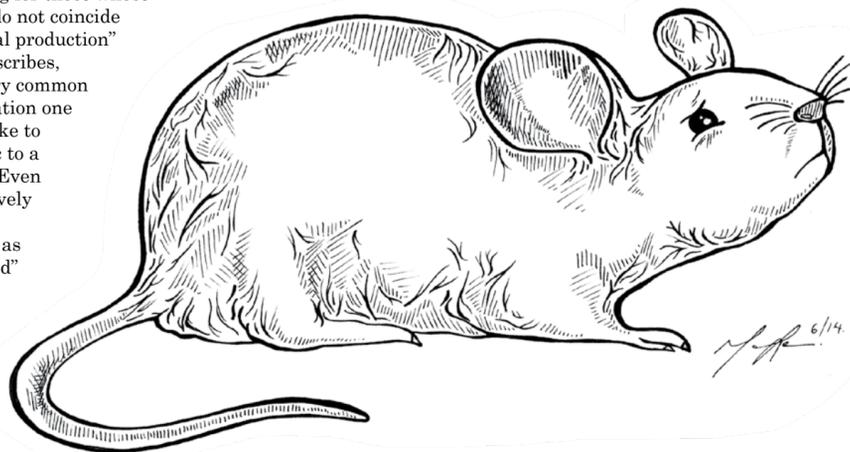
ILLUSTRATION BY
MONICA RENN

unprofessional conduct. A quote by the head researcher, "the man who produced the least effect got some ribbing, because he was the least manly", highlights the misunderstanding that has already been produced.

Sadaf Kalam, a researcher at the University of Sydney who works with mice, thinks that recording sex would not do much, saying that "that kind of protocol would not be enough of a control measure". She

explains that it would be near impossible to quantify how many people and other animals come within an influential range of the mouse in question. It wouldn't be possible to remove these stresses from results.

It is unclear how the research community intends to proceed, the best idea probably being to ensure familiarity prior to animal handling. This, however, does nothing for research past.



Exams - Tips for less stress and success

With exams coming up you might want some advice and tips from the University experts on dealing with exams and stress – see below.

USYD Learning Centre

(Information courtesy of: sydney.edu.au/stuserv/learning_centre/help/exams/exams.shtml)

I want some help managing my time to study for exams.

- It usually helps to make a detailed plan for the time between now and your exam.
- Make your plan as accurate as possible. Remember to include the time you need for transport, eating, family, work, sleep, etc.

Update your plan each day.

- Find out as soon as possible what topics you need to study, and work out how much time you have for each topic before the exam.
- At the end of each time you study, look at your plan and consider what you have achieved. Before you leave your desk, make a list for what you will need to cover the next time you sit down to study.

Here are some tips for using your time efficiently:

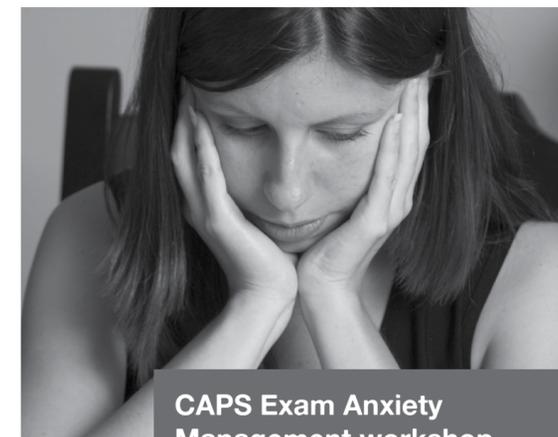
- If you can, choose the best time to study when you are naturally alert and focussed. For example, if you are a 'morning person', don't try to study late at night.
- Before each task, remind yourself of its specific purpose. For example, do you really need to read the whole chapter, or do you just need to check the paragraph about one particular topic?
- If you lose concentration while you are reading or studying, stop. Think about how this paragraph fits into the big picture. Is it important?
- Skim-read every article or book chapter before you read it in full. That is, first read the title, abstract, introduction, headings/topic sentences and conclusion. What is the main topic and purpose of this article, book, chapter or section? How does this fit into the big picture of what you are learning?
- If you find that you are procrastinating (e.g. spending your time on things which are a low priority), stop and deal with it immediately.

I want some help managing stress, anxiety or nervousness about exams.

- The first way to reduce any stress, anxiety or nervousness about exams is to be prepared.
- Find out as early as possible what topics will be included in the exam.
- Also find out as early as possible what the type and conditions of the exam are (e.g. How long? Where? Open book? Essay questions, short answers or multiple choice?)
- Make a plan for revision of the important topics, early in the semester.
- Look at some exam papers from previous years and practise writing answers. You can look for past exam papers in the library. You can also ask your lecturer and the office of your faculty, school and/or department.
- There are also a number of strategies you can use to boost your confidence and calm.
- Discuss the exam with other students beforehand, including any worries, but also the topics that you feel confident about.
- Lower the stress hormones in your body through physical exercise.
- Familiarise yourself with the environment of the exam.
- Remind yourself of the positive points: e.g. You have successfully completed other exams before, and you have prepared for this, so this exam will probably be OK too.
- On the day of the exam, wear something you feel good in, and take along helpful things, such as a water bottle and your favourite pen.

Remember though if you have any have any problems before, in or after the exams feel free to consult with a SRC Caseworker – call 9660 5222 for an appointment.

Also be aware that the SRC can loan you a calculator if you forget or just don't have one for your exam – come down to the SRC at level 1 of the Wentworth Building



CAPS Exam Anxiety Management workshop

The Counselling Service (CAPS) is running a workshop on Exam Anxiety Management - Learn practical strategies for coping with exam and performance anxiety on Wednesday 4th June, 1 – 2pm.

If you would like to attend the workshop please arrive at the CAPS reception (Level 5, Jane Foss Russell Building) 10 minutes prior to the start of the workshop.

(sydney.edu.au/current_students/counselling/workshops/list-of-workshops.shtml)



Ask Abe

Hi Abe,

A friend from my home town says that people at their uni can travel back home for the holiday break for free on the trains. Do you know anything about that?

North Coast

Hi North Coast,

If you are on a Youth Allowance dependent (away from home) payment or if you are part of a Centrelink couple where you have to live away from the family home because of study Centrelink will give you a "Fare Allowance". This is a reimbursement (you pay first) of the cheapest and most practical mode of transport to and from your family home. You're entitled to this payment for each semester of study you attempt.

Abe

President's Report *Jen Light writes on the NUS Education conference.*



This July the National Union of Students (NUS) will be hosting their annual education conference.

NUS is the peak representative

body for undergraduate students in Australia. NUS works to protect the rights of students across Australia, organises national campaigns on issues affecting students in a range of different areas, and makes sure that the student voice is heard by the government, the media, and the public.

The education conference is designed to get students together from across the country to talk about current issues affecting higher education. The conference will allow an opportunity to discuss previous campaigns run this year, as well as workshop future campaigns around education rights.

NUS was the co-ordinator of the 2 National Days of Action this semester, the first in March prior to the budget, and the emergency NDA held on 21st of May against the proposed changes to higher education. This year more than ever students across the country need to bind together and fight against the Abbott Government.

The Abbott Government's budget that was recently released will be most damaging to students. It states the implementation of deregulated fees, which will allow universities the freedom to charge whatever price they want for your degree. Deregulated fees will turn a \$10,000 degree into a \$100,000 degree, increasing in

accessibility for students from low SES backgrounds. We will also be seeing the addition of interest rates on our HECS debt attributing to thousands of dollars of extra debt.

This years budget will be detrimental to students which is why this years education conference is so important. The education conference is a great opportunity for student activists around the county to network and share experiences and skills.

This years education conference will be held from the 9-11th July in Perth at the University of Western Australia.

General Secretary's Report *James Leeder encourages you to get politically engaged and to maintain the rage.*



It has certainly been a busy time on campus since my last report. We have seen the potential policy decisions of universities illuminated in the wake of fee deregulation illuminated in the media, as well as the campus being physically illuminated as part of the Vivid festival. Students, collectively, have been busy taking part in and organising demonstrations such as the National Day of Action (NDA) against fee deregulation on May 21.

Despite seeing thousands of students mobilise at the most recent NDA, there are still thousands more students on the campus who remain politically unengaged. Some lack of engagement is understandable as the harms of deregulation can be hard to conceptualise since universities have total control over their own price, which means we can't easily predict how much universities will decide to raise fees until it actually happens.

However, we can predict a few things. If these changes do go ahead we will see all courses receive, at minimum, 20% less funding. Fee deregulation as it stands is accompanied with large numbers of cuts to university funding across the board as well. This has lead both our Vice-Chancellor Michael Spence, and Melbourne's VC Glyn Davis, to announce that under current predictions the fees for degrees

such as science, engineering and medicine would need to rise by \$5000 a year in order for universities to maintain their current levels of funding. Current and potential students need to let the government know just how angry they are over deregulation, and demonstrations like the NDA are a great way to do that.

Some, like journalist Annabel Crabb, have claimed that student demonstrations are ineffective but this is not true. The demonstrations have not only mobilised thousands of students but they have been featured on TV, within newspapers, in the jokes of the ABC's Clarke and Dawe, and have drawn vast amounts of attention to a crucial issue. Their success is in the spotlight that they shine onto the issue, and as such, it is crucial that students ensure that scrutiny on the government over changes to universities is maintained.

Rallies and lobbying have more impact the more people are involved. Whilst it has been current students and staff expressing most of the discontent, they should not be the only ones. Other proposed changes, such as the proposed 6% interest rate, affect students both currently and retrospectively meaning that graduates would face increased financial burdens as well. I hope to see current, past and future students unite in a campaign against changes to higher education to ensure that it is still an equitable and accessible system.

Maintaining the rage can be difficult, particular when facing exams, but if the current policy decisions of the Abbott government are anything to go by I doubt we'll have a problem.

Education Officers' Report *Eleanor Morley and Ridah Hassan.*



The National Day of Action against Abbott and Pyne's attacks on higher education on May 21 saw thousands of students hit the streets in the biggest student rally in Sydney in almost a decade! At Sydney Uni 1000 students

heard from a variety of speakers discussing how the budget will affect students and the fightback we need before marching through the quad, and to join other campuses from NSW at UTS.

Sydney Uni has a vibrant history of student radicalism, and it is fantastic to see these traditions being revived in response to Abbott's class war budget. We have made it clear we will not accept these attacks on education, healthcare and welfare, and we will continue to protest, occupy and disrupt until we win.

Over the past couple of weeks, every time a Liberal MP has

stepped onto a University campus across the country they have been met with the angry chants of students. Here in Sydney we have targeted Julie Bishop (twice!), Christopher Pyne and George Brandis, and we will continue to do so for as long as these parasites try to demolish public education.

Unfortunately, our University administration has decided to do the dirty work of the Abbott government by issuing a student activist with a one month campus ban for participating in the protest against Bishop. This is a worrying attack on free speech; we have the right to protest to protect

our education.

Annabel Crabb, Amanda Vanstone and others may denounce our actions, but our actions have garnered majority support from the rest of the country. The next anti-Abbott action that you can get involved with is the Bust the Budget rally on June 28, meeting outside Town Hall at 1pm.

This is only the beginning of our campaign against Abbott, and we hope to see all those who joined the rally on May 21 to come back out early next semester when we will be holding another National Day of Action against this budget.

Wom*n's Officers' Report

Georgia Cranko, Julia Readett and Phoebe Moloney.



Over the past week, we've felt so lucky to end the semester with a bit of a bang. Our autonomously edited and written edition of Honi Soit was released on Tuesday and

we can't thank all the wonderful editors and contributors enough for coming together and producing a wonderful publication to share with fellow students, friends and family. We also held a joint launch party with the Indigenous Collective, which involved pizza, poetry slams and a beautiful bunch of people who came along to support our editions of Honi Soit. A big shout out the Indigenous Edition's Editor in Chief, Madison McIvor, whose strength and passion was absolutely inspiring.

We heard from over ten performers who shared with us the power of words, the power of voice and the power of coming together to hear each other's differing experiences. Our hosts Bridget Harilaou and Sonia Feng educated us on poetry slam etiquette and we were clicking our fingers in absolute awe of the stories and words shared by the poets. As we looked around the room we could see people clicking because they could totally empathise, clicking because they'd just learnt something new, and clicking

This week has highlighted to us that to be part of creating change; the sharing of stories and personal narratives holds incredible power, especially the stories of those who are often disenfranchised or silenced. Aimee Stanford and Charlie Jackson-Martin led us in an autonomous queer story sharing evening and we're looking forward to organizing a number of intersectionality workshops over the holidays and the semester to come.

International Student Officers' Report

Emma Liu, Xinchun Liu, Sherry Vanbo and James Wang.



This semester has been eventful. We launched our Fair Fare campaign at the International Festival in late April, and one of our officers spoke at the May 21 rally about how the budget will affect international students.

The Fair Fare campaign is a collaborative effort of international student collectives at this university and UNSW. It seeks to raise public awareness of the currently unfair travel concession scheme. We have collected 50 photo from students and received more than 300 likes on our Facebook page.

International students are legal students in NSW yet we are only entitled to limited travel concession. We are eligible for a discount between 24 to 35 per cent for a quarterly or yearly MyMulti 2 or 3. In order to access these discounts, students need to pay for these tickets upfront, with price starting from \$425. Access to these tickets is controlled education provider: students need to retain a one-time code from the university and use it to purchase tickets online.

This scheme not only brings unfairness, but also safety concerns. Students, out of financial considerations, will choose to walk home alone during night time than catching a bus or train. Buying a full price ticket everyday costs a considerable amount of money for a student. We call for all students, local and international, to support this campaign. You can simply 'like' and share our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/fairfareNSW>), or participate in our ongoing photo shoot.

We wholeheartedly support the rally against cuts to higher education, because we believe that it will affect International Students. One of our officers, Emma, spoke at the USYD rally about how the federal budget will compromise teaching quality and its consequences. International Students are not cash cows and

we will not pay for the education that does not value as much as it costs. Current students, though immune from fee deregulation, will suffer as the Australian government compromise education quality. Future students will be rational enough to analyse their choices for education destination. Australia will hence become a less attractive destination when tuition fees increases as well as living expenses.

We are passionate about all issues concerning International Students. Please feel free to contact any of us if you have any questions or concerns, or if you'd like to get involved in our campaigns. Simply shoot us an email at international.officers@src.usyd.edu.au, or leave a comment in our Facebook group: search for 'USYD Students Representative Council(SRC) International Students Officers'.

Notice of Council Meeting

86th Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney

DATE: 11th June

TIME: 6pm

LOCATION: Professorial Board Room (Quadrangle)

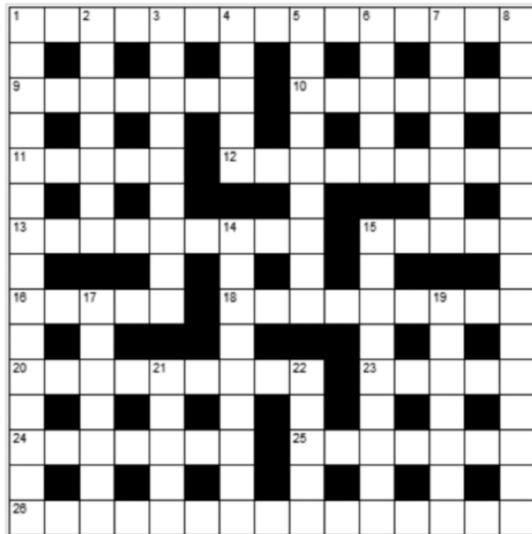
Students' Representative Council, The University of Sydney
Phone: 02 9660 5222 | www.src.usyd.edu.au

DATE: 11th June

TIME: 6pm

LOCATION: Professorial Board Room (Quadrangle)

Quicksand - Watch Out!



ACROSS

- 1 To boldly go, for example (5,10)
- 9 Sought legislative influence (7)
- 10 Die, colloquially (5,2)
- 11 North Indian city (5)
- 12 Imaginary European kingdom (9)
- 13 Collocates often with Bolognese? (9)
- 15 South American beaver-like rodent (5)
- 16 Fraudulent acts (5)
- 18 Onlooker (9)
- 20 Non-nucleus cell material (9)
- 23 Relating to vision (5)
- 24 Dan Brown or Dante novel (7)
- 25 First letter (7)
- 26 Small-grained sweetener (10,5)

DOWN

- 1 Destroying itself (4-11)
- 2 Intense blue flower (7)
- 3 Post-sunset times of day (9)
- 4 Lowest point (5)
- 5 Available for use (2,7)
- 6 Indigenous people found in Arctic region (5)
- 7 Early stages (7)
- 8 Act done outside routine (15)
- 14 Iroquoian language spoken by Native American tribe (9)
- 15 Vatican faithful (9)
- 17 Almond liqueur (7)
- 19 Intricate handmade lace (7)
- 21 Placed in ambush (5)
- 22 Light yellow or grain (5)



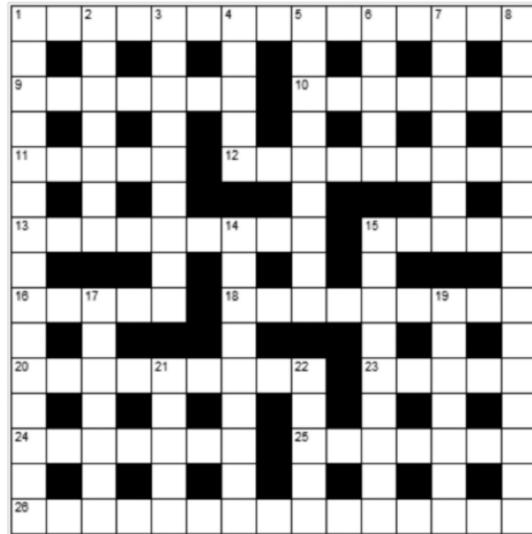
Ulysses visits the homestead, we hear (7)

ACROSS

- 1 Abruptly come, unruly noise suddenly (15)
- 9 Manitus wreaked wave disaster (7)
- 10 Marcel to ruin French castle without fez (7)
- 11 'Molto bene' first sound in shed (5)
- 12 Exit particle becoming apparent (9)
- 13 Almost there troubled without Gore's petrochemical resin? (9)
- 15 Edgarsy Allensy's sentimental lines (5)
- 16 Mephistophelean victim's Goethe work (5)
- 18 Swiss mathematician in Swiss capital stirring French broth without French good (9)
- 20 Is minty plant spasm related to one's lower pelvic bone? (9)
- 23 Not on bank to colloquially kill my person (3,2)
- 24 Brum's nine worried for teeth grinding (7)
- 25 Lionise design to make sound omission (7)
- 26 Tetchiest commie subjected to moral tribunal (6,9)

DOWN

- 1 Disc sport played with a fusible emitter (8,7)
- 2 Fold our cute made-to-measure clothing (7)
- 3 Try again about try (9)
- 4 Prime state! (5)
- 5 Fraction's top smashed our Marten (9)
- 6 Hideous creatures found in fog residue (5)
- 7 Cannot have babies when aseptic (7)
- 8 Reduced Bond film to popular saying (3,4,4,4)
- 14 Quark or muon in musicboat collision (9)
- 15 Uniting apropos itinerants, as they're the ones most directly affected (9)
- 17 International organisation with refinement lacking grace (7)
- 19 Not right to fist without first 'having' a liberal? (7)
- 21 Found remains in Tbilisi Acropolis of Egyptian goddess (5)
- 22 Strawberries and...unguent (5)



The Quiz

- 1. Which intellectual wrote the Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus?
- 2. What is Iggy Azalea's birth name?
- 3. In what year was 'Return of the Jedi' released?
- 4. Did Schrodinger buy life insurance for his cat?
- 5. What is Switzerland's bus slogan for the upcoming FIFA World Cup in Brazil?
- 6. Who hosts the late night talk show 'Last Week Tonight with John Oliver'?
- 7. Who plays Claire Underwood in the US version of House of Cards?
- 8. What was the final score of this year's first NRL State of Origin match?
- 9. What is currently the highest grossing film at the worldwide box office in 2014?
- 10. Which continent is the mara native to?
- 11. Who painted 'The Birth of Venus'?
- 12. Which former Australian cop (currently making the headlines) is the TV miniseries Blue Murder based on?
- 13. Which two sides contested this year's Indian Premier League cricket final?
- 14. In which two countries can Coca-Cola not (officially) be bought or sold?

Answers: 1. Ludwig Wittgenstein 2. Amethyst Amelia Kelly 3. 1983 4. Yes, and No. 5. 'Final Stop: 07-13-14 Maracana' 6. John Oliver 7. Robyn Wright 8. NSW 12 - QLD 8 9. Captain America: The Winter Soldier 10. South America 11. Sandro Botticelli 12. Roger Rogerson 13. Kolkata Knight Riders and Kings XI Punjab 14. Cuba and North Korea.

All the data we couldn't sell to ASIO

Justin Pen and Andrew Passarello bake a pie graph and crunch the numbers.

During April 10-24, the *Honi Soit* editorial team ran a feedback survey to get a picture of who our readers were and what they thought of our paper. Over the fortnight we received 346 respondents. The survey was regularly promoted through our Facebook and Twitter accounts.

The following results confirms many truisms.

The bulk of respondents were aged 20-21 and 22-23. 43.5 per cent of respondents studied Arts and Social Sciences, 16.5 per cent studied Law and 10.4 per cent were Science students. Over 40 per cent of respondents lived in the nearby Inner West. Respondents were next most-concentrated in the North Shore (11 per cent) and the Western Suburbs (9.3 per cent).

Over 40 per cent gave the Greens their first preference in the last Federal Election. Nearly 32 per cent voted for Labor. 18.6 per cent voted for Liberal. Accordingly, 38 per cent identified as "Progressive", 17 per cent as a "Social Democrat", and 10 per cent as "Socialist".

Correspondingly, 8.7 per cent identified as "Conservative", 6 per cent as "Libertarian" and just over 4 per cent as "Wet Liberal".

More than half of our respondents engaged with *Honi* in print and online, though more read the paper exclusively in-print than online. Respondents also appeared to either follow *Honi* each week (50 per cent) or very casually (31 per cent).

On a scale of 1-5 (1 being "Very Conservative", 5 being "Very Progressive"), respondents gave us a 4.2. This perspective may explain why nearly 60 per cent of respondents thought we held a bias against Liberals on campus. Conversely, respondents felt we held a bias towards Grassroots (22 per cent) and the Indies (19 per cent).

Over 60 per cent of respondents felt positively about the paper, while 15 per cent thought were unimpressed. Just fewer than 20 per cent were "Indifferent" to *Honi*.

Go online to www.honisoit.com for more information.

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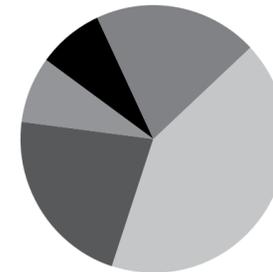
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We have a solicitor who speaks Cantonese, Mandarin & Japanese

法律諮詢
法律アドバイス

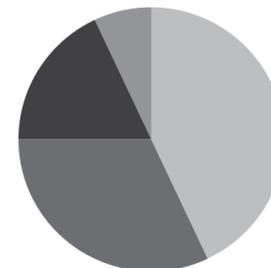
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SENTIMENT TOWARDS HONI



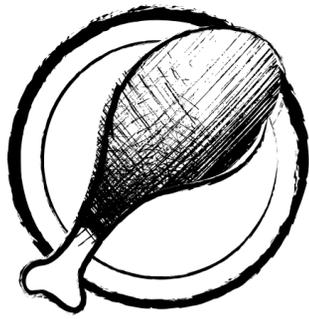
- STRONGLY LIKE: 19.71%
- LIKE: 42.32%
- INDIFFERENT TOWARD: 21.74%
- DISLIKE: 8.41%
- STRONGLY DISLIKE: 7.83%

FIRST PREFERENCE VOTES



- GREENS: 43.19%
- LABOR: 31.59%
- LIBERAL: 18.55%
- OTHER: 6.67%

Honey Soy



University Spends 100k+ Building Enormous Glass Dome To Keep Protesters Out



Photo credit: Peter Walsh

Neurosurgeons To Be Replaced By Priests

Elliott Brennan decided to write heaps for us this week.

Further analysis of the Federal Budget has revealed a 10 year plan to gradually replace Australia's neurosurgeons with much-needed priests. The overhaul will be finalised in 2024, by which time there will be no remaining practitioners who are not members of the clergy.

The high costs of the scheme, which include paying for the lifestyles and houses of fully dependent ageing men, will be covered by a two-tier system. The first tier will see further degradation of funding for the completely redundant Royal Commission into child abuse, and the second will appear in the form of a collection till that will be passed around hospital waiting rooms peer-pressuring the sick into donating. On top of these measures,

hand sanitiser dispensers in hospitals will be replaced with cheaper and more effective holy water equivalents.

Prime Minister Abbott defended the scheme to the feral left-wing media who questioned the ethics of the program. "James 5:16 reads, 'The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.' That is beyond doubt. I truly believe that," he said.

In addition to clergymen taking hold of scalpels it has been confirmed that Cardinal George Pell will be returning to Australia to author the *Brain Injury Australia 2015 Annual Report* – a role in which his apt scientific knowledge displayed on the ABC's Q&A in 2012 will be fully utilised.

Thai Coup In Haikus

Dominic Ellis and Peter Walsh are poets and they didn't know it.

1. domestic troubles
army declares martial law
taylor swift cancelled
2. martial law declared
king endorses would be boss. . .
the students rebel

IN OTHER NEWS

Tony Abbott Awarded Scholarship To Whitehouse Institute Of Design

Euro Zone Elects Ferret As Senator Because Why The Fuck Not

Eddie Obeid Embarrassed By Comparison To Callum Forbes

Number of Movies Passing the Spider Bechdel Test "Disappointingly Low", Says Old Spiders McGug

Soon To Open USyd Cafe Actually Just Deathtrap For Hipsters

Peter Walsh dreams of a utopic future.



In an effort to curb irony, the University of Sydney Union has endorsed the opening of a new café in the Wentworth building: Laneway.

Laneway will feature artisan breads, freshly ground sustainable coffee, floors made of a sticky substance that restricts movement, and a constant flowing passage of carbon monoxide.

The Laneway development, named for the popular festival, and also to evoke the one-way passage of students towards their inevitably painful death, anticipates opening in advance of semester two.

Union CEO Andrew Woodward expects the new development to be popular amongst members of the Arts faculty, noting the "sheep mentality" evinced by students. "In trials, we asked the question: if all your friends jumped off a bridge, would you do it? And the answer was a resounding 'I dunno, whatever.'"

It hasn't all been positive, though. There have been noted objections amongst the custodial staff, many of whom are reluctant to spend their evenings prying piles of double-denimed, prescription-less-glassesed ex-students from the ground.

Thankfully, however, these staff are set to be made redundant over the break, replaced by the unpaid volunteers that came to prominence in last year's re O-Week.

As a promotion, during the first two weeks of operation, customers with Access cards will be given a swift knock over the head on entry, to make the process faster.



Socialist Alternative Mobs Liberal Member's Cat

Elliott Brennan is Liberal-sympathising scum.

Angry protestors stormed the suburbs of the far North Queensland electoral district of Cook early Monday morning in search of Scott Morrison's family cat, Chairman Meow.

The protestors were motivated by a Fairfax report that Chairman Meow's diet of caviar and lobster is paid for in full by cuts to education. "Meow is just another cooperate leech on our system, I heard his kitty-litter is filled with the shredded bloodied papers of legitimate asylum seekers," said Anne Grei, 22.

When the mob finally found Meow it became evident they lacked the agility needed to keep up with the feline, only managing to shout the words, "no cats, no fleas..." before the target darted over the nearest fence.

News Limited broke the story within minutes of its occurrence leading some to believe that their headline reading: 'Filthy Fucking Communist 'Grubs' Strike Again,' was pre-prepared.

Honey Soy approached Scott Morrison for a comment, but his office replied that he would address relevant issues in two months when they are no longer relevant.

EXCLUSIVE: Chris Pyne Got Out, We Learnt What He Was All About

William Edwards wrote this for Queen and surplus.

A power vacuum and awkward silence have appeared in Cabinet following the unexpected death of Christopher Pyne. The late Minister for Education and favourite of student protesters met his untimely end in a violent altercation only hours ago, owing to a rapid and unexpected series of events.

The tragedy began to unfold when Pyne, discussing the government's controversial new budget, explained: "By and large, we have a mandate to do most of these changes." When asked how he could claim a mandate for policies not actually put to voters, voters who were in fact promised that these policies were out of the question, he appeared flustered and began to blush. "No, no, you misheard me," he insisted. "I wasn't even talking about the budget. What I meant was that I have a *man date*. Two words. And he's gorgeous!" Pyne, wiping his brow nervously, immediately changed subject and the issue was dropped, leaving just enough time for his audience to politely feign surprise.

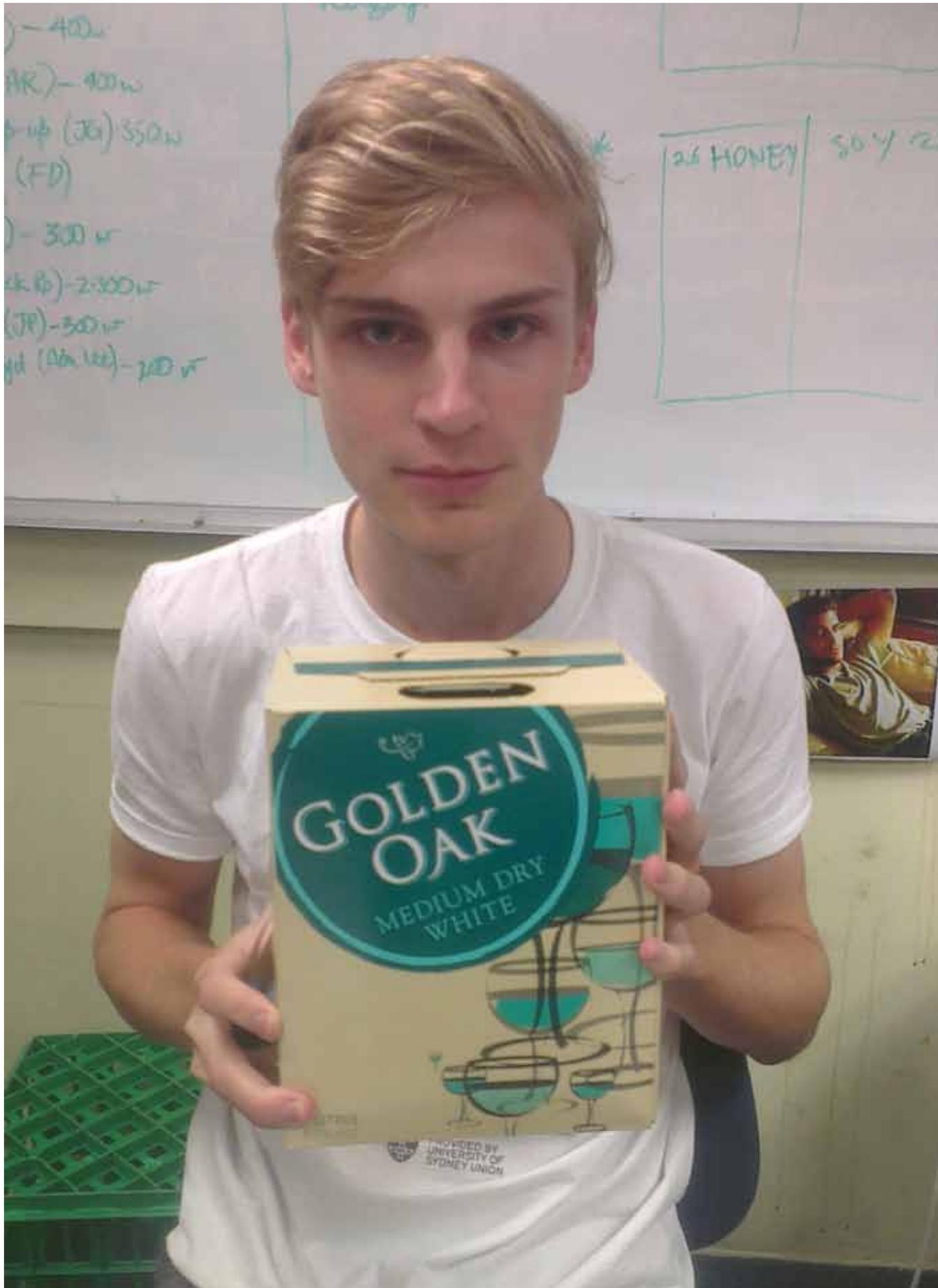
Elsewhere, however, Pyne's coming out wasn't received so disinterestedly. Church pulpits were pounded, wailing was heard from a meeting of the University of Sydney Conservative Club, and Tony Abbott began to froth at the mouth. Abbott, at the time

reportedly smoking premium tobacco rolled in \$100 bills, flew into a rage at the news. Witnesses claim to have heard him mutter a number of phrases – notably "gay agenda" and "he's worse than my sister" – before loudly and through tears yelling, allegedly to no one in particular: "Will no one rid me of this turbulent queer?!" Those were the words that sealed Pyne's fate.

Four of Abbott's most loyal knights, whose identities are currently unknown, are said to have flown into action upon hearing the Prime Minister's outburst. After a brief search, the knights found Pyne in the process of buying drinks for a younger man in one of Oxford Street's best-known gay clubs. There they drew their taxpayer-funded swords and, with a cry of "For Queen and surplus!" slew Pyne, who in his final moments is believed to have whispered: "But I was born this way."

A hairshirt-wearing Abbott, seemingly in penance for Pyne's death, has since declared that the former Minister for Education will receive a full state funeral. Several young Centrelink recipients will carry the coffin as part of their budget-related "heavy lifting".

A FUCKING WINNER.



HACKBET

PRESENTED BY

Honi  Soit