

Honi Soit

SEMESTER ONE, 2016 • WEEK 13

FIRST PRINTED 1929



**Satanic
crossword
experience**

PUZZLES, PAGE 18

The Golden Key:

How universities enable the
campus secret society you
have never heard of

FEATURE, PAGE 9

**New laws
threaten
academics in tech**

TECH, PAGE 14

**Protest
chants,
scored**

COMPOSITIONS, PAGE 16

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Tom Joyner investigates the inscrutable Golden Key.

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DEDICATION

For Gung, whose writing inspires everyone that reads it.

WELL WISHES

Oh hey guys just wanted to wish you a happy break. Yep cool cya then.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. The University of Sydney – where we write, publish and distribute *Honi Soit* – is on the sovereign land of these people.

As students and journalists, we recognise our complicity in the ongoing colonisation of Indigenous land. In recognition of our privilege, we vow to not only include, but to prioritise and centre the experiences of Indigenous people, and to be reflective when we fail to.

We recognise our duty to be a counterpoint to the racism that plagues the mainstream media, and to adequately represent the perspectives of Indigenous students at our University. We also wholeheartedly thank our Indigenous reporters for the continuing contribution of their labour to our learning.

EDITORIAL

Natalie Buckett

By the time *Honi Soit* returns to stands in Semester Two we will have a new federal government. Past editions that also directly preceded an election read heavy with hopelessness.

Similarly, this semester of *Honi Soit* rings loudly with the voices of students that have been let down by the institutions that claim to represent them. This semester, students have written about the systemic failure of the University to respond to sexual harassment and assault across campus. They have covered peaceful protests disrupted by riot police, and have reported on a budget where education was once again just a peripheral buzzword.

Yet, between these moments of frustration, triumph feels all the more special. Students across political factions celebrated as 5 women were elected to Union Board for the first time in history, and when an SRC lawyer and a refugee took the government to the High Court and won.

Take a look through our latest edition, where this mixture of hope and hopelessness resonates more loudly than ever. In News, read about a Vice Chancellor ignorant to the needs of students, then turn over to page 16 where the chants of our student activists are written as music.

People accuse this newspaper of not having much value. Yet if this paper and these stories can do something before July 2, it is to demonstrate the gross impact conservative governments have on young people, and that we demand more.

I don't like to overemphasise what *Honi* is or what *Honi* does. It is just one voice in an overcrowded debate about the future of this country. But we shouldn't sell ourselves short either. In a University where privilege is etched into the sandstone, the students who create for *Honi* attempt to inspire change. In a world that feels increasingly hopeless, it is young people who give us hope.

Letters

Hey everyone, shut up!

Dear *Honi*,

There sits on my desk at home a card with a sketch of an elegant lady. She reads a book from a balcony which overlooks the still harbour of a pre-modern European city. A quote from the poet Samuel Longfellow is printed below the picture, 'The love of learning, the sequestered nooks, / and all the sweet serenity of books.'

Our university has all that Longfellow celebrates. Students come here because they love learning. There are plenty of

spots provided for us to read and think. And, of course, we have books galore. But what about 'sweet serenity'? Without it the intellectual quest is hindered.

Fisher library is the main study space on campus. People come here routinely to make use of its services, not least the silence that a library is supposed to provide and protect. However, I find that 'quiet zones' in Fisher are not always true to their name. Too often, people are talking.

If I sound like an old troll, it's because I am. If people are talking too loudly in a quiet zone, and disturbing the silence of students, I tell them politely to be quiet. If you're bugged by

someone's undue yapping, you should tell them with a smile to keep quiet, too. No one gets hurt, and everyone wins.

Whatever the modern library is meant to be - kitchen, lounge room, meeting place - it must always remain a sanctuary for quietude. To ensure this, the campus could do with a good dose of noise intolerance.

Jonathan Adams
MTeach (Sec.) I

Very angry voter person gets mad

Dear *Honi*,

I must admit that like most USyd students, I didn't give two hoots about the election that just passed, but as some of my friends did, I was bombarded with messages telling me to

'embrace' people, to 'count on' someone else and to 'shimmy' with another person entirely, which I find to be pretty boring actions, especially shimmying, which is a lame dance move.

But because I felt obligated to vote I did put in some research into some of the people running to try and find out a bit about them and I saw that most of them were rather useless. Many of the things that I saw them promise this year I've already seen promised year after year.

Grace Franki and Vanessa Song were especially boring, and 'better parties' and 'cheaper noms' (Grace's words, not mine) were their boring promises. I love a good party, and I love good food (like all of us) but I don't think that the candidates care too much about improving this, and I don't think that they will be able to at all, especially now that both of them have been elected.

As I've liked the USU FB page, I also saw a bit of the

Soapbox (what a joke that is) and the USU VP, Liv Ronan, chucked her such a softball question about 'how she will improve parties', where other candidates were faced with scandals or accusations.

It turns out that Liv Ronan has publicly endorsed Grace, along with Michael Rees and Tiffany Alexander, two other USU board directors.

Isn't that bias in the elections process then? I remember something like this happened with the USyd Senate two years ago and the USU board directors then lost the plot.

Isn't the 'free-for-all' policy allowing USU board directors to aid candidates just promoting 'jobs for the boys'?

Why was that policy allowed? Guess who presided over allowing that policy? Michael Rees. No wonder everyone doesn't give a shit about the USU.

Regards,
Anonymous



Art: Matthew Fisher

Lonely over the break? Send us a letter. But we won't read it until after the break. Sorry about that. But anyway, pour your heart into an email to editors@honisoit.com. Maximum 500 words.

NEWS

SATELLITE CAMPUSES

SCA to have answer on move by July

Mary Ward

The Sydney College of the Arts (SCA) will know whether they are joining the Arts faculty or becoming part of a mega-art school by July, Provost Stephen Garton said at a town hall-style meeting last week.

Professor Garton addressed teachers, students and alumni, stating that the University is currently in negotiations to merge the school with the UNSW Art Design (formerly CoFA) and the National Art School in Darlinghurst, to create a “Centre for Excellence”.

If these negotiations fail, SCA will be assumed as part of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the end of the year.

Garton said they should have an answer “by June or July”, but he did not see a future for the SCA as a separate college on the Rozelle campus.

“You have been in significant decline for a long period of time,” Garton told attendees,

adding that the SCA’s current existence in Rozelle’s Callan Park was “not sustainable”.

The SCA’s future has been unknown since a *Sydney Morning Herald* article published in November revealed the University would be moving away from its Rozelle campus.

SCA teachers voiced their upset at the decision being delayed for so long (claiming they had been promised a decision in April at a previous meeting), as it was disrupting curriculum development and student recruitment.

“There is an understandable frustration about a lack of ability to plan,” CPSU branch President Grant Wheeler told *Honi*, saying the University was “turning their back on their staff”.

If a mega-art school was created, Professor Garton conceded its operation was unlikely to begin by Semester One, 2017 due to the need to synthesise curriculums and seek out a viable location.

SCHAPELLE CORBY

USU boogie board

Alexandros Tsathas

Choice cuts from last week’s USU Board meeting:

KEEPIN’ THE FAITH

The Board formally agreed to establish a new “religious” category for clubs and societies, which permits faith-based declarations. The executive stressed to *Honi* the final wording of the amendment was made only after extensive consultation.

INVESTMENT ETHICS

Honorary Treasurer Ed McMahon presented a report by consultancy firm Mercer, and the USU has now all but adopted an ethical investment strategy, largely in a bid to codify an opposition to investing in fossil fuel companies.

BACK IN THE BLACK

The USU made a \$1.8 million loss in the 2013-14 financial year, due to large capital outlays. The USU’s financial performance in the 2014-15 financial year, to be publicly announced at this week’s AGM, represents movement “in the right direction”. Hermann’s is doing well for the USU. Manning Bar and Engo Grill aren’t.

DREAD-CON

The SRC and SUPRA will play joint-hosts to the National Union of Student’s (NUS) Educational Conference (effective mid-year meeting) when it rolls into town in July. President Alisha Aitken-Radburn wasn’t too keen on the USU pulling out all the stops for their guests – rooms were trashed last time, and apparently NUS is gunning for meal vouchers for delegates.

BIRTHS, DEATHS & MARRIAGES

“Hahahaha omg everyone is so rude” - us, 2016

USU EXEC LOCKED IN

Your newly elected USU Board is set to begin its term this week. On Wednesday, the board will vote in a new executive to govern for the following year.

While each position is elected individually, a ‘ticket’ (or alliance) has formed between several directors which will all but guarantee them the balance of power.

This ticket will have Michael Rees (Independent) as President, Atia Rahim (Student Unity) as Vice-President, Tiffany Alexander (Labor) as Treasurer and Shannen Potter (SLS) as Secretary. *Honi* understands the group have been pitching themselves to the first year directors formally, on a platform of stability and unity within the board.

This leaves Marco Avena (Grassroots) and Jack Whitney (NLS) out of the executive. It’s highly unlikely they have the numbers to mount a challenge, so expect the election to go largely uncontested.

TORIES CALL ME A WHIG, AND WHIGS A TORY

Three tickets have formed to contest next semester’s *Honi* Soit election, each with a unique gripe with this year’s paper (sad face).

From the “*Honi* is too left-wing” camp, *Honi* reporters and St Paul’s College students John Patrick Asimakis and Josh Koby Wooller have put their bowlers in the ring. *Honi* knows of two people from the campus media and arts community who turned down offers to join, one claiming the ticket was heading in a “very conservative direction”. Asimakis confirmed the ticket’s existence but denied it would be running on a conservative platform.

At least three college residents are currently on the incomplete ticket, suggesting it could be a resurrection of the “college tickets” of the late 2000s, spurred this time by growing collegial discontent with reportage of institutional sexism. However, when we asked Asimakis to confirm who was on the ticket, he took a leaf out of Wesley Master Lisa Sutherland’s book and did not release the names.

From the “*Honi* is too right-wing” camp, *Honi* has heard Wom*n’s Officer Anna Hush is forming a ticket with an activist bent. A mix of SRC collective office bearers and Grassroots members are rumoured to have signed on. Hush refused to comment, saying she was “not interested in contributing to the gossip around tickets at this point”.

Finally, we can confirm a third ticket is being led by *Honi* reporters Siobhan Ryan, Michael Sun and Justine Landis-Hanley. Ryan and Sun are members of Grassroots, while Landis-Hanley is the SRC Residential Colleges Officer. MECO/Law student Alexander Tighe is also on board.

When asked for an update, they said: “We’re looking into the possibility of Waleed Aly enrolling in a B Vet Science so he’d be eligible.”

We do not yet know if they hate us, but are sure they will develop a reason to over the break.

UPPER HOUSE OF CARDS

More elections! Next semester, two students (one Undergraduate, one Postgrad) will be elected to the USyD senate. With a two year term on the Uni’s peak governing body, they’re potentially the two most powerful students on campus.

First rumoured contender is ex-*Honi* editor Alexi Polden. Polden has not confirmed or

denied any decision, but has significant experience in reporting on the senate which would make him a popular candidate across the left on campus.

Second up is ex-SRC Vice-President Daniel Ergas. Ergas told *Honi* “I’m certainly thinking about it, but it depends on who else is interested in nominating...as long as it is someone from the broad Left I’m content”.

Ergas indicated he would likely not contest the spot if Polden ran. His exact words were “Oh christ, absolutely. He’d smash it”.

Current USU Treasurer Ed McMahon is similarly positioning himself for the Postgraduate spot. He indicated he may be taking a break from uni, but if enrolled for Semester 2, would run “unless someone else with comprehensive left wing politics and dedication to the unpaid role is keen”.

Honi expects more conservative candidates to come out of the woodwork soon, following in the footsteps of last-elected fellows Dalton Fogarty and Simon Hill.

Keen readers will know the Postgrad spot has a current vacancy. Nominations for the four-month interim gig have closed, and the senate will choose the replacement on July 4.

ALL THE WORLD’S A STAGE BUT THIS GUY IS THE WORST

Members of the Autonomous Collective Against Racism’s (ACAR) recent Revue have copped a bizarre text from a theatre owner who objected to their pre-show Acknowledgement of Country.

Markus Weber, the owner of King St Theatre in Newtown, called the cast “not fit to be part of a humanitarian, civilized society”.

“Do not read a scripted ‘message’ before the performance,” said the Austrian-born Weber. “Not what you go conform with cause it is political correct [sic]”.

Lucinda Vitek allegedly had similarly “awful” interactions with Weber when directing at the theatre in 2013. She said Weber made racial jokes in front of Asian members of production crew, and upon learning she spoke German, jokingly remarked “Zieg Heil”.

“ACAR aren’t the first people to have this happen, but they are probably the first to speak out about it.”

GRAVE CONSEQUENCES

Online exchanges between student politicians are infamously terrible, but *Honi* was taken aback by National Union of Students’ (NUS) Welfare Officer Robby Magyar’s joke that SRC Education Officer Liam Carrigan would be “thrown in an unmarked grave”.

When Carrigan sledged him in a Facebook group called “NUS National Banter Action Group”, Magyar responded: “I look forward to proving you wrong when I have a state funeral and you’re thrown in an unmarked grave.”

“I initially thought the comment was self-deprecating and humorous, but realised upon posting that it was a step too far,” Magyar told *Honi*. “I immediately deleted the comment, and later apologised to the individual in private messages.”

“I have since left the group...nothing good can come from a Facebook group such as ‘NUS National Banter Action Group’ and it would probably be for the best if such a space did not exist.”

At the time of writing, current NUS President Sinead Colee and General Secretary Cam Petrie were listed as members.

Honi asked Colee if disciplinary action was planned and if she considered the group appropriate for National Officebearers, but she did not reply.

CAMPUS SAFETY

Panel urges University to do more to deal with sexual harrassment

Siobhan Ryan

Last Thursday, the University of Sydney Wom*n’s Collective hosted a screening of US documentary *The Hunting Ground* and a panel discussion about sexual assault and harassment on university campuses.

As *Honi* reported on May 28*, the Vice-Chancellor Dr Michael Spence admitted, during this panel, that he was not aware of how sexual assault and harassment complaints are currently made.

Although *The Hunting Ground*’s focus is on the mishandling of complaints at US colleges, both Spence and fellow panellist, Wom’n’s Officer Anna Hush, agreed there are many parallels to Australian universities.

While there are similarities between US fraternities and Australian residential colleges, the underlying factor that causes sexual assault and harassment “isn’t fraternities, [and] isn’t [US] sporting culture, it’s sexism”, Hush said.

Much of the discussion looked at the danger of victim-blaming attitudes, which creates a culture in which survivors are less likely to come forward.

Panellist Nina Funnell, who has experience working in this area, outlined the three best responses to someone disclosing such an incident: “I’m so sorry that this has happened to you, what has happened to you is wrong and I’m here for you.”

As the discussion moved on to international students, Executive Director of Rape and Domestic Violence Australia, Karen Willis, identified them as particularly vulnerable and less likely to report incidents.

Funnell spoke about inter-

viewing an Australian student who was sexually assaulted while on exchange in France, and described the experience of navigating the medical and criminal justice systems of another country in another language as “horrific”.

Spence noted the University is in the process of building more accommodation for international students, yet implied some limit to the University’s ambit of control.

“Universities are in a particularly special place” to lead, especially as they are creating future community leaders, Willis said in response.

When asked why it had taken so long for action to be taken in light of consistent reporting on this issue over the last four decades, Spence spoke to the difficulty in getting colleges to cooperate.

“The colleges are totally legally independent of the University, and the University actually has no jurisdiction over the colleges,” aside from disaffiliating from them so they lose their land, which would involve lengthy court proceedings.

“I think that in any of these discussions we need to organise the asymmetry of power between the institution and students,” and ensure that there are a number of students in meetings so that a single student isn’t “isolated and spoken on top of”, Funnell added.

The University recently enlisted former sex discrimination commissioner Elizabeth Broderick to help take action on this issue.

*For more information see ‘Vice-Chancellor unaware of process for reporting sexual harassment complaint’ by Siobhan Ryan at honisoit.com

STUDENT POLITICS

Liberal Club’s entire membership dissolved by USU

Andrew Bell & Mary Ward

The Sydney University Liberal Club’s (SULC) membership list has been dissolved and its AGM postponed by the University of Sydney Union (USU) following sustained in-fighting between club factions led by the President Will Dawes and Secretary Josh Crawford.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the society was scheduled for next Wednesday, but has been delayed until after ODay next semester, following a determination handed down by the USU Board after an in camera discussion at their monthly meeting on Friday.

Any ACCESS card holder who wishes to join or remain a member of the society will be required to attend the SULC ODay stall in person to secure their membership.

A USU casual employee – accompanied by a security guard – will administer SULC’s ODay stall and be in charge of taking registrations. According to the ruling, seen by *Honi*, the club will be required to fund the expense of the casual worker and the security guard.

The purpose of the AGM was to elect the executive for the following year, which would largely determine the balance of power between competing groups within the club for the following year.

A conflict arose between Dawes and Crawford following OWeek regarding the proper method of counting the club’s members ahead of the AGM.

While Dawes wanted the club’s OWeek list of sign-ups to be used, Crawford was advocating for a new approach, which would allow for ACCESS card holders who had attended at

least three meetings to vote.

The disagreement has essentially resulted in two separate groups of SULC members being created: those who support Dawes (and will be supporting failed USU candidate Dom Bondar for the club’s presidency) and those who wish to see Crawford jump from Secretary to President at the eventual AGM.

The two groups have been recorded on separate and conflicting mailing lists of “SULC members” held by Dawes and Crawford, with each using their own mailing lists to communicate with those who they consider to be members.

Dawes told *Honi* he sent out an email to “all [members] that [he has] the contact details of” on Friday evening describing the situation.

“The Club’s activities will continue as usual and a new AGM date will be set for early next semester,” the email read. “The University of Sydney Union is doing its best to find a solution which addresses the concerns myself and many other Club executive and members have as to the integrity of the membership list”.

However, there seems to be disagreement amongst the SULC executive as to what the wiping of their membership will actually allow the club to do until a new AGM is held.

“My understanding from other executive members who have spoke with C&S is that the process will be that the club is going to be temporarily suspended until it holds its AGM next semester,” a member of the executive told *Honi*, seemingly contradicting the information Dawes sent out to members.

SULC has been plagued with dysfunction this semester, fol-

lowing a falling out between the Liberal Party’s centre-right faction (which traditionally controls SULC, and of which Dawes is a member) and Alex Dore, who counts Crawford among his supporters, after Dore was elected as NSW Young Liberal President at the organisation’s executive elections in February. After leaving the centre-right with Dore, *Honi* understands Crawford has not been accepted by any faction, but *Honi* has been told by centre-right sources that they suspect he and Dore are working with the party’s left (of which Crawford’s mother, Catherine Cusack MLC, is a member) to control SULC.

The club did not hold an Ordinary Meeting until Week 8 due to continual disagreements between Dawes and Crawford. USU President and member of Labor Right faction, Student Unity, Alisha Aitken-Radburn was brought in to assist the meeting’s administration.

Honi has been told the split resulted in Crawford and Dawes holding separate members’ drinks at the start of semester.

Some SULC members have suggested that Crawford was attempting to stack the AGM with his new membership system, stating that non-students and even Liberal Party staffers have been purchasing ACCESS cards and attending meetings, presumably with the intent of voting for Crawford as President at the AGM.

While Dawes did not comment on whether he suspected stacking had occurred during the year, he said he was “incredibly concerned” about stacking behaviour likely to occur at the ODay stall, adding that he condemns such behaviour “unequivocally”.



eLearning data disclosure potentially affects students’ marks

Andrew Bell & Tessa Pang

The eLearning program used by almost all undergraduate students at the University of Sydney allows teaching staff at the University to view students’ past academic performance and login information, creating a risk of influencing students’ current marks.

While students may be under the impression that previous academic information is not shown to marking staff involved in their current enrolment, this isn’t the case. Staff members with access to

the “grade centre” can see past academic performance, information which may influence expectations about students’ current performance.

Professor Philippa Pattison, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education) told *Honi*, “Any staff member who is enrolled by the coordinator as a designer (usually the coordinator), instructor (usually lecturers) or teaching assistant (usually tutors or demonstrators) can view the grade centre.”

“If the tutor’s role includes marking, they will have access to all or part of the grade cen-

tre,” she said.

The grade centre contains all marks that pass through Blackboard or assignments that are submitted and marked through Turnitin. Since very few subjects are marked anonymously, the University cannot exclude the possibility that markers will peruse the data and be guided by it - especially when deciding between mark gradations.

Further, tutors with access to the grade centre will be able to see the last date the student logged onto eLearning.

Pattison told *Honi*, “A participation mark reflects a student

taking part in a task rather than logging on to a system.”

While that is ideally the case, the University could not exclude the possibility that frequency of logging into Blackboard would be taken into account by tutors in determining class participation marks. This would affect a student who downloads materials at the start of semester, and therefore doesn’t need to use eLearning, but is no less diligent than other students.

Even non-marking staff members have access to “de-identified, cohort level information on the make-up of the class...[which

is] used to support student learning,” Pattison said.

Similarly, unit coordinators have access to students’ personal details entered on Sydney Student. This includes their name, date of birth, mobile number, home address, languages spoken at home and whether or not they are the first in their family to attend university.

While the utility of general information is clear, allowing teaching staff to pitch their classes more accurately, this electronic system raises serious issues relating to the transparent use of student data.

Why all USyd library fines are unenforceable

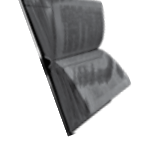
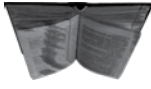
Andrew Bell has so much invested in this article

There are currently many thousands of dollars owed to University libraries from students. When these fines are above a certain threshold, students can be prevented from graduating, accessing University services or re-enrolling. Here is why they are all legally unenforceable.

Before we get into the details, it’s important to note that these fines can be substantial. Thomas Joyner, an upstanding student at this University, currently owes \$720 in outstanding fines. “A \$720 fine for one first year assignment is absolutely ludicrous, and prevents me from borrowing a book ever again. If the aim of the fine was to inhibit my studies, it has succeeded.” he said.

So here’s why they’re unenforceable.

Basically, a library fine is just a payment for a breach of contract. The library agrees to let the student use the book and the student agrees to return it in time. For meatier commercial contracts, corporations may go to court to figure out how much they’ve lost as a result of a breach of contract. That approach doesn’t really make sense on the small-scale of a library fine, so the library pre-nominates how much you have to pay.



How much you have to pay is calculated by estimating the financial loss that would likely flow from the breach of contract. While this makes sense, the law imposes a limit when estimating losses. The figure cannot constitute a “penalty” or be “punitive”.

So at what point does compensating for loss clock over into “penalty” territory? The key to identifying penalties is that they’re extravagantly disproportionate to the financial loss that would likely flow from the breach of contract. Strictly, the library receives no financial loss when their books are returned late – certainly nothing comparable to \$10/day (or \$10/hour for two hour books).

ANZ was taken to the High Court recently, and (partially) lost on the basis that their fees were punitive. ANZ claimed the fees, such as an overdraft fee, recouped the cost of administration and enforcement. The library might make a similar argument, but their costs probably only add up to a few cents per day – nothing close to \$10 a day.

It’s also important that you can breach the contract ‘trivially’ and still get hit with the full

fee. Therefore, if you’re a second late with a two-hour book from Fisher, you get hit with the entirety of the \$10 fee.

The library might have a stronger argument in England, where the library’s goal to facilitating the circulation of books would work in their favour. But that hasn’t had much purchase in Australia, where financial loss is the most important factor.

In fairness, the library doesn’t enforce overdue fines unless the books are recalled. But the fact that another student wants to use the books will never cause the library financial loss.

In the end it’s probably not worth it to take the library to court. The law is complex and the cost would subsume the fees many times over. But with so many students in debt – maybe it’s worth a class action?

1. Probably. I’d write a disclaimer that this isn’t legal advice, but then again if you go to court on the basis of an *Honi* article without any independent advice you really deserve to lose.

Honiscopes

Are these horoscopes or real simple extension excuses? Use one this exam period and find out.

Art: Zita Walker



Leo

slowly eating cereal that i didn't realise had nuts in it and over a period of time i went into anaphalaxis. still going



Gemini

my dog which i definitely own and which is definitely real, died and in my culture (you wouldn't know it) death rituals for pets take 14 years



Libra

the person i usually pay to write my essays says she can't get it in til tues, is that okay??



Sagittarius

made a cup of tea. it got cold, i had to get another one. kettle was broken, had to buy another kettle. went to ikea, got lost sorry



Pisces

my computer was hacked by anonymous and they deleted my essay only



Aries

my daddy is really rich so i don't need this university degree anyway, his years of tax fraud will keep me comfortable



Virgo

i'm an artist. deadlines restrict me and suffocate my creative potential, let me be free



H₂O, Just Add Water

i'm actually sleeping beauty and i'm trapped in this castle (with wifi PHEW) waiting for some prince



Capricorn

i was too busy negotiating entirely unimportant factional deals as a USyd BNOC and was too #drinkdrunk to get my essay done



Scorpio

the student paper has been mercilessly attacking my home (St Paul's college) so i needed to make fake Facebook accounts to troll their website



Taurus

the election is coming up and i'm just so unbelievably depressed about the future of Australian politics and the world that i just need to crawl up in a ball and cry for a few days (too real)



Cancer

i follow wiccan rituals and there's one on the due date of this assessment and if i don't attend it i'll be eternally damned (that's wiccan right?)

Oliver Moore really hopes this doesn't go viral and get them fired

On the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOBIT), the Greens announced a suite of new gender and sexuality-focussed policies. Most notably, this included a commitment to remove the permanent exemptions to federal anti-discrimination law. Currently, there exists a permanent exemption from the law for religious groups and organisations, meaning that they can legally discriminate against people on the basis of their gender, sexuality or age. These exemptions exist in similar forms in most state legislation.

I work casually at a religious private school. I’m also queer. As a function of my job, I am required to stimulate the minds of my students, to encourage them to think critically about the world they live in and the structures which govern it. This, of course, in the time of the great marriage equality debate, and amongst the whirlwind of voices surrounding the Safe Schools Coalition, means speaking about queer issues, many of which are brought up by the students themselves. Some already identify as non-heterosexual and are looking for a supportive adult voice; some are confused by the issues and want to talk about how they affect them and their friends; and some are simply looking for more information.

I would love to talk to my students about these issues, because I know how important having a supportive and non-judgemental adult figure can be for teenagers just beginning to figure out their identity. However, in order to ensure I can keep my job, I have to speak about it in a way which does not align me with the queer community. Imagine having an extended conversation with someone about dogs, without ever revealing the fact that you own a dog.

This guise is particularly hard to hold when, for example, one of your students tells you the school wouldn’t let her set up a club for queer students. It is particularly hard to hold when you pass a rally in



The moral rigidity of the workplace is difficult enough to adjust to without having to erase yourself in order to fit into it

support of the Safe Schools program on your way to work. It is particularly hard to hold when you tell your students to watch the news for homework, only to have them hear members of the far right condemn people like you on a publicly funded broadcaster.

For most young people, especially those at university, who need to work casually and around an ever-changing schedule, employment is precarious at the best of times. The extra burden of navigating your way through a complicated series of unstated assumptions is jarring, particularly in comparison to the freedom of the university environment. The moral rigidity of the workplace is difficult enough to adjust

to without having to erase yourself in order to fit into it. Where any exemptions to anti-discrimination laws exist, discrimination will inevitably take place, be it in the silences of things unsaid, or in the very real possibility of the loss of a job or stable income. The permanent exemptions give religious organisations enormous power over not just the hiring and firing of employees, but over the rules and norms that guide our society.

Where discrimination is allowed to continue unchecked, it spills over into the attitudes of the general population and means that homophobia and transphobia can continue to wage their poisonous war on the queer community.

If you can't take the meat, get out of the kitchen

Olivia Evershed spoke to three meat industry professionals

“Working in an abattoir made me decide that I’m OK with eating meat,” Michael tells me over a purple smoothie at the café. He has none of the traits I would have associated with a professional slaughterer; friendly and at ease, he is wearing a loose tee and a pirate hat.

I am impressed with his confidence: had I gone and conducted a survey in the freezer section at Coles and asked customers why they thought it was OK to eat animals, I dare say many of them wouldn’t have been able to answer.

But Michael can justify his attitude.

He’s not squeamish – and the details that perturb others do not faze him: “There’s a lot of blood,” he admits. He comes from a farming background and has been involved in hand-rearing lambs for slaughter before: the reality of inflicting death on living creatures for human consumption is just not something that seems unnatural or cruel to him.

Michael is the first of three people I spoke to working in the meat industry. Awareness of animal welfare and livestock conditions are on the rise, and I wanted to know how such attention is influencing the industry.

I put to Michael that livestock animals such as pigs have been known to demonstrate human

behaviours – does that influence his opinion of using such animals for meat? “Capacity is there,” he acknowledges, “but that’s not their life. That’s not what they were bred for.”

Ian, a butcher and manager at Glenmore Meat Company, gives a similar response. “They’ve been bred to be eaten,” he says, “and you can use their coats for clothing. They’ve been doing that for centuries.”

Loel is a chef at an upmarket café in Waterloo. As a vegetarian in the meat industry, his opinions differ from the others. “It’s always a matter of conflict in my mind” he says, “because whilst me personally I’m not buying meat to support that side of the industry, I am then preparing meat in a way that is promoting people to continually eat meat.”

Is there something wrong with this? “I feel that we don’t have to produce and consume as much meat as we already do,” he says. I ask whether he views livestock in a different way to domestic animals and he responds with conviction: “No form of animal is different from the next, whether it be wild or domesticated – they’re still all a species, they’re still all alive and they still all feel pain.”

“Animals should definitely be respected. We definitely use and abuse them too much.”

Michael isn’t so sure. “Animals are lesser

beings and that means we take advantage of them and there will be a bit of suffering and a bit of unhappiness but I don’t think it’s a big deal.” Yet for different reasons, Michael looks forward to a slaughter-free future.

This reason is VAT meat, otherwise known as ‘in vitro meat’, made by culturing single muscle cells to yield thousands of tonnes of meat. Michael believes that in the future, VAT meat will be readily available to replace farmed meat. He sees it as the ideal solution – no unnecessary suffering, but also no wastage.

Michael also believes in a future with “robots and conscious entities” – are his projections realistic? Ian reckons “things aren’t going to change,” but such innovations as genetic modification in agriculture prove that change is rife in the food industry. In the meantime, are we justified in eating animals?

Rational conscience would dictate that it is our responsibility to avoid chickens who spend their entire lives in filthy sheds with tens of thousands of other birds; cows kept in the dark and tied up to prevent movement so as to keep their flesh tender. But kept in the dark - much like the veal - you may well be perpetuating the cycle without knowing it. Now there’s something to chew on.

Cumbo cards

Cumberland students should not have to pay \$75 for ACCESS services they hardly use, writes Samuel Chu

One of the questions asked of a candidate in the recent *Honi Soit* USU Board interviews was: “Students at Cumberland Campus have to pay \$75 for an ACCESS card, but don’t enjoy any outlet discounts. Is this fair?”

The candidate’s response, “I would do it [still pay the \$75]”, supposedly spoke to just how much they’d gained from their involvement in the USU’s Clubs and Societies (C&S).

This answer, to stay true to the interviews’ *Hamilton* theme, demonstrated USU Board candidates really don’t know how the

game is played at Cumberland.

Unfortunately, neither do most of Cumberland’s students. First-year students, blinded by the bright lights of OWeek, are all-too-often conned into purchasing an ACCESS card, unaware that Cumberland Student Guild (CSG), not the USU, controls student life at Cumberland.

Not a single outlet at Cumbo is owned by the USU, so no ACCESS discounts apply. The ACCESS card’s other main role, a C&S passport, is also nullified because not one USU-administered club or society has a pres-

ence at Cumberland.

Unless there are members of the CSG-sponsored Evangelical Christian Union or Exercise and Sports Science Student Association (whose dubious exploits were documented by *Honi* last year), Cambodians have no option other than to make the 20km trek to main campus to pursue their extra-curricular interests. It is unfair that on top of this geographical penalty they should pay the same amount for an ACCESS card when it confers no day-to-day discounts on them and when the USU mandates no

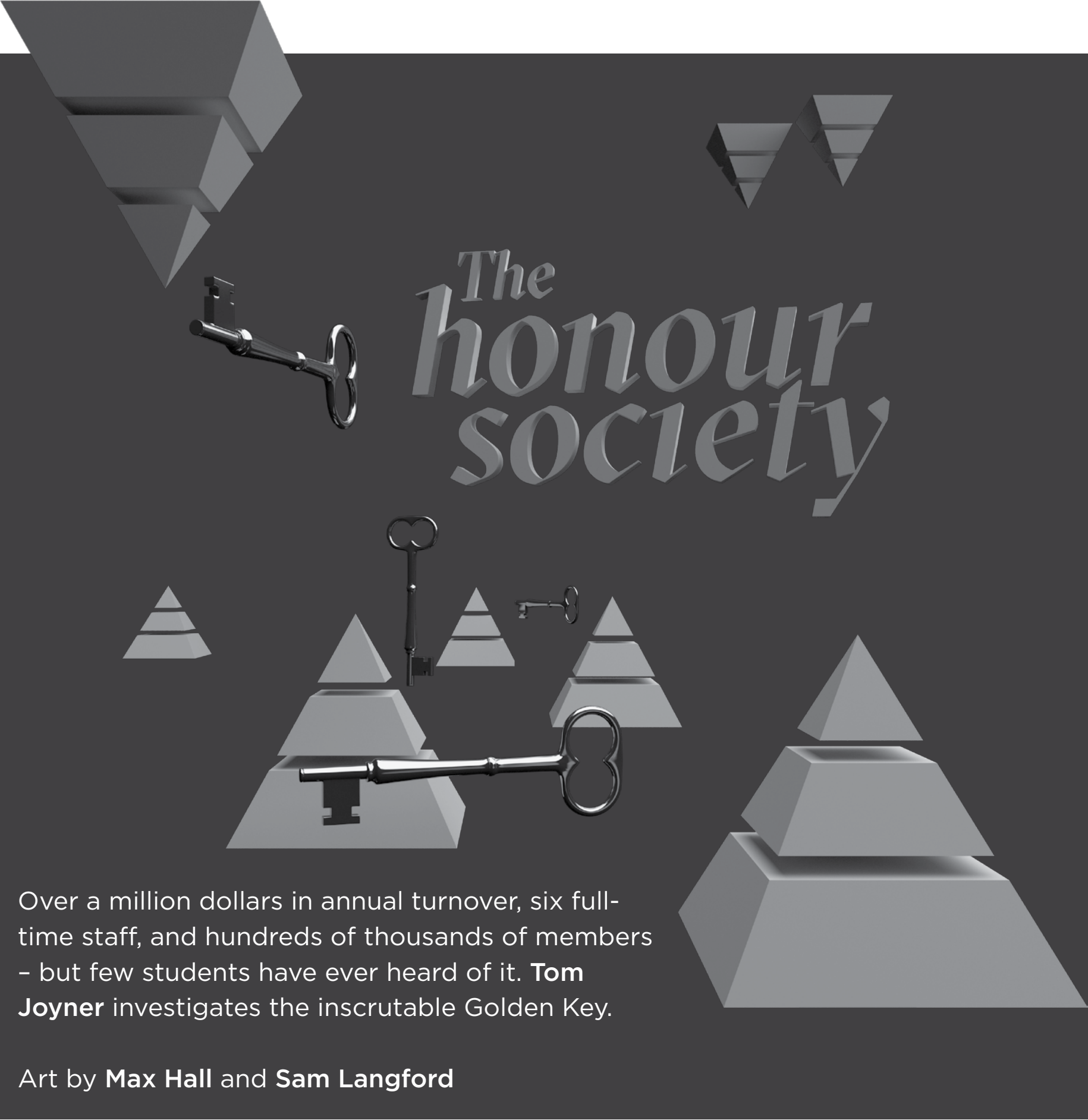
Cumberland presence for C&S.

A compromise in the form of a satellite-campus concession should be made available to Cumberland’s students. Its price should consider the USU’s absenteeism from Cumberland, but still incorporate a fair C&S cost. It’s disappointing that successive waves of Board contenders have made promises to this effect (including outgoing USU President Alisha Aitken-Radburn), but have failed to deliver. Listen up new blood! Don’t throw away your shot!

A greater effort should also be

made on behalf of the University, the USU and CSG, to clarify their roles within the university experience to first-years. The USU’s current ACCESS-peddling practices are shady at best, predatory at worst.

Clearing up the situation for naïve high school leavers and offering a satellite campus ACCESS concession is a fair and straightforward course of action which the USU should embrace. And, of course, it has the added benefit of increasing student engagement with the USU and its outlets.



Over a million dollars in annual turnover, six full-time staff, and hundreds of thousands of members – but few students have ever heard of it. **Tom Joyner** investigates the inscrutable Golden Key.

Art by **Max Hall** and **Sam Langford**

In cramped offices in the inner Sydney suburb of Ultimo, the Golden Key International Honour Society Inc.’s headquarters for the Asia-Pacific feel more like a family tax accountancy or a business startup. Its rooms are on the fourth floor of a shared block on Jones Street, and overlook a Chinese supermarket on one side and a self-storage warehouse on the other. There’s barely enough space for seating in the reception area, and a large collapsible banner emblazoned with the company’s logo leans haphazardly against the front counter.

It’s a far cry from the workspaces of Bank of America, Shell or Lenovo – large corporations with which Golden Key has fostered partnerships over the years – but then again, the Sydney office’s six full-time staff don’t usually expect guests.

For an international organisation with hundreds of thousands of members, surprisingly few people have ever heard of Golden Key. Presenting itself as a philanthropic organisation for high-achieving students, it blurs the lines with its unique business model. Its recruitment practices are misleading and it greatly overstates the bene-

fits for its members.

As an *Honi Soit* investigation has found, Golden Key signs up new paying members through partnership arrangements with universities. At least one Group of Eight university provides the personal information of thousands of its students to Golden Key without students’ knowledge or consent. The university even mails out letters of invitation on its own official letterhead signed by a senior university administrator.

Honour societies have never held as prominent a place in Australian university life as they have in America. Founded in 1897, Phi Kappa Phi is the most famous example of an American honour society, and describes itself on its website as “a community of scholars and professionals building an enduring legacy for all generations”. Golden Key’s premise isn’t too different: it recruits high-achieving students across 400 university campuses worldwide with the promise of networking events, conferences and “enhancing student opportunities,” in the words of the organisation’s Asia-Pacific director, Joshua Ang.

Roughly 200,000 student Golden Key members are spread across several dozen universities in Australia that host campus chapters, usually comprising of a student-run committee – including a student President who controls the chapter’s funding – and an ‘advisor’ on academic staff. The chapter runs networking events, career nights, and workshops. It also engages regularly with its members via email mailouts and Facebook.

The ANU chapter is held to be one of the best in the country by the organisation, and has the awards to prove it. Each year, according to its chapter President and linguistics student, Sarah Heywood, it recruits around 60 to 100 new members.

Students can only join their local chapter if they are formally invited, and must pay a flat, one-off \$100 fee. Invitations are sent out, typically in the mail or by email, only to those students the society claims are in the top 15 per cent of their cohort. It’s in this way the society maintains its prestige and exclusivity. Students who have joined often speak of adding a line to their resume as a boon during job interviews.

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FEATURE

Documents held by the corporate regulator ASIC show that former ANU Vice-Chancellor and Australian Chief Scientist, Ian Chubb, held a senior role with the organisation from around 2001, when he began at the university, up until February 2009.

However, Professor Chubb said his involvement had been peripheral at best. “I do remember the very first time that I went to one of their presentation evenings and I think it went on for hours, I mean literally hours. I remember telling them I wasn’t going to go again if I had to sit there watching hundreds of people go up and get a certificate,” he told Honi.

At one point, Golden Key approached him to join the international board of directors, but nothing ever was set in stone. “I know that they had tried to get me involved more deeply than just being the VC of the university.”

But organisations like Golden Key have been met with suspicion on Australian campuses. Students *Honi Soit* spoke to, in addition to the hundreds more who left comments on web forums, said they felt initially flattered to receive an invitation, but were wary of the organisation’s initial fee and potential benefits.

Many of those students who joined said they didn’t engage with the society much further than their initial induction, and many soon forgot they had become members, only to be sent another letter of invitation for each subsequent year of their degree asking they pay the \$100 joining fee again.

“It’s not always a perfect system,” said Ang, himself a graduate of the Australian Catholic University. Many more students said the society offered them nothing but a barrage of emails advertising discounted goods from corporate sponsors. “Students are able to opt in or out of any correspondence we send out.”

Dr Vinh Lu, a senior lecturer from the ANU College of Business and Economics who is also the university’s on-campus Golden Key ‘advisor’ said he was aware of problems with member engagement, particularly members who sign up once and never interact with the society again. “I’ve been telling the society for the past year,” he said. “I feel that the members are quite disengaged, and this is actually up to the society chapter to run programs and activities that connect their members.”

It’s only a matter of time before Golden Key becomes a more accepted part of campus life, ANU chapter president Sarah Heywood explained. “I think because [Golden Key] is such an unfamiliar concept in Australia, there hasn’t been enough time for people to understand what an honour society does, what the point of it is.”

“There’s this reputation that we [Golden Key] have. But meeting the people who are involved and believe in what Golden Key is doing... really it is that helping bright students achieve their full potential outside of the classroom.”

But it’s not an uncommon criticism that the society is little more than a network of sleek and professional recruiters whose main job is to entice students with the promise of exclusive access to private networking events and scholarships to travel overseas. It’s not far off the mark: heavy PR spin and an expertly honed public image are hallmarks of Golden Key that shroud its business practices.

For such a seemingly large organisation, there is surprisingly little information available online about it. Its website is vague at best, and uses platitudes to describe the “power of knowledge” and “continuum of excellence” in the way a travel company or a life coach might advertise its ser-

vices.

A read through its Wikipedia page reveals little more, except for a watered-down history of the organisation. But clicking through to the ‘talk’ page – an out-of-view section of a Wikipedia article hosting debate between users on the article itself – unveils much more. “I noticed that this page read like an advert for the organization,” wrote one anonymous user. “I have restored some semblance of ‘journalism’ to it today using previously submitted information.”

“History shows their PR dept can’t keep their hands off it,” wrote another. A third user alleged Golden Key’s own director of operations and membership, Ashlyn Houska, made several edits to the page – including deleting an entire section titled ‘Controversy’ – under an account named ‘AHouska’.

But the ways in which Golden Key obtains student information in its recruitment process raises more questions; both contact details (physical address or email) and academic results to target high-achievers.

“In terms of obviously data privacy, it’s something that is extremely important to Golden Key and the universities that we work with, as it is for this printer,” Ang said. “We’ve had a long-standing relationship with this printer, and so have the universities that we work with. We have a strict confidentiality agreement in place and that kind of covers all of these areas.”

However, a spokesperson confirmed ANU in fact directly provided Golden Key with thousands of students’ personal information, including home address and other contact information, potentially in breach of its own privacy policy.

When asked whether he was aware of such a privacy breach, former Vice-Chancellor Ian

Chubb said he wasn’t. “I’d be really very surprised if ANU handed over student information to any group.”

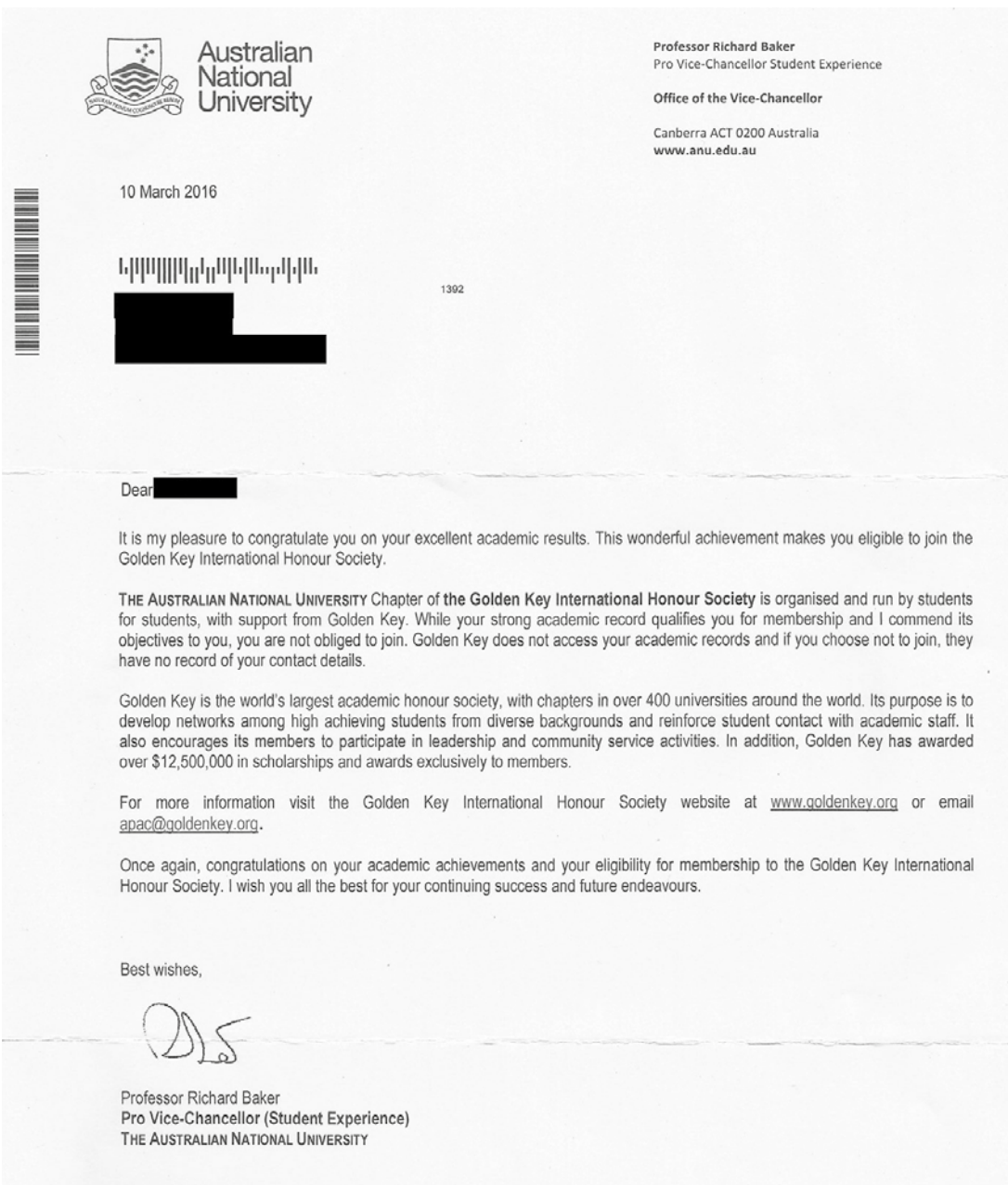
This raises questions of the exact nature of Golden Key’s relationship with other Australian universities. All other universities contacted by *Honi Soit*, including Western Sydney University and Macquarie University within New South Wales, all denied financial arrangements with Golden Key.

But dozens more, including Australian Catholic University, University of Queensland, Flinders University, Monash University, University of Sydney and La Trobe University have churned out press releases lauding the latest Golden Key event or praising the successes of a campus chapter in the past few years: a presentation of honorary membership to the governor-general, a guest speech from a decorated academic, a student’s award of a scholarship. Ang also denied existence of a financial arrangement with universities.

At ANU, however, much like many universities, students are invited to join the society with personal letters written on official stationery bearing the university’s logo and address from Professor Richard Baker, the Pro Vice-Chancellor of student experience.

In one such letter obtained by *Honi Soit*, Professor Baker – who was unavailable for interview – reminded the recipient they are not obliged to, but their academic record qualified them to join Golden Key. “It is my pleasure to congratulate you on your excellent academic results. This wonderful achievement makes you eligible to join the Golden Key International Honour Society,” the letter read.

“The letterhead shows the support of the society on campus, similar to any other chapters,” said Vinh Lu, the campus advisor. “For the students it’s



Right: a Golden Key invitation letter on ANU letterhead sent to a student in March this year

FEATURE



an opportunity for them to feel like they develop a sense of identification with an organization with a good purpose.” Ang denied suggestions that an official letter from their university encouraging students to join a private organisation might be misleading.

Selwyn Cornish, Lu’s predecessor in the campus ‘advisor’ role, and an academic at the College of Business and Economics, also sits on the international board of directors. Cornish said Golden Key has been “officially” recognised by ANU since it first came to Australia in the mid 1990s after its endorsement was approved by Academic Board and later the University Council. He denied the university’s letter is an “invitation” to join, but rather a “support letter”.

But it’s hard to deny a financial relationship. In the past, ANU has provided an undisclosed amount of money to students to pay for travel and accommodation to attend Golden Key’s international conferences, last year held on the Gold Coast, and in 2016 set to be held in Tuscon, Arizona.

“That’s not a relationship,” said Cornish. “That is supporting ANU students just as a member of the ANU table tennis team or the ANU women’s soccer team seeking funding from the university.” But unlike a varsity team representing a university, Golden Key members go in a private capacity, and with apparently little oversight from ANU itself.

“Every year, the Vice-Chancellor decides to offer a certain amount of funds for activities and if a student would like to attend [a Golden Key conference],” said Lu. “If any students come to us,

printing, and we’ll basically pay for that,” he said, adding that some campus chapter’s bank account is held “within” the university, but is solely controlled by the student president and deputy to spend on chapter activities and some scholarships.

Given Golden Key’s emphasis on funding student scholarships and hosting events, it spends comparatively little of its annual revenue to do this. Though Golden Key is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission – a federal independent regulatory body that collects financial information from 55,000 operational charities and non-profits in Australia – it’s finances are vague at best.

Public records held by the Commission show Golden Key turned over \$1.1 million in revenue over 2014 – almost all reportedly from membership fees – down from \$1.3 million the year before. There is no reported revenue for corporate sponsorship arrangements in the financial reports.

Cornish explained most of the money was “ploughed back into scholarships” and running the annual Asia-Pacific conference. But the society’s financial reports tell another story. Of all its listed expenses in 2014, \$1.1 million went towards costs including paying staff wages, travel costs, invitation costs, rent, professional fees, office supplies, ‘corporate allocation’, and miscellaneous expenses. Cornish told Honi a part of the revenue was sent back to the organisation’s Atlanta headquarters offshore, something that Ang described as an “on-paper allocation”.

“Most of the money is channeled back into

Above: The global headquarters of Golden Key in Atlanta, Georgia, as seen from Street View

points towards a deeper direction within the organisation.

“We shouldn’t deceive ourselves,” Bernie Milano, the head of the KPMG Foundation told The Chronicle of Higher Education in 2002 after signing a corporate partnership with Golden Key. “Companies do this to have access to students. Students pay their dues to get a leg up in the job market.”

Indeed, the sponsorship gives corporations access to invaluable mailing lists of thousands of unwary students whose contact information was initially provided to Golden Key by universities like the ANU. Ang wouldn’t say how much Australian revenue came from sponsors, but many of Golden Key’s email newsletters contain advertisements for products offered by companies ranging from Shell marketing campaigns to Panasonic TVs, to credit cards offered by Bank of America in the US.

When Bernie Milano was invited to visit Golden Key’s lavish global headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia, he described the experience to The Chronicle with awe. “This is what you’d expect to see in the office of a CEO of a Fortune 100 company,” he said, “not that of a student-centered, non-profit organization.”

Certainly, on the surface, Golden Key presents itself as a student non-profit, but in reality it is a successful business model. It relies on the unending recruitment of new members to the society. After all, where member fees make up nearly all its reported revenue, recruitment is its main prerogative. While it presents itself as a philanthropic venture, there is no mistaking its business motives.

Its revenue is further supplemented by corporate sponsorship by companies seeking to tap into to Golden Key’s valuable mailing list of university students – a conventionally hard-to-reach market for advertisers. There is little net benefit for students to join, at least far less than the \$100 joining fee could hope to cover. For the vast majority who join, under the impression the society is part of or officially linked to their university, they simply join a growing database of students to which corporate sponsors can target their marketing material.

Just as was shown in the case of Student VIP, the ultimate benefit, as with many such ‘student-oriented’ companies, remains squarely with those who operate it. Students, it’s worth reminding, are almost never the consumer, but are almost always the product.

For such a seemingly large organisation, there is surprisingly little information available online about it.

we will usually ask them for a funding proposal. Any students who would like to go overseas on a trip, they need to propose the benefits and the funding costs.”

When interviewed by *Honi Soit*, Ang initially rejected the suggestion of a financial arrangement between ANU (and other universities) and Golden Key. But when pressed, he quickly conceded there was an arrangement “in-kind”, though would not go into detail.

“Some of our universities will do their own

Golden Key student activities,” said Cornish. But this assertion does not match up with financial records. According to 2014 reports, the total spent on member events or scholarships that year was just below \$199,000, less than a fifth of total revenue.

Though it is unclear from its financial reports, Golden Key supplements part of its revenue with corporate sponsorship. Its website lists several major business partners, including Bank of America, Shell and Lenovo, as sponsors. While this may be innocuous enough at face value, it

PERSPECTIVE

Attack and defence

Anonymous on how to navigate the conflict engulfing the University’s colleges

I should preface this article by making a few disclaimers: this is my third year living at one of USyd’s residential colleges. In the wake of a recent media onslaught centred on something so personal, it’s tempting to assess the claims made against my own “college experience”. But to do so would risk equating my own voice with a group that spans six separate communities, and cannot be singularly spoken for or defined. In the context of global focus on institutional culture, it seems more constructive to focus on the significance of these events in how we navigate these issues in the public sphere.

The most pervasive aspects of sexism come from the nuances of everyday life which don’t lend well to headlines; the casual comments, attitudes and conversations which shape what is acceptable. To address the failings of an institutional culture, in any context, is far more complex than making grand gestures to be seen as positive action. It’s about addressing where the problem lies at the roots, rather than just chopping off branches.

Unfortunately media articles inevitably focus on the dramatic, and can sometimes escalate into a war of electronic words. What should be a dialogue deteriorates into a battle between cliques which obscures productive discussion of the real issue at play: that these incidents

are a product of a something much bigger and more nuanced, extending far beyond the sandstone walls of colleges. What we end up with is a cycle of criticism and reaction that doesn’t address the substance of the problem.

The purpose of this article isn’t to fire another

As students, we need to make concessions about how the culture in our institutions can exacerbate issues like sexism, whether or not we feel our personal experiences are accurately conveyed to the public

shot into the battle of publicity on this topic. It is to suggest that all stakeholders in this situation should stop thinking in terms of attack and defence. As students, we need to make concessions about how the culture in our institutions

Replicating racism

Kevin Lee on the way our parents impart subtle oppression

My father’s and my last names are the same in Chinese, but different in English: his is spelled Li, and mine is spelled Lee. The reason for the change is that Australians kept pronouncing his “Lie”, which, he tells me, was not only inaccurate, but also made it sound as if he was a liar. So, to make my life a little easier, our family name was reformulated into something more readily pronounceable.

That is just one of many anecdotes that illustrate the way in which white ignorance, ranging from banal misunderstandings to overt discrimination, has shaped my relationship with my parents. Racism makes people of colour ashamed of their own identities, and tells them to adopt a guise of whiteness in order to find acceptance. When parents internalise that shame, they pass it onto their children, and the family unit becomes co-opted by the poisonous beliefs and stereotypes of white supremacy.

I cannot count the number of times when my parents, annoyed by someone’s bad driving, would chalk it up to them being just another “Asian driver”. Usually, they tried to verify their accusation by either peering into the offender’s side window as they drove past, or analysing their licence plate: a string of 1s, 6s or 8s, lucky numbers in the Chinese community. Their friends would regularly share, with a combination of intrigue and disgust, stories about the faults of Chinese immigrants, ranging from their gaudy fashion sense to their supposed inability to maintain clean restaurant kitchens. “This is why gui lao (Westerners) hate the Chinese,” would always be their conclusion.

Having immigrated in the 1980s, my parents were regularly exposed to the kinds of racial discrimination that is today widely ridiculed and caricatured. Lacking any real ability to fight the racism they encountered, they understandably

took the easier way out: they tried as hard as they could to integrate into the white community, and distanced themselves from other da lou ren – people from the Chinese mainland – by adopting the same views they had been subject to. And, believing that doing so would protect from the harassment that they had once endured, they attempted to pass those views onto me.

Yet even their best attempts at integration have not always been successful. For as long as I can remember, my mother has been signing up for, and dropping out of, English language courses, not for any lack of determination or ability, but rather because of a fear of being judged by her white peers. Merely trying to speak up and engage with the white community instantaneously identifies her as one of “those” Chinese-Australians, who don’t “speak the local language” and “adopt local customs”, so often it is easier to remain silent and not try at all. Unsurprisingly, I was never encouraged to keep trying to read and write Chinese as a child – that wasn’t important to someone living in Australia, after all.

This isn’t to say that the discriminatory nature of my parents’ beliefs should be downplayed or excused. Nor could I ever accuse them of being bad parents. But when, as a result of the shame and isolation forced upon them by white society, racism is perniciously perpetuated by people of colour, they impart that same shame onto their children. In that way we are, from a young age, discouraged from ever choosing to accept our identity, and are told that we ought to instead pursue whiteness in order to be accepted.

When I speak to others who come from migrant families about racial discrimination, I’m frequently told that it isn’t worth worrying about. Often, I hear that stereotypes, like those that

can exacerbate issues such as sexism, whether or not we feel our personal experiences are accurately conveyed to the public. We need to distinguish a critique of culture from an assault on our own self-worth. Equally, media coverage which distorts and politicises these issues only alienates the communities within these institutions and encourages a culture of blaming those who come forward. While college management has a part to play, the power to impart cultural values lies with the students. Publicity can only generate change by starting a meaningful discussion with the people who have the power to do something.

On a broader note, maybe it is time to open up a critique of a university culture fixated on divisions between campus groups and communities, where we define people by their place of residence, a society or a coloured t-shirt.

It’s natural that everyone needs to belong somewhere. But without an inclusive concept of what it means to be a student here, USyd is just an amalgam of different cliques with values that are varying degrees of problematic. We need to resist the instinct to fall back on a discursive framework of “us” versus “them” and admit battle lines have already been crossed. That is, if working towards a more progressive environment for young people is what we’re really fighting for.

suggest that Asian women are bad drivers, are true, and that I should just learn to accept them. Or, worse still, I’m told that I shouldn’t be surprised when I see Chinese people being treated like they don’t exist, or that international students are excluded from student activities: what else do I expect when they can’t even properly speak the language?

There is, perhaps, some value in non-white

But when, as a result of the shame and isolation forced upon them by white society, racism is perniciously perpetuated by people of colour, they impart that same shame onto their children

communities reclaiming ownership of stereotypes about themselves and reinventing new meanings from them. But that cannot explain the degree and extent to which those communities replicate the racism which they are subjected to. When whiteness is intergenerationally taught as the correct mode of behaviour, that replication is inevitable. Ending racism has to start with people of colour believing that they deserve better, and that they have something to fight for – and that starts with parents telling their children that they ought to be proud of who they are.

MEDALLIST SPEECH

The right path of the law

This is an abridged version of the speech delivered by University Medallist Melissa Chen at the Sydney Law School prize winners’ ceremony on May 5

Good evening Dean, distinguished guests, faculty members, our generous prize donors, and of course, tonight’s prize winners and their wonderful families and friends. It is such a privilege to give this year’s address and I can only hope that my questionable oratory skills can do this honour justice.

My instructions for this evening are to provide a “celebratory reflection on the year”. And certainly, there is a whole lot to celebrate about studying law at the University of Sydney.

However, for me to focus on these positive things here tonight would be disingenuous and misleading. What is left out of most speeches at formal events like these is a realistic reflection on the day-to-day drudgery and frustration and stress of completing a law degree. For me, some of these experiences were as follows: receiving a 68 per cent in an assignment and locking myself in the Law School Society office and vowing to study 20 hours a day until I could remedy that ‘poor’ mark and subsequently being woken up at 4am by the cleaner vacuuming under the table where I had fallen asleep; having my skin break out into rashes and having a constant sense of nausea around exam time; my friend’s nose spontaneously bleeding from the sheer stress of completing his honours thesis; comforting one of my friends, who was in tears, outside this very lecture theatre, because her grandfather had passed away and the week before she had turned down an opportunity to fly overseas and see him for the last time because she was so worried about failing her upcoming law assessments.

If indeed you entered law school with a burning optimism about the positive things the law can achieve – I implore you to hold tight to your aspirations

It is an oft-cited statistic that more than 30% of law students will experience anxiety or depression at some point while they are at university; upon entering the legal profession, these mental health problems get worse. There is such an obsession in this law school and in society on being “successful” and winning scholarships and prizes and medals, when really what we should be talking about is how to achieve our goals in life while also looking after ourselves in a sustainable and healthy way. No doubt it is exciting and fulfilling to receive public affirmation for the things we do – but if we build our identity around these things, as perhaps in the past and even now I am tempted to do, we are setting ourselves up for disappointment – as inevitably, the public accolades will dry up and we’ll be left staring at ourselves in the mirror with emptiness and dissatisfaction.

But I don’t want this speech to be a massive downer.

There are two factors that have helped me to not only stay committed to and passionate about studying and practising law, but also – and most importantly – have enabled me to lead a happy and healthy and sustainable life.

The first factor was finding balance in life – between my career and education, family relationships, social life and health and wellbeing. I look back at the first four years of my law degree in utter disbelief that I used to think it was okay to eat a packet of Pringles, Natural Confectionery snakes and a carton of chocolate milk because I was “too busy” to cook something healthy for dinner; that I used to scoff openly at those who suggested that I exercise and go for a walk once in a while for a study break; that I used to ignore invitations from my family and friends to celebrate a birthday because I was so stressed about my course load. The greatest tragedy I think would be for you – tonight’s prize winners, intelligent, motivated people with so much to offer this world – to remain so focused on that single goal of academic and career “success” at the expense of all other areas of life, that you die of a heart attack at your desk at the age of 42 – perhaps with a lot of money in the bank and a large property portfolio – but with no friends and no family to mourn your loss. It is well worth reflecting tonight on your achievements and the method in which you achieved them and how, in the future, you can continue pursuing your goals and dreams in a healthy and sustainable way.

The second factor which helped me through the last few years of law school was to rediscover my original motivation for studying law and formulating career goals and aspirations that were consistent with that motivation. It is almost a joke at law school, delivered with a smirk of knowing derision, that first year students arrive on their first day, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, with optimism in their eyes and a desire to use the law to change the world for the better in their hearts – and that by final year, these very same students, inevitably have prestigious jobs at top tier commercial law firms or investment banks or management consultancies. So many of us who had these original dreams and desires to help people using the law seem to finish law school with a real pessimism about the ability to do this.

Having now volunteered and worked in the community legal sector for the last four years, and hopefully far into the future, it has become clear to me there are more reasons now than ever for students interested in a career in social justice to maintain a dogged determination to their goals of using the law to obtain justice for and empower the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of our society.

Without such dogged determination we will not be able to put pressure on federal and state governments to reverse the 30 per cent cut in funding to community legal centres which are already so stretched to the limit and which assist thousands of individuals – who otherwise would not have the money to obtain legal advice – with their legal issues. Without such dogged determination, we will not be able to fight against the many injustices that could be remedied, rather than perpetuated, by the legal system – injustices which include the fact that there remains today Indigenous families living as tenants in town camps less than 1km from the Darwin CBD in absolute squalor, surrounded by garbage and excrement and broken toilets and lights and doors because their landlords have no money to fulfil their obligations as landlords; the fact that there are homeless young people with fines exceeding tens and thousands of dollars, and facing imprisonment for these fines, because police and transport officers do not seem to understand that indeed being homeless and suffering from mental health and drug and alco-

hol abuse problems probably means that you cannot buy a train ticket; the fact that there are asylum seekers being tortured and sexually abused and psychologically destroyed in offshore detention centres, burning themselves to death because they think this is the only viable means of escaping their situation, under the cover of Australia’s “national security interests”.

If indeed you entered law school with a burning optimism about the positive things the law can achieve – I implore you to hold tight to your aspirations and allow them to inform your decision-making and career pathways as a law student and a lawyer. Our system needs intelligent, hard-working people like tonight’s prize winners to keep fighting the good fight, so that the law can be used as a tool for social justice rather than a tool of oppression.

I would like to spend a few minutes expressing my gratitude to the people who have supported me throughout law school and without whom I would never have had the privilege of addressing you all today.

To the lecturers and tutors at this great institution – thank you for imparting your enthusiasm and dedication to the law to all your students.

To my employers throughout law school, including Ragni Mathur who is so kindly here tonight, thank you for teaching me how to translate theory into practice, and for being such wonderful and patient mentors.

To my family – in particular, my dad, grandmother, and brother – thank you for loving me unconditionally in the way that only family can.

To my friends – thank you for supporting me throughout the ups and downs, honestly, I would have quit law school for med school long ago if it wasn’t for your support. In particular, I would like to thank my long-suffering study buddy Nicholas Condyliis, who is the pure embodiment of the idea that with hard work and humility you can achieve absolutely anything.

Finally – I would like to thank the one person who has supported me for my entire life and would sacrifice anything for me, and who would love me equally whether I was here giving this speech or had just been accused of defamation following a corporations law exam – my mother, Karyn May. Now, when I was in primary school my mum began attending university as a mature age student – having never been to university before – and I distinctly remember to this day watching her study diligently on the weekends and weeknights while also somehow managing to raise my brother and I as a single parent – and not only did she do a damn good job of that, she also managed to top her course at university. Having a role model like this in my life instilled in me the greatest sense of strength and independence and fearlessness. And I sincerely hope that all of you here tonight are lucky enough to have someone like that in your life and that you are able to take a moment to really, truly, express your appreciation to that person for everything they have done. So mum, to you I say, though words are clearly inadequate, thank you so much – these awards that I receive tonight are as much yours as they are mine.

On that note, prize winners, congratulations on your achievements. I wish you all the best in the pursuit of your own goals and pathways in life. I hope that above all you remember to look after yourself and your friends and families, and I look forward to working with you all at some stage throughout our careers. Thank you.

Weapons-grade research

Victoria Zerbst on how the Defence Trade Controls Act could impact academia



It doesn't seem outlandish to laud tertiary education as a weapon against ignorance, dogma and cognitive inertia. Yet, while studies in philosophy have certainly offered a shield from bias and intellectual firearms to unleash during verbal combat, it would seem absurd to receive a prison sentence for bringing Occam's Razor onto an airplane.

There are, however, areas of academia that are broadly defined as weapons by the Australian Department of Defence. Many fields in science and information technology are considered "dual-use" (designed or suitable for both civilian and military purposes) by the government and are defined as "strategic goods" in the Defence and Strategic Goods List (DSGL). These areas include biotechnology, quantum computing, optical telecommunications, robotics and, the main one, cryptography.

In April this year, the 2015 amendments to the Defence Trade Controls Act (DTCA) came into effect with the goal to "control the transfer of defence and strategic goods technologies." There are now offences for persons who do not follow military protocol or have a permit or approval to supply DSGL technology. These persons could very easily be academics.

Luke O'Connor is a former security lecturer

in the fields of computing and mathematics who completed his PhD in cryptography at the University of Waterloo. He explains cryptography as "a collection of topics to do with protecting information from people that you don't want to be able to see this information – it's data control."

This control is particularly important now, when internet use is pervasive, and people can send information freely and easily. "Encryption is what gives you the protection on top of the connectivity, so you can create private channels over the internet," O'Connor explains.

An article published in *The Conversation* last month suggested that "researchers and innovators who communicate any new idea overseas without permission could face ten years in prison and \$400,000 in fines."

Luke Anderson is a PhD candidate and information security lecturer at the University of Sydney School of IT. "The trade controls don't cover things which are already considered to be public knowledge. So if it's RSA, some sort of public encryption algorithm is fine, no worries. Where it comes in and starts affecting me is if I start inventing something new," he explains.

Yet in a field marked by constant change, Anderson is concerned that the new laws, which he describes as "vague", could be applied to some-

thing he or his colleagues might seek to teach. As Anderson puts it, "They [the government] can be like, 'that was actually private information, you shouldn't have disseminated that'. And it's actually specifically disseminating it to foreign nationals. Because my class is full of international students, I can't talk about it in my class now, I can't talk about new developments, without first of all making sure – are they in the public domain, are they normally accessible, are they above this certain level of encryption? If I fail to do that, if I actually want to show them something cool and new that hasn't actually been publicised yet, they can chuck me in jail for 20 years."

While the Defence Trade Controls Act was initiated to align Australia's policy with international laws, both the US and UK have protections for public research and education.

For Anderson, his qualms with the act focus less on the fear of persecution and more on the law's damaging impact on innovation. "It really stifles creativity. It stifles interaction and it stifles collaboration. Stomping on something with policy is this government's default go-to action. Unfortunately it hurts the industry, and it hurts progress."

O'Connor believes it will take a long time until people actually realise what they have to comply with. "Traditionally these types of laws have not gone down very well, so they normally go through a couple of stages – disbelief, a lot of outcry for being enacted, then people may start to tentatively comply, and then maybe even they start to comply significantly, at great cost and inconvenience."

He believes the first prosecution will be the litmus test to see how the legislation actually plays out. "In the end we have to hope we have smart lawyers who can argue these cases."

Even though it might be a while before we see our professors jailed for disseminating new information, these laws stand at odds with Turnbull's focus on technological innovation. While it is impossible to ignore the changing landscape of military intelligence, it is important that policy-makers allow for academic freedom and ensure the security of academics teaching Security.

Art by:
Frankie
Hossack

What Indian media can teach us

Erin Jordan thinks Australian media needs a new approach to diversity

On May 18, I joined a number of fellow media and communications students in attending a guest lecture by Jawhar Sircar's – CEO of the mighty media conglomerate Indian Prasar Bharti Media. I will admit it wasn't until I heard someone whisper behind me "he has met Obama!" that my interest was piqued. Sircar, however, proved to be more than just some guy who's met Obama. He carried with him a very important message for Australian media: unity in the community can only be truly forged if we take representations of difference seriously, and put in place systems to hand power directly to unrepresented voices.

A week prior to this lecture, Australia was abuzz with Waleed Aly's "controversial" Logie win. It was only in reflecting on Sircar's words of wisdom that I could understand why Aly's win was so controversial. The truth is, we all grew up in an environment where Australia's ability to accept diversity was vacuously tooted by politicians, teachers and the media. It is because of this that we are unable to reconcile or understand the differences between what we have been told to be true and the actual racist reality of Australia. There are a myriad reasons for this, but our media does play an important role in perpetuating it.

The current state of the Australian media is, if the national shock of Aly's win is anything to go by, rather horrific. We don't have to peruse the public broadcast channels of radio or television for too long before we realise Australian media

needs to put in a lot more effort if it wants to claim that it represents diversity of any kind. The hosts, presenters, weather reporters and everyone really, are noticeably white and predominantly city-centric. As *Guardian* Indigenous editor Stan Grant recently highlighted, there are no places where Indigenous reporters are fairly employed as foreign correspondents, despite them being the most appropriate representatives of Australia. The ABC's dedicated Indigenous department attempts to confront problems of representation, but ultimately doesn't result in the space for a non-conventional presenter to be a part of the mainstream dialogue of Australia, or for regional diversity to be represented. Whilst it is important to recognise this evident representation gap in our media, it is more important to understand what there is to be done about it. So what does Sircar have to do with all of this? Well, I think we can learn from his media system.

The picture Sircar provides of the Indian media starkly contrasts the current patched-together broadcast that is Australian media. Instead it is a "pan-Indian service" comprised of 400 individualised but national radio stations, 125,000 newspaper publications and 15 commercial broadcast centres. Its coverage is far-reaching and all encompassing and each station or newspaper publication represents a different voice. Instead of attempting to insert the occasional arguably token minority (be it ethnic, regional etc.) into a

Sydney or Melbourne based media system, they have their own stations and platforms. It is precisely this management of regional diversity that Australia should take note of.

Not only does Australia have a system incomparable to what Sircar describes, but we are actively moving away from it. Funding pressures on the ABC that have seen regional and rural reporting take a hit would be seen as particularly fatal by Bharti Media. By eliminating regional services, Bharti Media would risk sacrificing the strength that these individualised areas give to the united construction of India. Beyond media, Sircar's emphasis on the importance of cooperation between the regional and the national provides broader lessons as to how we can overcome our problems of cultural diversity. In practice he describes this as dubbing the contents of regional radio songs into Hindi, a national language. The regional is woven delicately, but meaningfully into the national interest, fostering the modern Indian attitude that I would like someday to be echoed in Australia. Instead of requiring some level of cultural assimilation for diverse voices to be heard, their difference is respected and upheld.

It's hard to say exactly what this would look like in an Australian context, but in essence it involves destabilising the current city-centric system, handing power over to decentralised media outlets across the country: a grassroots approach to constructing a media landscape.

Chicho Gelato, Perth

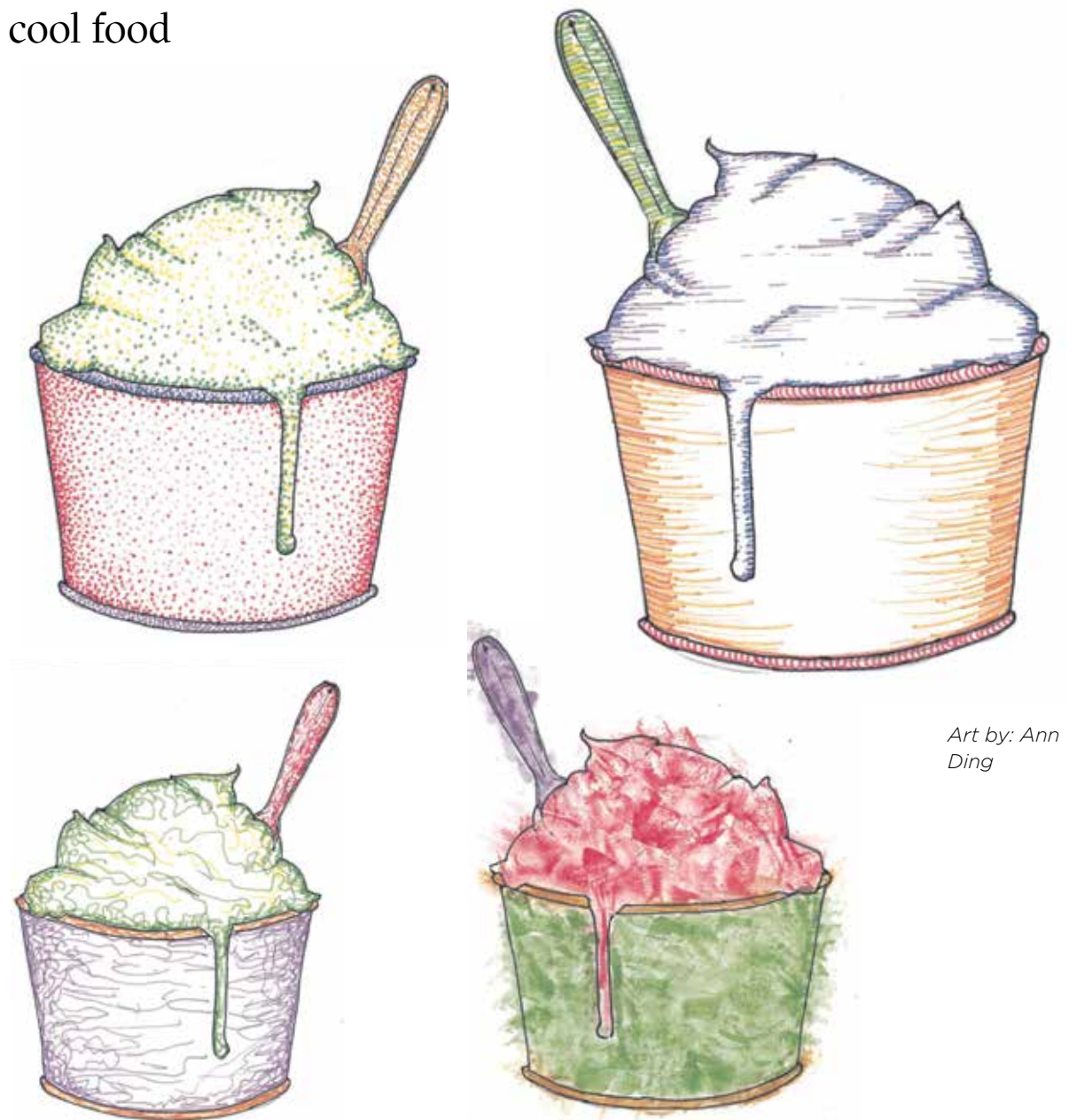
Cool boy Aaron Chen reviews cool food

I had to go to Perth on a plane last week. It was a cool thing to be able to do and I had lots of fun. But there were still drawbacks. The major one was that when I was in Perth, a band called Hinds was in Sydney, and when I left Perth they played there. There was a tiny amount of time where we crossed over in Perth, but I would never be able to meet them. It was my last day in Perth and I was feeling pretty grim about that, walking around with my mates Sam, Tom, John and Sarah. We just got a Tsar's breakfast at Babushka. It had lots of protein, so that was definitely a positive. The spinach was well-wilted. Sarah is from London and wanted to get a "proper milkshake" so we crossed the road to get that. (Sarah was saying how Australia hardly has any proper milkshakes that were heaps thick and that. I agreed. I offered a McDonald's thick shake, but she was like "Nah it's shit." I'm like "I love McDonald's thick shakes." She said she did too, but also it was a very specific mood you have to be in to have it. I agreed.)

So we went to go and get this milkshake. But then when we arrived there they were, Hinds the four-piece band from Spain. I wish I were lying but I'm not lying. They were standing outside eating their gelato. I was like so low-key about it like "omg (note the lower case). i love hinds." and they were like "sick. thanks." My friend Sam was like "Oh hey, I designed your poster when you came to Brisbane last time you were here." The reason he said that was because he had designed their poster when they came to Brisbane the last time they were here. They all had different gelatos. We may have all seemed very chill about it. The truth was I was very intimidated, the rumours are true...I was major-league star struck.

I didn't get a gelato. 5 stars.

Hinds has finished their Australia tour.



Art by: Ann
Ding

Inspired by Indigeneity

Michael Sun willingly desecrated the careful curation of his tweets to live-tweet an event

Last time I was at the Opera House – almost exactly a year ago – I was watching Sufjan Stevens perform an ethereal soundscape through blurry, tear-stained eyes, and walked out into the harbour with renewed perspectives. Homeground Talks inspired a similar change within me, albeit for a very different reason; one that boasted no 10-minute strobe-lit, reverberating, wall-of-sound guitar solos but one that incited cathartic epiphanies amongst its audience in its own way: intelligent and passionate, heated at times, but moderated with refinement by incredible chair Dr. Romaine Moreton.

Moreton has a knack for teasing out the interplay between the speakers’ ideas and posing questions that are sometimes penetrative, always educational. This was never more evident than in Homeground Talks, which – over two sessions – featured some of the Southern Hemisphere’s most recognised Indigenous activists, leaders, musicians, and creatives.

Session 1 was aptly themed “Unfinished Paperwork: Recognition and Sovereignty”, topical given the concurrence of the talk with the anniversary of the 1967 referendum which amended mentions of Aboriginal people in the Constitution. Michael Mansell, Secretary of the Aboriginal Provisional Government, delivered a speech that included a welcome crash course in the ongoing dialogue regarding sovereignty in Australia and a logical basis for a treaty between Aboriginal communities and the government as a conduit for tangible negotiation. He was a refreshing, amicable voice that delivered his argument with seasoned ease and reasoning – traits that were echoed in his fellow speaker and Maori activist Tame Iti, who urged us to listen to the stories of the panel.

Both men were engaging, but it was Rosalie Kunoth-Monks OAM who was the night’s absolute tour de force, enticing the crowd’s utmost attention with her sobering reminders of the continued need for change in this country. Quips like “they are not public servants, they are public

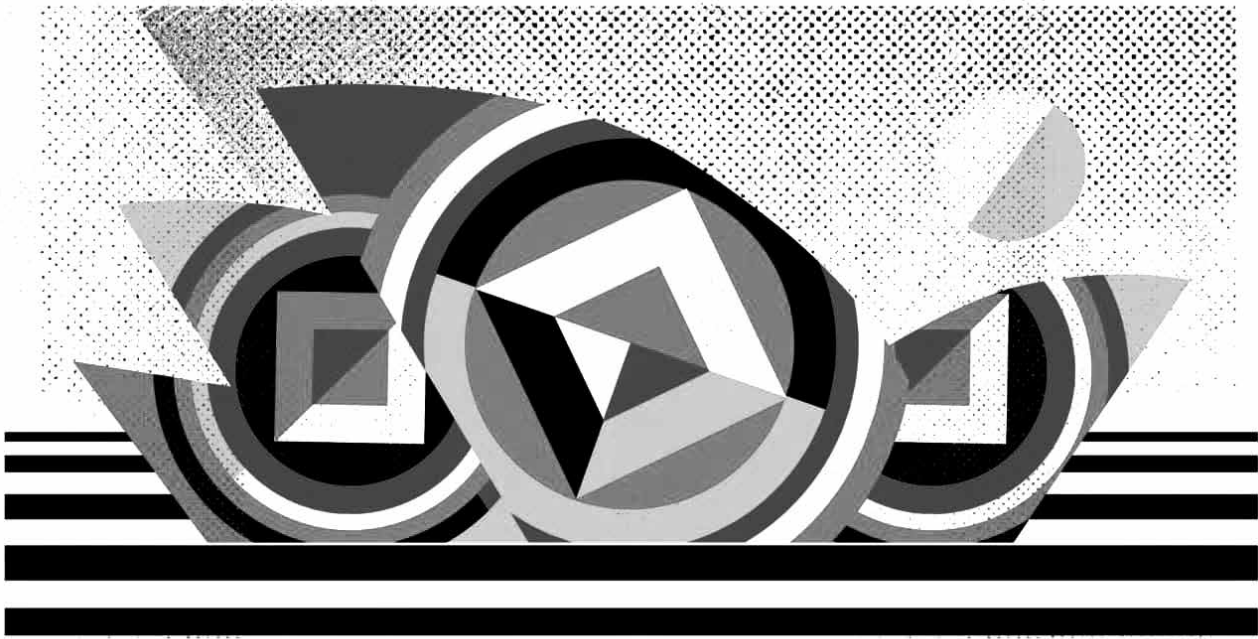


Image: Homeground

serpents” drew uproarious laughter but it was her conviction in her personal identity that ultimately expressed her disdain for debates over treaties and constitutional recognition. “There is no need to talk about sovereignty,” she remarked, “I am sovereign.”

However, the night did not escape the inevitable drama that pervades all panel discussions, and Moreton deserves applause again for navigating the palpable tension in Session 2 between Amelia Telford, Indigenous climate change activist with Seed and the AYCC, and Marcia Langton, chair of multiple Aboriginal-owned mining companies. Their co-panellists’ discussions of music and agriculture in Indigenous cultures unfortunately fell by the wayside to centralise the question: should Aboriginal people, in their ownership of the land, be able to run mining operations that are environmentally damaging to the land? Telford’s impassioned defence of

the environment was a highlight of the night as she explained that despite valuing autonomy, she felt mining was intrinsically opposed to the spiritual significance her community assigned to the land. Langton, meanwhile, scrolled on her phone, occasionally sending piercing stares into the crowd before accusing us of “portraying all Indigenous people as idiots who can’t think for themselves”.

Nevertheless, this minor controversy only enhanced the lively debate of the audience and sparked dynamic interaction between panellists that I expected to see at such a politically charged event as Homeground Talks. There were moments of lightness that punctuated an otherwise charged discussion and ultimately, I was left with a new appreciation and understanding of the modern Indigenous framework in Australia, and a new empathy for the struggles faced by Aboriginal communities in an apathetic society.

“The Golden 9 of Stuvac”

Ludmilla Nunell



How Kim Jong-il took down coal seam gas in the inner west

Eden Faithfull and Swetha Das spoke to a filmmaker trained in North Korean propaganda

In the West, it is all too easy to associate North Korea with totalitarianism, nuclear warfare and a repressive regime. Consistent with this perception, propaganda has been wielded by Kim Jong-un and his predecessor Kim Jong-il as a well-developed and effective tool to keep the masses in line with party policy and in adoration of their Supreme Leader.

Thousands of kilometres away in Sydney in November 2010, residents of the city’s inner west discovered that the New South Wales state government had approved an exploration license to drill for coal seam gas close to homes and schools in St Peters.

Given the insufficient risk assessment and lack of communication with local residents, many opposed the fracking plan by signing petitions, rallying the government, and protesting on the streets. This may not bear too many immediate parallels with a tyrannical regime enforced by a dictator like Kim Jong-il, but someone saw potential in Jong-il’s “supreme innovation” to confront the actions of an unresponsive government.

While heavily invested in protesting the fracking plans, director, writer and flagrant anti-capitalist Anna Broinowski finished reading Kim Jong-il’s manifesto, *On Cinema and Directing*, when a solution dawned on her.

“When you’re fighting a capitalist enemy on steroids, you get new weapons,” Broinowski decided that this new weapon was filmmaking, though not just any indie-enviro flick. She was going to employ the lessons she had read about and, with the help of one of North Korea’s most prominent filmmakers, to create an anti-fracking propaganda film.

Anna Broinowski is the only Western filmmaker in recent history to have gained access to the North Korean film archives. Unlike our most exotic James Bond-esque fantasies, this was not a simple task, and it certainly wasn’t a short wait. It took two years to be exact.

Broinowski was planning to create her own propaganda film in retaliation to the NSW state government’s fracking plans, and she wasn’t going to take the easy route. Broinowski was hoping that the film would mobilise the Australian people to worship the unspoiled land in Sydney Park, where young children, just like her daughter would often play. As North Korean filmmakers are aware, propaganda has a powerful effect on viewers through the use of clear characterisation, evocative music and themes of morality.

Broinowski arrived in North Korea in July 2012, ready to learn how to create a politically powerful film about coal seam gas. Broinowski says she was initially amused by locals’ responses to her project. While explaining what coal seam gas was, she was met with bewilderment about the government’s treatment of Sydney residents. “Here are these people who we say live under this brutal regime... but they were horrified for us.”

Kim Jong-il’s use of propaganda in North Korea is nothing short of brazen. Shooting using celluloid film and primarily relying on stagnant, long shots and post-recorded sound, some of the most recent North Korean “blockbusters” resemble poorly produced spaghetti westerns.

“There is almost something magnificent about stepping back in time into a culture that has evolved without the internet,” says Broinowski.



Art: Brigitte Samaha

As her film developed, Broinowski sought advice from the country’s top propagandists. Although many of the images from the North Korean films are idyllic and reminiscent of simpler times, it was difficult for local filmmakers to shift the awareness that they were indeed operating out of a totalitarian state. “[You know, North Korea has] the same number of surveillance people per citizen as the Stasi.”

The purpose of Broinowski’s foray into North Korean propaganda, however, was not to be a conduit for Western curiosity and sensationalism. The West’s manner of functioning was no different to the propagandist ideology prevalent in North Korea. “By showing an Australian audience the ham-fisted approach to propaganda by North Korea, I could show them how we are also fed propaganda on so many mainstream media outlets,” says Broinowski.

Though our politicians may have a lighter touch, Western politics is in no way immune to falling back on often bigoted rhetoric. “I think populism on both the right and the left is interesting because capitalism is broken, and people are pissed fucking off,” says Broinowski.

While it’s easy for pundits in the West to deride the oppressiveness of the North Korean regime, the information we receive is often being spun in an equally heavy-handed manner. Broinowski contends that we in the West are being fed a singular, one-dimensional image of the country. While North Korea chants its communist catch-call, and declares they must rise up against the oppressive enemy, we laugh in response. We think it is only they who live under an oppressive regime.

Richard Broinowski, former American Aus-

tralian ambassador to South Korea and Anna’s father, reminds us that threats by Kim Jong-il to the US are not the full story. “What the media leaves out is that he actually says more than that each time. He says ‘we will nuke you if you fire at us.’” Mr Broinowski accuses the mainstream media, notably Rupert Murdoch’s empire, of adulterating the facts about North Korea, portraying them as the instigators of international hostility.

A termination of a CSG license over Sydney was finally announced in 2015 – action that emerged as a result of the protests that first began at a grassroots level across the city. With this news in stride, Broinowski still speaks about the lessons she has learnt from her time in North Korea, with her more recent talk being at the Sydney Writers’ Festival.

Broinowski may have been unsuccessful in her bid to end the use of coal seam gas in Australia as a whole, though thanks to her efforts, there were small wins along the way. Sydney Park remains free of fracking, and she continues to espouse her new awareness of the power of propaganda across Australia, along with her trademark anti-capitalist spiel.

Broinowski’s escape into a disconnected world provided more than just an anti-fracking propagandist film; it was an insight into the duality of dogma and fact. “Truth is a nuanced thing. The more truth you have, the more power you have.” She recalls the words of a North Korean filmmaker about their country’s future, that could very well describe our own: “There is a seismic shift coming. Go back to Australia and tell them that.”

Special Consideration: Applying, Rejections & Appeals

Under the University's new centralised and bureaucratic Special Consideration process they are very focused on students providing supporting documentation to show that they were clearly not able to do an assessment or study on a particular day or days.

If at all possible, ensure documents, such as medical certificates, have specific start and end dates and include the date of the assessment. Be aware that certificates stating 'ongoing' in the date range may be rejected.

Generally the University will not grant Special Consideration outside or in excess of that covered by days specified in the documentation.

Don't delay getting your assessment in as soon as you can, even if you're waiting for a decision on special consideration.

Seek advice from an SRC Caseworker if you have a specific concern about your documentation, or if you believe a Special Consideration request has been unreasonably rejected. You can appeal this decision.

If you are unwell on the day of an examination apply for Special Consideration with a medical certificate that shows you are unwell on that day. Get the certificate on or before the day of the exam, otherwise it may be rejected. There are some doctors who do house calls if you can't make it to a medical centre, such as the National Home Doctor Service. You must submit your application by the 3rd working day (11.59p.m. AEST) after the assessment due date or sitting date of the exam. If exceptional circumstances prevent you getting a certificate on the day or submitting an application on time then seek advice from an SRC Caseworker.

Generally the University will not grant Special Consideration outside or in excess of that covered by days specified in the documentation.

We suggest you carefully read the University's web pages on Special Consideration (http://sydney.edu.au/current_students/special_consideration/).

We also welcome any comments or feedback you have about your experience of the new special consideration process. The SRC is aware that there are some real and significant problems in



relation to the new centralised process for special consideration and will be talking to the University about this.

If you wish to appeal, or you would like to provide feedback about the new process you can contact us at help@src.usyd.edu.au or call 9660 5222 to book an appointment with an SRC Caseworker.

Discontinue rather than Absent Fail!

If circumstances arise and it becomes very clear that you will not be able to successfully complete a Unit or Units (even with Special Consideration) we suggest you discontinue by the end of week 13 (Friday 3rd June) rather than take no action and then get an Absent Fail (AF) result.

If you discontinue after the end of week 7 (up to the end of week 13) your result will normally be a Discontinue Fail (DF) - this is a fail for 'progression' rule purposes but does not effect your average (WAM) in the way an AF does.

If you discontinue because of severe circumstances beyond your control that arose or got worse after the end of week 7 you may be eligible for a discontinue not fail (DC) result. Seek advice from an SRC Caseworker if you want more information about DFs and DC applications.

If you're experiencing difficulties at the moment you can talk to an SRC Caseworker or access the University's support services which can be found on the University's website.

Ask Abe

SRC caseworker HELP Q&A



Dear Abe,

I feel a bit stupid asking this, but how can I tell if an email is genuine or a scam?

Happily Naïve

Dear Happily Naïve,

There's nothing stupid about asking for help. The NSW Department of Fair Trading gives these 10 rules:

- Don't respond to offers, deals or requests for your personal details.
- Never send money or give credit card, account or other personal details to anyone who makes unsolicited offers or requests for your information.
- Don't rely on glowing testimonials.
- Never respond to out of the blue requests for your personal details.
- Always type in the address of the website of a bank, business or authority you are interested in to ensure you are logging into the genuine website.
- Don't open unsolicited emails or click on a link or an attached file provided in an unsolicited email as it will probably lead to a fake website designed to trick you into providing personal details.
- Never use phone numbers provided with unsolicited requests or offers as it probably connects you to fakes who will try to trap you with lies.
- Don't reply to unsolicited text messages from numbers you don't recognise.
- Always look up phone numbers in an independent directory when you wish to check if a request or offer is genuine.
- Never dial a 0055 or 1900 number unless you are sure you know how much you will be charged.

If you think you might be scammed contact Fair Trading as soon as you can.

Abe

DID YOU KNOW?

If you apply to discontinue a subject before the last day of semester* you will get a Discontinue Fail (DF)

This WILL incur HECS or fees, and WILL affect your "academic progression", but WILL NOT affect your WAM. This is particularly important for students avoiding Show Cause & Exclusion.

* Semester 1: 3rd June, 2016
* Semester 2: 28th October, 2016

Need help or advice? Your SRC is here to assist you.

The service is FREE, independent and confidential.
Phone for an appointment: (02) 9660 5222

We are located at: Level 1, Wentworth Building (G01)

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President

Chloe Smith

It's the last week of semester one – that winter break looks so close and yet so far! Your SRC is finishing up on a busy note, with our final council meeting for the semester happening this Wednesday at 6pm. As usual, all are welcome – especially if you'd rather not watch QLD thrash NSW in the State of Origin for the millionth time.

Last week was busy as well, with the SRC holding a film screening of The Hunting Ground, a documentary about sexual assault and harassment on university campuses in the US, followed by a panel including the Vice-Chancellor Michael Spence and one of the SRC's Women's Officers, Anna Hush. This is especially pertinent given the recent media scrutiny around disrespectful and sexist behaviour at our colleges. The SRC will be continuing to hold the university to account on this issue and push for genuine change.

In other exciting news, the SRC has been selected to host the National Union of Student's annual Education Conference in July! This student-led conference is a great opportunity for students from

universities around the country to share skills and campaign ideas and discuss the future of higher education in Australia. We'll be holding workshops and panels, hosting high-profile keynote speakers, and engaging with some of the key challenges facing our universities and tertiary students.

This is particularly relevant to all USyd students given the recently released Strategic Plan for 2016-2020 which outlines some major changes the university management is hoping to implement, especially in light of the Federal Budget's implications for the sector.

I strongly encourage as many students as possible to register to come along and get more involved in the education campaign. Students will be able to apply for equity grants to assist their attendance at the conference through both the SRC and NUS. Shoot me an email to find out more or get in touch with NUS via their website: <http://www.nus.org.au/>

I wish everyone good luck with their final assessments and exams and hope you all have a relaxing break. We'll see you in semester two!

Co-General Secretary

Lachlan Ward

So I guess we are at the end of Semester 1, and therefore Georgia and I are halfway through our term as your General Secretary. Over the last few weeks, we have been crunching the numbers and have finalised the SRC's budget, ensuring that our services and collectives are funded as effectively and efficiently as possible, in order to improve your SRC. I have also been involved in assisting with the organisation of the National Union of Student's Education Conference, which this year is being held at USYD. I expect it to be an informative conference, consisting of speaker panels from politics, unions and media, as well as sessions on activism and educational issues. Registration is closing soon, so feel free to look it up or contact general.secretary@usyd.src.edu.au to find out how to attend, with some equity places being available if you have financial issues.

With the federal election happening at the conclusion of semester, keep in mind the current government's attacks on higher education. These have consisted of deregulating

the university sector, gutting funding and seeking to take back your HECS even after your death, something that will impact those worst off in society, most of all. Furthermore the government is committed to slave labor with the PATH program to employment, which when trialled in other countries has been completely ineffective at reducing youth unemployment. Coupled with the fact that the Liberal party still is not committed to action on climate change, legislating for marriage equality, or any of the other numerous policy flaws that they possess, there really isn't anything going for them at this election. That's why it's so important for you to have your say at the ballot box, and I strongly urge you to put the Liberals last as it is where they are already putting you and anyone else who is not a wealthy business owner. Finally, for your exams, I wish you, good luck and hope you do your best!

Wom*n of Colour Officer

Vanessa Song

Vanessa Song did not submit a report this week.

Welfare Officers

April Holcombe, Isabella Brook, Matthew Campbell, Dylan Williams

April Holcombe, Isabella Brook, Matthew Campbell and Dylan Williams did not submit a report this week.

Sexual Harassment Officers

Olivia Borgese, Gina Tran, Lorena White Medina, Michelle Picone

Olivia Borgese, Gina Tran, Lorena White Medina, and Michelle Picone did not submit a report this week.

Social Justice Officers

Kim Murphy & Jack Whitney, Lorena White Medina & Michelle Picone

Kim Murphy & Jack Whitney, Lorena White Medina and Michelle Picone did not submit a report this week.



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The Postgrad Pages

PRESENTED BY 

Thank You and Goodbye

Christian Jones, SUPRA Co-President reminisces on the 2015/16 Council term

My term comes to a close on the 30th of June and this is my final report for Honi Soit. It has been a pleasure to serve as your Co-President for the postgraduate association at the University of Sydney. Postgraduates have faced many hurdles in my term. We have seen the University stall and waste time in discussions about their flawed strategic plan, systematic failing of international students by the Business School, and the Academic Board remove the simple extensions policy and subsequently reinstate it due to the tireless work of student members of the board.

Beyond pressuring University Management and achieving better results for postgraduates, we have separately increased our efforts to ensure the experience for postgrads is exceptional. We have seen the highest turnouts for Wine & Cheese since it began 3 years ago - a timely reminder of the importance of social engagement. Thanks to Vice-President, Thomas Greenwell for leading this effort. We held our first Postgraduate Ball with the USU, an event that has not occurred since before Voluntary Student Unionism. This Ball would not have been possible without the work of our Education Officers, Fatima Rauf and Ahmed bin Suhaib and the USU Programs Department, specifically Michael Sun and Eric Hunter.

We launched the International Student Concession Campaign this year with the SRC, UTS-SA, UNSW SRC, and NUS at an event held on Eastern Avenue with The Hon. Jenny Leong and the DVC (Registrar) Professor Tyrone Carlin there in support. This campaign is ongoing and I encourage all students to sign the petition and help out with the campaign as international students are still discriminated against by this Baird Government. The petition has over 5,000 signatures to date.

When it comes to the University Management, we have to give some credit where it's due. Tyrone in particular has made himself accessible and has been prompt in answering questions and responding to emails with an average response time of 7 minutes. One such occasion was the day before the aforementioned campaign launch, he called from his sick bed 5 minutes after I sent an email and even came to the launch the next day, despite still being ill. I hope this constant line of communication with management will continue into the next SUPRA term.

The Academic Board has gone through a number of changes over the past year. Firstly we saw the retirement of Associate Professor Peter McCallum from Chair of the Academic Board. A sad day for student representation on the board, but there is hope! Associate Professor Tony Masters in his first few months has consulted with students monthly and has listened to the concerns of students and I hope this will continue into the future. He pioneered the "Student Report" as a standing item within the Chairs report, which has given a consistent voice to students in the Academic community. I'd also like to take this chance to thank Megan Kemmis from the University Secretariat for all her hard work with the Board. She has been pivotal in ensuring student representatives are informed about all things Academic Board. She has been the go-to person with her wealth of knowledge about the University during my term. On behalf of all Postgraduate students,

thank you Megan!

Throughout my time at the University, I have had the opportunity to work with various student leaders. However, none have excelled quite as much as the current University of Sydney Union President, Alisha Aitken-Radburn. I have never met anyone as dedicated to the student movement and to student welfare as Alisha. I thank the people of the University for Unleashing Alisha in 2014, you have done a noble service to the Union here at Sydney.

Kyol Blakeney was the 87th President of the SRC and it was an absolute pleasure serving with him. At any committee meeting, he was there to provide a voice for students against management at any decision that may have impacted negatively to students. In his outgoing months, he was still there to fight for the betterment of all students. In particular and along with Tom Greenwell, he was there to speak out when Simple Extensions were under attack.

For the second half of my term, Chloe Smith was the strong independent woman who took over in the SRC. I have seen some of the wonderful work she has contributed and I know she will keep up the fight in the coming months. In my final days as Co-President, I will be co-hosting the NUS Education Conference with the SRC, the first time that a postgraduate association has been involved with the conference in living memory. This would not have been possible without the cooperation that has occurred over the past year with the SRC, USU and SUPRA.

To the 2015/16 SUPRA Executive, it has been a pleasure to work with you over this past year, particularly Treasurer, Josh Preece and Vice President, Tom Greenwell, who have provided excellent leadership and stability to our organisation. You have been with me throughout the year, keeping me in line and keeping us from going bankrupt. Kane Hardy, for all the work you have done with our social media and attending and minuting meetings, Fatima and Ahmed, you have done a wonderful job running our campaigns and events throughout the year. The ball wouldn't have happened if it weren't for you! I thank each and every one of your for your hard work over the past year. I will miss all of you after this term.

Last but not least, Kylee Hartman-Warren, my Co-President. She has worked with SUPRA for 4 years now, finishing up her tenure as Co-President. She developed SUPRA's first Wine & Cheese and has assisted in making it thrive over the years. Sharing a presidency has been a unique experience. Kylee and I have had each other's backs throughout the term, like when I was unwell doing O-Week, one of our busiest periods of the year. Kylee worked long hours and took on coordination duties at short notice.

The staff have been through a lot in the past year. We have gained two new staff this term. We were disappointed to lose Pru Wirth to Western Sydney University but we pleased when an internal applicant, Louise Corney applied for and ultimately moved into the role of Administration Coordinator. Pru has been with SUPRA for over 5 years and has made us what we are today. She has coordinated the publications and administration of her offices perfectly. Louise began in the position during what has been, at times, a tumultuous period. I know that I am leaving SUPRA in

*Postgrads
have
faced
many
hurdles
in my
term*

good hands with her as head of our Admin team (heart emoticon). Both as the Director of Student Publications and Co-President, I have had the privilege of working closely with the Admin/Pubs team consisting of Louise, Anthea and Amity over the past year. They have been a delight to work with, even when they massively cracked it at me with my late submissions for Honi articles and for our other publications (every week, including this article).

Our advocacy team has been very busy over the past year, recording the highest number of students requiring advice in the history of SUPRA. They have assisted our council in numerous activities, including: briefings, media releases and letters to numerous University management staff and outside the university. They have gone beyond the call of duty in my term and I am forever thankful. Adrian Cardinali has been a magnificent Coordinator of our advocacy team and has assisted in every endeavour I have taken with SUPRA. His advice and assistance has been pivotal in our organisation for the better part of a decade. Over the past year, he has always been there when I needed help and when students needed his help. He always goes out of his way to help anyone who needed SUPRA's help. The SAAO team have seen a huge spike in caseload in recent years and have taken it in their stride by implementing new intakes systems and maintaining a positive approach to the organisation to reach the very best outcomes for the students. Thank you Adrian and the SAO team!

Finally, I'd like to thank the postgraduate community for entrusting myself, the Executive, the Equity Office Bearers, and this Council as their representatives to the University. I'd also like to say thanks to all the Equity OBs who served this term! You've been a pleasure to work with for the most part. You've all campaigned and advocated for your constituents throughout the year through activist events, network meetings and keeping people up-to-date with the latest information.

I'll end this article the way it began, Thank you and Goodbye!



Be Excellent to Each Other

Kylee Hartman-Warren, SUPRA Co-President

I am writing my last entry for Honi Soit and I must say it has been an honour serving as co-President next to Council and the current executive. I have learned a lot this year, and I have developed a great deal. This community has been an important part of my postgraduate life and I cannot stress how much I will miss being a part of its vibrant engagement.

This year SUPRA has seen a light of achievements. For the first time in a while, SUPRA regularly released media statements. Additionally, SUPRA supported students at faculty meetings and restructures, and worked diligently with USU and the Academic Board Student Representatives. I hope students continue this long established trend of student representation at the University of Sydney and please continue to use SUPRA as a community to do so. This representation is vital to the welfare and educational experience of postgraduate students today and on into the future.

To me, this year's cross-campus successes would not have been possible without the relationships many SUPRA councillors have built with their fellow student colleagues. I want to thank my co-President Christian, the USU and the SRC for making this year's collaborations possible. Christian has brought a refreshing social

element to the organisation, and thanks to his previous work, has connected SUPRA with key figures at the USU and the SRC throughout the year. I am grateful for his diverse insight to student representation.

I also want to thank Tom (Vice-President) for working hard to bring Academic Board Student

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do so*

Representatives together, and I am grateful for the opportunities that Kane (Secretary), Rachel (Queer Officer) and Josh (Treasurer) brought to SUPRA as they were connected with a number

of student outlets we worked with over the year. Equally important, Ahmed and Fatima (Education Officers) also worked hard to expand the Education and Outreach portfolio, and in doing so, they created a place where students built relationships with each other over the course of the year. Forough (Women's Officer), Mike (Indigenous Officer), Marguerite (Disability Officer), Dhaval (International Officer), and Libby (Rural & Regional Officer) also worked hard to develop networks for students within their equity portfolios. I am grateful for Council for supporting us through the year, and volunteering at so many of our functions where students have the opportunity to connect. I am deeply appreciative of the role our Staff and SLAAO teams play in ensuring that we maintain meaningful activity at SUPRA and that we have the support to see this activity carried through.

Finally and most importantly, thanks to each and every one of you for allowing me to serve and for supporting SUPRA over the years. It has been an honour. I wish everyone the best in the coming semester and remember to study hard, have fun and be excellent to each other.

Very Respectfully - Kylee Hartman-Warren

Government Plans to Scrap Free Opal Travel

By Fatima Rauf, SUPRA Co-Education Officer

Public transport in NSW is already very expensive for many commuters and the NSW Government has delivered another blow by removing the free travel option on the Opal Card. Previously, Opal Card users would only pay for 8 trips in a week after which all remaining travel for the week would be free of charge. From 5th September 2016 onwards commuters will pay half-price on travel after 8 paid journeys each week. The free travel option was an attractive incentive when the Opal Card was first introduced in 2014 and it appears now that it was a temporary measure designed to make commuters switch to using the Opal card over the paper tickets while the latter have been gradually phased out.

The changes have been widely criticized by members of the public since it significantly increases travel costs and makes taking public transport a less viable option in comparison to driving, leading to further road congestion and traffic problems. Additionally, the changes will significantly affect students, who regularly take

*fares are already high for
students who are allowed to
only work a certain amount of
hours a week and are paying
high tuition fees*

public transport to travel to universities. As it is, many students struggle to support themselves during university and the increase in fare is only going to further disadvantage them.

The group affected most by the changes, however, are international students. Ahmed Suhaib, Co-Education Officer for SUPRA commented on



the recent changes: "the people who will be most affected by the proposed changes are the ones who are currently getting a raw deal. I'm talking about international students who pay full fares and have limited discounts available to them. These students rely on the eight trips cap they get from Adult Opal. These fares are already high for students who are allowed to only work a certain amount of hours a week and are paying high tuition fees. It is these students that will be affected most by the proposed changes to Opal."

Since February, SUPRA has been involved in a campaign to get transport concessions for international students, along with other student organizations. The campaign has received significant support; the petition currently has over 5000 signatures. However, the NSW Government has been uncompromising on this issue, as can be demonstrated by the latest changes being made to the Opal Card.

Kaitlin Alexander, a Phd student at UNSW expressed disappointment with the changes being made to the Opal Card: "With the amount of money the NSW government will be making by getting rid of free travel after eight trips, why can't they afford the much smaller expenditure of extending student travel concessions to all students, regardless of their nationalities?" she asked.

At this time, it is very important for students to band together and protest the changes being made. The Travel Concessions campaign is ongoing and I urge all students to sign the petition and support international students.

Additionally, the 'Rally for Fair Fares: Don't Scrap Free Opal Travel' has been organized for 21 June 2016. Students are encouraged to attend the rally and demand affordable and equitable transport.

Law Library Books Discovered To Be Fake

Jayce Carrano is also fake.

The Law Library's collection of volumes has been revealed as fake after a student mistakenly knocked one over.

Simon Carter, a ninth year law student, made the discovery. "I saw a spare seat so obviously I start running but I skidded on some Modafinil packaging and knocked a book off."

Carter said that when he picked up the volume he noticed it was too light to "contain the dense burden of justice".

The Cursor has subsequently been informed that all three thousand law tomes are in fact empty Rice Bubbles boxes painted brown to look like books.

When approached for comment, a librarian told *The Cursor*, "Shhh!".

A spokesperson from the University's Law Faculty said, "Oh god I admit it all. The snapping, crackling and popping went on for days. Our students never touched the damned books. What was the point in buying real ones? I would have gotten away with it too if it weren't for that meddling skid."

This truth-bomb comes just weeks after Sydney University's famous Quadrangle building was discovered to be a plaster façade taken from a *Harry Potter* themed school play.

The Cursor Reviews Famous Art From The Internet

We've had some complaints that our coverage in *The Cursor* neglects art, high art, fine art. Fine. We looked some fine art up on the internet. Here is our review.



This is art. The symmetry here is really good and this is obviously about feminism. Are we still broad now, pretentious fucks? Are we still pandering to the anti-intellectuals with our memes and short paragraphs? It just makes the words easier to read.



I don't want to gender this face. It is a BROODING. face. Sad, sad face painted with paint, is this high culture? It has texture and lines and is miserable. Are we still an immature, child publication? Are we?



Shock! Horror! The human condition stretched on canvas! A classic painting from the internet and it better make us look ENGAGED with CULTURE.



This painting has good layout. I like how it is grey on both sides and is about different times of the day. I have seen this painting many times. It is famous, that's how I know it is good. FUCK.

Dolly Doctor: Top 5 Pregnancy Myths

Adam Chalmers has a PhD in myths

1. Athena being born from Zeus jizzing on Athenian ground
2. Pasiphae birthing the Minotaur
3. Hitler clones in South America
4. Withdrawal is as effective as condoms
5. The virgin birth of Christ

Government Interns Leaving to Join Street Gangs

Jayce Carrano is at it again, this time with some jokes about gangs.

A report has revealed that hundreds of government interns are quitting to work in street gangs. A recruiter for the Bandidos told *The Cursor* that government workers were particularly sought after because of their experience in organised crime.

Samuel Lucas, 21, recently joined the Coffin Cheaters after leaving his position in Canberra. "My new boss is a good bloke. He's offed a few people but at least I know those ones deserved it, hey? Couldn't say that when I worked in the Department of Immigration."

Mr Lucas estimated that he receives approximately \$7.80 per hour – well ahead of the national average for a paid intern – as well as discounts in gang protected stores such as Rip Curl and Boost Juice.

Jane Dyson, 24, also recently became a gangbanger. She said her new position involved a lot more "honest work" than writing media releases for the Department of the Environment.

"I was part of the team that lobbied the UN to remove Australia from the UNESCO climate change report. Once you've done something like that, hustling is nothing."

Louise Lucas, Mr Lucas' mother and the spokesperson for Mothers of Reformed Delinquents said the trend was welcomed by parents.

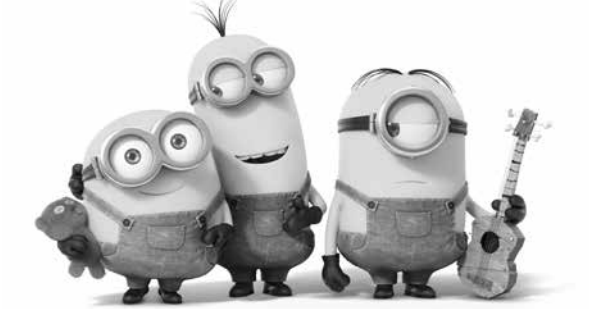
"I was devastated when I found out my boy was working for the government but I'm so happy he's decided to go clean. You know his gang pulled in nearly \$20 million in profit last year. We're very proud."

Michael Parmegiani, who clearly had an Italian name, was also approached for comment but refused to tell us which mafia crime family he was affiliated with.

Updates From The War In Syria Curated Exclusively With Minion GIFs

Victoria Zerbst knows how you like your news

The war in Syria is #bad, but someone needs to report on it. Today that brave person is me. Luckily, we can totally cushion being reminded of war crimes with these lovable GIFs. Let's begin.



Via GIPHY

Okay! So, there is still heaps of fighting in northern Syria. But who is fighting who? On one side we have a Kurdish-led coalition of armed groups. On the other we have ISIL AKA Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant AKA ISIS.

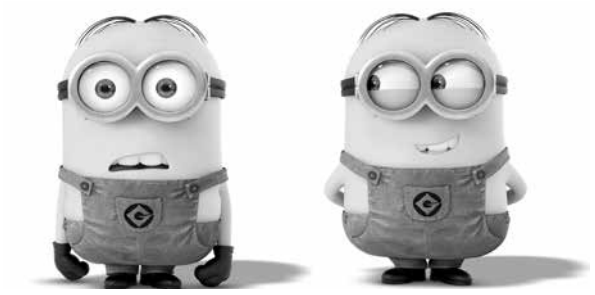
But what's this? The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) are US-backed AND they have taken control of four villages near the town of Ain Issa, about 60km from Raqqa. Look at these minions.



Via GIPHY

OMG so cute! But wait...it looks like there has been an attack on a strategically significant airbase in central Syria used by Russian forces. Was it Islamic State? Journalists seem to think so.

Also, the Kurdish-Arab alliance announced that they will be launching a military campaign against IS north of Raqqa. OMG guys minions are adorable.



Via GIPHY

Islamic State is currently the big ruler in Raqqa, which was home to like 200,000 people before the conflict. IS have committed atrocities against the civilian population since its takeover of the city more than two years ago. Thank god we have minions to get us all through this terrible news.

Alternative Ways To Tell Time In Your Exam Without Tearing A Hole In Time And Space By Bringing In A Wristwatch

Mary Ward has sold all of her Seiko shares

With the advent of the "smartwatch", the University has decided it is best to ban even the dumbest of watches from exam rooms.

But, how can a student with a surname in the latter half of the alphabet expect to read the face of a tiny clock some 2km away from their seat? Here are some alternative time-telling tools you can bring into your exam to make sure you don't fall off course:

1. An hourglass.
2. A sundial.
3. An old man who only has 180 minutes (plus 30 minutes reading time) to live.
4. The wife of an old man who only has 180 minutes (plus 30 minutes reading time) to live. [Author's note: this will probably be more effective, as her cries will intensify in the final ten minutes of your exam, and she will likely let out a harrowing scream as her husband takes his final breath that will alert you to when time is up!]

The Qursor Quiz: Are You More Sydney or Melbourne?

Which one of these ungodly cities are you? Find out in this quiz by Oliver Moore

1. Which weather phenomenon most accurately describes your emotional state?
 - (a) Super sunny!
 - (b) Constantly changeable
 2. How do you like your coffee?
 - (a) Single origin, roasted on site
 - (b) Takeaway only, so I can drink it on the tram
 3. What time do you like to finish your evening out?
 - (a) 1.30am, when lockout kicks in
 - (b) Whenever I decide to, the sweet bell of an arriving tram always awaits me to take me home
 4. Which dating app do you prefer?
 - (a) Tinder or Grindr, for dating people
 - (b) TramTracker, for dating trams
 5. What is your favourite love song?
 - (a) Something by Celine Dion or Michael Bublé
 - (b) The glorious whisper of a tram whistling towards me is the only love song I need
 6. In your opinion, what major design flaws do most trams have?
 - (a) Not enough seats
 - (b) How dare you insinuate that my beautiful tram could be flawed! They are perfect in every way! Shame on you!
- MOSTLY A:
- Congratulations! You're a normal person and will be right at home in sunny Sydney.
- MOSTLY B:
- Looks like we've found the Melburnian.

Trending

[Bondage Enthusiasts: We Wish This Government Would Have More Self- Restraint](#)

[Uni Students Wearing Boat Shoes Actually Owns Boat](#)

[How to Hack Someone's Facebook Oh Wait This Isn't Google](#)

[OPINION: Small Fish in A Big Pond Says 'This Is Spacious'](#)

[Cowboys Edge Out Raiders In Tantric Sex Encounter](#)

[+ This election is EVERYTHING](#)

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