

QUEER HONI

VOL 90 SEM 1 WEEK 6

**the
fight
isn't
over
yet**

**queer
anger
is
queer
power**

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Always was, Always will be, Aboriginal land

The University of Sydney Queer Action Collective acknowledges the traditional owners of the land we are on, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, and we pay our respect to elders past present and future. This land was stolen and the effects of colonization can still be seen today. As citizens of a country founded on the basis of genocide we must actively work to counteract these effects in our lives in meaningful ways. The system of government we have today still actively works against indigenous people through the systems which are set up to protect the states economic workings and status quo, such as the police and the legal system. We call for an overall of the racist imperialism of so-called Australia and call for control of the land to be put back into the hands of those who rightfully should control it, the first nations people. Always was, always will be, Aboriginal land.

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WHATS ON THIS WEEK

»Stand Up Comedy ft. the cast of Queer Revue, Hermann's Bar Wednesday the 18th of April at 7pm

»Queer&A Panel, hosted by the USU, in the Sutherland Room, Thursday the 19th of April 12pm

»Queer Beers, hosted by the USU, at Hermann's Bar, Thursday the 19th of April 5pm

»Speakout For Gaza + Palestinian Prisoners Day, Pitt Street Mall, Saturday 21st April at 2pm

WHAT IS THE QUEER ACTION COLLECTIVE?

This Edition of Honi Soit was written and edited by the members of the Queer Action Collective. The USYD queer action collective is an activist collective made up of LGBTQ+ identifying individuals. We run campaigns against different forms of homophobia and transphobia, and take part in campaigns against racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression.

We also occasionally run social events such as open mike nights and queer beers.

We are an intersectional activist group who understand that all forms of oppression are intrinsically linked and must be fought together.

There is no pride for some of us without liberation for all of us



WHO MADE THIS EDITION HAPPEN?

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A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL WHO WISHED TO STAY ANONYMOUS. OUR LOVE AND SOLIDARITY IS WITH YOU.

Rainbows and Hard Hats

*When construction workers went on strike over queer rights.
Andy Mason is a builders labourer, CFMEU member and huge gay greenie communist.*

Building sites are not something that most people would usually associate with the queer community, Village People videos aside. But in the early 1970s, builders labourers in Sydney went on strike in order to defend the rights of a gay student. How did this happen? What does it tell us about how we can link working class and queer struggles today?

Construction workers don’t have a great reputation for social progressivism in queer- and feminist-influenced student circles. We are probably best known for crude, homophobic jokes and for sexually harassing women from the scaffolding. In some ways, this view is fair enough. The building industry is the most male-dominated industry in Australia, with almost 90% of workers being men, and has actually gone backwards in terms of gender equality in the last decade. Women in construction are concentrated in roles like admin, marketing and human resources. They are largely excluded from low-paid labouring work and more secure skilled trade work on site, as well as high-paid technical and managerial positions, and have poor prospects in terms of earnings and career progression compared with men. 60% of women in construction have experienced sexual harassment at work, while 85% of queer building workers report derogatory homophobic comments by their workmates.

On my first day on a building site, some other day-labourers and I were given the job of cleaning up around site, moving piles of fibreglass off-cuts and broken concrete bricks into a rubbish truck. One workmate was worried about inhaling dust from these materials, and asked the foreman if there were any spare dust masks on site for us to use. The foreman replied that “dust masks make you look like a fucking fag” and told us that “you’re never gonna pull chicks wearing that gay shit.” Luckily, another worker overheard and showed us where to get protective gear on site.

This male-only environment, like the footy changing room, is an intensely macho place. Building sites are dirty, loud, dangerous places. They are run by money-hungry developers who need to exploit the workforce as much as possible, and will cut corners wherever they can to maximise their profit. Homophobic and sexist attitudes can be used to bully workers into accepting unsafe work conditions – if somebody speaks up about a safety issue, a manager will call them a pussy and demand they do it anyway. And if you are on a casual contract and can be dismissed at any time, it’s very difficult to speak up about discrimination at work. I’ve seen managers use sexist notions about women being incapable of doing physical work to pressure young female manual workers into quitting. But paradoxically, these attitudes can sometimes be used by workers to stick up for themselves. I will admit to laughing when a co-worker called a particularly obnoxious corporate visitor to one site a “useless fairy” who “couldn’t organise a handjob in a brothel.” This display of machismo forced the manager to back off, and stop

With a worker killed on a construction site in Australia once a week, there is a serious side behind the dumb jokes.

trying to get me to work in an unsafe way. With a worker killed on a construction site in Australia once a week, there is a serious side behind the dumb jokes. While sexist and homophobic comments are a daily reality in the industry, people can also surprise you. One day during the marriage equality campaign, I was working alongside a deeply Christian labourer

called Albert who moved to Dulwich Hill from Tonga in the early 1980s. Given my own experiences with religious homophobia in my family, I was nervous that he would see the rainbow ‘VOTE YES!’ sticker on my hard hat and that we might have a problem. Instead, he told me that his community visit a local church run by a socially progressive priest, and that they would all be voting yes. “D’you see any conflict between Christian values and supporting queer people?” I asked him. “Didn’t Jesus say to love others as you love yourself?” he said. “I love my gay nieces and nephews. And anyway, the union supports it and I support the union, so I’ll vote yes.”

Albert’s attitude helped me to understand why building workers in the 1970s might have been prepared to walk off the job over a queer rights issue. Firstly, not every labourer is a homophobic meathead – many of us are queer, have queer friends and family and are already on side. Secondly, building workers are very loyal to their union and if the union comes out in support of an issue, many workers will back it.

The NSW Builders’ Labourers Federation (BLF) in the early 70’s was an inspiring outfit in every possible way. The union had spent the previous decade taming the worst excesses within the industry, fighting for workers’ safety and for better conditions on site – sometimes things as basic as access to a toilet and a place out of the sun to eat lunch. 70% of the workers in the industry at that time were migrant workers, who were exploited terribly by employers. Building workers also succeeded in their fight for better wages. These struggles were hard fought, with employers, the government, the media and the police all demonising construction workers. But builders labourers discovered that they could be more powerful than all of these groups – ultimately, they built the city and if they refused to work, the place would come to a standstill.

Jack Munday, secretary of the NSW BLF at the time, describes how after achieving a better life for their members at work, the union turned its attention to broader political issues. Most famously, the union issued ‘Green Bans’ on projects which were seen by the community as environmentally destructive. The Domain, the Botanic Gardens, Kelly’s Bush nature reserve and Centennial Park would all have been bulldozed if not for the union’s intervention. But the union was also prepared to use its industrial muscle to oppose the Vietnam War, demand land rights for Aboriginal people, and challenge Apartheid in

of all are the union’s ‘Pink Bans’, one of the first ever industrial actions taken around a queer rights issue. In 1973, gay activist Jeremy Fisher was expelled from a Macquarie University college after the Anglican dean found out about his sexuality. Despite the fact that it was a secular college, management insisted that they had a religious right to expel Fisher for being a sexual deviant, and refused to re-admit him unless he signed up to gay conversion therapy. Students tried to petition the college to change its mind, but they wouldn’t budge.

Enter the BLF. Macquarie Uni was engaged in extensive construction on campus, building new college accommodation and lecture facilities worth

The BLF’s example shows us that struggles for recognition of social difference and struggles for a better deal at work are not separate.

nearly \$8 million in today’s money. Fisher and other student activists approached the BLF and asked if the union would support them. Munday put it to workers on site that the university’s actions were discriminatory since “the university should allow homosexuals to study there the same as anyone else.” Workers agreed, and a total ban was placed on all construction work unless Fisher was allowed to return to study. The university needed the buildings completed urgently, and management caved.

The union also became active on feminist issues, arguing for the right of women to work as builders labourers, leading to hundreds of women taking up the work. BLF members also supported a strike by strippers in Kings Cross, and refused to build buildings at USYD unless the Philosophy department agreed to run the world’s first feminist philosophy course.

The BLF’s example shows us that struggles for recognition of social difference and struggles for a better deal at work are not separate. As Jack Munday put it, what is the point of getting better wages and conditions at work if you have to live in a polluted environment and put up with social discrimination? Builders labourers’ visionary stance on these issues



pioneered a new ‘social movement unionism’, which saw workers’ role as not just agitating for pay increases and more control over their labour but agitating for a better society for everyone. Some in the union movement opposed this, arguing that unions should limit themselves to bargaining within the workplace and not concern themselves with broader political campaigning. On the other side, more recent identity movements have often dismissed the potential for working-class solidarity with their goals, seeing class politics as ‘economistic’ and blind to social difference. The BLF demonstrates that both of these views are

Citizen Science as Activism

Amelie Vanderstock and Natalie Berry are here, queer, staunch enviro activists and really into citizen science.

It’s easy to fall into the trap of seeing science as purely academic and unrelated to activism. The science we learn at University is often highly theoretical and dominated by knowledgeable ‘experts’. Somehow it is seen as impartial, and beyond application to the real world it stems from. But, what of the people who’s lives the science actually affects? Where does the citizen go to get information? And, if scientific research and methodologies are so inaccessible to ordinary people, how can we keep those doing the research accountable?

‘Citizen science’ is science conducted by ‘non-scientists’, aka ‘citizens’. It exists on a spectrum from collecting ‘big data’ for an expert-led research project, to a community of non-scientists defining and executing their own projects. By itself, citizen science is not an inherently radical practice. But, when highlighting and valuing the power of local experiences and fortifying these with ‘numbers’, citizen science can play a role in environmental justice. When science is done with community and led by community, this is a form of activism.

Let’s look at Maules Creek, bordered by the Leard State Forest in rural North-West NSW, where farmers are concerned with elevated coal dust and noise from the open cut coalmines within a few kilometres of their crops and homes. Whitehaven (the mining company) self-monitors dust and noise pollution which (supposedly) rarely exceeds national pollution standards. However, to locals, the heavy haze that hangs over the mine each morning, and the thick layer of dust that they scrub off their letterboxes tells a different story.

When it’s the mining company that is in control of information on pollution, locals don’t have access to the science to back up their observations. This means they have no recourse to challenge the industries that are undermining their community, with no way to appeal to the experts.

So ‘citizens’ take research into their own hands.

The Australian Student Enviromental Network

Jazzlyn Breen really loves ASEN, hates climate change, and thinks capitalism sucks.

In the winter break of my first year at university I took a jump into the deep end of the environmental movement by going on a weeklong conference with a bunch of people I hardly knew. That week changed the way I interacted with the world, activism and the left forever. The conference was called “Students of Sustainability”, or SoS for short, and is being run again during early July in Melbourne. SoS is a politically focused environmental conference, and unlike what some people see the environmental movement as, is not just filled with white hippies who are really passionate about recycling. It hasn’t even been a year since this conference but I can now call some of the people I met at there my closet friends, and my biggest inspirations.

wrong – unions can and should engage in wider social issues.

The CFMEU lived up to this proud tradition during the recent campaign on marriage equality, unequivocally giving its support for queer rights. CFMEU officials spoke at the enormous demonstrations around the country, and organised workplace meetings to discuss the issue and urge members to vote yes. Officials and union activists explained to members that queer people and building workers share a common experience of discrimination at the hands of the hypocritical rich and powerful in this country, and

that building workers need to support equality for everyone and oppose discrimination wherever it is found. Some members were upset with this, repeating the idea that gay rights is something outside the workplace and the union shouldn’t get involved. But the union has stood firm in arguing that equality is union business – how can we care about our safety and conditions at work but not care about safety for other forms of exploitation and discrimination? Knowing that the union supports me, I’ve never worried about the rainbow stickers on my hard hat since.



know when to call out the ‘experts’ in industry and government is to be critically engaged citizens.

Science can be used to silence. And it can be used to empower.

Many students are in a unique position with the freedom to choose our research projects. Why not choose to work with communities who have research questions and needs of their own? Done well, this kind of citizen science is activism.

Now that’s some worthy procrastination from your Maths assignment. Or... is it a worthy topic for your Maths assignment?

Furthermore, many of us will be considering Honours, Masters and PhD topics in the future. Why not spend those years critically engaging with research that is both relevant and actually useful to real life communities?

Being at university should be equally about developing critical thinking skills as it is about getting that degree. To engage with communities and



Regaining the Radical Roots of Gay Liberation

Daniel Cotton is a member of Solidarity and an activist with the Campus Refugee Action Collective.

Homophobia and transphobia are far from dead. There’s more to fight for, and more they will try to take from us. There will be more battles to come, and tomorrow, just as it was yesterday, the lives of LGBT+ people will be thrown to the tide of history. It will be an active political question who wins, and what direction our lives are forced. It matters for that future what we do today, and for that reason, I’m looking back at the history of the fight for gay liberation for the lessons it has for us today.

People will not be surprised to learn that it was not the cops, the Liberals or ‘GAYNZ’ who fought for the rights LGBT+ people enjoy today, though they will probably continue to receive pride of place in Mardi Gras marches. The fights of yesteryear reveal instead that is was committed radicals at the heart of those fights, who saw first hand that the fight for gay liberation meant confronting the structures and institutions that produce homophobia. It reveals those willing to stand up to state, church, medicine, and ultimately a capitalist world that relies on a heterosexual nuclear family to produce its workforce.

The seeds of struggle

Australia’s movement for gay liberation didn’t merely materialise; it was built on an upsurge in struggle. The late 60s saw flourishing radicalism worldwide. In France 1968, workers mounted then the biggest general strike in world history, spurred on by student radicalism, breaking the idea that capitalism had reached any kind of period of stability. Meanwhile, the Prague spring showed that people could fight against Stalinist dictatorship. An escalating fight against US imperialism in Vietnam showed the possibilities of confronting the world’s biggest superpower. When student protests against the war at the Chicago Democratic Party Convention were crushed by cops, the intensity of police brutality became obvious to many young radicals who saw clearly the need to fight back.

All of this set the stage for the Stonewall riots in New York 1969, where LGBT+ people fought back against police brutality. This instilled not just for those who were there, but people across the globe, that opposition to homophobia could be proud, loud, and public. It led to the beginnings of the US Gay Liberation Front (GLF)—who describe themselves as a “revolutionary homosexual group of men and women formed with the realisation that complete sexual liberation for all people cannot come about unless existing social institutions are abolished”. This overtook the pre-existing ‘homophile’ movement which aimed to assimilate itself into capitalist society, presenting gays as unthreatening. Rather, the GLF maintained that homophobia was produced by the society that criminalised and attacked them.

This sent ripples around the world. In Australia, it inspired some of the first gay liberation groups. The Campaign Against Moral Persecution (CAMP) explicitly cited Stonewall as inspiration for its establishment. In Australia, gay liberation built on and grew alongside movements for Indigenous rights and women’s liberation, and against the Vietnam war. It drew on a trade union movement that was taking strides by world standards. Gay liberation drew from women’s liberation in particular, with women’s liberation groups supporting some early CAMP groups, and helping set up the first national homosexual conference through the newly created NUS women’s officer position. Gay liberation in Australia would be unimaginable without the

tangible assistance and overall backdrop of these growing struggles.

A Radical History

The emerging movement for gay liberation grew gradually—from the first political organisations in the late 60s, to the modest demonstration for gay freedom outside a Liberal Party office in 1971, and the first street march in 1972. Gay and lesbian activists joined women’s marches, leafletted pubs that refused service to homosexuals and protested when the ABC cancelled coverage for Denis Altman’s seminal book ‘Homosexual: Oppression and Liberation’. Marches, sit-ins, and ‘zaps’ publicly and proudly challenged homophobia.

With the numbers of days lost to strikes nearing their all-time height, some workers took the world’s first industrial action on a gay political issue. When Jeremy Fisher was expelled from Macquarie University’s Robert Menzies College on the grounds of his sexuality, the NSW Builders Labourers’ Federation (BLF) placed a ‘pink ban’ (politically motivated stop worke strike) on hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of projects at Macquarie University, eventually succeeding when the University Council came out in support for Fisher’s reinstatement.

In 1978, this movement was shot forwards with what was then the largest gay and lesbian political event in Australia’s history—Sydney’s first Mardi Gras. This was famously smashed by cops, leading to 53 arrests, brutal attacks on those involved, and the publishing of arrestee’s names and occupations in the Sydney Morning Herald, this lead to sackings and public ridicule.

But it was not police brutality that made the difference. Police violence was common; attacks on gays in beats including entrapment were regular, and the murder of Dr George Duncan in 1972 was well known. What was different was in how people fought back against brutality, and the attitude of proud defiance. In the words of gay liberationist Peter Murphy, “It was a police riot, and the poofters and dykes were fighting back... Garbage and garbage bins were flying. I had never seen anything like it, and neither had the police.”

A thousand marched on the streets, celebrating and protesting. In the coming months, thousands rallied in support of those arrested in the Mardi Gras. The movement eventually saw most charges



A protester is grabbed by a NSW Police officer on June 24, 1978 outside the Central Court of Petty Sessions.

dropped, and the Summary Offenses Act ended, meaning protesters no longer needed to apply for permission from police to rally. NSW later became the one of the first places in the world to ban discrimination against homosexuals, and later still decriminalised homosexuality.

Prominent in these responses to homophobia were socialists and communists. Communists were at the centre of arguments for solidarity in the BLF. Trotskyists and communists played leading roles in the origins of Gay Liberation. Socialists were at the heart of organising the 1978 Mardi Gras. This was no coincidence. These were precisely the people who connected the dots between gay oppression, the capitalist system that produced it, and those with the power to challenge that system.

These episodes were key turning points in the struggle that has transformed the experience of LGBT+ people in our society—a movement that fought for decriminalisation, the equalisation for the age of consent, the end of the ‘gay panic’ defence to murder (although not in SA), for adoption rights, and now marriage rights.

The movement today

Last year, on the backs of decades of struggle, we won marriage equality, a step forward in formal equality for LGBT+ people across Australia. This was an important win, putting the final bullet in Howard’s attacks on the possibility of marriage equality in 2004. But it was more than just a fight about marriage; it was a step towards tackling the roots of homophobia in our society. With tens of thousands taking to the streets, we felt how we could force change on our governments who refused to legislate for equality despite the overwhelming weight of public opinion. Many came away realising the necessity of a genuine movement for liberation.

We have a long way to go in tackling homophobia in Australia however. The ‘gay panic defence’ still allows South Australians to downgrade the charge of murder to manslaughter if the victim is gay and the purpotrator claims ‘self defance’ because of this. Religious schools still can, and do, fire people because of their sexuality. Most telling is the mental health statistics which speak for themselves, with 16 per cent of LGBT+ people and 42 per cent of trans people aged 16–27 attempting suicide.

Meanwhile the issue of transphobia continues to rear its ugly head. Until recently, Australia was the only country in the world where kids were forced through the family court to access stage two hormone treatments. Most Australian states require surgery for changes to the gender recorded on birth certificates. This February, a popular hormone treatment, Primoteston Depot, was removed from the Pharmaceutical Benefit Scheme. Overseas, cissexism is snowballing, with figures shuch us Trump increasingly turning to transphobia as a tool of division. The UK has seen a tripling of transphobic hate crime in the last five years, and the US has seen a huge spike in murders of trans people, 2017 reaching a decade-long high.

We should not take the success of marriage equality to mean the LGBT+ movement is necessarily thriving and strong. Truth told, marriage equality was not the battleground of choice—there is no reason any government benefits should be tied to the oppressive institution of marriage. The plebiscite

was just an attempt by Turnbull to appease his party’s right wing, and it emboldened homophobes across the country. There’s no reason our rights needed to be put to the vote in the first place. Even in the campaign itself, many attempted to distance the fight for marriage equality from that of trans liberation, leaving people prey to a transphobic scare campaign by the right.

This gutless move was the symptom of the move away from the proud defiance of the ‘70s to an assimilationist urge that ducks from the battle for full liberation in efforts to gain small concessions. This move from revolutionary radicalism to reformism is again no accident. It happens in the context of the overall strength of the left, and a low level of class struggle. It happens with weakened unions and low strike days, and consequently of social movements all too disconnected from the power wielded by the workers who produce our society. Our best chance for regaining the radicalism and the successes of the ‘70s is to rebuild the same seeds of struggle that were preconditions to that radicalism.

The allies we will need for future battles for LGBT+ rights are working alongside us in the fight against Australia’s torture camps on Manus Island and Nauru, against Indigenous incarceration and

Effective Refugee Activism

Jazzlyn Breen reminds us of the importance of activism and how the refugee movement closed the offshore processing centres in the past.

When you take a look at the current refugee crisis in Australia it can be incredibly overwhelming to think about how we can actually make any positive changes. You may have thought along the lines of how is going to a protest going to get people out of detention? Or, how is signing a petition going to improve the lives of refugees? Your scepticism is completely understandable, but I’m here to tell you these actions do create change. Because it has been done before.

18 years ago, amidst an atmosphere of public disdain towards refugees, figures such as Pauline Hanson were able to force their way into positions of power. This spelt disaster for those seeking asylum in Australia. The late 90’s saw the implementation of Temporary Protection Visas by immigration minister Philip Ruddock, expansion of detention centres and the opening of Woomera detention centre in November 1999. The situation for those seeking asylum in Australia worsened in September 2001, with the implementation of “The Pacific Solution”. This ‘solution’ saw that, instead of being allowed to reach mainland Australia, all unauthorised asylum seekers were to be sent to detention centres in the Pacific Islands. Following a series of tragic events resulting in the death of asylum seekers, public disdain for the treatment of asylum seekers began to grow. In July 2002 the UN Report on Mandatory Detention was released, outlining the injustice and suffering being caused through the Australian government’s policies.

In response to the governments treatment of people seeking asylum in Australia, Refugee Action Collectives (RAC) began to pop up all around the country. The actions these groups took in connection with the unions and the larger public were ultimately successful in helping to close detention centres and improve the lives of asylum seekers. But how did they do this?

The short answer to this complicated question is that people power and unions forced the government to change their policies. The details are more complicated, however, it is overwhelmingly clear that the actions of activists played an vital role in creating positive change.

child removals, and against the Liberals’ savage cuts to welfare, healthcare and education. By pouring our energies into these campaigns, we foster the healthy social movements and deep solidarity that we will need for a full agenda of gay and trans liberation. Equally importantly, we must rebuild the union movement. As workers today or else workers tomorrow, we have to win the right to strike by breaking bad rules, because it is this capacity to strike that hits hardest and deepest against the capitalist system that produces homophobia.

So today, as it has been in the past, the LGBT+ movement needs radicals who see the interconnections of oppression, and understand how the same system that creates racism, sexism, homophobia and transphobia, crushes all the people who make it work. It needs people who understand that this means not fleeting skirmishes but a long battle against homophobia and transphobia. But it also needs people who make the connection not just of oppression but of resistance. It needs people who see that our fight must be fought not against our cis and hetero brothers and sisters, but together in solidarity against the homophobes who sit in parliament.



be forced to change.

Looking at the past we can see that activism has a massive impact on the decisions of the government. A shift in public opinion needs to be followed up by mass public action forcing the government to change their policies towards refugees.

As this is queer Honi, I thought it might be relevant to talk a bit about the plight of LGBT refugees.

The Australian government is responsible for the historic violence against queer people, from the violent breaking up of the first Mardi Gras to the recent plebiscite, where elected officials were allowed to have a say who should and shouldn’t exist. It is the same government which is also responsible for sending queer refugees to offshore detention in places where it is illegal to be gay. Where they face the same discrimination that they risked everything to escape from.

We exist under the system of capitalism, which is a system that allows racism, homophobia, sexism and all kinds of oppression to exist – it thrives on exploitation. Under capitalism people are exploited because of their skin colour, not allowed to be together because they won’t produce more workers for the system to exploit, or are paid less for their work because of their gender. Capitalism is a system that, to function, must divide ordinary working people. It tries to divide us by our sexuality and our gender, and it tries to divide us through racism and refugee bigotry. But we can, and will, fight this- students and workers united stand together to fight the ruling class and everything they stand for. Capitalism is not a system that works for the majority- and the only way we will ever have true liberation for all is to escape from this system of oppression. So yes, we need to fight as hard as we can to free the refugees, but we also need to smash the state, destroy nationalism, fight against all racism and stop being complacent in a system which does not care about ordinary people. We have seen change through mass movements in the past, the people united will never be defeated.

Ending HIV Transmissions by 2020

Wilson Huang looks at the current state of HIV health care.

Historically, infection by HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) was considered to be a death sentence. However, significant medical advances have allowed HIV positive people to lead healthy lives with treatment. AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) is no longer the norm in Australia.

The NSW HIV Strategy 2016–2020 aims “to virtually eliminate HIV transmission in NSW by 2020”. With improving treatment and prevention methods, we have the resources to achieve this. This includes HIV Pre–Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP).

On April 1, 2018, PrEP was listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). This ensures access to a highly effective HIV prevention method. A 30 day supply costs \$39.50 or \$6.40 if eligible for a concession on the PBS.

People at a higher risk of HIV infection under the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM) Guidelines are eligible. They need to be Australian residents 18 or older, have a current Medicare card and have a negative HIV test result. International students may also qualify if their country has an appropriate Reciprocal Health Care Agreement with Australia.

People at higher risk of HIV infection include sexually active transgender, gay and bisexual men and heterosexual people whose partner is HIV positive

USyd is Burning

Connor Parissis looks at the proud history of LGBTQI+ activism at Sydney University stretches over nearly five decades.

In the lead-up to Mardi Gras, it’s important to remember that Mardi Gras began as a protest: a rejection of heteronormativity and discontent with the social status quo. The corporation of Mardi Gras today is antithetical to the legacy of queer activism. Queer activism isn’t about bedazzled ATMs or rainbow painted aircrafts. It’s about continuing the legacy of resistance that’s spanned for nearly half a century.

Historically, Sydney University has been a focal point of queer activism, both on a state and national level. It was home to some of the first people to publicly come out in this country: historian Garry Wotherspoon and playwright Nick Enright. And it was a place of action for the gay liberation movement, which urged lesbians and gay men to protest against criminalised homosexuality, workplace discrimination and the demonisation of homosexuality in mainstream discourse.

Simultaneously, there was a growing anti-gay movement, headed by former USyd student and Prime Minister Tony Abbott, who won the SRC presidency in 1977 after running on an anti-gay platform. Although the counter movement gained some traction, queer activism persisted throughout the 80s. Renowned activist Lex Watson pushed the USyd staff union to pass an anti-discrimination motion for gays and lesbians on campus, which paved the way for similar action in the

without an undetectable viral load (UVL).

UVL is a treatment as prevention (TasP) method. It improves the health of HIV positive people while ensuring zero risk of HIV transmission to partners. HIV positive people with UVL are not cured, but their viral load is reduced to ‘undetectable’ levels as their treatment has prevented viral replication. According to the Kirby Institute in 2016 72% of HIV positive people in Australia had a suppressed viral load with 93% of people receiving antiretroviral therapy achieving this.

Using a condom is also a useful preventive measure. When used with silicone or water-based lubes, condoms provide adequate protection against sexually transmitted infections (STIs). When using a condom ensure it is not expired and plenty of lube is used. It is not recommended to use oil-based lube. Make sure it is opened carefully and squeeze the air out of the tip before putting it on. Do not use your teeth or nails to open it. When appropriately used condoms are one of the most effective measures to stay safe. ACON provides free condoms and lube around NSW. Do not reuse condoms.

As a last resort HIV Post–Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), can also prevent HIV infection. It involves taking anti-HIV drugs for a month after possible HIV exposure including if a condom breaks or slips off. It should be taken as early as possible and within 72

hours. PEP is available from sexual health clinics and most emergency departments of public hospitals. Near USyd you can get PEP from the emergency department of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital or the RPA sexual health clinic.

It is still essential to protect yourself from other STIs as well. It is recommended for high-risk groups including men who have sex with men to get vaccinated for Hepatitis A and B. Also consider getting vaccinated for human papillomavirus (HPV). Consult your doctor for more information. It is good practice to use condoms during sex.

With many prevention methods, we can end HIV transmissions. By staying safe, we can all help end HIV. It is recommended if you are a sexually active gay or bisexual man to test at least twice a year and more if necessary. If you test positive getting to treatment early is important and remember UVL means zero risk of HIV transmission. HIV can affect anyone and if you think you have been infected get tested. According to the Kirby Institute in 2016 heterosexual sex accounted for 209 (21%) of new HIV diagnoses in Australia while male-to-male sex accounted for 712 (70%). Together we can end HIV transmissions in NSW by 2020.

If you think you have been recently exposed to HIV, please call 1800 737 669 (1800 PEP NOW).

install more gender neutral bathrooms, allow 24 hour access to LGBTQI+ spaces, and devote student club funds to LGBTQI+ programs. In 2017, the University agreed to sign on to all demands bar the public recognition of marriage equality. Most of the other demands have yet to be met as well. Vice Chancellor Michael Spence’s Anglican church notably donated \$1 million to the ‘NO’ Campaign in October 2017. Despite multiple on-campus clashes between ‘YES’ and ‘NO’ campaigners, which gained the attention of national and international media, marriage equality can very much be considered one of the biggest wins the queer community and its allies have ever witnessed.

2018 is a fresh start with new goals for the queer community. University of Sydney Queer Officers Ray Prout and Jazz Breen said that it was time to move away from “bourgeois issues” and “pink capitalism.” More concretely, this means, recognising marriage equality as a win, but also as a campaign that has “held us back from doing almost anything else.” Prout and Breen encouraged people to “go to rallies, chat to people at social events, go to organising meetings, question our own beliefs about the world, and to listen to the people around us.” The strong history of queer activism is far from over, and we too can be the like the activists before us. So remember, whether you’re watching or marching in the 40th anniversary of Mardi Gras, remember why we’re there, but also where we have to be.

Queer Scientists in the Spotlight

Joshua Massingham takes a look at the queer scientists that you should know about.

I’m a nerd. Its not really complicated. My book shelf has a shameful number of science education books on it, I love every nerdy TV show and movie you’ve probably heard of and, the most compelling evidence yet, I decided to pursue a science degree. However, I wasn’t always sure that was something I wanted to do. One of the main reasons I didn’t want to do a science degree was I was scared that, as a queer person, science wouldn’t be welcoming for me.

Take a minute and think of some famous scientists, a few probably come to mind quite quickly. People like Neil deGrasse Tyson, Albert Einstein, Marie Curie, etc. However, pretty much the only queer scientists most people know Alan Turing, a man who was chemically castrated by the British government for being gay. So you can why I was nervous about entering science.

My aim for this article, therefore, is to introduce everyone to some awesome queer scientists and STEM professionals, and to try and shift the heteronormative and homogenous image of science. Even if its only six people at a time.

Sally Ride
Sally Ride is an America physicist and Astronaut who was born in 1951. She grew up in Los Angeles and earned her Bachelors, Masters and Doctorate degrees from Stanford University.

Sally joined NASA in 1978 and flew in the space shuttle Challenger in 1983, making her the first American woman in space (she was preceded by two soviet women). She flew again in 1984, also in Challenger giving her a total of over 300 hours in space. She is also the first known LGBTQIA+ astronaut.

After NASA Sally worked for Stanford university and was a Professor of Physics at the University of California, San Diego. Her partner, Tam O’Shaughnessy, was also a professor there, although they had met when they were much younger.

Sally unfortunately passed away from pancreatic cancer in 2012.

Lynn Conway
Lynn Conway is an American computer scientist and Trans rights activist. Lynn grew up in White Plains New York and attend MIT and Columbia University earning Bachelors and Masters level degrees.

She worked for IBM from 1964-1968 before being fired because of her intention to transition. However, she still went on to have a remarkable career in computer science with her research helping to revolutionise microchip design.

She became a professor of electrical engineering and computer science at the University of Michigan in 1985 and retired from that role in 1998 as professor emerita.

Since 2000 when she self-published her story of transition, Lynn has been a remarkable activist for Trans rights. She has advocated for transgender people’s rights for equal opportunities in STEM fields and in 2009, she was named a “Stonewall 40 Trans Hero”. She has also been featured by Time Magazine as one of “21 Transgender People who Influenced American Culture.”

Greg Brown and Mitch Moffit
Both born in 1988, the couple met while studying biological science at the University of Guelph. Since 2012 they have run an incredibly influential science education channel called ASAP Science, which is there to provide “Your weekly dose of fun and interesting science.”

In June 2014, the couple released a video titled ‘Coming Out Twice’ where they told their audience of their relationship after receiving a large number of homophobic comments. Another reason the couple decided to talk about their relationship, is due to the lack of LGBTQIA+ visibility in STEM fields, and how they wanted to try and help change that.

The channel has an impressive seven and half million subscribers and nearly one billion total views and their videos range all of different scientific areas of inquiry and feature videos such as, “Humans in 1000 years” and “Where do texts go?”

Ben Barres
Barres was born in 1954 and is an American neurobiologist. He grew up in West Orange, New Jersey and obtained his Bachelor of Science in Biology from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, his medical degree from Dartmouth medical school, and a doctorate in Neurobiology from Harvard University.

His research has focused mainly on interactions between neurons and glial cells and he has authored or co-authored over one-hundred and sixty publications. He is a co-founder of a company which provides drugs to block neurodegeneration of Alzheimer’s disease. He has also released publications detailing sexism within science fields.

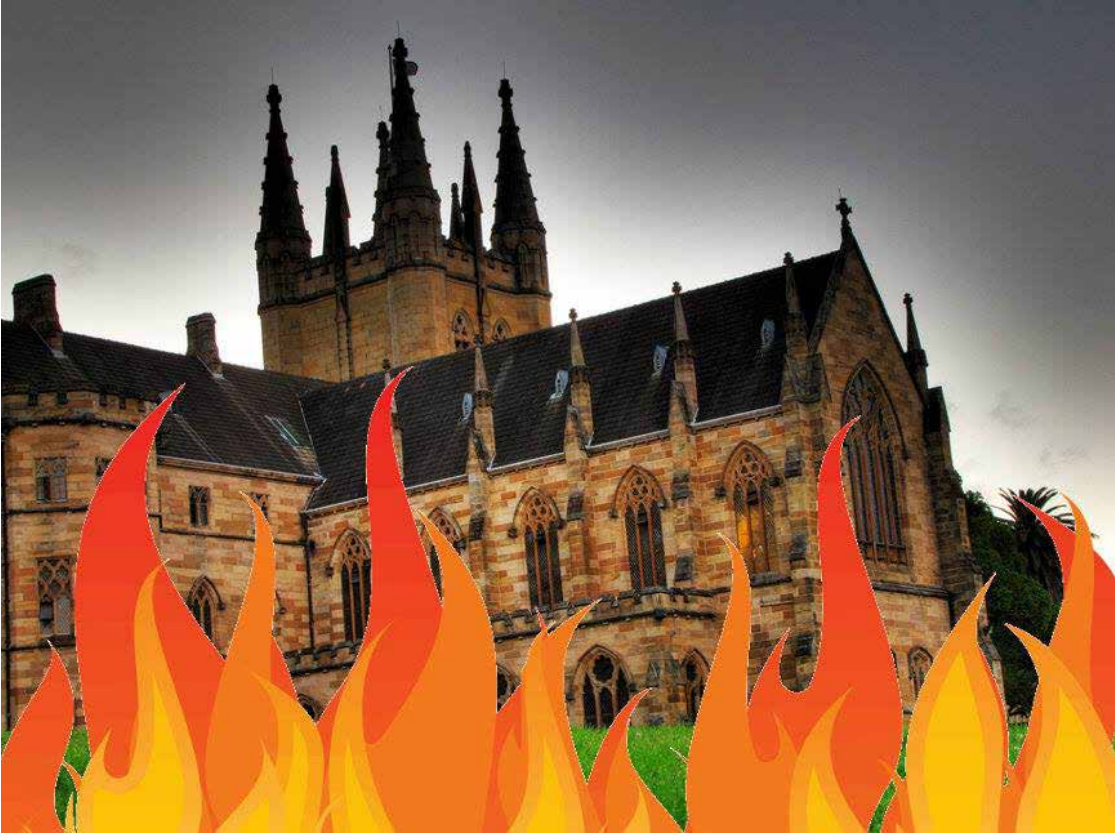
In 2013 he was elected to the National Academy of Sciences and became their first openly transgender member.

Ben passed away from pancreatic cancer on 27th December 2017.

Audrey Tang
Born in April 1981, Audrey is a Taiwanese software programmer. She dropped out of high school at 14 and by age 19, was in California working in software companies and as an entrepreneur.

Most of Tang’s contributions to software belong in free software and open source efforts. She is best known for starting and leading the Pugs project. She has also helped to create traditional Chinese translations for open-sourced-related books.

Tang is the youngest minister without portfolio in Taiwanese history, having been named so in August 2016. In October of the same year she was given the office as “Digital minister”. She is the first transgender official to hold a top executive cabinet position in Taiwan.



Where to be Queer and Funk Out

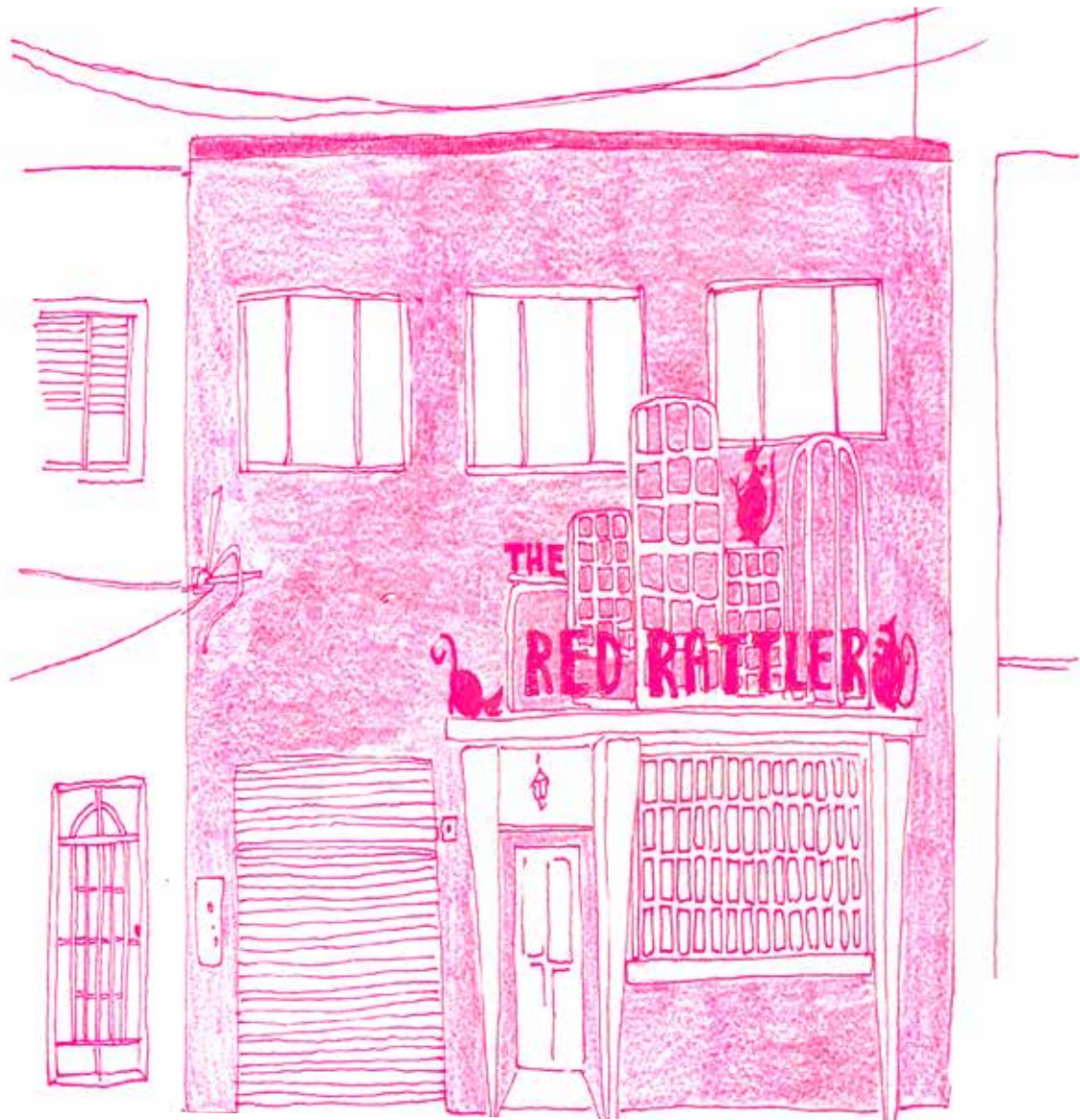
Harry Gregg investigates the queer party scene in Sydney.

The lockout laws have taken an unfortunate sledgehammer to Sydney’s nightlife and culture. Luckily, this has disproportionally affected the straights, who don’t know how to party anyway. Despite taking a hit and with tragic closures of icons like the Midnight Shift, Sydney is still the queerest city in Australia with a vibrant community. Sydney still hosts the world’s biggest Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras (suck it Melbourne) and you can still very much go out for a boogie with the queer community. It’s so important to have venues where the queer community can go and be themselves, find themselves, and have a good time. The best way to keep Sydney open is to go out and support the venues fighting the repressive NSW Liberal government.

Here’s my take on some of the queer places in Sydney, and how many funks out of ten they’re worth and how unlikely you are to run into Tony Abbott in them.

ARQ
Lets start with a big one. The slogan of Arq is “you always end up at Arq” and they’re right, you do. The place is open until 7am and with two levels and a smoking area known as ‘trash alley’, Tony Abbott is probably nowhere in sight. You can’t enter the club between 2–5am, but it’s still a very, very late trader. Arq has pretty incredible drag shows at 2am, which the whole top floor stops to watch. The music could be better though, with many of the gay classics shoved out for spacey electronica, which somehow doesn’t get the vibes going all the time. But who knows what it’s like on the non-free nights, as I am too poor to go.

VERDICT
The music isn’t as funky as it should be, but the place is a staple and you really do always end up there. 6.5 Funks out of 10.



RED RATTLER THEATRE
Perched in lockout free Marrickville, the Red Rattler Theatre truly embraces all the things weird and wonderful about the queer community. From hosting a range of events like queer stories to Heaps Gay parties, the Red Rattler is something really needed and loved in Sydney. It is so great to have a queer venue that really seeks to platform those in our community who are left out and overlooked in queer party spaces. Women, Trans people, queer people of colour, queer people who are still figuring it all out and everything in between are welcome here, and it shows those who run the Red Rattler have put effort in to show it.

VERDICT
Good, weird and gay AF content. 9 Funks out of 10.

STONEWALL
Named after the iconic American queer rights riots in the 70’s at its sister club in New York, Stonewall is probably the number one place on Oxford St. With three levels, constant drag queening and a variety of vibes to choose from Stonewall is a place you can get your funk on. From the classy wine bar, to the people desperately looking for hookup on the intentionally dark third floor, Stonewall really has something for every level of trash. The music here is much better; on most nights you can hear a range of classic, funk and disco. Kicking on usually to around 4am and with a cage that suggests a whole bunch of sins that would make Tony Abbott uncomfortable, Stonewall is a must for any Oxford St night out.

VERDICT
Stonewall is a classic that also acknowledges the radical history of queer activism. 8 Funks out of 10.



BIRDCAGE
On one night a week but I wish it was my whole life. This place has everything: Free Entry, No Lockouts and disco after disco after disco. The best thing about it though is that it is a night for queer women. After your queer boogie warm up at Canned Fruit, head your way up Enmore Road from 11pm onwards to get the best of this gem. Venues like this are so important, to mount a challenge to misogyny in the queer community, especially in the male centric clubs of Oxford Street. Platforming women and non-binary artists you can always get an incredible range of tunes to funk down to at Birdcage. Clear out your Wednesday because you need to be down at the Sly Fox.

VERDICT
9.5 Funks out of 10. Seriously damn funky with good politics to back it up.



Artwork by *Eloise Myatt*

ALSO OF NOTE

Heaps Gay parties: despite always charging entry fees, these are some of the best parties in Sydney. Gracing many queer venues, live performances and an inclusive vibe make Heaps Gay a definite on the to funk list.

Landsdowne Saturdays: The iconic live music venue is planning to have queer parties every Saturday. With no lockouts and free entry, I am definitely going to fail my uni degree here.

Palms: Bangas are guaranteed here. However, everyone is old. Good on them I guess, but I prefer to boogie with my own generation. Go have fun in those properties you all own.

Tokyo Sing Song: Open until 6 am on beloved King St. It’s either really good here or just plain weird. I guess that’s just Newtown in general though.

Newtown Hotel: Hosting many drag shows and queer performances, the Newtown Hotel is just a classic pub but it’s queer friendly. The Newtown Hotel has \$4 pizza for students which is seriously a big mood. Come for the pizza, stay for the gay.

That’s my wrap.
Peace Out. Straight People are Lame. The Funk Shall Live On.

THE IMPERIAL
Baby she’s back! After a hiatus that left a hole in everyone’s hearts (look up the articles, it’s a long story with this one) the ‘Priscilla Queen of the Desert’ star is back with a vengeance and is ready to make everyone in Erskineville funky and queer again. Like everything in the inner west The Imperial has gentrified after many years of yuppie infiltration, but with the night club open and ready for your disco shoes it’s a must. One of the really nice things about the Imperial is when you sit down and watch some cabaret or a drag show, you feel like you’re back in old school Kings Cross before it went to shit. After a successful rebirth during Mardi Gras and many a party since, the Imperial hosts a wide range of events to tickle your fancy.

VERDICT
Good to see her back. I am looking forward to seeing more. 8 Funks out of 10.

A Place for us

Eva Sevrin reflects on how a welcoming space can be the best gift of all.

On my birthday (which was the first week of classes), I discovered the Queer Space. It was the day that I realized a room with couches and posters might have been the best gift I ever got. Hear me out. I'm an international student from Belgium, where the idea of a queer space would be highly controversial (I've never even heard someone suggest something as wild as this). Don't get me wrong, queer people in my country are 'lucky' in many ways; we've even had marriage equality since 2003.

However, I've always felt that these rights came at a certain precondition. When I came out, 'friends' have told me that "it's fine as long as you don't start too act gay". Whatever that means. It means that you can be gay, but only in the most invisible way. I'm well aware assimilation might be a relatively small price to pay, but it's still far from liberation. In one of her essays, Roxane Gay wrote about being queer: 'It gets better unless you're in the wrong place at the wrong time. Sometimes the wrong place is your home, the one place where you should be able to feel safe no matter what the world is like". It's a sentence that has haunted me ever since. The 'right place at the right time' is still a rare treasure to find. I know this is true because of the fact that 26.5% of queer people in my country have tried to take their own life. My uncle is one of them, something my grandmother told me while her eyes were full of regret. My grandparents struggled a bit too long to find a way to reconcile certain religious beliefs with the fact that their 40-year-old son was in love with a man.

It's strange to want to hug a grown-up. It's strange to study abroad, get this wonderful opportunity and secretly think 'I wish I could have taken you here'. We can't forget how many don't get this opportunity, how many people we actually **have** lost (and are losing) because they couldn't find a room where it was okay. So when I walk through this door, every time, I feel myself taking deep breaths. It still feels surreal we get to be here, from places all over the world. It's one single room. We get posters. We get couches. We get to read, talk and laugh here. We get to realize that we found 'the right place'. I wonder how many of us get to breathe here for the very first time. I also wonder how many take this room for granted.

I hope that next time you walk through that door you think about the people who don't get to be where we are. That we have to fight for them. When I go home again, I'm going to talk to my vice-chancellor. Fight for an autonomous place for people like us. The thought of little queer spaces all over the world is a hopeful one. Everyone deserves at least one room of their own, a room to call home.

An Open Discourse on Open Relationships

Kida Lin takes a critical look at the state of queer dating.

We are gays. We fuck people we met on Grindr and we move on. That's just how things are. If you want 'romance', probably should go and watch *Fifty Shades of Grey*."

That's probably the last time I spoke to D. By that time, I had been seeing D for three months, and, he had a boyfriend.

I often think about that conversation—partly because I never watched *Fifty Shades of Grey*, and partly because I have an ambiguous feeling towards open relationships.

It can be liberating, or so we are told. It can be particularly important for queer people, as it signifies a rebelling breakaway from heteronormative norms, a loud and reassuring "fuck you" to the mainstream. It is a performative act of transforming ('destroying') the norms around relationship and marriage to the face of conservatives.

In addition to and because of its political and ideological significance, the ability to opt into and enjoy non-monogamous relationships can often be a yardstick for our queerness. It is not "queer enough" to settle with one person, just as it is not queer enough to settle for sex that's not kinky and adventurous. This competition to be the queerest and the coolest is also a platform for power rela-

tions. The ability to be detached and the readiness to move on often indicate to others and ourselves how much capital we have in this competitive market.

Of course, this is not to suggest that queer people who subscribe to open relationships do so necessarily because of these reasons. For too long, society has consistently stigmatised any relationships that deviate from traditional norms. We should, therefore, celebrate any social progress that affords individuals greater freedom and more choices. The point, however, is that social movement whose ultimate aim is inclusion should not to entrench further exclusion. Ultimately, what we need is a better and more genuine discourse about open relationships.

It is tempting to downplay the importance such a discourse with a conclusion, "what matters is simply everyone chooses what they want. If this is not for you, don't do it." That ignores the reality of queer community today. Just as there is a pernicious heteronormative norm dictating what's 'normal' in the society, there emerges a concurrent specific norm prescribing what's 'queer' in the queer community. Namely, *it is hard* if you don't make certain choices.

Perhaps it is also not that liberating. Some people in open relationships have very strict and details rules about who they can and cannot do. No kissing;



Art By Anonymous

oral only; only when travelling. These rules certainly do not render their choices illegitimate and it can be crucial to define clearly what each other is comfortable with in a relationship. However, encounters with these people do make me wonder how reliable is the picture of 'unfettered freedom' that some are only too ready to paint.

On a deeper level, discourse on open relationships propels us to examine some underlying shifts in the queer community. Last year, Huffington Post columnist Michael Hobbes published an article titled "The Epidemic of Gay Loneliness". The piece sparked heated debate while resonating with many others. It points to a seemingly paradoxical phenomenon—the social progress in greater society doesn't seem to improve the wellbeing of many queer individuals. It argues that apart from transforming laws and people's attitudes in the society, we also need to take a critical look at the norms in the queer community.

There is no easy answer. But we should at least challenge the current discourse on open relationships that is framed exclusively around freedom and defiance. This will require us to ask some hard questions: the value of mobility and stability, the ideal of intimacy, and how power dynamics operate to include while excluding.

Queers for Palestine

Ray Prout discusses queer activism and the Israel–Palestine conflict.

Last year, the University of Sydney Queer Action Collective made a banner with the words "Queers for Palestine" painted on it. As soon as the image was posted, it on the right wing radar, and our seemingly innocuous photo was condemned on pages internationally. So what was all the fuss?

At this point in history, Israel is an apartheid state. This sentiment is echoed by those who fought within apartheid regimes, such as Nobel Peace Prize laureate Desmond Tutu, and Nelson Mandela, who stated in 1997 that "Apartheid is a crime against humanity. Israel has deprived millions of Palestinians of their liberty and property. It has perpetuated a system of gross racial discrimination and inequality. It has systematically incarcerated and tortured thousands of Palestinians contrary to the rules of international law and waged war against a civilian population, in particular children".

The BDS movement, standing for *Boycott, Divest and Sanction*, is a movement that has been growing since 2005 within the international community, and seeks to provide not only social, but political, economic and cultural consequences to Israel's treatment of the Palestinian people. In a recent example of an influential boycott, Lorde chose to not perform in Tel Aviv after an article by two New Zealand students asked her to reconsider her visit. These are statements that boycott organisations and institutions rather than individuals, and is not some sort of reactionary dogma, but rather a tactic outside of political solutions that can be undertaken by anyone, be it at an individual level or at a organisational level. The effect of boycotts is that it creates the opportunity for more conversations about the Israel–Palestine conflict, which in turn leads to a domino affect.

The queer BDS movement seeks to, as Angela Davis said, "*broaden the terrains of struggle*", using the current 'marketability' of queerness within the

western political landscape to deconstruct and delegitimize the current Israeli settler colonial narrative. In a speech to the US Senate, Benjamin Netanyahu stated "*Israel has always embraced this path [of liberty] in a Middle East that has long rejected it. In a region where women are stoned, gays are hanged, Christians are persecuted, Israel stands out. It is different.*" Israel is proud and open within its support of queer culture and uses it as a shining example of how they are progressive within social issues; Tel Aviv is a thriving gay district, pride weeks are heavily spruiked by Israeli tourism boards, and most notably, trans individuals are welcome and



celebrated within the IDF. To an outside observer, these seem like the hallmarks of a progressive and tolerant nation, but much of this is largely performative, with very little substance. This use of queer narratives is known as 'pinkwashing', and it is meant to cover up transgressions and silence potential critique with a facade of progressiveness and equality. In engaging in pinkwashing, Israel is not "promoting gay rights". It uses the relative freedom accorded to (Jewish Israeli) gays as a public relations tool.

Want to get involved? Here are some events coming up.

>**Speakout for Gaza + Palestinian Prisoners Day Saturday April 21st, 2pm at Pitt Street Mall**

There are currently 6,119 Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli prisons; three hundred and fifty-two of these are children. Israeli military courts prosecute 700 children every year, with more than a 99 percent conviction rate. Physical abuse and sexual violence are routinely used to coerce Palestinian prisoners into making confessions. Ahed Tamimi is one such prisoner, currently facing up to ten years imprisonment for slapping two Israeli soldiers trying to invade her home. She is being particularly targeted because of the role of the Tamimi family in resisting the Israeli settlers' theft of land and water in their occupied West Bank village.

>**Stand With Palestine: Raise the Flag at USYD Wednesday May 2nd, 1pm Outside Carslaw**

Palestinians demanding the right of return to their homelands are under violent attack from Israeli military forces. At current count, 31 protesters in the #GreatReturnMarch have been killed by sniper fire. Disturbing videos have emerged of Palestinians convulsing from unknown nerve agents hurled at them by the IDF to drive them away from the Gaza "border". The media and establishment in the West is determined to see these events as "deadly unrest". It's clear however that the violence comes from Israeli forces upholding their colonial power and defending apartheid state from a largely peaceful mass movement. The courage of Palestinians fighting against their oppression demands our solidarity. Join this speakout on campus to condemn the Gaza massacre, to demand the Australian government cut ties with Israel, and to support freedom and justice for Palestine.

>**Protest for Palestine: 70 years of Nakba Tuesday May 15th, 4:30pm at Town Hall**

May 15th 1948 marks the day that over 750,000 Palestinians were expelled from their homes and made refugees. In 1948, the establishment of the Israeli state in Palestine through violent ethnic cleansing not only forced Palestinians from their homes, but also led to massacres of indigenous populations and the destruction of villages. After 70 years this bloodshed has not been forgotten, nor the right of Palestinians to return to their homeland. Join us to commemorate 70 years since the Nakba (catastrophe) and to protest against the ongoing occupation of Palestine, on Monday May 15th, 6:30PM Town Hall.

Pinkwashing is not about gay rights at all, but rather a means to justify the continued occupation and colonial settling of Palestinian land. In short, Israeli pinkwashing aims to isolate queer from other identities and make its record on gay rights trump its continued occupation and brutalization of the Palestinian people. As queer activists, we seek to reject the cooptations of our narrative—Israel is not 'different' because it flies the rainbow flag, it is different because it is conducting land theft, state sanctioned violence on Palestinian men women and children, and hiding these actions behind a rainbow flag. Things do not exist in a vacuum: we must also be attentive to the oppression that these purported rights conceal. A myopic view of queer politics as a single-axis excludes other interconnected injustices based on race, ethnicity, class, gender, and other markers of difference. There is no liberation for us if it may cost the lives of a nation.

This year is the 70th anniversary of the Nakba (literally translated as 'the catastrophe'), where 700,000 Palestinians were uprooted from their homes, creating a refugee crisis that is still not resolved. NUS Ethnocultural officer and Sydney University Palestine Activist Hersha Kadkol said that "BDS has been the key campaign internationally for mobilising solidarity with the struggle for Palestinian liberation and raising awareness for the cause. It's fantastic to see 70 academics at this University participating in a boycott of Israel to highlight the massacre of peaceful protesters in Gaza in the last weeks. With the pro-Israel establishment cracking down on BDS activists and their victories in the US, it's so important that students and staff continue to keep up the pressure on campuses of another major ally here in Australia. We're raising the flag for Palestine at a speak out on Wednesday 2 May, 1pm on Eastern Avenue. All supporters of free Palestine are welcome." There will be protests taking place internationally, and needless to say, our banner won't be disappearing any time soon.

After the Afterparty

Jesse Krause talks Mardi Gras and Gaytms.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of Mardi Gras in Australia, an iconic expression of queer pride. For many in our community, it is a time of celebration, acceptance and pride in our identities. However, the Mardi Gras we celebrate today is far removed from the Mardi Gras of the past. The Mardi Gras of today does not evoke strong feelings of pride for me – it’s a hollow celebration that makes me ache for a return to a powerful, activist queer movement that fights for true liberation; not for us to be little more than objects to be paraded around by a pink capitalist hegemony. In the fight for recognition and survival, our movement has been co-opted and weakened by insidious forces.\

It was tireless and fearless activists who first fought for our right to express pride – in the face of police brutality, political indifference to our plight and near-universal discrimination, brave activists fought for the right of queer people to exist and survive in a world that despised us. Here in Australia, women were dragged off the streets by their hair, queer people were beaten bloody by police, and anyone seen at Mardi Gras was publicly shamed by the media and forced out of their jobs and families. There were decades of brutal struggle before we won the right to march down Oxford Street – it was not given to us by anyone or anything; we had to spend years in the dark fighting and dying for it.

The police violence against our community sparked a response – years of staunch resistance by anarchists, feminists, communists, unionists and anything in-between – from a united left fighting for their right to exist against the dominant belief that to be queer was to be subhuman. The 78ers who fought to organise that first Australian Mardi Gras paved the way for generations of activism and change for our community, and it’s their experience of protest and defiance that inspires us to take up their legacy and organise within our community. It was only through direct action and a united struggle that we were able to take that first step and force the state to properly acknowledge us; only after we protested and bled on the streets was the government forced to decriminalise our existence.

That was then, so what changed? How did we go from Mardi Gras being a radical protest of the state and its treatment of queer people to the commercial, tame and apolitical parade that it has become? This year’s Mardi Gras welcomed the likes of the NSW Police Force, Malcolm Turnbull, Bill Shorten and countless others to march and smile for the cameras. The militarised arm of the state that continues to brutalise and torture us, marching in pride? The people who refuse to legislate or fight for us while we suffer, marching in pride? They have no place in my pride. Their very presence is an affront against our struggle and the history of not only Mardi Gras,

but our entire movement. These groups and these people have done nothing to help us, and yet show up now when it’s convenient for them to appear like progressive champions of the downtrodden? We don’t want you here. Fuck off.

You may think that our struggle is over – we won marriage equality! So why shouldn’t Mardi Gras be a celebratory and happy occasion? We do have reasons to celebrate; but celebrations can still be protests, and protests can still be celebrations. We’ve come so far since that first parade in ’78, but we still have so much further to go before we are even close to being free. There are so many battles that need to be fought – but our historic tool of protest has been co-opted by companies and groups that want to present as progressive and profit off our struggles. Our parade is dominated by shameless promotion and self-aggrandizing groups that do little for our fight, all managed by a corporate board.

Depression, homelessness, suicide, abuse – our community suffers and yet we are expected to believe that a horde of rainbow flags once a year has fixed all our problems? We deserve to have control over our pride again. We deserve to have a strong, fighting Mardi Gras that is true to its roots. Queer people are still kicked out of home and forced onto

the streets. We are still sent to conversion therapy. We are still subject to public hate and vitriol when we leave the house. We are not equal. We are made to believe that we live in a safe and accepting world – yet I still get looked down upon and called a faggot for leaving the house wearing nail polish, or for daring to hold my boyfriend’s hand. Pride is a protest – and we need it to be so now just as much as we did in ’78. We need to challenge the views of those who look down upon us, not wear a rainbow flag once a year and parade around for the cameras so a bunch of straight people can feel good about themselves and their own inaction.

Fuck cops. Fuck Liberals. Fuck Labor. Fuck the banks, fuck corporations, fuck anyone who tries to profit off our pain. GayTMs and rainbow logos will not help us; in the face of a corporatized and pinkwashed pride, we need to remember that they only gave us rights because we gave them riots. Pride and Mardi Gras began as a brutal resistance against a state that wanted us to die. We need to return pride to a political protest and reaffirm that we will not be pawns – Mardi Gras is ours, and its current iteration is an absolute joke. It’s time to challenge the state and make our voices heard again.



Pink Capitalism – Artwork by Jess Zlotnick



SRC Activist Collectives

Are you interested in making a difference on and off campus? Join an activist collective! (We’re different from the USU clubs and societies)

Wom*n’s Collective (WOCO)

An autonomous collective engaged in intersectional feminist activism and providing support and education. They publish Growing Strong and Wom*n’s Honi yearly. Safe access zones around abortion clinics, the continual effort to combat sexual assault and reproductive rights issues are all on the agenda for WOCO. Find them on Facebook as “University of Sydney Women’s Collective”. Contact at usyd womens collective@gmail.com.

Campus Refugee Action Collective (CRAC)

The Campus Refugee Action Collective is a group of Sydney Uni students that meets regularly to fight for refugee rights, including an end to detention. Find them on Facebook “Campus Refugee Action Collective Usyd”

Education Action Group (EAG)

A group that believes education is a right and fights for the real implementation of that on campus, becoming involved in a range of different issues relevant to that struggle. Funding cuts to universities, hostile environments to students on campus and anti-racism efforts are all on table this year. Find them on facebook as “Sydney University Education Action Group”. Contact at education.officers@src.usyd.edu.au.

Environment Collective (Enviro)

A part of Australian Students Environment Network (ASEN), Enviro collective organise wherever the need arises to fight the continual destruction of the Australian environment. Logging, fossil fuels, and mining; if it’s tearing apart the natural world, Enviro will have something to say on the matter. Find them on facebook “Sydney Uni Enviro Collective”. Contact at environment.officers@src.usyd.edu.au.

Autonomous Collective Against Racism (ACAR)

A safe space for the many who may feel marginalised or otherwise left out by the prevalent white supremacy in Australia and on campus, they seek to provide a welcoming environment and encourage the representation of people of colour and the wide variety of experiences included within. Find them on facebook “Sydney Uni Autonomous Collective Against Racism”. Contact at ethnocultural.officers@src.usyd.edu.au.

Disabilities Collective

The Disabilities collective organises around issues relevant to those with disabilities, regardless of whether they identify as such. Barriers to the full participation in society on an equal basis with others of those with any sort of long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment is of concern to them. Find them on facebook “USYD SRC Disabilities & Carers”. Contact at disabilities.officers@src.usyd.edu.au.

Indigenous Collective

More than 300 students from across mainland Australia and the Torres Strait islands engaged in building a strong, culturally rich community on campus. They’re also involved with Indigenous issues organising on and off campus. Find them on Facebook “USYD Indigenous Collective”. Contact at indigenous.officers@src.usyd.edu.au.

Queer Action Collective (QuAC)

QuAC is an active collective which works against the myriad forms of oppression targeting LGBTQ+ people on campus and in Australia. Collectively deciding which issues to organise around, QuAC has been involved in the marriage equality campaign, the Manus refugee crisis and the ongoing sexual assault campaign. Find them on Facebooks “USYD Queer Action Collective”.Contact at queer.officers@src.usyd.edu.au.

International Student’s Collective

International students are a huge part of USYD and only growing in number and importance, as part of that the International Student’s Collective works to support their rights and help build connections between those students here on campus. Find them on facebook “USyd International Students Collective”

Contact at international.officers@src.usyd.edu.au.



“The people united will never be defeated”

Sexuality in Cinema: Representation Matters

Sabina Salvatore looks at queer media and why we need more.

I’m writing all this not even an hour after seeing Love, Simon; a film about a gay teen struggling with coming out to his family and friends and concerned about how being known as the “gay kid” will change his relationship with the people he’s surrounded by. That’s a simplistic summary of the plot, but the film, the first studio teen movie to feature a gay protagonist, is a major step forward in the representation of young LGBTQ+ people in film.

An article published by Time Magazine in March this year entitled ‘Love, Simon Is a Groundbreaking Gay Movie. But Do Today’s Teens Actually Need It?’ garnered a lot of attention and a whole lot of anger, mostly directed at the obviously questionable, somewhat controversial title. However, a quick Google search reveals the author, Daniel D’Addario, whose article prompted so much discourse in the online LGBT+ community, is in fact a married, gay man in his early thirties.

The most interesting part of his article is his final paragraph in which he asserts that Love, Simon feels ‘like a film responding to an entirely different culture, like one in which gay marriage was never legalized’ and concludes that the film ‘simply feels like looking back in time’. I can’t speak to the community or culture under which D’Addario has formulated these ideas, however, I can speak to how inaccurately he understands the queer youth culture of today for someone considerably not that much older.

D’Addario’s entire review rests on the idea that in a world, or rather an America, in which same-sex marriage is legalized, we have progressed to an extent in which homophobia does not exist, or at least the fear of judgement when coming out does not exist. However, the decision to legalise same-sex marriage was not global, and more crucially, even where same-sex marriage is legal, the law does not necessarily denote universal public agreement or support (does the 61.6% Yes verdict ring a bell?)

The reality of the situation for the majority of

Blood Bans

Connor Wherrett talks bloody beaurocracy.

Every few months, a red bus appears on Eastern Avenue and invites generous students to come in and donate blood. Naturally altruistic students are drawn to this truck. There are students and staff who have witnessed first hand how much blood is needed in cases of emergency, and feel a sense of obligation to assist.

Yet inside this bus operates one of the few sharp legal lines of segregation between LGBTI+ people and the rest of the population. Australia in 2018 still refuses to allow you to donate blood if within the last 12 months you’ve had oral or anal sex with another man, even using a condom.

‘Men who have sex with Men’ (MSM) have been shut out of donating needed blood out of a fear of HIV. The word ‘fear’ here is appropriate. It was put in place in the very heights of the AIDS panic in the 80s. However, the AIDS panic and spread of the 1980s has not continued all the way to 2018. Condoms are used frequently, men are regularly tested for STIs and PrEP is on the pharmaceutical benefits scheme. It is unscientific and unethical to assume that the blood of gay men is too risky for the purposes of blood donation.

The most frustrating thing about this archaic policy is that even if one believes that the blood of gay men is still likely to be a danger to the health

LGBTQ+ teens is that regardless of what people like D’Addario may assume, and despite wider society being undeniably more “accepting” than it was ten or fifteen years ago, it still leaves a lot to be desired. There are still parents with “traditional” values, still people who feel “uncomfortable” around people who aren’t straight and still the absolute fear that coming out will change everything about your life. There’s anger too that there is still an expectation to formally “come out”, that to be gay or lesbian or bisexual or however you define your sexuality, you have to declare it first. Almost as though you can’t just be yourself, but rather must give people time to process and accommodate this ‘new’ version of you.

Representation of LGBTQ+ people in film is important because it reflects the shift that is in the process of happening. The fact that a film such as Love, Simon is the first studio gay teen romance is the very reason the film itself, and hopefully many subsequent young LGBTQ+ stories, are necessary. There is endless research that indicates children respond to role models who they relate to in terms of gender, interests, hobbies and as I would suggest here, sexuality. For many children and teens that don’t fit into the cis-gender, heterosexual “norm” and are figuring out how to define themselves, a movie can offer a moment of relief from the stressful surrounds of the uncertain world and give hope that everything is going to be okay.

LGBTQ+ films that aren’t targeted at adults, don’t overtly sexualise their characters and crucially don’t end in heart wrenching tragedy are increasingly necessary to reflect that society is shifting, and that happiness and acceptance, while unfortunately not guaranteed, can be found. While there is nothing inherently wrong with depicting tragedy or loss in cinema there is certainly an uneven tilt towards these themes in LGBTQ+ stories. This has turned the queer film genre from a place of representation to one of manipulation and exploitation of queer characters to garner an emotional and sympathetic reaction from the audience without achieving or inspiring any

Representation Matters

system, there are still so many options for reducing the blistering inequalities that exist in what should be an open and voluntary service. The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), which controls the prescriptions set by the Red Cross, could consider lowering the ban to 3 months since the last sexual encounter. They could only allow the blood of those who have been tested for all relevant STDs. The TGA could take a more detailed test, or offer a combined LGBTI+ sexual health/blood donation program. Yes, the 12 month ban remains in place and out of step with other developed nations (E.g. South Korea and South Africa).

The fact is, blanket policies like this discourage healthy MSM giving blood. A same sex male couple, despite being together for a year and only having sex with each other, and being regularly tested, is treated the same way as a gay man who has multiple unprotected sexual encounters with different individuals a week.

In the wake of the Orlando shooting, gay men across the state lined up at the American Red Cross to give blood, only to be turned away by a similar archaic policy. To be denied one of the only practical means of assistance when people in your community are dying must have been heartbreaking. I only wish that they didn’t later learn that such a ban was most probably

greater awareness, action or change in treatment of the real world LGBTQ+ community.

LGBTQ+ films that are accessible to a younger audience, such as Love, Simon is, are crucial in normalising and desexualising queer relationships. Certainly, Love, Simon may seem like a pretty standard teen film but it manages to reflect the how even despite being surrounded by a liberal family and accepting friends the fear of rejection or unacceptance still lingers. However, queer films with positive or at least hopeful endings are a great place to begin to show young people struggling with their sexual identity that loving and accepting yourself for who you are and expecting that same respect from others is achievable. And even in circumstances where acceptance from others is impossible, then a film can provide a couple of hours of relief, hope, and escape.

Films have always been, and will continue to be, works that reflect current social circumstances and issues. LGBTQ+ films need to reflect the whole spectrum of the queer experience, stop exploiting tragic stories and start providing more genuine, relatable content. We can’t end up with another generation of LGBTQ+ teens, like mine, who have flocked to the same 5 storylines in film or television for the limited extent of realistic content. If the shift towards telling more “wholesome” queer stories in recent years is anything to go by, then more representation is on its way, slowly but surely – and there is certainly hope in that.

Representation Matters

impractical.

There is some hope for change. In Australia, the Victorian Andrew government has called for a review into the ban against it. The Red Cross has asked the Therapeutic Goods Administration for change. Also, young people are learning about this issue and speaking out. The UK National Health Service has reduced the deferral to 3 months, and is investigating of how it is possible for MSM to be able to donate in the future.

This issue has barely been raised as conversation in Australia. This represents how that the Australian bureaucratic and the Australian public are still comfortable with the notion of LGBTI+ people, MSM in this instance, as societal outsiders. It is easy to shut off a community from an opportunity because they are the other. Instead of being accommodative, the easy answer is to be exclusionary.

Attitudes need to change. Conversations need to happen. Policies need to be designed in a way where we’re thinking of how LGBTI inclusion can benefit everyone, not how LGBTI+ exclusion is an easy fix for the benefit of everyone. The only thing my blood is doing when exclusionary bans still exist is boiling.

Representation Matters

Is The Bachelor in Paradise Just Really Gay?: On Sedgwick’s “Homosocial Desire”

An exploration by Jemimah Tarasov.

Eve Sedgwick’s 1985 treatise, ‘Between Men’ centralises an idea of male “homosocial desire”. The term is something of a paradox: referring to both the tendency for our society to be structured around male relationships, and the demand that these relationships be characterised by “intense homophobia, fear and hatred of homosexuality”.

What Sedgwick proposes is that there is a “potential unbrokenness of a continuum between homosocial and homosexual”, whereby homosocial desire will often come to the fore through male/male/female love triangles. What I’m proposing is that the Bachelor in Paradise is not only really good, but also really super gay, and totally full of the sort of homosocial desire that Sedgwick is talking about.

Bachelor in Paradise achieves most of its drama through love triangles. These love triangles are most commonly situated in a male/male/female configuration; whereby two men will fight over one woman (think Davey/Jake/Flo, Jarrod/Mac/Ali, etc). The men actually spend little time with the objects of their obsession; in reality, spending their days in gender segregated groups, discussing their love interests, until permitted to participate in a mandated “date”, set up by production.

Sedgwick believes that the tensions inherent to homosociality (whereby close male bonds are required for the maintenance of male power/

Representation Matters

Anonymous disects our queer history and our current issues.

Pride started as a riot. It was necessary; in those days, police delighted in terrorizing queer people in our own spaces. After Stonewall, a raid on a nearby gay bar led to Diego Vñiales falling and impaling himself on a fence, fearing deportation if the police arrested him and discovered he had overstayed his visa. One of the witnesses then heard a cop say, “You don’t have to hurry, he’s dead, and if he’s not, he’s not going to live long.”

Yet today, we see police (who for their part assaulted Peter Murphy during the first Mardi Gras) and the Liberal Party marching in Mardi Gras, while all sorts of corporations eagerly co-opt the rainbow as a veneer for advertisements. After marriage equality, many allies and even some in the community will cease advocating for LGBT rights. This does a great disservice to the queer people of color and transgender women in particular who have fought for decades. Even now, their own struggles are still kept silent, in favor of a narrative appealing to the sensibilities of cisgender, heterosexual people.

Before Stonewall there was Compton’s Cafeteria. The 24-hour cafeteria was one of the few places transgender women could meet publicly, as gay bars were hostile towards them, and homeless, black, and Latine queer youth often gathered there. As police and management attempted to arrest a trans woman, she threw coffee into an officer’s face and others – including a local lesbian street gang – erupted in support. This opened the road to the movement; the first transgender support groups and healthcare services formed over the next two years, and police became wary of openly perpetuating harassment after the two-day riot.

It’s hard to place the people of the earliest riots, beyond the fact that trans women headed the rescue

patriarchy, but these bonds must carefully avoid treading into male sexual desire) are commonly expressed through such “love triangles”; whereby “women serve as the conduits through which these bonds are expressed” and that “ this triangle may portray as rivalry what is actually an attraction between men”.

Episode 8 of Bachelor in Paradise centres around a love triangle between Michael, Luke and Lisa. Luke and Lisa have been seeing each other since the beginning of the show. However, in this episode, Michael decided that he too was interested in Lisa. He didn’t express this to Lisa, but instead spoke to the camera about how he needed to “man up” and give Lisa a rose at the next rose ceremony (expressing romantic interest in her). When Michael did eventually speak to Lisa, directly before the ceremony, Luke watched the conversation from afar, appearing increasingly confused and distressed. The tension between Michael and Luke was palpable.

Immediately after electing to give Lisa the rose, Michael returned to being totally preoccupied by Luke – beginning to cry, and shouting “I’m a dog mate. I dogged my mate”.

Diana Sargentin writes in “American Masculinity and Homosocial Behavior in the Bromance Era” that the ‘bro-code’ of popular Western culture, exists in reality to “... situate

Representation Matters

Anonymous disects our queer history and our current issues.

from the police van outside Stonewall Inn. Of course, their priorities were the right to survive, and they found no allies in the media. Stonewall’s first reporter stood next to the police as they dragged a protester through the door and punched him repeatedly in the face. In the years since, increasingly conservative elements of the gay rights movement sidelined trans women in front of the press, while profiting from their action. Stonewall fell victim to anti-homeless efforts from real estate developers and the New York government, gradually edging out queer youth and sex workers of color. This was explained as a result of increased tourism.

Without critical examination, mainstream media often slips into the dichotomy of pitting an image of (white) gayness against non-white cultures and religions. This also plays into the cynical strategy of right-wing politicians wielding xenophobia and threatening queer people simultaneously. Queer refugees around the world are caught in the crossfire, left in inhumane and unsafe conditions with no end in sight, and carefully ignored. Meanwhile, the governments displacing their people claim to champion freedom. Few are willing to take on the intersection of racism and homophobia, especially against the state and corporate newspapers doing their best to keep it quiet – at least, when they’re not saying that their human rights abuses and warmongering is justified by the backwards, barbaric culture of the foreigner, and can’t you see that by the brave gay soldiers defending the country that gave them their rights?

The goal is not to assimilate blindly. Most of us aren’t allowed to, anyway. Life is not a series of hoops to jump through, to prove you pose no threat to the white cisgender majority and their beliefs. They may express a grudging acceptance that we’re

male relationships in a rule-oriented context and to uncover a male identity that is based in terms of appropriate codes and conducts of masculinity”. Was Michael crying because he just felt bad? Or was he crying because, as Sam commented later, he had “decimated the bro code” — i.e. he had decimated his own male identity?

The ‘bromance’ or ~homosocial desire~ is important to patriarchal systems, as it allows men to maintain strong bonds with one another – which are essential if they are to dominate political, corporate, social spheres etc. However, these homosocial bonds must be carefully ‘policed against the feminizing and homosexualizing influences of excessive heterosociality’ (Flood 2008) (i.e. men can’t be just friends with women). Homosociality is therefore commonly formed through ‘competition and exclusion’ (Hammarén and Johansson 2014), whereby “achieving sex with women is a means to status among men, sex with women is a direct medium of male bonding” (Flood 2008). I literally can’t think of a show where there is more weird gendered segregation than the Bachelor in Paradise: right down to the intense low-angle shots of them being separated for the rose ceremonies.

(To conclude: Bachelor in Paradise is the gayest show ever, and if you like it you’re probably gay)

Representation Matters

Anonymous disects our queer history and our current issues.

“not that different” where it is politically useful to themselves, and then drop it as the tides change. This was just one of the reasons why last year’s postal vote was so distressing to queer Australians, being surrendered to the public microscope such that the Liberal Party can claim victory.

Other LGBT people also perpetuate racism within their community. In London, bouncers at gay clubs have demanded that South Asian men “prove” themselves as a method of racist degradation. This mirrors the same attitudes that write off all black, Asian, or Middle Eastern LGBT people as a homogeneous, one-dimensional type that just happens to be sexually undesirable or a punchline.

While transgender women and queer people of colour face the most violence, there is no longer the brave defiance of the community fighting back and forging networks of support; organizers of a Pride march named after Stonewall can jeer as police arrest queer black protesters and testify against them, while walking alongside banks making money off oil pipelines on stolen land.

Are we at the end of history? Judging by the ongoing battle for transgender rights, against a backdrop of corporate subterfuge and shifting political manipulations, the world may yet see a few storms. Once again, we will find ourselves in confrontation – except this time the LGBT community may have to face its own cracks first, and accept the reality that an ad campaign cannot buy our freedom and a corporation won’t.

POETRY

Home

Left at dawn,
right at dusk.
I leave the window open
to hear the planes fly past.
My lover, where are you?
Each day passes like a year;
bereavement washes over
as waves did once upon us
when we walked the shore,
when we waited for fireworks
the loud noises scared you,
shivering despite the summer heat.
We went home early that night.
We laid in bed, and I held you.
I found home that night.

Left at dawn?
No, I left at dusk.
I sit on the left at dawn
the sun rises, planes depart.
My lover, she is far from here.
Yet she is not the moon,
and I am not a star.
Tonight, I sit on the right,
behind a man and woman
They kiss openly, publicly.
Our kisses were stolen, secret;
one between store curtains,
one at the empty Aztec exhibit
hours before I left you behind.
Soon, amor, I will come home.

Eclipse

The trains won't be parked,
and won't be sleeping soon.
Though the sun departed the sky
and the moon may reign in cycle,
all must fall into that eclipse.
Hand to hand, head to chest,
eyelids closing and breath slowing.
For a precious, fleeting moment
we are entwined with one another
a dwarf star, an old friend of ours,
meets its lunar counterpart at last.

They only last minutes, eclipses.
In your head, you imagine it—
astronomers rewrite every book,
awestruck by a two-week eclipse.
In mine, I replay it, every moment.
Your weary, tired smile in my wallet
your love held in my old handbag
alongside a book, ink-filled with love.
I persist that my lips may meet yours
again, that the heart you have taken
of mine is returned at next eclipse.

The Night

Wearily, tiredly, again I find myself
betrothed to the eternal nightfall;
that which sticks to the bones,
that which gnaws through the flesh.
I am enveloped, I am blinded, bound;
much as the yellow fog that lingered,
whose muzzle rubbed the windows,
the darkness, that creature, curled itself
around me on a soft October night.
Will it consume me, or will it slumber?

No, neither; the emptiness is replaced
with the burning agony of circulation
regretting abandonment, returning to limbs.
I am told to leave it as a cat upon my lap,
and so I attempt to observe myself externally,
yet I am entwined too deeply, too closely,
to my id, to my ego; I am what I am, and
I am that lone crustacean which still
scuttles across the silent sea floors.

The night embraces me as a lover, and smiles.

-Marisol Valenzuela

ANGERY REACTS ONLY

millennials speak in codes unknown
to our immediate antecessors, whose
disapproval fuels our wild pursuit of
mimetic dysteleology, of nonsenses,
of feral humours, of discomposition,
of punctuative chaos, of deliberate
rending of word & form. we laugh at
tragedy because what else can we
do but laugh? we laugh at fruit pies
thrown into the faces of anti-queer
crusaders & we laugh at anarchists
nutting that fascist dickhead Tony
Abbott & we laugh at punching nazis
because punching nazis is fucking
hilarious. we laugh at the Kübler-Ross
stages of grief as rendered by knock-
off brands of I Can't Believe It's Not
Butter (denial) & What, Not Butter!
(anger) & then Could It Be Butter?
(bargaining) & This Is Not Butter
(depression) followed by acceptance
in the form of unadorned off-label
unsalted margarine. we laugh at I AM
AN ANGERY TRANS AND THESE ARE MY
ANGERY HANDS because more than
three hundred trans people died in
2017 between January & December
& we don't even know their names
so we laugh because we are trying
not to be a trans person who dies in
2018 between January & December.
our coup de plume, our cri de coeur
is noise & gibberish & fake news &
thisisfine.jpg because this isn't fine.
our generation is drowning & dying
& burning & bleeding out & we are
all so fucking depressed so fucking
wracked with anxiety so fucking crazy
if we didn't laugh we'd have to cry &
we are all already crying. we laugh at
how fucked up we all are because if we
didn't laugh we would have to instead
go through denial through anger through
bargaining through depression through
acceptance but without the margarine

-Robin Eames

A Visit to Venus

Is it weird that I woke up wanting to kiss you?

One day you'll meet a girl who talks about the world like she's lived a thousand lives but still has the wonder of a child. You will realise she's the type to fight until she's bleeding underneath her fingernails as she clings to jagged rocks if it means casting light and raising her voice for those without one. She will bring passion you've never seen and a feeling you've never known. She will look at you with giant brown eyes that glow like paint droplets on a white canvas and you will feel your heart catch in your throat, you will feel every inch of your body tense up and you will bite you tongue and you will want to run. Don't you fucking dare.

Don't you dare turn your head. Don't move a fucking muscle. Stare at her even if she's so bright it burns. Reach for her even through you're terrified if you touch her the wrong way you'll rip a hole in her soul and she'll bleed galaxies all over the both of you. Kiss her so hard you can feel the stars burning at the back of her throat. Trace the lines of her spine and memorise them live the craters of the moon you always swore you came from. You've said you're an alien... now prove it.

She makes you tremble and that makes you mad. You hate to shake. You haven't let yourself feel vulnerable for six earthly rotations around the sun. We get it, that's six years, you've never been colder but your heart is still heaving so don't be stupid – she's standing right in front of you. You are brilliant and you are intuitive and you are kinder than you'd like to admit but you're not a hero for disappearing before you could destroy her. You're not doing anyone any favours by killing things before they can be brought to life.

If you really believed she deserved the world you would reach inside yourself and build what you could from the universe within you. If it turned out it wasn't enough you'd shake hands and move on with your separate solar rotations but you won't even try. You refuse to open your eyes. It begs the question... Who do you think you are?

Do you really think you know what's in the cards before the stars?

If you say you are going to ruin her then of course you will. Self-fulfilling are terrible things and you know that you're the king of them but have you stopped to think that maybe she's the queen? Have you stopped to think that maybe she's terrified too? She's had to bolt her feet to the fucking floor because she's had the curve of your jaw memorised since the first time she touched it. All her life she's been told she's a hand grenade and she's petrified you'll pull the pin and be blown to bits. She's beside herself in a volatile fit imagining all the ways both your hearts might break.

She was born from Neptune and she's bottomless and blue and you can see yourself falling into her like an endless pit and it makes you want to freeze and wither up because you've always said you'll die alone. And you've always lived like a diamond in the rough, until she showed up shining like a sapphire and its

All
Too
Much
But there's one thing: nobody asked you to promise your life. Nobody asked you to patch up the holes in her universe. It's not your job to make her feel whole and nobody said you had to reconstruct her solar system. You're not a hero and you're not a God and you're certainly not the sun. And yet you end it before it even begins?
You didn't have to run.
But it's not too late
to come back.
To stay.
-Amelia Powell

Dear dead-name;

Even though I thought you were gone, the world still sees you.
No matter how flat my chest is, how short my hair is, how low my voice is, people still see you.
It breaks my heart and it makes me think of you.
Sometimes I still get glimpses of you in my reflection, and then you start to fall out of my eyes as a liquid memory running down my cheek. I'm sorry I had to kill you in order for me to live.

There are people who tell me I would've looked better as you, as if to say that your appearance is more worthy than my happiness. They mourn the loss of you, even though they never knew you, because you never existed. You were a pretty girl, but you weren't real, you weren't me.

I am sorry that you're not here anymore, but every day that I live is a day that you would've wanted to end. I suffered for you.
You tried to destroy me, hoping you could keep me away, but you knew I would escape eventually.
I was there on the days that you tried to stop your breasts from forming, the painful bandages you wore on your chest changed the shape of my body.
My ribs suffered for you.
I was there when you starved yourself in the hope that your curves would disappear.
I was there when, at 8 years old, you wondered why your body didn't look like all the other little boys.
I was always there.

I'm sorry that I want to destroy you completely.
I want to remove your breasts, put them in a box and gift them to someone who needs them just as badly as I need to be rid of them.
I want to destroy your voice, scream at the top of my lungs until all that's left is a low whisper.
Cutting off your long girly hair filled me with joy beyond any I've felt before.
Every step I take to become myself I destroy another piece of you and I'm sorry.

Dear dead-name, I never hated you, it's because I love you that you're no longer here.

-H

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QUEER! WEEKLY

TRUE STORIES

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BREAKING NEWS - There is now a D in the LGBT+ acronym and it stands for Drone

YAAAAAS QUEEN!
New queer drones are SLAYING!!!!
First queer people were allowed to join the military, then we had marriage equality - and now we have equal drone rights too.
FINALLY rainbow imperialism. This is why representation matters.



I went to roller derby one time and now I'm a raging homosexual - This is my story.

As soon as I put my feet into the over used and very sweaty hire skates I felt it. Homosexuality. My lust for men evaporated almost instantaneously and I suddenly felt the sudden urge to fuck women. I suddenly knew all the deep and intricate details to the L word, even though I had never watched it before. My hair quite literally just fell off, leaving me with stylish but very, very gay pixie cut. I was suddenly wearing flannel and had a septum piecing. By the time I had taken off the skates I was in a long term loving relationship with a women, all her furniture was in my house and we had adopted several cats. I don't know any straight people anymore.



Now we have marriage equality, leftwing young Labor gays can finally implement the theory of "change from within" in the heterosexual, patriarchal system of marriage.

"I was so worried that my life would reach it's peak when I finally become a backbencher in parliament and never once sway from the party line for my entire political career, but now I know I can go even further, and change the patriarchy by participating in it and never challenging the status quo at all". Says an on campus political hack who would rather his opinions remains anonymous, least they interfere with his future career in politics, and current staffer job.



CELEBRATE PEOPLE'S HISTORY

**POSTER
LAUNCH**

+ EXHIBITION
CLOSING

A MEMORIAL EVENT TO CELEBRATE

RAY JACKSON

Indigenous Social Justice Association | Laureate of the Human Rights Prize of the French Republic 2013



ISJA



1PM SATURDAY APRIL 21

REDFERN COMMUNITY CENTRE

To coincide with the third anniversary of Ray's passing, along with the poster launch there will be a memorial exhibition of Ray's t-shirts, political posters, and other symbols from Ray's life of struggle.

EXHIBITION RUNS FROM 9AM-5PM, TUESDAY APRIL 17 – FRIDAY APRIL 20