

# Honi Soit

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8-9: INVESTIGATION

## How the centrelink robodebt system fails students

At 8:00am on a Thursday morning a University of Sydney Masters student received a phone call from a private debt collector. "A debt from Centrelink has been passed on to us," the caller said. "We highly recommend that you start a payment plan with us today or we will have to start charging you interest." The phone call arrived the morning after a lengthy phone call Meg had conducted with

a department representative. Centrelink had confirmed once again that her \$2000 debt would be paused for appeal.

[Full story on page 8 >>](#)

11-13: FEATURE

## Tales of Chemical Romance

It's an unnaturally hot day for the middle of September, reaching a high of almost 30 degrees. The sky is a picturesque azure, proof that Spring has finally arrived. Dust swirls through the crowd and clings to sweaty bodies. A boy waits in line, a small clear packet tucked in the waistband of his underwear. A policeman and his sniffer dog eye him as they patrol the area, but the dog doesn't

sit and they walk on. Of the 30,000 attendees, 355 will be searched for drugs, 69 would be found to be in possession and 10 charged with supply offences.

[Read more on page 11 >>](#)

# Acknowledgement of Country



As an Indian and an international student, I want to give an Acknowledgement of country that is meaningful to the First People of these lands, The Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. As First Australians, the Gadigal lived and utilised these now densely populated lands to hunt, gather and continue ceremonial practices that sustained their people for millennia. Most people believe ancient Aboriginal culture died out in the times of assimilation, though if you peel back the layers, you will find Aboriginal Australia is still alive and thriving in a metropolitan city like Sydney.

I personally would like to thank First Australians across our campus, Sydney and Australia for allowing us to study, work and edit on a location that continues to be a space of rich cultural heritage. The way it continues to thrive breathes light into what was once considered a dark stain in Australia's history. This always was and always will be Aboriginal Land.

I wholeheartedly thank Bianca Williams from Mana Yura on campus for co-writing this with me, and for graciously taking me through the past, present and the future of Indigenous life, history and experience on campus. In the words of the Red Horn Woman of the Assiniboine and Taktonai First Nations Canada, a hope towards securing equal inclusion of people of colour, and more importantly First Nations peoples:

"We Decolonise ourselves by occupying the spaces they never allowed our ancestors to hold."

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## Editorial

Ever since I was a child, I was infatuated with the idea that someone could be born in one country, and could relocate to another. This edition juxtaposes the old with the new, and showcases some of the difficulties that arise from living in a hyper-connected world.

In this edition, Pranay Jha and Jessica Syed review *Hotel Mumbai*. The film's depiction of the 2008 terrorist bombings is demonstrably tokenistic, but the story itself is one that is set in my city and one that is very close to my heart. Being an international student who has struggled to fit into Australian culture, it becomes all the more important that writers like Mavis Wong speak to these experiences from a personal perspective. She writes about identity struggles of those who grow up with westernised perceptions and its knock-on effects on forging campus friendships. The edition's feature by Rebecca Chu is an exploration of Sydney's drug culture. The piece explores some of the experimental struggles of today's youth. It is a timely issue with the upcoming elections and particularly prominent amongst the ongoing discussions of pill testing in festivals across Australia.

That being said, I hope this edition allows you to navigate and debate critical topics such as these ones.

Happy reading,  
Karishma Luthria

## The Goings On

### PoC Revue

Don't be a racist deadshit. Support people of colour in comedy and head to PoC Revue at the end of this week—it's one of the best identity revues of the year.

11 Apr / 6 pm / Verge Gallery

### Poster Run!

The Enviro Collective are doing a poster run to advertise the Captain Cook Resistance Gathering on April 28, alongside ReAct: Climate Code Red, a month of climate action taking

place between the 19th of April and 19th of May.

There's nothing that helps you release pent-up tension like a good old staple-gun on some good old University approved poster boards to staple some good old SRC posters around this good old campus.

Wed 10 Apr / 3pm / Manning Sunken Lawns

### Say Yes To Refugees: Sydney Palm Sunday Rally

As the federal election approaches, the annual Palm

Sunday rally for refugees is as important as ever given bipartisan support for offshore detention. Crumbs, such as the passage of the Medivac Bill aren't good enough.

Public dissatisfaction is best expressed through protest, so be strong in numbers against the Australian government's persistently ghastly treatment of refugees.

Sun 14 Apr / 2pm / Belmore Park

### Honi Turns 90

Though we'll never be as self-

referential as our brothers over at *Burn Book*, we here at the *Goings-On* think we've provided you with enough campus culture to warrant plugging one of our own events. Honi has somehow managed to stay on stands for a solid 90 years. Come along to dance and celebrate.

Drinks are on us, but we'll be soliciting gifts for FIRE Fighting In Resistance Equality, a community group "united against all forms of oppression and exploitation."

Sat 20 Apr / 7pm / Goodspace Gallery

## LETTERS

Hey! I just met you and this is crazy, but here's my email so write to me maybe. It's hard to look right at you baby, but, here's my email so, write to us maybe: editors@honisoit.com



### How good is whooing everyone?

After reading the article titled "The racist and normative life of Sims 4" I am left questioning if the author actually played Sims 4, let alone did some research. I agree that Sims 4 is a whitewashed american stylised view of life yet I am perplexed by the author singling out the Sims' 4 Get Together expansion pack "pushing certain stereotypes". Get to together allows sims to go to nightclubs, join clubs with sims who share similar aspirations and perform group activities like footstool.

While I agree that it could have had an analysis of the lack of traditional celebrations and food, I believe that Sims 4 stereotypically overrepresented cultural clothing, to the extent that I was annoyed by it.

I invite you to write a piece to counter mine that addresses your concerns.

— Karishma Luthria.

### Apology

Honi Soit would like to once again wholeheartedly apologise for a line in "Review: 2019 Sydney Uni Revue, the Void" and acknowledge that we, as an editing body, did not do enough to ensure that the review was to the standards our readership deserves.

Furthermore, I am incredibly saddened that the article fails to mention the history of Sims of breaking down traditional views on sexuality and gender. It's as if the article is exclusively pushing a viewpoint without holistically understanding what the Sims video game is about.

— Someone who plays Sims because I love whooing everyone.

### Editor Strikes Back



Forgiven, but not forgotten

It seems that Hengjie "Air Conditioner" Sun has managed to cool down the simmering tension directed against him in the USU!

As the Burn Book noted last week, Sun had skipped a USU board director meeting in the name of his air conditioner business. Unfortunately for Sun, actions come with consequences! Well, sort of. USU board directors are allowed to be suspended should they miss more

than two meetings, and Sun has missed three. The Burn Book has learnt that a slim majority of USU board directors agreed to accept Sun's apology and voted against censuring him, while a significant minority are reportedly deeply unhappy with Sun's lack of commitment. But in any case Hengjie, our offer still stands! Amazingly, it actually seems our office aircon works more than you!

### We are the paragon of Truth and beauty

Continuing our outstanding record of being the sole voice of truth in this god-forsaken paper, the *Burn Book* has once again uncovered a falsehood that has gained traction on USyd Rants, this time a rumour that USyd had paid up to \$300,000 for a series of misshapen blue splotches in the

reporting is cognisant and supportive of the diversity on campus.

### Disabled Honi

The 91st Students Representative Council voted last Wednesday April

3rd 2019 to amend its regulations in order to enshrine *Disabled Honi* as a regular annual edition. The motion was moved by current Disabilities Officers Hayden Moon and Wilson Huang. Keep your eyes peeled for the second iteration of *Disabled Honi* which will be distributed in Week Four of Semester Two this year.

## SAY YES TO REFUGEES

april 14 palm sunday

rally & march



join the usyd contingent

1pm railway square, central station



@refugeeactioncollectiveusyd

promoter. The enthusiasm he pours into events is truly inspirational. From comprehensive WeChat posts to engaging organisations for collaborations, the SRC president truly is dedicated to events. Alas, this dedication seems to stop when it comes to events actually officially run by the SRC. For its latest tenancy seminar, the Facebook event was published at 9am on the day of the event, which was to happen at 3pm. More recently, Jacky deleted the event page for SRC's Health Day, causing many to think that the event had been cancelled. When asked by Burn Book, the God-King said it was deleted simply so it could be posted again closer to the actual day of the event. While we are not one to doubt the social media skills of the God-King, we do hope that "closer to the event" does not mean 9am before the event, again.

# UNSW students conned by Student Concierge company

Nell O'Grady

Over 100 University of New South Wales (UNSW) International students were forced to pay exponential, false rental and service fees.

The corrupt student concierge company was run by a 29-year-old self professed entrepreneur Ashleigh Howe.

International students were promised high quality student accommodation services including private transport from the airport, and regular cleaning services.

Howe also regularly changed business names which developed from the Student Concierge Company in 2015 to become the Global Education Advisory in 2016.

Instead, these students were met with a series of financial demands by Howe generally through text message. These messages were often abrasive, aggressive and categorically unreasonable.

Requests included extra costs for already promised cleaning services, additional registration and extra electricity fees. The *Sydney Morning*

*Herald's* investigation into Howe's company also confirms that students were made to sign additional agreements outside of the Standard Residential Tenancy Agreement which allowed Howe's business to move forward with its unreasonable demands.

Many students after leaving the student accommodation services failed to easily retrieve their bonds without ongoing and rigorous demands on Howe and the involvement of private lawyers.

China's English language newspaper, *Global Times* also revealed in February, that a number of Chinese students affected are looking to file lawsuits against the Global Advisory Services founder.

The *Sydney Morning Herald's* investigation into Howe also revealed that the former Sydney Church of England Girls Grammar School (SCEGG) Darlinghurst student was engaged in an ongoing system of mismanagement of her student concierge business, Global Education Advisory.

Further investigation by liquidators and students has lapsed as it is believed that Howe has left the country.

# New laws punish contract cheating

Alan Zheng

In 2016, Howe's business was forced into liquidation by a bookkeeping firm that represented the rights of several private businesses hired by Howe. The entrepreneur owed a total of \$689,000 to the local businesses she had hired including lawyers, landlords and marketing/graphic design employees. She has yet to repay these debts. Howe also has an multiple ongoing local court proceedings lodged against her, adding a possible \$100,000 to her existing owing.

*Honi* understands that no University of Sydney students were affected by Howe's service and that it was predominantly students in the inner east that were affected. Most of these students were studying at UNSW, however the Kensington campus' media team told *Honi* that they "don't have resources to provide response to enquiries from student publications."

A USyd submission to the Higher Education Standards Panel in March urged more expansive powers for TEQSA to address the weaknesses of comparable authorities in New Zealand.

The proposed laws will not be debated until Parliament resumes for its Winter Session in early May.

Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) will be given the power to investigate and prosecute offenders, and disable access to websites promoting such services.

USyd's submission also cited "significant concern" over international student participation in contract cheating.

The law defines contract cheating services broadly, including the provision of assistance with assignments and exams, or supplying any part of a piece of work that a student is required to complete.

Minister for Education Dan Tehan condemned academic cheating. "The Morrison Government is targeting the people who are making money exploiting Australia's students," said Mr Tehan.

In 2018, USyd traced potential breaches of academic integrity to three Chinese-language tutoring colleges. One of the colleges, Yingcredible, promoted its services by representing an affiliation with several Sydney-based universities, including USyd.

Under the law, the Tertiary

# Uni error leaves Masters students without Centrelink

Aisling Ní Bhroin

Students enrolled in the new Master of Global Health program will miss out on their Centrelink assistance this year after the University of Sydney (USyd) failed to register the new program. This may well account for the "administrative oversight" and USyd not successfully registering the course with Centrelink in time.

Students found out after receiving an email from the program administrator on the 4th of March asking how many students were applying for Centrelink support and the outcomes of those students who had already applied. Only those students that replied to the email were communicated with further by the head of the School of Public Health, and were told that "due to administrative oversight," funding support applications made by students to Centrelink would not be approved because "the Masters of Global Health is not an eligible degree."

Students applying for Centrelink support through 'Astudy' are required to prove they are in an approved course at an approved institution. Having been changed this year from a Masters of International

Public Health to a Masters of Global Health, involving significant changes in structure and administration, the University failed to register the new program. This may well account for the "administrative oversight" and USyd not successfully supporting students until the end of Semester One.

Speaking with students, the error seems to have caused significant anxiety. Several students are now considering a switch from full-time to part-time study to accommodate for the University's error, increasing the already 18 month Masters program to up to 3 years. Others have to decide whether they can move back home to areas in greater Sydney and as far as Wollongong to commute to university every day.

A USyd spokesperson told *Honi* that "We apologise for any inconvenience or hardship this process has caused."

USyd will submit an application to register the Masters of Global Health with Centrelink "at the next opportunity, [however] there is no guarantee that it will be successful."

# SRC Pres falsely claims OBs lied

Joseph Verity

Students' Representative Council (SRC) President Jacky He has accused convenors of the Autonomous Collective Against Racism (ACAR) and numerous SRC councillors of lying about the organisation of a vigil for the Christchurch massacre.

During a meeting of the SRC tonight, numerous individuals raised the fact that He did not accept a request from ACAR to co-host the ACAR-organised Christchurch vigil, which occurred on March 22. He asserted that he did not receive a request from ACAR to co-host the vigil despite numerous first-hand accounts and incontrovertible digital evidence.

He told *Honi* that he did not receive a co-host request for the event in question. "From my end, I did receive a request from ACAR to co-host the event along with the Red Cross society but the Red Cross Society did not get back to me." Grassroots councillor and Women's Collective convenor Layla Mkh

confronted He, alleging that he initially supported ACAR's President's report the week after.

request to co-host, but did not, in fact, accept the request. He responded by arguing that the issue should have been "followed up" with him closer to the event.

Women's Collective Convenor Jazz Breen and ACAR convenor Ellie Wilson presented He with the digital evidence of their request, which still read "pending". He then backtracked and suggested that the request had not been sent until after the vigil was held. He then returned to his original position, saying "maybe you just didn't send it."

The discussion was closed after councillor James Ardouin (Liberal) moved a procedural motion to accept He's President's Report, with no more speakers on the report allowed.

He was criticised roundly during the meeting for his response to the Christchurch massacre. It was noted by several councillors that He himself was not present at the SRC's separately organised vigil in tandem with the Red Cross Society, nor did he include any mention of the massacre in his President's report the week after.

# Ramsay Centre conflict on senate not publicly declared

Lara Sonnenschein

Externally appointed Senate Fellow Ilana Atlas has not publicly declared a conflict of interest in Senate discussions surrounding the Ramsay Centre for Western Civilisation, despite being on the board of the Paul Ramsay Foundation. In an October Senate meeting last year, then Postgraduate Senate representative David Jordan declared a conflict of interest in discussions, noting that his relative, Elizabeth Stone, is on the board of the Centre.

Whilst the two organisations are somewhat separate entities, the two are intimately linked, as the \$3 billion charity Paul Ramsay foundation funds the Ramsay Centre project.

Atlas served her first two year term on the Senate on 1 January 2015 to 30 November 2017, and is currently serving her second term as a Senate Fellow which began 1 December 2017 and ends on 30 November 2019. Atlas was appointed to the Paul Ramsay Foundation board in 2017, the same year that the Ramsay Centre began reaching out to a significant number

of universities including the University of Sydney about running a degree in Western Civilisation.

A University spokesperson told *Honi* that "the Senate has been advised of Ilana Atlas' position on the board of the Paul Ramsay foundation and it is listed on the Register of Interests. In addition, Ms Atlas declares the interest each time Senate is provided with an update on Ramsay Centre negotiations."

However, the Register of Interests delineates a difference between advised and declared conflicts of interests, and Atlas' position on the Foundation board is only listed as 'advised'. It is standard practice for Senate Fellows to advise the Senate regarding positions they may hold off campus when they are appointed. There is nothing in publicly available Senate minutes indicating such a declaration, whilst David Jordan's declaration of interest regarding the same issue is minuted on the public record.

Senior lecturer in English and Linguistics, Nick Riemer

# SULS removes controversial job ad

Baopu He

told *Honi*, "The Senate can't make an impartial decision about Ramsay if one of its members is a Ramsay-insider. This conflict of interest is far from the most serious reason to oppose a Western Tradition program, but it represents another way in which the whole Ramsay proposal is deeply compromised. The right course of action is for the University management to finally listen to its humanities staff, withdraw its MoU and make public the content of the secret Senate discussions about the Ramsay Centre."

SRC Education Officer, James Newbold told *Honi*, "As if we didn't need another reason to oppose Ramsay, these gross corporate connections can be added to the ever-growing mountain of problems with the Ramsay's program in Western Civilisation." A spokesperson from the Centre told *Honi* that negotiations with the University of Sydney are "ongoing" whilst failing to comment on specifics. There has been an eerie silence since last year regarding USyd and the Centre's talks.

Several of the allegations put forth by the students included Nixon holding five hour long

phone interviews, requesting hugs from female employees, and threatening those who wanted to quit that he would "tarnish your name within legal circles."

In response to this, UNSW Law Society removed all job postings for Nixon. When contacted by *Honi*, Nixon denied the allegations against him, and stated that he refused to speak any more on the matter.

Current SULS President Jeremy Chan said that they were not aware of the allegations surrounding Nixon, but removed the posting immediately in accordance with their zero tolerance policy for sexual harassment.

In addition to removal, Chan stated that SULS had notified the relevant bodies to ensure the listing would not be posted anywhere else, and indicated that SULS plans to develop a database of employers to ensure a continuity of information between executive years.

While Nixon's posting has been removed from the SULS job board, it currently remains on other job boards, such as Indeed.

# Go8 universities oppose budget

Joseph Verity

The Group of Eight (Go8), a coalition of Australia's leading research universities, which includes the University of Sydney, has issued a statement condemning the Federal Government for their treatment of universities in the Federal Budget.

The statement indicated that ahead of the upcoming election the Go8 will be "looking for sound policies underpinned by funding" in the field of research.

In a statement to *Honi*, Go8 Chief Executive Vicki Thomson indicated that the statement was in no way an endorsement of Labor, but was an "endorsement of [their] policy as far as we know it." Thomson clarified that the Go8 is in no way partisan, but welcomes policies that support university research, regardless of party.

The statement from the Go8 comes barely a week after Federal Education Minister Dan Tehan said that a "strong university research sector makes Australia stronger."

Over the past seven years, Government funding for science, research and innovation has been cut by almost 10 per cent—a total of almost \$1.1 billion in real terms.



# Findings released

Alan Zheng

Freedom of speech is alive and well on Australian university campuses, according to former High Court Chief Justice Robert French's Independent Review of Freedom of Speech on campus with findings released on Saturday.

The report found that reported freedom of speech 'incidents' in Australia, including protests and rallies, do not establish a systemic pattern of higher education providers acting adversely to freedom of speech in the sector.

A number of student organisations including the University of Melbourne Student Union (UMSU) were consulted. USyd SRC President Jacky He told *Honi* that the SRC was not "consulted in any physical or media forms."

"I believe that University of Sydney on a holistic picture promotes an atmosphere that encourages speech freedom on campus," He said.

The Report ultimately recommended a new, optional Model Code on freedom of speech for universities.

# Spence to remain VC until 2022

Joseph Verity

The University of Sydney's Vice Chancellor, Michael Spence, has accepted the invitation of the University Senate to remain in his position for a further four years until 2022.

In an announcement Spence explained that he was "grateful to be able to continue to work with such high-calibre colleagues and students," while chancellor Belinda Hutchinson declared that she was "delighted" by the news.

The announcement comes mere days after staff rallied against Spence and senior university management, passing a unanimous vote of no confidence against them for managerialist attacks on staff working conditions.

Spence has been in his current position since 2008, when he replaced former Vice Chancellor Gavin Brown. In his time in the position, Spence has come under fire numerous times by staff and students. In 2014, Spence was heavily criticised for his refusal to oppose the fee deregulation proposed by the Abbott Government.

Last year, Spence suffered heavy resistance and criticism from staff in response to his approach with the Ramsay Centre for Western Civilisation.

The University indicated that the Woollahra house where Spence currently resides, valued at \$3.3 million dollars, will be sold, and that Spence will move into a self-funded residence. Spence currently receives a salary of \$1.4 million.

By 2022, Spence will have become one of the longest serving Vice Chancellors in the University's recent history. The last Vice Chancellor to serve a 14 year term retired the position in 1981.



# The dangers of weaponising anti-Semitism

Lara Sonnenschein questions the equivalency drawn between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism.

In 1973 Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban declared, "one of the chief tasks of any dialogue with the gentile world is to prove that the distinction between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism is not a distinction at all." The following year, officials from the Anti Defamation League (ADL) published a book called *The New Anti-Semitism*. These arguments were based on the idea that whilst we can identify and understand what Hitlerite white supremacist, anti-Semitism looks like, there was a new and dangerous anti-Semitism threatening us Jews on a global scale—the criticism of Israel.

This position is predicated on the notion that Judaism is Zionism, or at the very least that the two are so inextricably linked that they cannot be separated from one another. This is a falsehood. Judaism is a 3,500 year old religion, Zionism is a modern colonial movement, which has been resisted by many Jews since it began. I would go so far as to argue that Zionism as a political project constitutes a radical departure from Judaism.

Nonetheless, over forty years after Eban's statement, we find ourselves in a position where the argument that anti-Zionism is anti-Semitism has become firmly embedded within the 'gentile world'. Indeed, so much so, that even minor criticisms of Israeli policy, such as the establishment of Israeli settlements, illegal under international law, are often labelled as anti-Semitic.

French President Emmanuel Macron recently described anti-Zionism as "a reinvented form of anti-Semitism." In the U.S, the entire

weight of the American establishment recently descended on Minnesota Representative Ilhan Omar for her criticism of Israel, labelling her as an anti-Semite for drawing attention to the influence that the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) has on American policy.

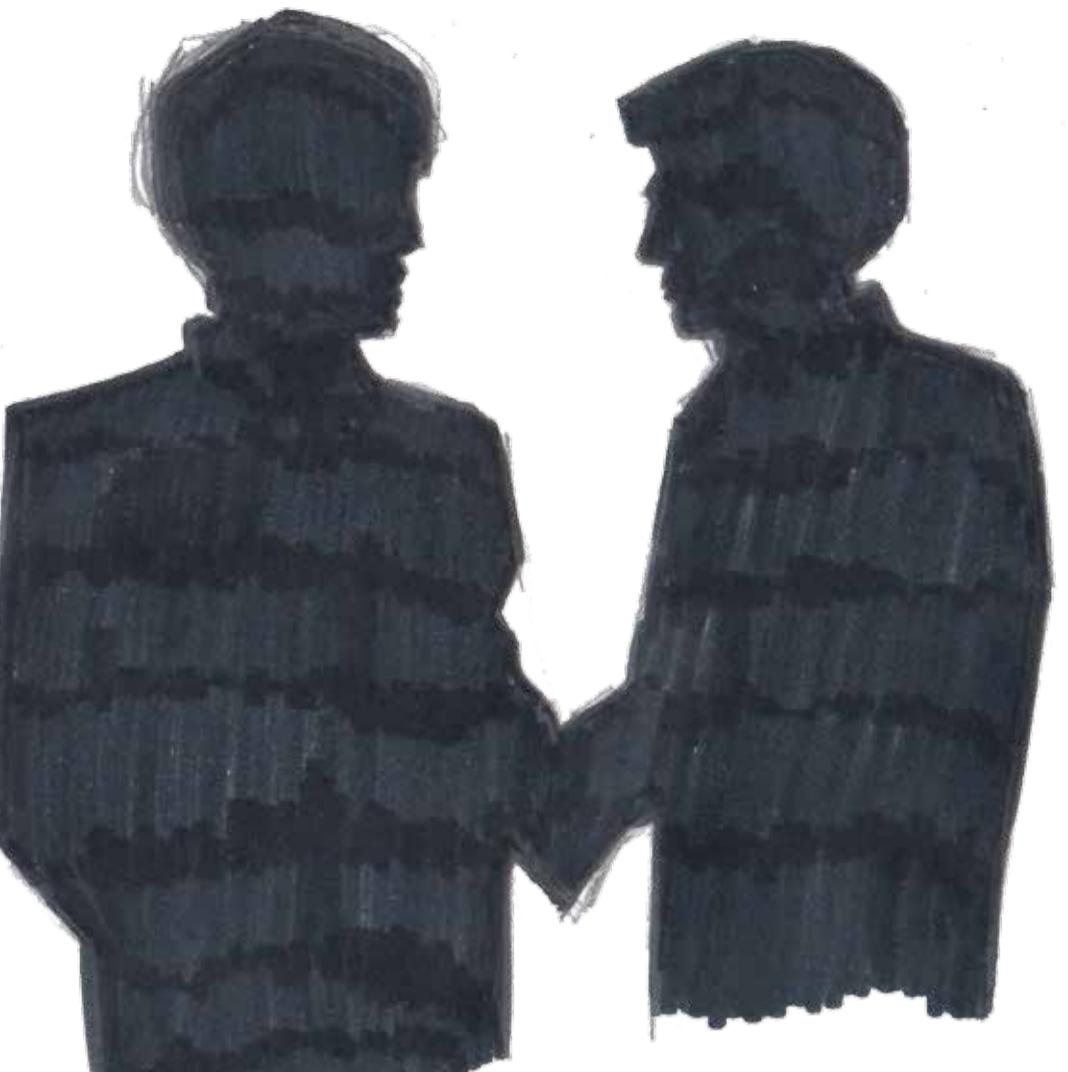
One cannot deny that traditional anti-Semitic tropes focus on money, behind the scenes dealing and the notion that Jews have a dual loyalty. However, one can wholeheartedly condemn this conspiratorial mythology, and also recognise the obvious impact that money has on politics, which Omar did, as she also drew attention to other powerful lobbies, such as the National Rifle Association (NRA) and the fossil fuel industry.

Of course it would be a mistake to mythologise the Israel lobby (which is sometimes done, and should be condemned) in such a way so as to make it seem like an all powerful force, in that its aims are always met. For example, AIPAC went all out to stop the Iran Nuclear Deal under President Obama, but were ultimately unsuccessful.

Naturally, no decent person wants to be branded as an anti-Semite. It is for this reason that the weaponisation of anti-Semitism has wide reaching and dangerous implications. Firstly, and perhaps most obviously, it works to delegitimise criticism of Israel within the public square by branding critical voices as anti-Semitic, and therefore motivates by Jew hatred, rather than genuine concern.

By natural extension, people who espouse views which are critical of Israel are less likely to continue to express their views on the topic once they've been characterised as an anti-Semite. This may even extend to other contentious political issues—if one is an anti-Semite, how is one to be taken seriously on other issues?

There are of course many critics of Israel who are Jewish. Weaponising



Art by Ludmilla Nunell

anti-Semitism continues in this case, albeit instead of being labelled an anti-Semite, one is branded a self-hating Jew or not a real Jew.

This is an extremely effective tactic insofar as it functionally denies Jewishness to Jews who hold non or anti-Zionist views, and practically serves to push Jews out of Jewish institutions

## "Weaponising anti-Semitism in order to shield Israel ... ultimately curbs organising efforts against genuine anti-Semitism."

and spaces, be it synagogues, schools or campus based Jewish groups so as to continue centering Zionism within these structures. Perhaps the crudest recent example of this was when a German bank was tasked with deciding whether a German Jewish peace group which comprised Israelis and the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors was anti-Semitic because of their views on Israel.

Finally, and perhaps less immediately obvious, weaponising anti-Semitism in order to shield Israel from legitimate criticism takes up necessary space within the discussion on anti-Semitism, and ultimately curbs organising efforts against genuine anti-Semitism, which is on the rise as an emboldened global far-right movement continues to grow.

In 2017, white supremacists marched in Charlottesville chanting 'Jews will not replace us'. Counter

demonstrator Heather Heyer was run over by a neo-Nazi, and President Trump laid the blame on "both sides," and argued some white nationalists are "very fine people." The same year, 60,000 nationalists marched in Warsaw, Poland expressing anti-Semitic and Islamophobic messages.

Last year, eleven Jews were

massacred at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh. Senator Fraser Anning recently invoked the Nazi 'final solution' term in his maiden speech to Parliament, and a few days ago Poles in New York took part in an anti-Semitic protest against Holocaust restitution. Even Israel has been increasingly aligning itself with anti-Semitic leaders and parties in Europe.

When Jewish cartoonist Eli Valley drew Christian Republican Meghan McCain crying crocodile tears over Ilhan Omar's alleged anti-Semitism, McCain decried his cartoon as "one of the most anti-Semitic things [she's] ever seen."

I couldn't help but wonder, had she never seen the infamous photo of her father John McCain standing next to Ukrainian neo-Nazi Oleh Tyahnybok, who has been photographed doing a sieg heil?

# Convincing parents the coaching's actually worth it

Pranay Jha questions the misleading nature of private debating coaching programmes.

*Disclaimer: Pranay Jha has previously coached both for private schools and private debating coaching companies.*

be good but the kids only wanted to play hangman so I eventually succumbed." Various other coaches described their job as "glorified babysitting" as opposed to actual coaching.

The absence of an incentive to win debates also appears to operate on a student, perhaps influencing them to take the weekend coaching less seriously. Emma\*, a current USyd Debater and private debating coach, told *Honi*, "I think it's not very useful for kids, mostly because coaches are lazy but also kids don't really give a shit."

## "Various other coaches described their job as glorified babysitting as opposed to actual coaching."

Debating coaching companies are certainly not oblivious to the aforementioned desires of parents. In many cases, they proudly boast the achievements of their tutors and note that many of them are studying at prestigious universities around the world. In terms of debating, parents are told their children will learn critical thinking and discuss issues about economics, international affairs and domestic politics. None of this seems very problematic—except for the fact that it is incredibly misleading.

However, the main source of income for many debaters doesn't actually come from Sydney's grossly overfunded private schools. Rather, many debaters tend to earn the real, big dollars working long shifts on weekends for private coaching companies. And while private and selective school debating programs deserve the criticism *Honi* has previously levelled at them, it seems the private coaching industry is equally worthy of our examination.

At a glance, private debating coaching seems quite worthwhile. It gives students whose schools don't have developed debating programs an opportunity to compete in an activity traditionally reserved for the upper echelons of society. In many instances, those students come from Non-English speaking and/or migrant backgrounds, and have parents who have likely faced hardships and discrimination on the basis of their English speaking skills. Given that, activities like debating and public

speaking, in which parents can see their kids deliver speeches with little preparation are justly considered to be empowering. Additionally, success in the activity is highly regarded by university selection committees and looks favourable for students seeking to apply for scholarships to study abroad. Subsequently, parents could be forgiven for believing that doing private debating coaching will allow their kids to attain a comparatively luxurious life. Today, while university debaters certainly seem less flashy, the amount of green and yellow bills tucked neatly into their wallet remains unchanged.

It is no secret that the world of debating coaching is rather lucrative. As elite schools have begun to take the activity more seriously, demand for high-quality coaches has increased at a rate incommensurate to their supply. Given this, schools with deep pockets have been willing to dish out exorbitant rates for coaches (close to an hourly rate of \$100 in many cases). Essentially this means that a few hours of coaching students on a Friday night will allow a university debater to lead a relatively comfortable student life.

However, the main source of income for many debaters doesn't actually come from Sydney's grossly overfunded private schools. Rather, many debaters tend to earn the real, big dollars working long shifts on weekends for private coaching companies. And while private and selective school debating programs deserve the criticism *Honi* has previously levelled at them, it seems the private coaching industry is equally worthy of our examination.

Beyond the attitudes of coaches and students, the conditions in private coaching colleges are not conducive to creating a productive learning environment. Classes for both juniors and seniors tend to be three hours long. While these classes give students an opportunity to participate in a proper debate, in a lot of instances they simply don't seem to have the attention span to focus for that long. This means that even where coaches are putting effort into their classes, it is quite difficult for students to absorb the information they're receiving.

## "The conditions ... are not conducive to creating a productive learning environment"

Additionally, when children are stuck in a classroom for hours and the focus is purely on improving debating, they often complain about classes being monotonous. In some situations, this causes parents to pull their children out of private coaching classes. Subsequently, those in charge of coaching colleges have an incentive to make classes "fun" in ways that aren't necessarily productive for debating or public speaking. Emma recounts her employers complaining about "how previous coaches had been too boring" when initially hiring her. She says that she "naively started off trying to

participate in debating back at school, there seems to be no method of tangibly tracking the progress a coach has made with their class.

The absence of an incentive to win debates also appears to operate on a student, perhaps influencing them to take the weekend coaching less seriously. Emma\*, a current USyd Debater and private debating coach, told *Honi*, "I think it's not very useful for kids, mostly because coaches are lazy but also kids don't really give a shit."

Beyond the attitudes of coaches and students, the conditions in private coaching colleges are not conducive to creating a productive learning environment. Classes for both juniors and seniors tend to be three hours long. While these classes give students an opportunity to participate in a proper debate, in a lot of instances they simply don't seem to have the attention span to focus for that long. This means that even where coaches are putting effort into their classes, it is quite difficult for students to absorb the information they're receiving.

Paying cash-in-hand without payslips, avoiding withholding tax from employees and paying incorrect superannuation all seem to be common practices in the private debating coaching industry. Such practices are also all examples of cases where concerns about tax evasion may be raised, as provided by the Australian Taxation Office.

The astute debater would likely question what the comparative is. Although private debating coaching has its problems, at least it provides some opportunity for children whose schools aren't wealthy or well funded to debate. A very obvious solution would be to provide greater funding to state schools so that they can provide extra-curricular activities, such as debating, to their students. This would remove the need for parents to seek external private coaching for their children. However, in the absence of such reform, debating colleges can quite easily restructure class sizes, length and introduce greater accountability for their coaches. This may require debating companies to forego some profit. However, it would also mean that well-intentioned and hardworking parents aren't sacrificing their income for a service that ultimately delivers their children little benefits if any.

# HOW THE CENTRELINK AUTOMATED SYSTEM CONTINUES TO FAIL STUDENTS

NELL O'GRADY SURVEYS THE INDIVIDUALS STILL RECEIVING FALSE DEBT LETTERS FROM THE GOVERNMENT ORGANISATION.

At 8:00am on a Thursday morning a University of Sydney Masters student received a phone call from a private debt collector. "A debt from Centrelink has been passed on to us," the caller said. "We highly recommend that you start a payment plan with us today or we will have to start charging you interest." The phone call arrived the morning after a lengthy phone call Meg had conducted with a department representative. Centrelink had confirmed once again that her \$2000 debt would be paused for appeal. This was well into the third appeals process she had requested and the third time Centrelink had slightly diminished her debt since a series of false debt letters had begun arriving in her mailbox in early 2018.

This experience isn't unusual, and it's not particularly new, either. In 2017, the Commonwealth Ombudsman conducted an inquiry into Centrelink's automated debt allocation system or Online Compliance Intervention (OCI). The investigation revealed a series of flaws in the systems operation and, in turn, outlined a fairly loose set of recommendations to suggest further improvement. Two years on and hundreds of citizens still receive unexplained, vague and false debt letters. Students on youth allowance are

## "HONI CONDUCTED AN ANONYMOUS SURVEY COLLECTING THE OPINIONS OF RECIPIENTS ON CENTRELINK WELFARE PAYMENTS FROM A SERIES OF ONLINE FORUMS"

amongst the largest demographics most affected by these "robodebts."

Meg called the department again. This time it was to get clarification on how on one end, Centrelink was assuring her that her debt was being reassessed and on the other, a debt collector was confirming that a payment plan must begin immediately. "We apologise for this," said yet another Centrelink representative. "Your debt was paused as a result of its reassessment, but once the reassessment time limit has ended (a period of 3 months) our system automatically unpauses the debt and passes it on to a debt to a collector."

Since the government first introduced the automated system, thousands of debt letters are sent out weekly to citizens on welfare and youth allowance. It is widely considered (by the Australian Unemployed Workers Union (AUWU) in particular) that up to 90% of these assumed debts turn out to be false. Fees can span anywhere between six hundred and three thousand dollars and they are all reasoned under Centrelink's claims of "overpayment while on youth allowance." The debts are diminished gradually but rarely halted, and if they are, it is always due to frustratingly

long processes of contestation from the individuals falsely assigned this debt.

It is on the onus of the individual affected to respond and prove the system wrong. The problem is, in the case of welfare recipients, many are overworked, living without an occupation or surviving without a roof over their head. Students under youth allowance are away from home, studying full time and trying to look after themselves. If these individuals are unable to revise payslips and other documentation asked of Centrelink that can be up to seven years old, the organisation will simply continue to charge interest on that person's debt.

Ironically, Centrelink auto culls all letters from MyGov after a period of twenty four months. Centrelink can never offer much aid to those searching for their own documentation and there is no guarantee that they can be accessed by Freedom of Information (FOI) or any legal department. The process sees organisation #notmydebt continue to encourage individuals on welfare to retain all financial documentation in the likely advent that they are sent a debt letter in the coming months.

Honi conducted an anonymous survey collecting the opinions of recipients on Centrelink welfare payments from

to follow up with Centrelink and prove their debt as false, while 46.7% revealed they had not begun a process of appeal with the organisation even after more than half of those surveyed had been dealing with robodebts for up to 2 years.

The various ways individuals experience and deal with their false Centrelink debts comes down to a range of societal and personal factors. Meg, outrightly refuses to pay her false debt. "They [Centrelink] claim that when I first moved from home to Sydney to study at University I wasn't correctly reporting my income. They're talking

## "THIS ONLINE SYSTEM WAS HASTILY INTRODUCED BY THE COALITION GOVERNMENT IN 2016."

about a period from January to February when I first moved to Sydney. But I didn't have a Centrelink account so how could I be reporting anything," she said. "They clearly assume that the money I was making while on my gap year was the money I was making while starting University. Which is not the case. It's obviously a flaw in the system and I'm not paying it."

Meg moved to Sydney with savings and support from her parents. She also has a strong awareness of her own rights and is able to get advice from family and friends. For many, this is not the case.

In Honi's survey 53.3% of individuals stated that they had paid a debt that they still believe to be false. An anonymous general comment said "I just started paying back the debt, even though I [still] think it's wrong because I didn't know what else to do. I'm \$2000 through a \$4000 payment and it's nearly killing me (and I don't mean that in a problematical way—I mean literally financial stress is incredibly triggering for me)." An anonymous comment Honi received in the early release of the survey two simply states "it seemed legitimate at the time." Another

Unions were not contacted and the implementation clearly left room for substantial error, error felt exponentially across the professional sector, citizens on welfare and union representatives. The Public Service Association of NSW (PSA) told Honi "Mandatory staffing caps provided by the coalition government really impact Centrelink's ability to run productively. These automated systems were not developed with the workers in mind and they were not developed with the recipients of welfare in mind either, they said. "This kind of work needs to be done by real people with a focus and knowledge of the support needed [by recipients] for this kind of work. An automated system simply cannot provide this."

This is a result of serious staffing cuts, a view shared by the AUWU and PSA. 5000 Centrelink staff have been sacked over the last 5 years.

As a result Centrelink has been unable to keep up with the demand for its services. "My debt with Centrelink has gone through a number of stages of reassessment and appeal, and the debt has been reduced multiple times over the past 8 months," Meg explains.

"Every time the debt gets reassessed,

I ask the customer service representative what the original reason for the debt is, and they can never give me a logical answer."

It is a vast majority of students suffering with these debt letters that share similar stories. 86.7% of individuals surveyed by Honi say they have not had their debt cleared by Centrelink, while 60% of those surveyed were contacted by debt collectors at least once. 80% of respondents had called Centrelink to argue their debt several times.

For so many it seems an end is never really in sight. In March of this year *The Saturday Paper* wrote a piece on the incredibly damaging pressure that the robodebt process brings. The piece outlined that Greens senator Rachel Siewert told an estimates hearing she had received notice of "at least five people that have taken their own lives

with no response," said Meg.

The findings of *The Saturday Paper*

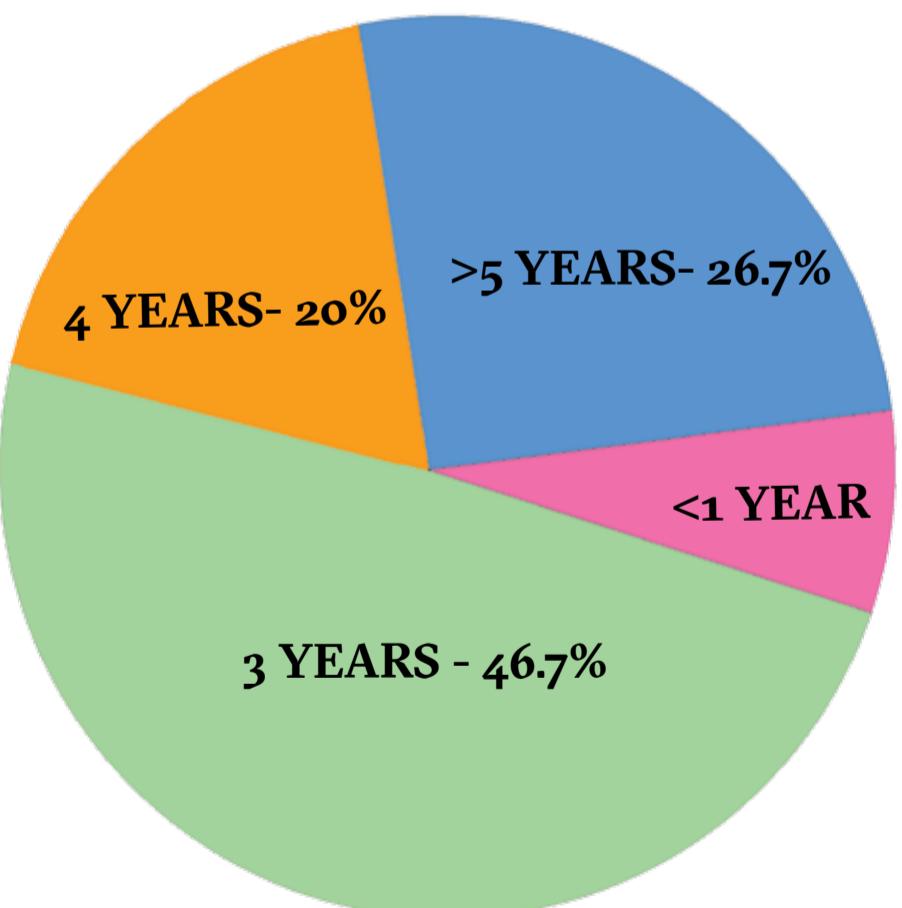
piece shares similarities with the feelings of those still involved in Centrelink debt disputes. Of those surveyed, 93.3% said the letters made them feel stressed, 80% said the debt made them feel

## "I HAVE PROVIDED THEM WITH ALL THE DOCUMENTATION THEY ASKED FOR SUCH AS PAY SLIPS AND SEPARATION CERTIFICATES AND EVERY TIME I DO I CONTINUE TO ASK WHAT THE REASON FOR THE ORIGINAL DEBT WAS, WITH NO RESPONSE."

directly related to having received correspondence related to online compliance." Centrelink ensures on their website that "if [individuals] are not happy with the outcome of the review, [they can] either make a complaint to the commonwealth ombudsman or appeal through the court." But it is this process of dissection and the particularly harrowing stress of financial

alone and unsupported and 60% said the process made them feel depressed. Those surveyed also described their experiences with these debts as leaving "them feeling helpless", and causing "a lot of unnecessary anxiety and stress."

Meg said she's cried over the phone to Centrelink representatives because it's just so frustrating. "By the time you get to speak to someone, the person on



## HOW OLD HAVE THE FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS BEEN THAT CENTRELINK HAS REQUESTED TO DISMISS YOUR DEBT?

the phone can only tell you what's on the screen in front of them and usually passes you on to someone else. It's mentally and emotionally exhausting," she said. "I always reported my income accurately and accepted the fact that Centrelink would no longer support me when I started my masters. So to receive a huge debt of almost \$2000, and for absolutely no one to be able to give me

## "THOSE SURVEYED ALSO DESCRIBED THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH THESE DEBTS AS LEAVING THEM "FEELING HELPLESS", AND CAUSING "A LOT OF UNNECESSARY ANXIETY AND STRESS."

services available. This is unfortunate, as the Student Representative Council (SRC) caseworkers are particularly knowledgeable on the operations and issues associated with Centrelink's "brick wall."

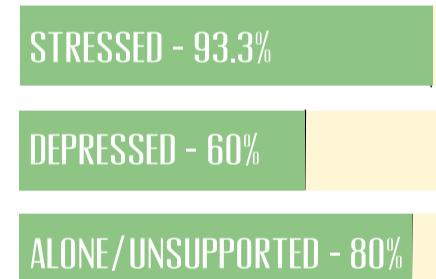
There is a wider discussion to be had on the worldwide issues of online automated debt systems. In early 2017 the United Nations (UN) also included in

its ICESCR final submission an outline of the effect of the debts on everyday Australians. It is believed that the UN looks to investigate this issue globally in the years to come.

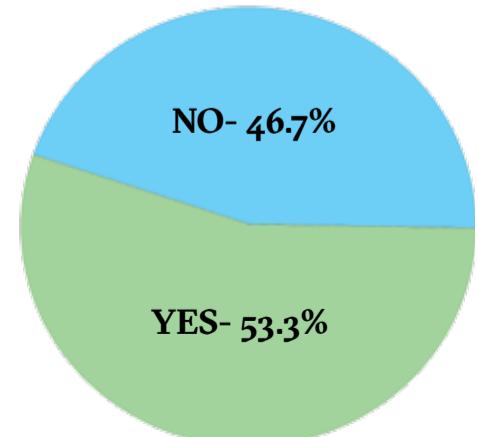
Thus, it seems absurd that in a society where major corporations regularly tax evade, a government organisation continues to falsely prosecute some of our most vulnerable citizens. An automated system cannot understand personal context, emotional suffering, abuse or student mental health. It doesn't recognise a delayed appeals process almost halted by overcrowded Centrelink phone lines.

Individuals need the human responses of a well-trained representative to be authorising and confirming these debts. The system cannot continue to function as an organiser of welfare recipients' owing, until it fixes its series of fatal flaws.

## STUDENTS ARE FEELING...?



## HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN DEALING WITH ROBODEBTS?



## HAVE YOU PAID A DEBT YOU STILL BELIEVE TO BE FALSE?

# The Last Hours

Shania O'Brien reflects on a friendship that was meant to last.

There's a gold frame on the table in my childhood bedroom. It's nothing special in terms of appearance: cheap metal with gold mica that's barely holding it together. The picture it contains is simple enough: one little girl holding another little girl's hand as they gaze at the skyline of the city. In the back, the sun shines garishly.

I remember Ana turning to me the day this photo was taken, and saying, "do you know why we don't gift people sharp objects?"

Superstition was not something I particularly believed in, but I had known the answer. A gift of sharp objects is supposed to sever relationships. I lied and told her I didn't know, and she recited a made-up fairytale about broken friendships between witches and wyverns.

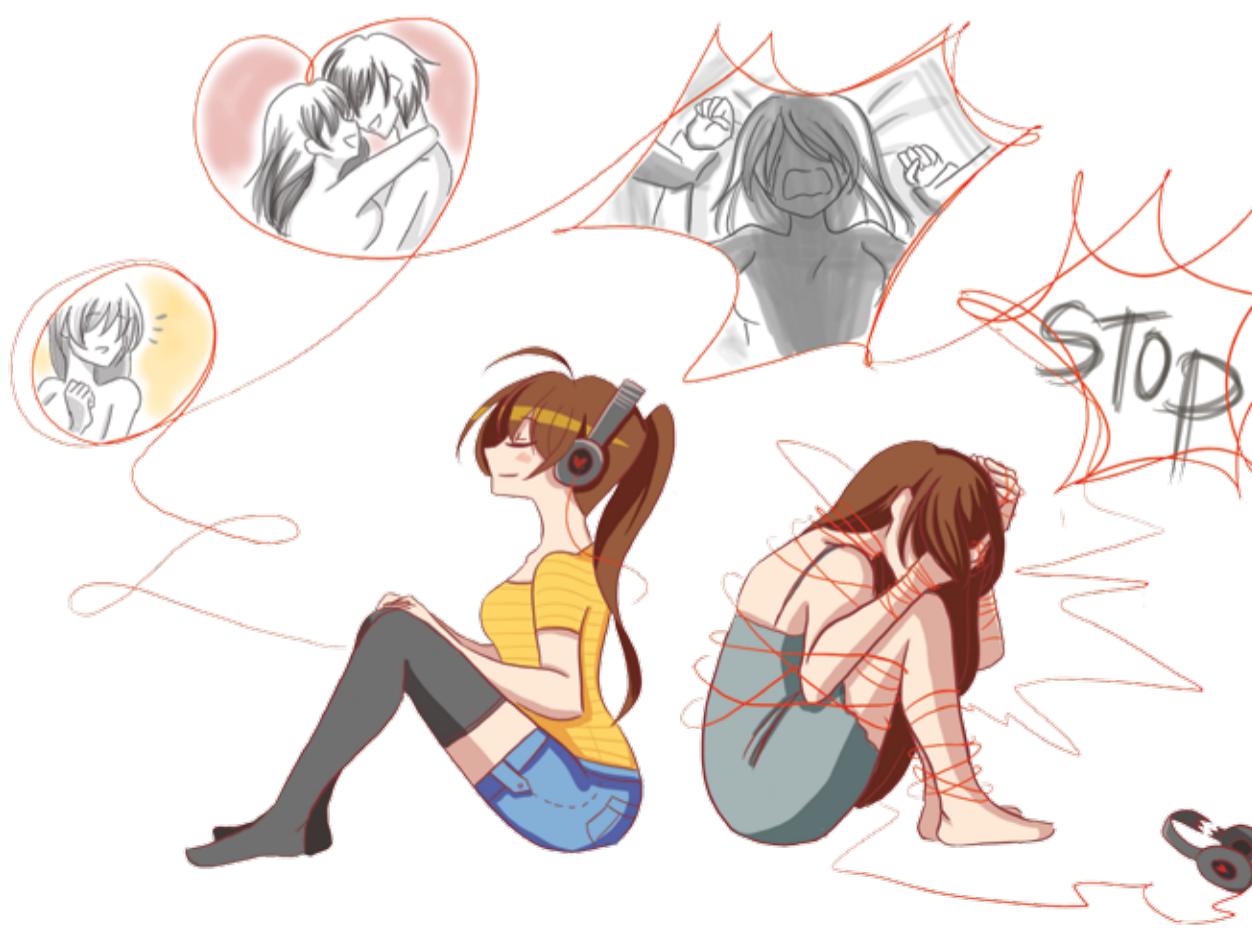
Ever since then, we would create stories for each other. Nine-year-old girls telling legends about the first curse, about true love, bloodthirsty elves and rainbow-colored clouds. The years after filled with colour. Our simple apartments in Darlington with redwood floors and overgrown Devil's ivy morphed into complex worlds of poisoned lakes and bubbling cauldrons. The crack in my wall was a portal into another dimension created by a world-shattering earthquake, and the darts Ana gifted me were poisoned arrows with which we could shoot our enemies.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

At sixteen, we sit on her balcony as sunlight streams through the balusters. It is the first day of spring, and it is tradition to people-watch and enjoy each other's company in silence along with a tub of mango ice cream. I have a book in my hand, one that is horribly predictable, complete with stargazing, theme park dates and kisses in the rain.

"You know that moment in books, when a character does something, and another character realizes they're in love?" I say to Ana. "Do you think that exists in real life?"

She furrows her brow and tilts her head. "No." A pause. "I don't know. I think it just happens over and over and over again until you realise you can't do without someone."



Art by Olivia Allanson

I look down at my book, then back at her, and realise that she's right.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

At seventeen, Ana asks me, "do you think we'll be friends forever?"

I haven't seen Ana since she couldn't make it for the movie three weeks ago, but we've been texting semi-regularly. We video chatted, too. Once. Five days ago. I'm not too worried, I've been busy with my job at Forever New. Working in retail is exhausting.

Eliza and I walk into the frozen yoghurt store and are greeted by upperclassmen. The conversation is trivial. Sports, YouTubers, Kanye West.

"Hey." One of them turns to me. "You're friends with Ana, right? My sister told me they're at the same internship. How is she doing?"

I didn't know that. I didn't even know she had applied for an internship. I swallow and look away. "She's good." I hope.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

It is ridiculous. Of course, we will. I do not care that she moved away a month ago, or that we don't get to see each other every day like we used to. It doesn't matter that she has made new friends, that she spends more time with them now than she does with me. It is an established fact: anyone who isn't Ana simply isn't enough, and vice versa.

Sometimes, I miss her calls and messages, but I'm... busy. I always call her back eventually. Most of those times, she doesn't tell me what has been bothering her and insists that it isn't important. I believe her, because we always tell each other the important stuff. And besides, she always picks up when I call. Our relationship is still going strong.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

High school is over, and I seem to have nothing but time. I sit and stare at the television, absentmindedly drumming my fingers on the table. I was supposed to go to the movies today, but Ana cancels on me again, insisting that she has a "personal problem" she "absolutely cannot tell me about," but "things are fine."

Fine, then. I invite Eliza and Spencer over for a sleepover. They are quirky girls who have just moved into the building, and my mother is always encouraging me to be more social and make new friends. We make popcorn and watch *This Means War*. Spencer wants to bet on who's the best at throwing darts, but that little competition comes to an end when Eliza tries to juggle the bolts and accidentally cuts herself.

"Why are these so sharp?" she complains. I flash back to a particularly sunny day a few years ago.

*Do you know why we don't gift people sharp objects?* I shrug it off and go look for a bottle of dettol for Eliza.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

I think about what I will say if I ever muster up the courage. Maybe, "hey, do you want to go for mango ice cream?" or, "are you still superstitious?" Perhaps it would be, "remember when you asked me if we would be friends forever?" But I will do none of those things. I will most likely spend the rest of the night looking over my shoulder in hopes of Ana rushing up to me and grinning.

It has been six months. Despite how fulfilling it is to devote every waking moment to SUDS, I haven't stopped feeling like something is missing. Maybe I have been too dependent on Ana. I haven't seen her since the party, but I know she is happy. Well, she looks happy in her pictures.

*You didn't call back. You didn't ask why. You assumed too much. You took her for granted.*

I look at my cracked wall and attempt to picture the world it would've led us to. Maybe it is one where our roles are reversed and I am the happy one.

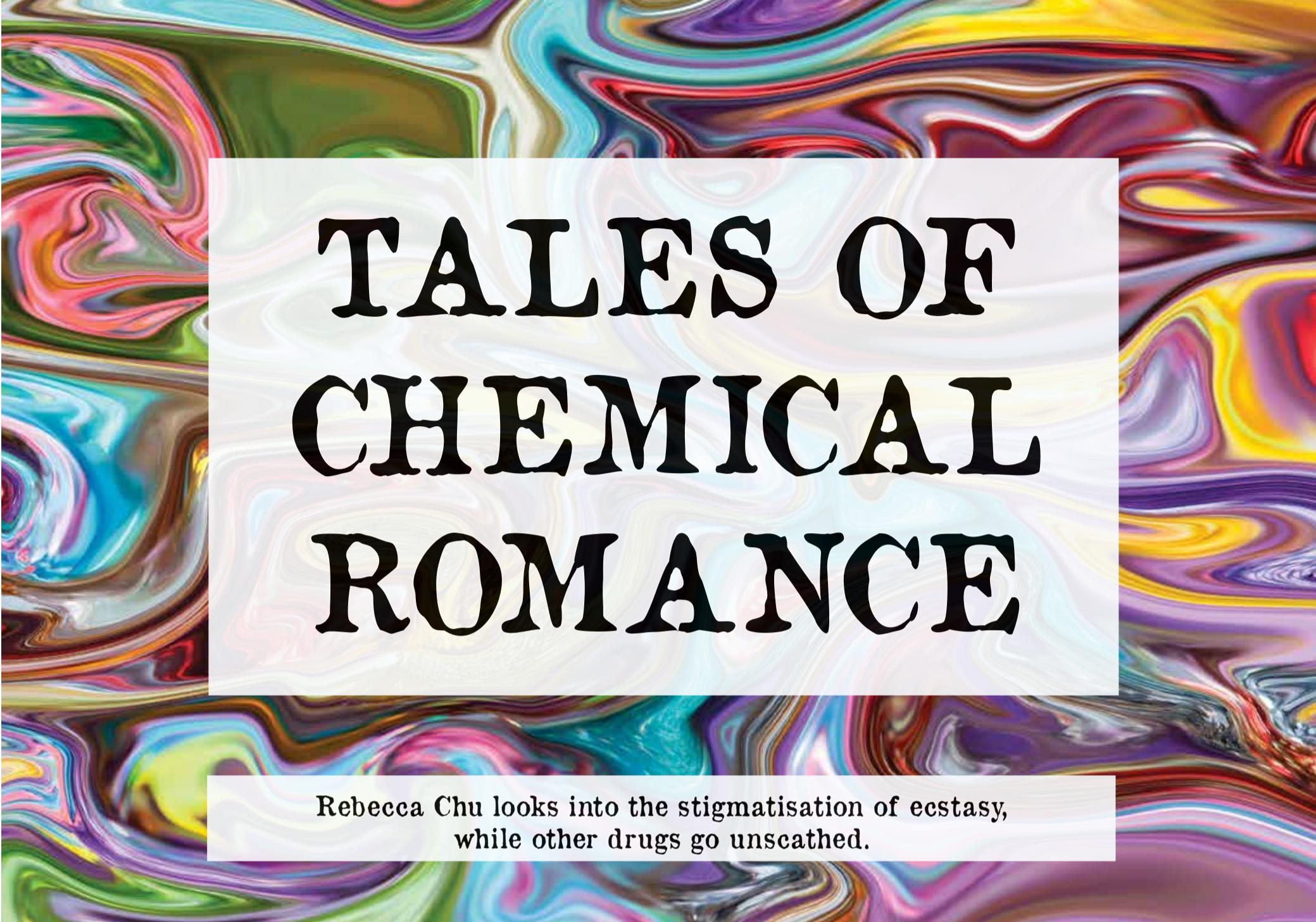
I think of another reason to add to my list. You were selfish.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

I am sitting by my window. It is the first day of winter, and the skies are dark. It is going to rain soon. I have collected little things from around my house that I do not need anymore: a picture frame, a dart board, books I will not read again, bracelets and rings whose gemstones have long since fallen off, clothes that do not belong to me. I put them in a box in the guest room's closet.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

Spring has come and gone, and it is time for me to look for things to fill my days with during the summer break. I think about visiting my aunt in Dublin, or taking an art class. I do not think of the cardboard box often. I have not gone through its contents in a while.



## Tale I

**I**t's an unnaturally hot day for the middle of September, reaching a high of almost 30 degrees. The sky is a picturesque azure, proof that Spring has finally arrived. Dust swirls through the crowd and clings to sweaty bodies. A boy waits in line, a small clear packet tucked in the waistband of his underwear. A policeman and his sniffer dog eye him as they patrol the area, but the dog doesn't sit and they walk on. Of the 30,000 attendees, 355 will be searched for drugs, 69 would be found to be in possession and 10 charged with supply offences.

The main stage lights up the island as twilight settles over the scene, streaking the indigo sky with hues of soft pinks, purples and blues. The excitement of the crowd is palpable; it seeps through the pores of their skin and rises above them, settling in a dome of euphoria. Electronic beats pound through the speakers, resounding through chests and bones, as if the music was emanating from the bodies themselves. The atmosphere is a frenzy of lights, smoke, bodies and sweat, and the air is aglow with the sense of camaraderie that seems to come hand-in-hand with inebriation. Rarely does humankind experience this kind of feeling, when all inhibitions are tossed aside and the extremes of the emotional spectrum allowed a public platform for expression.

The End Show commences and the crowd is at its peak

once again with the final moments of the night. Laser beams pierce through the block of midnight blue sky in a feverish blur as fireworks erupt the roof of the euphoric dome. The seductive voiceover replays in the souls of the crowd like a mantra. We stand on the edge of a new decade of dedication. Together, as one tribe. United by the same passion. Screams are drowned out by the pulse of the music, and the crowd pushes and pulls against each other in a giant embrace.

By the end of the night, two people will have died from suspected drug overdose. Defqon.1 is clearly more than just a music festival; it is an unforgettable experience.



On 16 September, 2018, the NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian stood in front of cameras and vowed to permanently shut down the dance music festival that claimed the lives of 23-year-old Joseph Pham and 21-year-old Diana Nguyen.

The backlash was considerable, and Berejiklian was forced to retract her initial promise, claiming that she had only meant she "never wanted to see that event in its [current] form come back." A panel of experts comprising of NSW's Police Commissioner, Chief Medical Officer and Chair of the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority was consulted and in late October 2018, the State government proposed three key areas of drug-related



activities to target. It involved the introduction of a new consistent licensing regime for music festivals, strengthening drug and alcohol education, and a new category of crime that would hold drug dealers responsible for the deaths they may have inadvertently caused. Pill testing was ruled out from the start with Berejiklian stating, "Anyone who advocates pill testing is giving the green light to drugs."

"If there was a way in which we could ensure lives were saved through pill testing we would consider it—but there is no evidence provided to the government on that," Berejiklian said, despite the plethora of research that supports this initiative as an effective harm reduction tool. Her statement came in response to another suspected drug-related death of a 20-year-old man at the Beyond the Valley Festival earlier this year.

In Australia's first ever pill testing trial at Groovin the Moo in Canberra last year, two potentially lethal substances were identified within capsules and were consequently disposed of. A report published by Harm Reduction Australia also found that of the people who had had their drugs tested, 42% had stated that they would change their drug consumption behaviour as a result. Almost two-thirds knew of others using the same drugs, of which 90% reported that they would share the results of the test. The trial was deemed a success and has been approved to be conducted again at this year's Groovin the Moo.

Meanwhile, the NSW government continues to rely on draconian regulations embedded with the War on Drugs mentality that has been widely criticised and proven ineffective. Will\* worked as a staff member for Defqon.1 from 2014 and 2017. He watched as the austerity of officials and increases in police presence matched the creative ludicrousness of the rumours spreading about the ways attendees were attempting to smuggle in drugs. In 2014, reports that people had been sneaking onto the island a month and a half in advance to bury drugs in the grounds forced police to secure the location earlier. The next year, people were allegedly swimming across to the island and the police employed speedboats to patrol the perimeter. The year after that, rumours that people were now using drones to drop drugs onto the grounds circulated. Regardless



of whether any of those theories were substantiated, police presence almost doubled in 2018.

## Tale II

You can almost always tell when someone is on something. Dilated pupils, involuntary jaw clenching, uncontrollable body and eye movements, sweating, slurred speech.

"He's fine," one of his friends says. They all watch as he thumps his head violently to the beat of music only he can hear. His hands hold the sides of the table in case his enthusiasm sends him falling head-first on the concrete ground, which seemed a possibility. Every so often he leans back, head lolloping, mouth agape, eyes a frenzy.

An hour ago, in the privacy of his own bedroom, he had taken two caps and snorted a line of coke. Afterwards, he walked downstairs back to his own 21st birthday party, a grin across his face as the drugs began to make their way through his circulatory system. He had waved off his sixteen-year-old sister's accusing gaze as the E dissolved in his stomach and small intestine, its molecules absorbing into his bloodstream. From there, they would travel up to his liver and then to his heart, where each beat would send the molecules in and out of the lungs for oxygenation. Finally, it would arrive at the brain.

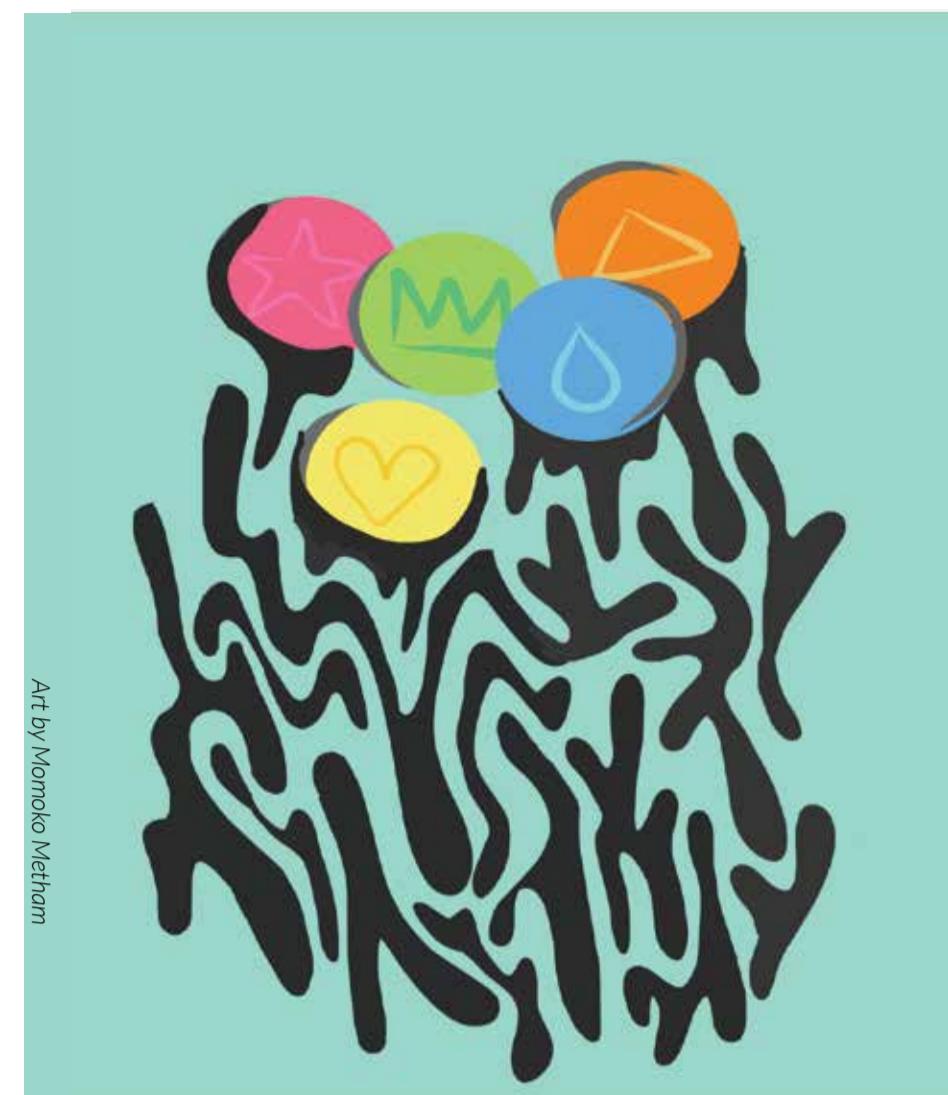
"He's fine."

He is now in the peak of his high. Serotonin is bouncing within his synaptic spaces, blocked from returning to its terminals as the drug lures more of its colleagues to come join the party. Intense happiness is reigning his brain and an inexplicable feeling of love for every single person at the party is encouraging him to sporadically shout out, "Fuuuck." When they bring out the cake, he blows out the candles and then proceeds to smash his entire face into it.

They all laugh.

Blue icing drips from his hair onto the glass table. The destroyed cake sits next to him, a few bite marks taken out of its sides. The party is beginning to settle down and a group gathers around the birthday boy as the side effects of their own inebriations begin to calm. Four hours in and he is still exhibiting the signs of someone having the time of his life. A piece of worn-out gum he should have spat out a long time ago continues to make its way around his mouth, not doing much to alleviate his teeth grinding. A friend passes him a fresh piece and he shoves it into his mouth without removing the first.

A designated driver arrives at the party. "Holy shit," she says as she walks into the scene. Aside from the star of the show, there's vomit patches over the grass from others who couldn't handle their drink. She sits down with the group and they all continue to watch as he vigorously tests the limits of the range of motion in his neck. It is incredible, the dexterity and flexibility the



Art by Momoko Metham

human body is capable of when chemically enhanced. The audience collectively winces, trying not to think about the pain he can not feel yet.

"He's fine." His friends don't want to give him too much water in case of water intoxication. They keep a close eye on him, as other guests begin to filter out, thanking the birthday boy who would not remember a single thing the next day. The designated driver stays longer than she originally intends to, just in case they need someone sober to sit with him in the ride to the hospital. When it hits 2 am, she and the friends she came to pick up leaves him with the others, who all assure them that this is not the first time this has happened, nor would it be his last.

The next morning, the newly minted 21-year-old will say he was fine, besides the fact that his neck and jaw are now in serious pain. He will spend the rest of the day recovering in bed, reminiscing the events of the previous night, many of which he has no recollection of. For the rest of the week he will feel depressed, which he will attribute to post-party blues rather than the fact that his serotonin levels are now lower than normal.



"You know, I think we should start taking ecstasy instead of drinking alcohol on nights out." It's a typical Saturday night and I'm with Michael\* at Cargo Bar, both of us four to five drinks into the night. I laugh. "No seriously. It can't be any worse for us."

"You don't seriously believe that," I say, sipping on my double vodka with lemon lime and bitters.

"Why not?"

"Well for one thing, it's illegal."

"It's an indescribable feeling," Eva\* says. "It's like I never knew that kind of happiness was possible and I'm scared I'll never be able to feel that happy again."

Eva's first time was on a road-trip up the coast, surrounded by a small group

of friends who all knew she would be taking it. She recalls the way physical touch was its own form of ecstasy, and the way she felt a connection towards everyone, an intensity she had never experienced before.

"It's like getting absolutely pissed, but 1000 times better," Michael had once said to me. "No mess, no hangover, and it's cheaper."

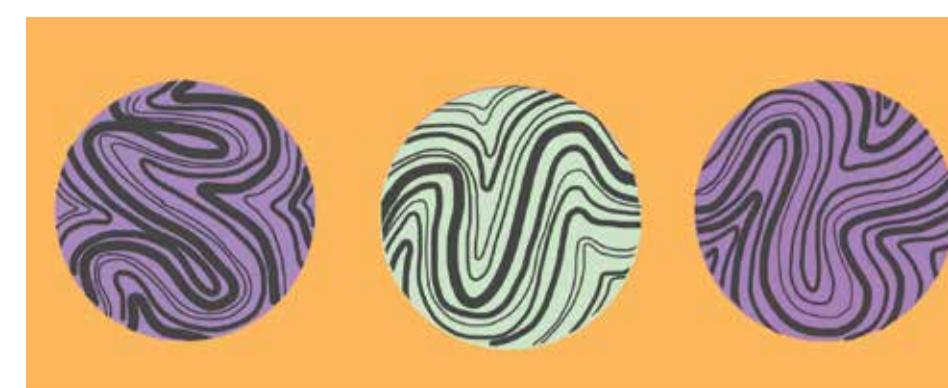
Whilst pure ecstasy in small, infrequent doses is said to be one of the least harmful drugs available (and that's including alcohol and tobacco), the misuse and abuse of MDMA can have significant effects. Depending on the cut, contaminates, and quantity consumed, it can lead to dehydration, hyperthermia, an increased or irregular heart rate, and seizures. The stigmatisation of illicit drug use in public discourse fosters a culture of ignorance and misinformation, leading to dangerous consumption habits where people lack knowledge of the detrimental and potentially lethal consequences. It's easy to have a blasé attitude towards a truth no one is really willing to talk about without severe judgment.

"Once people get more educated about the harms of MDMA, they'll start to take it less, and less frequently and when they do, far more responsibly," Will says to me.

"You don't get that here in Australia. There seems to be a race to the bottom, between who can get the most fucked up as fast as possible. There's an element of heroism that seems to be a response to the prohibitive regulations in Australia."

The unregulated and diverse nature of Australia's drug market also means that new substances and drugs are always emerging into the scene. While the Australian Drug Trends 2018 report conducted by National Drug & Alcohol Research Centre found that there was a shift towards greater use of capsules and crystal forms of ecstasy, both of which are generally perceived to be of higher purity, there is still no way for the naked eye to be certain of what other substances they contain without tests. Capsule use increased from 19% in 2008 to 72% in 2018, while crystals almost doubled from 2015. Pills remained the primary form of use, with three quarters of Australians reporting use within the last six months. Of the quarter of participants that reported non-fatal overdoses, almost two-thirds nominated ecstasy as the main drug of choice.

In 2017, Dr David Pennington from The University of Melbourne proposed a new reform to drug policy that advocated for regulating access and supply to cannabis and ecstasy. Under the system, Australians over the age of 16 would be able to purchase limited quantities of ecstasy sourced from government-approved pharmacy suppliers. It was designed to dissuade users from turning to questionable and unknown sources, as well as connect users to appropriate forms of counselling and treatment. In an article for *The Conversation*, Pennington wrote, "Low levels of [ecstasy] use do not present a risk to health any more than



modern and responsible use of alcohol."

Earlier this year, Greens candidate Lilith Zaharias went to the extent to state, "If you could go to Woolworths and buy a pack of MDMA it would be much safer." Zaharias has faced significant backlash since.

But users like Will seem apprehensive about such reforms. "I'm more hesitant when it comes to legalising ecstasy as opposed to decriminalising it," says Will. "In terms of legalising it for commercial use like you would with, say, alcohol, I'm far more sceptical with how that would play out."

Indeed, it is downright disturbing to consider the consequences of normalising ecstasy in the same way excessive alcohol consumption has been in society today.

## Tale III

The night is young and so is she. A 17-year-old on her first big night out. She waves goodbye to the rest of her underage friends as they decide to call it a night. As she sits in the entrance of the restaurant-bar, exhilaration washes over her. She will be turning 18 in a little over a month, but the knowledge that she doesn't quite belong here just yet incites a rare feeling of rebelliousness. The restaurant-bar she is in looks more like a club; it blasts dance music whilst patrons eat and drink under flashing lights and lasers. Alcohol of all kinds are served by the bottle.

Without checking her ID, the waitress leads the girl to a table where her legal-age friends are waiting for her.

"I told you you'd get in." A boy grins, holding up a bottle of original flavoured soju and a couple of shot glasses. Another boy begins to pour the contents of an already open bottle into the glasses.

"Cheers."

The next few hours pass by in a blur of alcohol-infused memories, some of which will later take her a while to distinguish between reality or dream. She taps out after eight shots, but will only remember the taste of the first three.

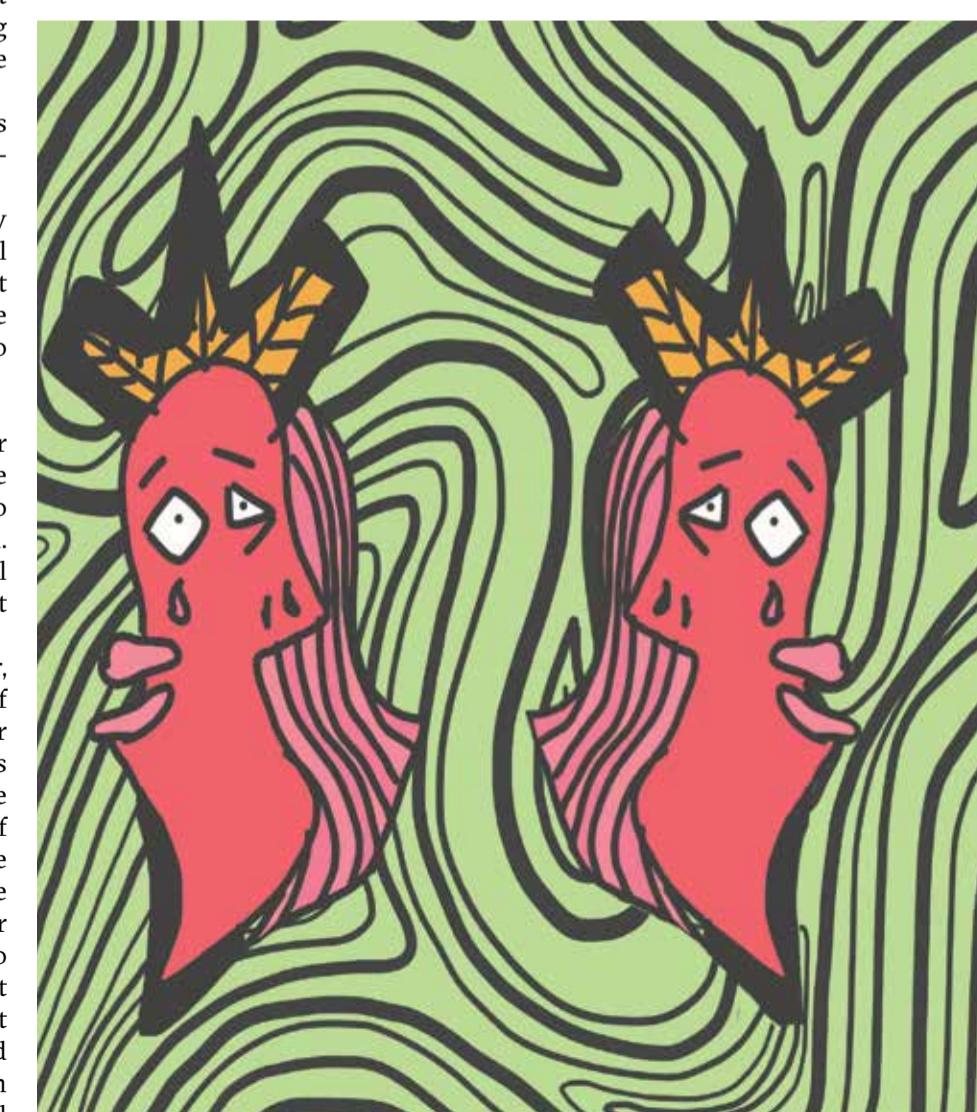
The following day in her hangover, the girl will only remember brief snapshots of the walk from the bar to the train station — the way she is entranced by the flashing neon blue elevator button, unable to keep herself from continuously pressing it; the feeling of security and comfortable helplessness as someone carries her through the streets of Town Hall, too drunk to stand on her own two feet, let alone walk; the pain that was absent but should have been there when her head bangs against the tiles of the station floor; and the brief moments of painful

whilst holding "normal" social drinking habits to a different standard.

Yet it is interesting to note that the number of young adults consuming more than five standards at least once a month dropped from 57% in 2001 to 42% in 2016. While further research is needed regarding the factors motivating this decline, it presents the possibility that shifts in attitudes towards alcohol, as mediated by education and changing cultural perspectives, have a correlational relationship. These statistics align with statistics from the 2017 Australian Secondary Students' Alcohol and Drug survey which showed an overall decline in current drinking behaviour among high school students. Conversely, ecstasy use among 12 to 17-year-olds has doubled from 2% in 2011 to 5% in 2017. Though general prevalence remains low, the dramatic increase in proportion suggests the beginnings of a detrimental normalisation of ecstasy amongst high school students, fuelled by a disregard for health risks and ignorant consumption attitudes that amassed public stigma.

When it comes to drugs, government policies and guidelines are influenced by interpretations of societal morality, rather than what objective evidence may dictate. To centre an argument exclusively on the reductive dichotomies of being either "for" or "against" drug use reflects a deep-rooted misunderstanding of what motivates and sustains youth behaviour. Rather, we need to consider destigmatisation through open discourse and decriminalisation as a viable alternative to reducing the senseless deaths that continue to haunt our headlines.

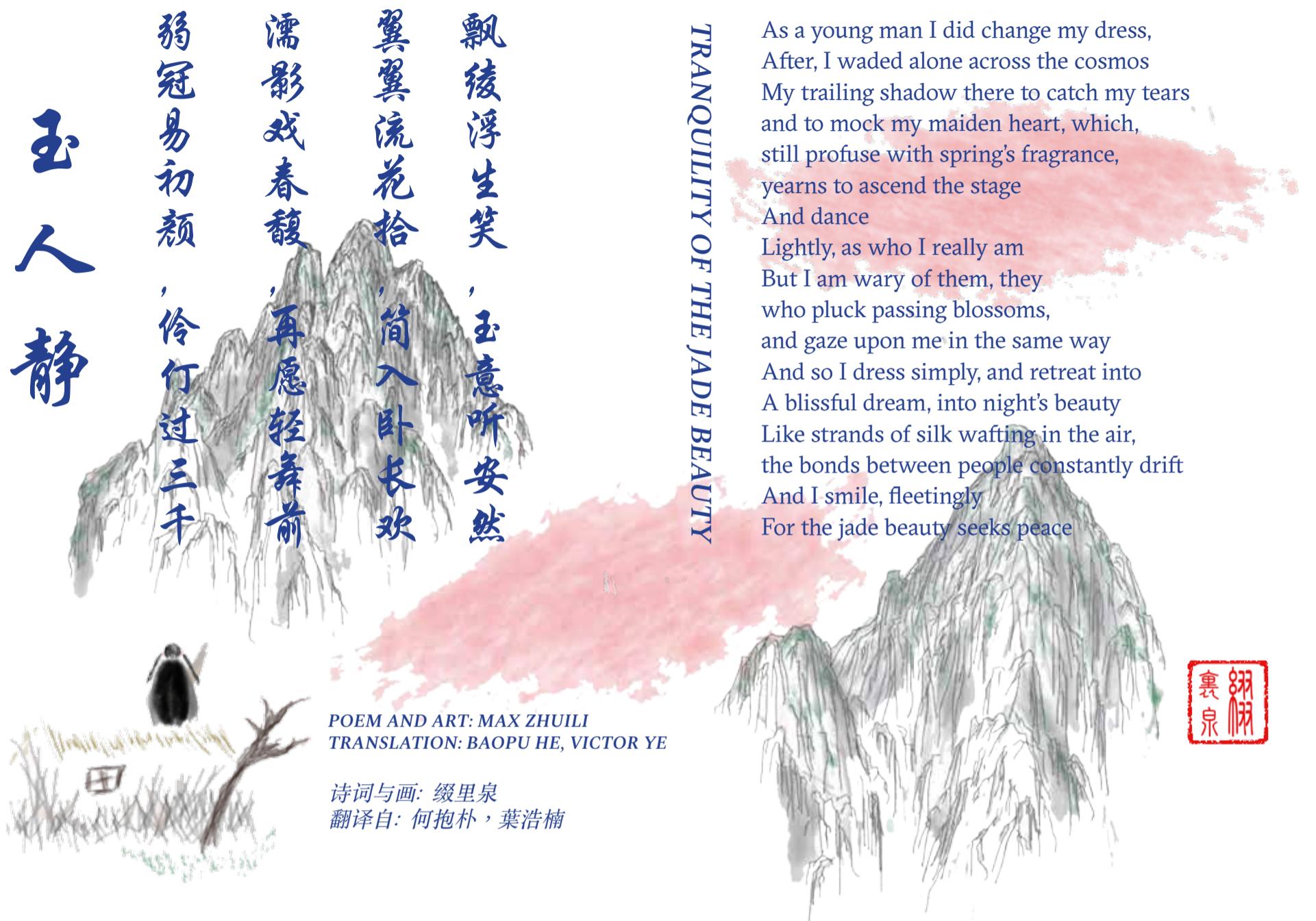
\*Names have been changed.



# Hotel Mumbai: brown bodies for white fear

Pranay Jha and Jessica Syed interrogate the perilous popularity of the new blockbuster film.

CONTENT WARNING: THIS ARTICLE MAKES REFERENCES TO 2008 MUMBAI TERRORIST ATTACKS



## 致那些暂受抑郁之苦的人

韩宛珊探索国际留学生心理健康问题

或许你会时常看到这样的新闻，来自于国外大学的某某某，由于各种原因自杀身亡。或许在另一个城市，或许在同一个城市，我们已经失去了很多同龄人。

2018年12月14日，墨尔本大学传来一则噩耗，一位中国留学生疑似压力过大，在墨尔本大学校区的Redmond Barry Building南侧纵身一跃，结束了生命。

这些优秀的同龄人，在生前都患有同样一种疾病——抑郁症。据耶鲁大学发布的研究表明

中国留学生心理疾病的发病率令人警惕，这份调查显，45%的中国留学生称曾出现过抑郁症，29%的人称有焦虑症状。

**最后一句话，送给那些饱受痛苦的人，抑郁的日子是场战争，愿你都能赢得这场斗争，重回光明。**

医生是你可以信任的人

悉尼大学有专门的心理咨询中心(CAPS)，可提供免费的专业心理咨询。如果察觉到自己有潜在的心理问题，可以拨打电话寻求帮助。悉尼大学心理健康中心专线：1800 011 511

迄今为止，从医学上来说，抑郁症的病因并不能说是非常清楚，但肯定的是，心理和社会环境等诸多因素的交互作用导致了抑郁症的发病。遭遇应激性的生活事件，是导致抑郁发作的重要触发条件。其临床表现为：情绪

持续低落，感到空虚；对周围事物失去兴趣；睡眠出现问题，失眠或嗜睡；注意力不集中；有死亡的念头等。

其实你我都应该知道，留学生活并没有看上去的声色犬马。来自父母的压力；来自课业的压力；环境的陡然巨变；文化的冲突；经济的负担；个人的成长，当这些具体又现实的问题同时落到一个身上的时候，将很容易引发情绪上的崩溃、焦躁，而导致抑郁。

面对抑郁症，我们应该如何治愈？当你感到自己情绪低落、有抑郁兆的时候，首先要学会的就是自救。

得到医生的诊断结果后，谨遵医嘱，按时吃药。同时，心理咨询会保护你的隐私，可以畅所欲言。

相信自己不是一座孤岛

把自己的情况告诉自己信得过的朋友，并且毫无保留的跟ta倾诉所有的想法，包括极度阴郁情绪的描述。但请记住，一定要找信得过的朋友。把抑郁情绪告诉一个并不理解你的人，只会让自己的情绪变得更糟。

如果感觉身边的朋友抑郁了

请尝试理解ta，如果对于ta的困扰，想不出好的解决办法，请倾听。对于饱受抑郁折磨的人，很多时候，倾听是比劝说更管用的方式。并且在没有得到ta允许的情况下，尽量不要把抑郁症的情况告诉他。

“如果有一天，你一个非常外向的朋友，跟你说他最近很痛苦。”

“请你一定要当回事儿，因为他可能，比你想象的更痛苦。”

最后一句话，送给那些饱受痛苦的人，抑郁的日子是场战争，愿你都能赢得这场斗争，重回光明。

The fetishisation of people of colour is multi-faceted. There is extensive literature on the exoticisation and hypersexual portrayal of East Asian, South Asian, African and Middle Eastern women in Western cinema. Beyond this, people of colour are too often portrayed in Western films by means of conventional stereotypes, such as that of the "nerdy, funny Indian kid" in mainstream comedy movies such as *Harold and Kumar*. The capitalist, political motive which in part gave rise to the United States' invasion of Afghanistan yielded a bonus for the U.S. economy, producing a wealth of material inspiration for Western film-makers to draw on.

The 2012 American film *Zero Dark Thirty*, whose plotline was centred around the "man-hunt" for Osama Bin Laden was one such highly acclaimed piece, nominated in five categories at the 85th Academy Awards. However, its depiction of the interrogation of Pakistani suspects by CIA agents was decried as propagandistic by critics, with the film altogether denounced for having glorified state-sanctioned violence.

One could say that *Hotel Mumbai*, appearing six years later, is but a continuation of this Western penchant for profiting off violence involving people of colour. Unlike *Zero Dark Thirty*, the film has only solicited praise and acclaim, with no critique in sight.

For those who believe that representation is an end in and of itself, films like *Hotel Mumbai* are remarkable. They provide opportunities for actors of colour to showcase their talents and satiate the modern liberal's desire

for Hollywood narratives set outside of the West. Undoubtedly, *Hotel Mumbai* has quite a diverse cast featuring Jordanians, Indians, Pakistanis, and Russians amongst others. Its characters, at various points, speak in a range of languages and come from various class backgrounds. However, anyone whose perspective isn't limited by the blinkers of representation fetishisation, *Hotel Mumbai* reflect a rather troubling reality—the rendering of ethnic bodies as instruments for white sentimentality.

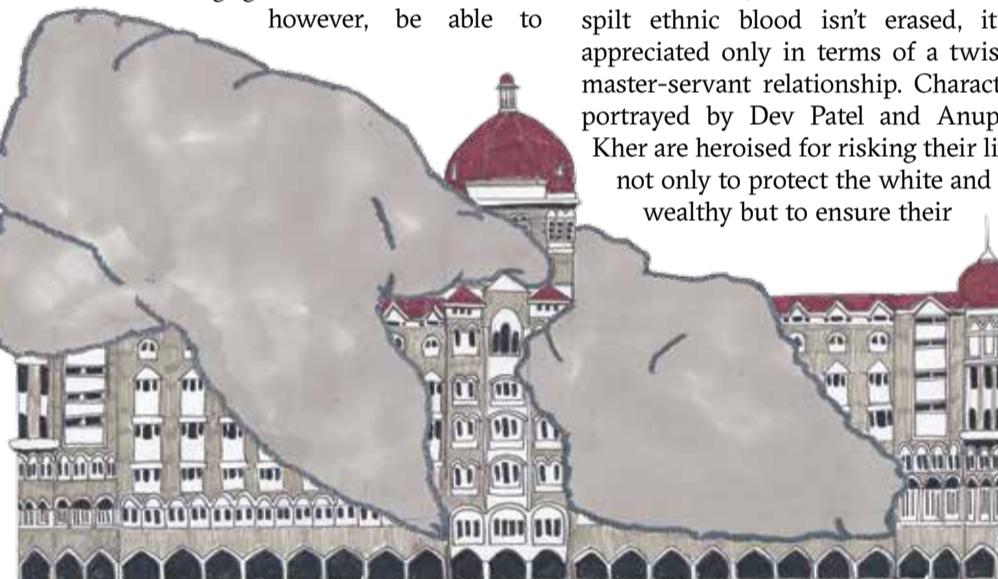
*Hotel Mumbai* is not a poorly made film. The use of both diegetic and non-diegetic sound, camera movement and sequence all produce a rather captivating experience for its audience. However, on a very basic level, it seems rather perverse to callously exploit a tragedy in which hundreds of people were left wounded or dead, to produce a 125-minute action thriller. *Hotel Mumbai* does itself no favours in this regard by dedicating a series of roughly 30-second shots, to scenes where numerous Indians are being gunned down. It would, however, be able to

potentially overcome this concern if it provided a realistic narrative of the impacts of the Mumbai attacks on victims.

The makers of *Hotel Mumbai* certainly attempt to consider the victims of the attack, by focussing on the narratives of various characters trapped in the Taj Hotel. For example, the audience is exposed to the experiences of an Iranian-British aristocrat and her family, Australian backpackers, and a Russian ex-Spetsnaz officer, as well as some of the staff. The problem, however, lies in the fact that ordinary Indians only find their way into *Hotel Mumbai*'s plot through acts of service to the wealthy and often white protagonists.

The Indians who were killed in restaurants, train stations, and even within the five-star hotel itself are gifted mere minutes within the film's broader narrative. In most cases, their deaths are viewed through the prism of a white gaze—reducing them to props which enhance white fear.

Of course, where the value of spilt ethnic blood isn't erased, it is appreciated only in terms of a twisted master-servant relationship. Characters portrayed by Dev Patel and Anupam Kher are heroised for risking their lives not only to protect the white and the wealthy but to ensure their



comfort. In this way, the message of the film isn't simply that the lives of ordinary Indians did not matter. Rather it is that their lives matter only when they are in the service of endangered whites.

*Hotel Mumbai*'s depiction of this racialised relationship is perhaps epitomised when Dev Patel's character, Arjun, a Sikh staff member at the hotel, is functionally told to remove his pagadi. A white woman, who moments earlier had chastised another guest for speaking in Arabic, claims she is afraid he is a terrorist because of his turban, or pagadi. Arjun is then humanised to the white eye, by showing photos of his family and ultimately explaining the dishonour associated with removing ones pagadi.

After conceding that, if it makes her comfortable, he will remove his turban, the white woman tells him to keep it on, explaining she's "just afraid."

In *Hotel Mumbai*, it is fear that produces racist attitudes, and the burden is on Indian characters to both produce and alleviate that fear. Asking Arjun to remove his pagadi isn't abhorrent merely because of the racist attitude that underpins the request. It becomes unconscionable when he is sympathetic to the white people he is 'serving', and when he is willing to submit to their will.

As the blockbuster Hollywood industry is just that—an industry—it's a far cry to hope that representation of people of colour within it will arouse meaningful progress in terms of how our communities are treated in the West. When our deaths, our wounds, and our suffering are granting cultural and economic profit to a white audience, it's hard to be optimistic that we will be humanised in the real world.

Art by Ludmilla Nunell

## Green New Light on the hill

James Newbold is waiting for that green light.

The scene is set at a recent Sydney Policy Lab discussion on the possibility of an Australian Green New Deal (GND). The dramatic personae are the elites of Sydney's left. The discussion, generally stimulating and effective in coalition-building, ultimately featured contentious issues within environmental discourses.

The evening opened with an admission: no Indigenous people were present. Indigenous peoples ought to be at the centre of an Australian GND, everyone said, but the event took place in an elite, largely white academic space.

Little mention was made of effective land and water management techniques of Indigenous peoples. Attendees reminded each other that climate change is a social justice issue, but that discussion lacked context. Noticeably absent was the water crisis in remote Indigenous

communities in North-Western NSW, and the Victorian government's clearing of sacred Djab Wurrung trees for a highway bypass.

The GND is a broad environmental and egalitarian project, Dr Amanda Tattersall told attendees, originating from social movements which survived the fall of Bernie Sanders' 2016 presidential campaign by gradually developing within and outside of the Democratic party, lately through the efforts of Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and the Justice Democrats.

The GND's historical namesake was the Democrats' New Deal, a set of extensive post-Depression public reform initiatives. The next government's environmental policy is a far cry from the GND. The two policy suites are only remotely comparable in terms of breadth

and in centering a "just transition" for workers in fossil fuel industries. But Labor's approach is grounded in moderating environmental policy rather than reskilling and empowering communities. Subsidising lower emissions-intensive technology leaves the door open for capitalist profiteering rather than public investment. The result is Labor's policy falling concerningly short of a materialistic and social movement-driven GND.

It's hard to see the GND developing from within Labor ranks, as necessary as it is for Labor to support it.

Without an original New Deal, an Australian-branded "Green and Gold New Deal" needs inspiration from post-war reconstruction, the accords or last decade's Global Financial Crisis bailout.

A GND would, and must, look, sound

Disclaimer: The author is a current member of National Labor Students (NLS) and a Young Labor Left Convenor

and operate differently in Australia. The non-tokenistic centring of Indigenous people and their practice, relevance to people of colour and working class communities as well as the complexities of our own polity make a different GND necessary.

Thuy Nguyen from the Sydney Alliance challenged the largely white room to include working class and migrant communities in the coalition building project. Past mistakes must not be repeated, Nguyen argued.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recently declared that human society has until 2030 to limit irreversible changes to the climate. Labor's policy reaches into most areas of society and the economy, but even on these measures, it falls far short of the urgent change championed by the GND.

# No Future (Tense) for Prescriptionist Grammar

**Ellie Stephenson** argues for a more inclusive approach to diverse language systems.

My mum is studying a linguistics degree. It has its hazards: the occasional text about labiodental fricative 'f's; borderline-unreasonably long chats about vernacular Englishes. But one of Mum's grammar-related fun facts left me really concerned. "There's no such thing as future tense in the English language."

No such thing as the future tense? I was confused. Thirteen years of schooling and a bit of university, and I'd existed the whole time thinking "I will" was future tense. In fact, I imagine myself to be quite good at grammar, with a firm grasp on semi-colon usage, and what a copula is. Nonetheless, I had simply never learned that no verb inflections exist for the future tense in English. Rather, our expression of the future is based on mood and aspect, which implies a future without modifying the tense of verbs.

I think this is telling. Many amateur grammar snobs pedantically look down on colloquialisms, vernaculars, and various linguistic innovations on the basis that they're not 'proper grammar'. But I'm unsure how many cranky grammar aficionados know that much about language at all.

Grammar snobs are more than an annoyance. I'd argue they take an entirely incorrect approach to English. At a point, linguistic prescriptivism becomes outdated, limiting rather than

defending the integrity and beauty of a language. Prescriptivists who gleefully tell us that we're using language wrong, saying words that everyone knows how to use don't really mean what we think they do, telling us language is a logical system we are spoiling, espousing non-existent grammar rules like never putting a preposition at the end of a sentence. Sometimes grammar rules make sense, and help make English clearer—but too often they're used to construct superiority

is grounded in the view that AAVE, a dialect of English created by Black people in the US, is a bastardisation of Standard English. The reaction was misguided: AAVE has its own set of distinct, regular rules and uses language in consistent ways. Pullum claims: "there is no more reason for calling [AAVE] bad Standard English than for dismissing Minnesota English as bad Virginia speech."

The prescriptivist hostility towards Black linguistic innovation is a good case

**"Importantly, do your grammar rules make English more accessible, or are they used to construct 'good' and 'bad' English along prejudiced lines?"**

around particular ways of speaking and writing.

Geoffrey Pullum's paper 'African American Vernacular English (AAVE) is not Standard English with mistakes' describes the media outrage that followed a Californian school board's decision to incorporate AAVE into their teaching. The school recognised that AAVE was largely the language spoken at home by their students, thus adjusting their teaching to appropriately cater to that reality. The press was horrified, falsely suggesting schools would start teaching their students slang or 'incorrect' English. Pullum points out that this reaction

study of the arrogant and discriminatory ways in which grammar 'rules' are applied. They are typically used to condescend the slang, vernacular Englishes, and modes of speaking of the working class and racialised minorities. Not speaking 'properly' is weaponised to imply people are uneducated, unintelligent and less worthy of being listened to.

In Australia, Aboriginal English is a dialect of English with its own lexicon and grammatical differences to standard Australian English. Rather than viewing it as 'wrong', we should view it as an intelligent and valuable adaptation to an imposed colonial language. Classism

also creates unfavourable judgements of language — snobbish distaste for the perfectly reasonable and quite useful 'youse' means that working class Australians who created an efficient second person plural are deemed to be speaking improperly. Linguistic prescriptivists also pick on young women, nurturing an unhealthily fervent hate for 'like' as a filler word and an unreasonable disgust for low modality word choices.

If you're a linguistic prescriptivist with a proud love of pedantry, a sense of superiority from knowing what a participle is, and a desire to lecture people on semi-colon usage, it's worth some reflection. Are your criticisms grounded in a desire to make people's speech and writing less ambiguous and easier to understand? Or are they about narrowly and restrictively defining what 'correct' English is, regardless of the fluency of communication?

Are your critiques based on real grammatical rules which evolve with the development of language, or are your rules the stuff of rigid style guides and handbooks of centuries past? Importantly, do your grammar rules make English more accessible, or are they used to construct 'good' and 'bad' English along prejudiced lines? And — pertinently if, like me, you didn't understand tense until age 18 — how well do you understand the language you want to make rules about?

# NICK KYRGIOS: VILLAIN OR ANTI HERO?

**Kiran Gupta** defends the often misunderstood young tennis star.

In the tropical paradise of Acapulco, Mexico, far away from any of the grand slam tennis tournaments, Australian tennis player Nick Kyrgios is battling away against all-time great Rafael Nadal. Battling is possibly not the right word for a performance such as this. The first set has been taken by the Spaniard and Kyrgios is about to throw in the towel, citing sickness. Australia groans collectively.

Yet, from the depths of defeat, the Australian manages to turn the tables to beat the reigning French Open champion before beating two more top 10 players and a former grand slam champion to win the tournament. Thrown into the mix is some swearing at fans, racquet smashing and an underhand serve. Nonetheless, one would expect that, having won the biggest title of his career, Kyrgios would be met with applause in Australia.

Channel 10 didn't think so. Their headline read: "Nick Kyrgios just won his first professional tennis tournament in 14 months. So why does he look so unhappy?" This poses the question: where does Nick Kyrgios fit in to contemporary Australian discourse? The answer is complicated, but he certainly is the anti-hero we need in Australian media.

Now, why is Kyrgios so important to contemporary Australian discourse? There are a few reasons for this.

The young star has been very open about his struggles with mental health. After his win in Acapulco, Kyrgios offered reassurance to others sharing the same burden.

"It's hopefully an example for people who are struggling and getting in some places you don't think you can get out of. If I can do it, you can do it," he said.

This statement combined with his frequent posts on social media about depressive illnesses and anxiety have opened up a dialogue about mental health. Kyrgios has often been stigmatised in the media for factors that could be

Outside these circumstances however, the media often fails to properly reflect on Kyrgios' age and inexperience when it comes to his inability to craft a flawless public image. He is still only 23 years old — barely older than most undergrad students.

We are so used to the sterilised and carefully curated image of the ideal tennis player — players like Federer and Nadal know exactly what to say and how to say it to the media, and who have PR machines as well as endless experience to back this up. But we should note that this is not the norm. These players are extraordinary, and we should congratulate them for that, but they are also of a slightly different generation.

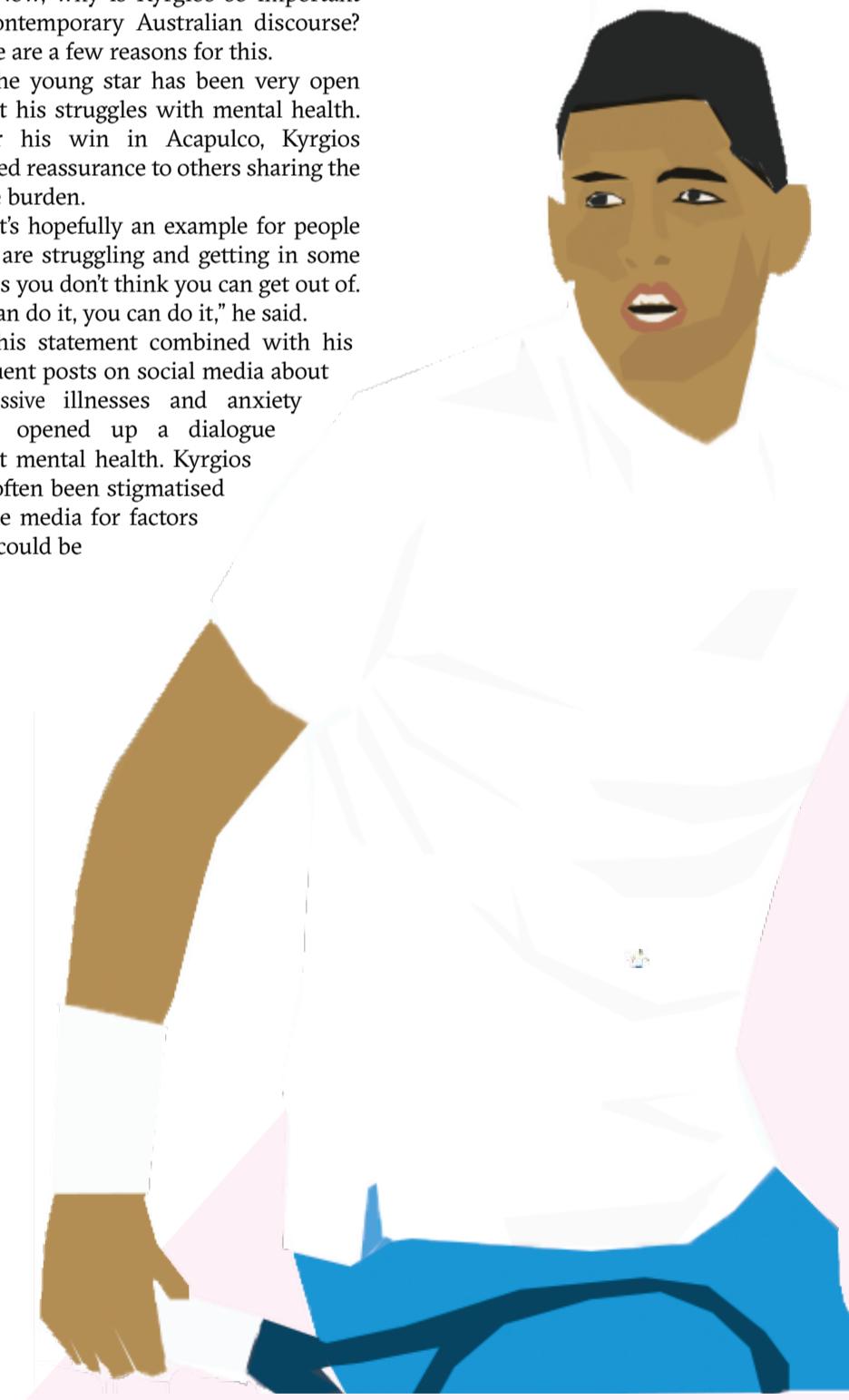
Kyrgios is not a hero like them in the conventional sense, but rather an anti-hero in the sense that he embodies a lot of the feelings that young people do feel and the way we react to things.

On a fundamental level, he is one of us and we should celebrate that. He is of us.

The idea of an anti-hero is an interesting one. In a PhD dissertation, by Leslie Erickson, she explains that anti-heroes are those who possess their "own moral compass, constru[ing] their own values as opposed to those recognized by society." Kyrgios clearly does not conform to the values traditionally recognised by the tennis world. Yet, he does have a clear moral compass himself and a strong set of personal values.

Underlining all this is the simple fact that Nick Kyrgios brings attention to the game of tennis. Whatever he does invokes a strong and varied opinion from an equally varied audience. He plays to packed stadiums all around the world. He has a huge social media following and appeals to younger generations globally who revere his "bad-boy" attitude. He has collaborated with NBA star Kyrie Irving on a tennis show for the Australian Open, opening up the game of tennis to a whole new fanbase. His ridiculous tweener shots make the headlines everywhere. Kyrgios has given rise to a renewed interest amongst our generation in a sport which has a median viewer age of 61.

Yet, for all the positives that Nick Kyrgios brings to the table, there is always someone ready to have a go at him. It's time that we stop unfairly vilifying Nick Kyrgios and we accept him as the anti-hero that contemporary Australian discourse needs.



Art by BrownTown

# Climate Change: The Political Limits

**Sam Lehmann** asks us to look through the political spin in climate change discourse.

Climate change rhetoric tends to revolve around carbon emissions. We associate climate change with atmospheric carbon levels, excluding broader ecological destruction. In a consumption-fuelled market society, resulting mass waste causes forest and marine habitat destruction. Yet, where politicians escape accountability when they classify climate change as a problem that should be traded off against economic prosperity. The historical politicisation of climate change must be confronted in order to reach the radical solutions needed to save our environment.

In 2011, Julia Gillard's government introduced the Clean Energy Act, aiming to set business' emission trading targets, backed by tax incentives. The market was tasked with reducing pollution levels. After three years, there would be a fixed carbon price to further reduce carbon emissions. Tony Abbott famously repealed the carbon tax in 2014. The Abbott Government's response to the climate problem was made clear early. Abbott was effective as opposition leader because he divided the public's understanding of climate change. In a 2013 *Insiders* interview, Abbott explained that climate change should not be considered independently of market behaviour: "The important thing is to take strong and effective action to tackle climate change, action that doesn't damage our economy."

This was a crucial juncture in recent

political history — two key, interconnected responses followed. First, Abbott's rhetoric scared the Labor Party while deepening an ideological divide in the Liberal Party. Second, Abbott, popularised a greater concern; namely, how to simultaneously appease the state, the market, the public, and the climate. From thereon in, climate change became politicised; a phenomena characterised to be either threatening the current economy, or that future generations had a stake in fighting.

As an opposition leader, Abbott was fiercely conservative — nothing changed

**"Much of our consumption is unavoidable and yet contributes immensely to environmental degradation."**

when he became Prime Minister in the 2013 election. The Labor government, that had torn itself apart through leadership spills, stood little chance at that election. Abbott's fear-mongering rhetoric around policies designed to take action on climate change policy was enough to frighten the Labor party to near incapacitation.

Rhetoric and anticipation within the Australian public grew when Malcolm Turnbull assumed the office of Prime Minister, proving himself more popular than Abbott in 2015. Turnbull had been an outspoken voice within the Liberal Party when opposition leader in

on 2005 levels, by 2030. The Labor Party have claimed that, if elected, they will commit to a 45% reduction on 2005 levels by 2030. Australia must stand in contrast to Sweden, where the government has committed to complete carbon neutrality by 2045.

Yet, Australian and international governments alike are ignoring a point that Abbott made in 2013, that being, environmental policy supposedly cannot come at the expense of the economy.

We live in a market society. We rely on the market society — our social structure — to live the lives we lead. We pay for

# THE GREAT SEUNGSBY

What do an embattled K-Pop star and Fitzgerald's Jazz Age antihero reveal about South Korean society?  
Words by Joanna Nam.

South Korea's music and entertainment industry, better known as K-pop, is a global sensation that many people love, know, or at least have heard of. Those who wouldn't consider themselves among the millions of avid fans following the music genre still recognise the worldwide popularity it has amassed over recent decades. This is of course unsurprising as K-pop is now one of South Korea's largest exports, and is often seen as the country's number one cultural ambassador. Known for its flashy bubble gum coloured music videos, its songs where lyrical catchiness reigns, and the suave choreography that often accompanies these it all, it's easy to see why the industry has garnered such an intense fandom.

But since late January this year, K-pop has been witnessing a snowballing sex scandal. At the centre of this story, which continues to unfold today, is Lee Seung-Hyun. Better known by his stage name, Seungri, he is the youngest member of one of K-pop's most popular boy bands, Big Bang. The group has often been referred to as K-pop legends, and they boast numerous impressive accomplishments, including their fifth EP, *Alive*, being the first Korean album to chart on the Billboard 200.

Seungri has often been referred to as Korea's Great Gatsby, or Seungsby, due to the affluence he has gained from his business empires. Seungri himself has relished in this label on several occasions, entitling a 2018 solo album *The Great Seungri*, for example. In 2015, he even hosted a Christmas party inspired by the Great Gatsby film. The popular use of this epithet is not unearned as the parallels between F. Scott Fitzgerald's anti-hero, Jay Gatsby, and Seungri are in fact quite striking.

Like Gatsby, who lived an impoverished childhood, Seungri himself is known to have come from rather humble beginnings in South Korea's Gwangju. Both figures rose to extreme wealth through their businesses, and with it, they heavily indulged in lavish lifestyles. Much like Gatsby, Seungri is known for hosting glittery parties. In 2017, his exclusive two-day party made news headlines as he hired out the whole of Palawan island in the Philippines to celebrate his birthday. The party saw celebrities, business people, politicians, socialites and social media stars from all over the world as guests.

However, after examining their respective lives more deeply, it becomes clear that Seungri perhaps was not aware of what the Gatsby tale truly entailed. While their similarities in wealth and success are obvious, the parallels between the two resonate deeper, and more eerily. It seems that Seungri failed to see past the glamour, and missed the cautionary echoes of Gatsby's name. Gatsby's opulent lifestyle was gained by illegal bootlegging enterprises. Similarly, the recent K-pop sex scandal has exposed the illicit schemes that formed part of Seungri's own riches.

The facts of the scandal can be summarised like this: As an entrepreneur,

individual idols, failing to adequately address the more systemic and institutionalised issues. Many media have in fact been playing the game of 'who's next?' by almost dramatising the scandal. This question does, of course, have to be answered for light to be shone on the truth. However, there is plenty more to turn our attention to.

While this scandal is heartbreaking and necessitates justice for the victims involved, it is simply a K-pop version of the wider realities that permeate Korean society more generally. Just like how Gatsby is reflective of the flaws characterising the then American society of the 1920s, Seungri is representative of South Korea's own set of problems.

The country's entrenched gender inequality and misogynistic attitudes lie at the forefront of it all. Within recent years, South Korea has been experiencing what's been termed a molka epidemic.

Instances like this sex scandal can essentially be seen as microcosmic representations of the wider patriarchal oppression that South Korean women face. South Korea has consistently ranked as one of the lowest ranking countries for gender equality, placing 115th out of 149 countries in last year's World Economic Forum's report on the global gender gap.

The term also encompasses the act of secretly filming someone during sex, meaning that many perpetrators know their victims, raising issues of revenge porn. In 2017, the country saw over 6,500 reported cases of molka incidents, and according to official statistics, 98 per cent of the perpetrators were men and more than 80% of the victims were women.

This fuelled a large part of South Korea's own #MeToo movement. In October 2017, thousands of women took to the streets of Seoul in protest, chanting the highly circulated hashtag #mylifefeisnotyourporn. And while the rise to fight against such gross invasion of privacy is both necessary and courageous, the molka epidemic, where women are reduced to objects of voyeurism, without a doubt exposes the misogyny that is deeply rooted in South Korea.

In Jung's official apology he wrote, "I admit to all my crimes. I filmed women without their consent and shared it in a social media chatroom, and while I did so I didn't feel a great sense of guilt." This very absence of guilt, confessed in almost a nonchalant way, is probably the attitude held by spycam perpetrators and viewers.

Along with these clips were a string of highly misogynistic comments and discussion revolving around the use of date rape drugs. Separate chatrooms have exposed Seungri's attempt to bribe potential foreign investors at the Burning Sun with prostitutes. On one occasion, the star even promised investors women too intoxicated to be aware of what was happening. In South Korea, where prostitution and drug supply are considered serious crimes, this expose sent giant shockwaves across society.

Since the discovery of these chatrooms, Seungri, who retired from the K-pop industry on 12 March, is being investigated for sexual abuse, sex trafficking, sex bribery and drugging female customers at his nightclub. Jung has been charged for secretly filming and sharing explicit tapes. Other male celebrities involved have confessed to, or are being accused of, watching or sharing these secretly filmed videos. The apparent blind eye officials paid to some chatrooms due to the connections of those in it, the accusations of Burning Sun bribing the police, and the alleged attempted destruction of evidence has also sparked investigation into the seemingly cosy ties between some of these celebrities and authority figures, taking the scandal beyond K-pop and into wider concerns of political corruption.

However, because the scandal has involved big celebrity names such as Seungri, many South Korean news outlets have been heavily focused only on the



Art by Annie Zhang

# A rant about being a culturally Westernised Asian

Mavis Wong speaks to building an identity as an international student who looks Asian, but is culturally Westernised.

After spending the first few days of the Lunar New Year nearly two months ago at home in Singapore, I landed in Sydney. Singapore — the country where pretty much everyone, from Gen Z kids to baby boomers, speak English everyday. Where, just like Australians, we binge-watch the same trashy Netflix shows, bop to the same Ariana Grande hits, and laugh at the same Kermit the Frog memes.

Though I have always been mindful that I grew up in a westernised Asian country, starting university in Sydney was where I found myself in a unique conundrum that a certain type of Southeast Asian international students face. We are not as Asian as students from China, Japan, and Korea who fluently speak their national languages and have distinctive Asian cultures, and yet we are not local enough to instinctively know what a "servo" refers to or who Paul Hogan is. We are familiar with Australia's culture due to the country's close proximity and being a popular holiday destination, but yet we cannot fully assimilate into a society we were not raised in.

We are geographically and culturally Asian. Singapore's public holidays include religious celebrations such as Deepavali for Hindus and Hari Raya Aidilfitri for Muslims. Ethnically Chinese Singaporeans, just like the Chinese in Hong Kong and Malaysia,

A last look at the analogy drawn between Gatsby and Seungri may give clues on how the remaining parts of the scandal will unfold. Much like how the upper-class Buchanans escaped the fate Gatsby was colliding into, as Seungri begins to face the consequences of his crimes, it may just be that those powerful but equally involved players, such as the anonymous foreign investors, will avoid punishment. It will not be long before we know whether life can sometimes truly imitate art.

still follow traditional Chinese practices such as not washing your hair on the first day of the Lunar New Year as you would "wash" away your good luck.

Even the date of my departure from Singapore speaks volumes — my family would not let me miss the most important festival in the Lunar calendar, but it's not such an integral part of my Asian upbringing that I have to sit through the full fifteen days of the celebrations.

Building a social identity when you move to a new country is tough, but what makes it all the more confusing is

**"We still face Asian stereotypes such as accents that correspond with the way we look."**

when your situation is shared only by a unique bunch of international students also looking to fit in.

Kyle Teng, a fellow Singaporean at USyd, explained that they struggled to fit in seeing as they culturally perceive themselves to be more Westernised. "It was difficult to associate myself to either group [Asians or locals], due to the fact that I look physically similar to one, while I am more culturally similar to the other."

"Not that it is an inherent need to belong to a specific group of people, but as an international student, I was hoping to find a community, one that

shared similar cultural and societal beliefs as I did, so that I could socialize and forge meaningful relationships with others."

Tiffany Vaughan, a second year, half Filipino, half English international student from Hong Kong, explained: "I felt pretty segregated [when I moved here]. At first I thought I would easily stick with a group since Sydney is pretty multicultural... but [there were] only a few I really felt a connection with."

To make this cross-cultural adaptation more awkward, we still face

nationality as you?"

It is as though locals do not know which box to place us in. But that's alright, because we too are still searching for which box to place ourselves in. Perhaps there is not any need for a box at all. I constantly straddle between my identity I've cultivated for twenty years and the identity I am building here. When meeting new people, I find myself deciding if I should speak in a more white-washed accent or my original Singaporean accent. Or if another Southeast Asian student wants to hang out, I catch myself hesitating because I don't want to be confined in my comfort zone, even if I do feel more at home than with a local, white student.

Perhaps two months is way too short a time for any first-year student, to feel like a part of something bigger than themselves. Perhaps, sometime during my time at USyd, I'll proudly embrace my Asian heritage while dropping Aussie slang in my daily conversations and introducing my toast to Vegemite.

Until then, I'll continue chatting with my friends back home in Singlish (a word recognised by the Oxford English dictionary), hang out with fellow Singaporeans (shout out to USYD's Singapore Students' Society), and continue my hunt for the most authentic Singaporean cuisine (The Ho Jiak in Haymarket is pretty decent).

# CENTRELINK 101

Thursday, April 11 1pm

Have you ever wondered whether you are eligible for Centrelink? Have you been putting off applying for Youth Allowance because the system seems too complex? If so, this is the event for you!

A representative from Centrelink will be presenting on:

- How to work out if you are eligible for Youth Allowance
  - How to apply for Centrelink benefits
- Tips and tricks to make sure you do not lose benefits
  - How Rent Allowance works; and
  - Other perks that Centrelink offers students

The Centrelink representative will also be able to answer specific questions that you might have!

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Claudia at [financial.literacy@squareone.org.au](mailto:financial.literacy@squareone.org.au). Head over to our Facebook event to stay updated, or visit our website at [www.squareone.org.au](http://www.squareone.org.au) to find out more about us!

We look forward to seeing you there!

# President

Jacky He

## Keep Kinley in Australia

Receiving permanent residency in Australia is an extremely strenuous process that involves submitting many documents and completing various language tests to finally receive an opportunity to just line up for a permanent residency status.

Imagine being the person who finally waits for the day when they are informed they may have a chance to stay in Australia, but is then informed

that they will be unable to receive permanent residency due to a hearing disability and deported from Australia. To put forward disability as a reason to not grant someone their permanency residency is an extremely discriminatory behaviour that we should oppose.

Kinley Wangchuck was a victim of such discrimination. I would like to think Australia is a fair country where everyone can be treated equally, and therefore we need to protect the weak by raising a voice.

## SRC stands with Christchurch

Almost three weeks have passed ever since the Department of Immigration office in Sydney to keep Kinley in Australia, as disability should beyond all doubt NOT be a cause for deportation. As the SRC, we condemn the fascist behaviours and stand against any forms of racism, bigotry and oppression.

Kinley Wangchuck was a victim of such discrimination. I would like to think Australia is a fair country where everyone can be treated equally, and therefore we need to protect the weak by raising a voice.



**Note:** These pages belong to the Office Bearers of the SRC. They are not altered, edited or changed in any way by the editors of Honi Soit

# Vice President

Dane Luo

## Vice President Consultation

The Vice President consultation drop-in times are every Thursday 11am to 1pm in the SRC offices. Come and have a chat! For satellite campuses, email us at [v.president@src.usyd.edu.au](mailto:v.president@src.usyd.edu.au).

## Health Days for Mallet Street and Cumberland

Next Tuesday, we are holding our inaugural Health Day at Mallet Street from 11am to 2pm. In week 8, we will be holding a second Health Day at Cumberland on Tuesday 30 April from 11am to 2pm. If

you're in our satellite campuses, come and learn from SRC and SUPRA caseworkers at the SRC, University student support services, NGOs and local organisations.

## Welfare Week for Camperdown/Darlington

Welfare Week will be happening on week 3 of semester 2. It will engage students with events on Eastern Avenue, with students from all campuses welcome to attend. The purpose of this would be to showcase all the services provided by the University, SRC, USU and local community organisations whether it be

financial, personal health, student housing etc as well as services not provided for by the University.

## Special consideration and simple extensions

Requesting a simple extension is an informal process between you and your UOS coordinator. A UOS Coordinator can grant a 2 working day extension for a non-examination task. You should email them with as much notice as possible and explain your circumstances. For longer illnesses (including the exacerbation of a disability) or misadventure that is short term and outside

of your control, you can request for special consideration within 3 working days of an assessment on the University's online portal. You will need documentation to support your claim.

For example, if you are sick you will need a Professional Practitioner's Certificate (PPC) completed by your treating doctor or counsellor. Download a PPC from the special consideration website. Your PPC needs to be on or before the day of your assessment. If you are not able to see a doctor on or before the day, you can call a home doctor service to come to you. If you have a long term

illness (4+ weeks) you should seek accommodations from the Disability Services Unit.

We are aware that there are providers of fake medical certificates available through social media (eg Facebook, WeChat). If you have not gone to a doctor's surgery and spoken to a doctor in-person, your certificate is likely to be fake. If you are caught using one of these, you can face misconduct proceedings that may lead to suspension. If you need any help, seek advice from a SRC caseworker. They are welcoming, free and can provide confidential advice.

# Ethnocultural Officers Bearer Report

Swapnik Sanagavarapu, Himath Siriniwasa and Ellie Wilson

The massacre that took place in Christchurch a few weeks ago was a despicable instance of Islamophobic violence. The Autonomous Collective Against Racism stands with Muslim communities both on campus and worldwide. We held a vigil on Monday 18 March to pay respects, and hosted a campus speakout alongside Unite Against the Far Right on Tuesday 19 March to speak out against ongoing Islamophobia and rising white supremacy. ACAR convenors

Swapnik Sanagavarapu and Himath Siriniwasa, along with Sexual Harassment Officer and Wom\*n's Collective convenor Layla Mkh and Mature Age Student Officer Vinil Kumar, gave speeches at the speakout.

ACAR has sent contingents to a number of rallies in the last few weeks, and held working bees to make banners and signs for events. Some of the events that we've attended in the last two weeks have been the Protest Israeli Apartheid on Palestinian Land Day rally and

WoCo's counter-protest against the Day of the Unborn Child, the latter of which Ethnocultural Officer and ACAR convenor Ellie Wilson spoke at. We've organised a contingent and a working bee for Palm Sunday, which is Sunday 14 April, and intend to promote the rally by working with the Campus Refugee Action Collective.

Planning for our autonomous edition of Honi Soit is underway. We've established an editorial collective and are currently processing

expressions of interest, of which we had a significant number. We hope to get content creation underway over the next week.

PoC Revue is this week from 11-13 April! Tickets are being sold online and in person. A number of ACAR members are involved in the show this year, and ACAR intends to attend the show together.

ACAR has now had four collective meetings, and the number of people engaged in the collective is growing. We intend to have weekly meetings

The General Secretary, Residential College officers and Student Housing officers did not submit a report in time for the deadline.

# Tenancy: Keep your receipts and records



Wouldn't it be great if we could trust that everyone did the right thing by us. Sadly we can't. That's where receipts and contracts come in.

When you pay a deposit, or rent, or any other bill, get a receipt. A printed receipt. Preferably in English. Take a photo of it, and email it to yourself, just in case you need it in the future. Having a record of the electronic bank transfer will not necessarily substitute for a receipt. Where possible it is best to have both.

A receipt is the only way that you can prove that you have actually paid.

This may become useful in the future if someone, like your landlord, or housemates were to insist that you did not pay that money, or that you paid less.

If you live in a home where the landlord (or their agent) does not live, you

are considered a tenant and should have a lease. If you live with your landlord (or their agent) you are a boarder or lodger, and should have a contract. This should show what the address is, how much you are meant to pay, when you are meant to move in, when you are meant to move out, and sometimes what happens if you move out earlier. It is important to keep a copy of your lease or contract, so that you can prove if there is a breach of the lease or contract. Again, you could scan it and email yourself a copy. This in turn may help you to claim back any money you are owed.

The SRC has had many cases where students have paid bond for their home, then moved out, and had their landlord refuse to refund the bond, saying that they didn't pay any. Similarly we have seen landlords claim that students were

# Ask Abe

SRC caseworker help Q&A



## Centrelink: How income affects payments

Dear Abe,

How much can I work while I'm on Youth Allowance?

Working

Dear Working,

Youth Allowance and Austudy recipients have a Student Income Bank (SIB), which allows you to work while receiving a Centrelink payment. Each fortnight you are allowed to earn \$437 without any reduction to your

payment. If you earn less than \$437 in that fortnight, the remainder is carried over to the next fortnight. This can accumulate to a maximum of \$10,900 a year. If you earn more than your SIB in a fortnight, your Centrelink payment is reduced by 50 cents per dollar for every dollar between \$437 and \$524, then 60 cents per dollar for every dollar afterwards.

These amounts are current as at April 2019.

Ab.



Check out the SRC Guides to Centrelink Payments:  
[srcusyd.net.au/src-help/centrelink/](http://srcusyd.net.au/src-help/centrelink/)

Tenancy continued...

behind in rent. We have even seen landlords agree that a student could move out of the home early and charged them extra money for this. In all of these cases written records would have helped

the student at the tribunal. The SRC has caseworkers able to help with tenancy and accommodation issues like this. Make an appointment by calling 9660 5222.



We HELP Sydney University undergraduate students with a range of issues. Our services include:

## SRC CASEWORKERS

Providing FREE, independent and confidential advice & support on a range of issues faced by students including: academic rights and appeals, show cause, exclusion, misconduct / dishonesty allegations, special consideration, tenancy, Centrelink, financial issues, Tax Help (Semester 2) and more.



## EQUIPMENT & LOANS

We offer Emergency Loans of \$50 and lend out university approved calculators, lab coats and other science equipment.



## SRC LEGAL SERVICE

Solicitors and a registered migration agent provide FREE legal advice, representation in court where relevant, and a referral service. Including: Police & court matters, traffic offences, immigration law, consumer rights, employment law, personal / domestic violence, witness / certify documents, insurance law, visa related matters and more.



Find the SRC: Enter from City Rd, down the stairs, near footbridge. Level 1, Wentworth Building

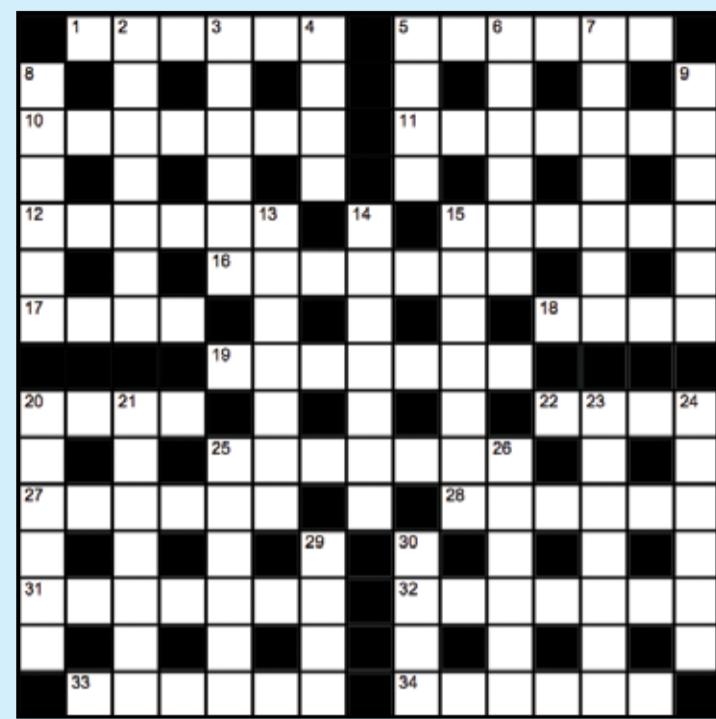
p: 9660 5222 e: [help@src.usyd.edu.au](mailto:help@src.usyd.edu.au) w: [srcusyd.net.au](http://srcusyd.net.au)

Drop-in sessions: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1-3pm

Appointments: Please call to make a booking

Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm

# Quick Crossword



## ACROSS

- Ask hostile jail stirrer: Are you pulling my leg? (2,4,3,1,4)
- U and I start taunting: "Fool!" (4-3)
- Walk slowly into the banks of a river, babbling idiot! (7)
- I, stern, counter, "Shove it!" (6)
- Done ketamine, ecstasy? Finish brain with this mind-numbing puzzle (6)
- Hurries to give up heroin for leading Dunhill cigarettes (7)
- These provide entertainment to soulless youths (4)
- Arsehole leader of Australia's National Union of Students (4)
- Maybe, Reverend, her gynaecological procedures... (7)
- ...primarily interest solely her, for starters. Ugh! (4)
- Obsessed over crack? (4)

## Sudoku

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

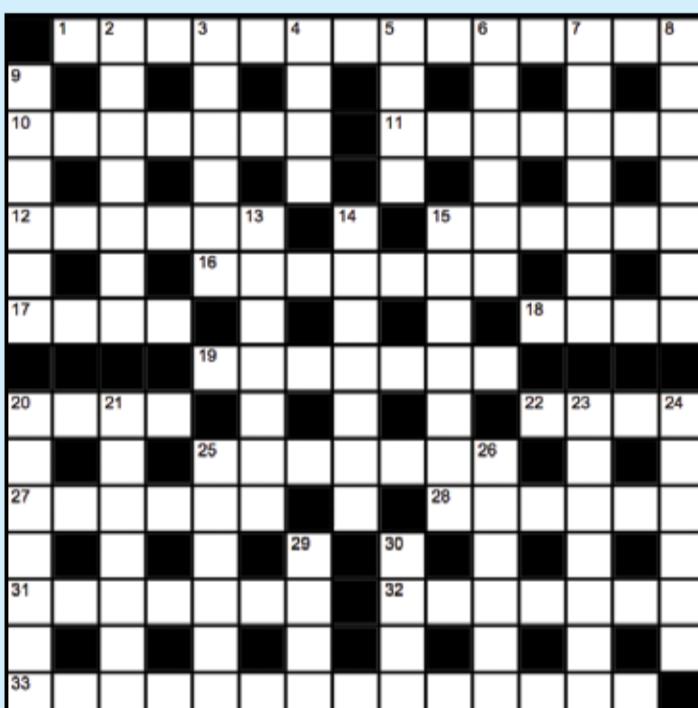
## ACROSS

- Somebody who handles money (6)
- Once you feel this emotion it's hard to stop (6)
- Told (7)
- Me and Your Mama, song by Childish \_\_\_ (7)
- The crucial document for new inventions (6)
- World famous brandy (6)
- Is just a fancy word for craftsman (7)
- Gonna happen, without a doubt (4)
- Roll call probably starts with this fella (4)
- Me Too became a big one in 2017 (7)
- I prefer this to a shower (4)
- Ain't No Sunshine, song by Withers (4)
- The inventor of X-rays (7)
- Sharpest example of this is 3-Down (6)
- Tool for reloading an old-
- fashioned gun (6)
- In USyd students are taught to do this (7)
- The prevailing US term for university (7)
- Shed all trace of, wiped out (6)
- She has a storied history and proud culture (6)
- And So It Goes is a film of this genre (6)
- Her Majesty doesn't like this crime (7)
- Thumb through an American atlas to find this place (7)
- In medicine, students learn anatomy with this (7)
- The polite way to retire (3,3)
- Shape your expectation for a film by watching this (7)
- Of Hebrew extraction (7)
- An upright climbing device (6)
- 'L' means 'fifty' to these folk (6)
- On the west coast of Italy you'll find this city (6)
- Her books include The Famous Five series (4)
- Forehead blemish of Harry Potter (4)

## DOWN

- Was a big hit for Smash Mouth! (3,4)
- Looking cool is easy with this sword (6)
- Kinda psychopathic former PM (4)
- Dumb cats (4)
- With tragic results, he trusted Delilah (6)
- Her Majesty has done this for 67 years (7)
- Finger food for French folk (6)
- Tool for reloading an old-

# Cryptic Crossword



## DOWN

- Secretly watch whip action inside—Bodacious! (7)
- How a regrettable deployment begins! (6)
- Street that is intersected with Place (4)
- Lourdes has no use for god (4)
- Old lady hosts gatho raging all night... (4)
- Spoil ski night showing up with waterproof coat (7)
- ...samples a dart, alcohol, and some white powder! (4)
- Read between the lines whenever Rand says 'jobs' (7)
- Irritating pest! You utter pinhead! Get better! (6)
- Aim attack at someone with newspaper puzzle (6)
- Love no leader, smear the queen in writing (2,5)
- Put a hex on foul accuser (7)
- How crosswords should be: Confusion, lunacy, and SNAFU (5,3,6)
- Bit of misfortune supposedly increases performance (5,2)
- Really old bridge covers CIA operation (7)
- Sign preventing entry to bar (4,3)
- Get lost, 'P' is soft, not 'F'! (4,3)
- Tin contains 50, 2,72, 2,72, 3,14 and rest. Too much! (5,2)
- I rage in uncontrollably heated state (7)
- Message written to editors belongs in toilet. Terrible! (6)
- Lie and hide quietly, Hitler Youth leaders below! (6)
- Saucy material heard from insiders (6)
- Old lady hosts gatho raging all night... (4)
- Spoil ski night showing up with waterproof coat (7)

## T.W.A.T.

I	D	O
N	T	C
A	R	E

Clues across and down are the same

- Bad-mouth (4)
  - Lonely (4)
  - Anonymous (4)
  - Guy (4)
- Target Rules:**  
Minimum 4 letters per word.  
Archaic English words encouraged.
- 10 words:** funny and casual  
**15 words:** Are puzzles a game to you?  
**30 words:** Is this all a joke?  
**1,000,000 words:** Get fucked.

# THE INDEPENDENT



**THE INDEPENDENT**  
BRINGS YOU NEWS EACH WEEK COURTESY OF OUR SPONSORS.  
THIS WEEK, THEY ARE:

**LinkedIn**  
Richard Dawkins

**CULTURE:** Yeah look 'Us' is okay, but Jordan Peele's best work is definitely 'GetUp!'>> P10

**EPIC:** I argued with a Jehovah's Witness door-knocker for four hours straight only to realise he was my Tinder hookup >> P13

## The Secret: How I worked my way to 487 LinkedIn connections a week

*Jagjit "Jason" Malhotra* tells *The Independent* his tips on how to make it on the cut-throat website.

Naïvely, I came to the University of Sydney thinking that simply getting into the Bachelor of Laws/Bachelor of Commerce (Finance) double degree would grant me the whole wealth of opportunities available to the cream of the model minority crop: internships, scholarships, clerkships, relationships – you name it. I stand before you today with all of these things and more. No thanks to my Bachelor of Laws/Bachelor of Commerce (Finance) double degree, though.

Around a year ago, I decided to propel myself out of my general sense of unemployment malaise. I'm not going to lie, I tried really hard to network IRL at USyd.

I tried to go to as many events as possible. "To hell with it," I thought, and started skipping class to go to FMAA events such as the "Antipodes Partners In House Stock Pitch Workshop", and the "FMAA NSW Down-to-Business Luncheon" (held at the prestigious

Sydney Hilton Hotel).

Nevertheless, despite my efforts, I found myself unemployed and living with my parents.

I must admit, living at my parents' Ingleburn Mansion came with many benefits. I was able to continue my relaxed lifestyle whereby my mum does everything for me including washing and folding my clothes, and cleaning up the leftover crumbs dispersed in the nooks and crannies of my Xbox controller. But was I employed at a top tier consultancy firm? No. Was I happy? Definitely not.

I decided that it was time to take things into my own hands. I said to myself, "What the heck, Jason, you should

just sign up to LinkedIn." And that's exactly what I did.

The fact of the matter is that most (unemployed) people aren't really good at navigating the complex features offered on the LinkedIn site. The key is having a good grasp of the "chat" widget, alongside a good grasp of blokey vernacular.

I simply sent invitations to random accounting and finance related company CEOs all over Sydney with the message, "Hey mate, I'm a keen liabilities and revenues enthusiast. Keen for any work you might have available. Cheers, Jason."

Within days, I received three prospective job offers. Understanding the potential that this message formula yielded

encouraged me to just pack it all in and apply for jobs that I wasn't even qualified for.

I sent a LinkedIn invitation to Greg Moriarty at the Department of Defence with the message, "Hey mate, I'm a keen arms enthusiast. Keen for any work you might have available. Cheers, Jason."

I've learnt a few things along the way and I am all the better for it. Your degree, and the amount of clubs and societies you join have no bearing on your job and career opportunities. All it takes is a good pinch of sheer bloody luck and the ability to craft a great LinkedIn invite.

**WE SPEAK TO ARIANACINI GRANDE:**  
*White on the inside, and as Italian as ever!*



**WHY DO HOT GIRLS KEEP GHOSTING ME ON TINDER AND BUMBLE?**

First thing's first, and boy oh boy am I *not* ashamed to say this.

I am a proud STINKING atheist.

Preacher harassing me on public transport? I tell them to fuck off. Jehovah's Witnesses knocking at my door? Not at my house. I tell them to fuck off as well.

So I've just GOTTA ask the question: why the damn heck do hot girls keep ghosting me on Tinder and Bumble?

I'm an intellectual. But that doesn't mean I'm not rough. Nor does it mean I'm

not soft either. Nor does it mean that my neckbeard is either too rough or too soft.

You match with a hottie, you link them your 4,000 word review of *The God Delusion*, and still, nothing.

I really need a support system right now, as I deal with the inane ramblings of my toxic Christian family. I cannot do as billions of intellectually inferior people around the world do: turn to god.

Whatever. With my looks, and disdain for religion (especially Islam), I know I'll be fine.



# HEALTH DAY

MALLET STREET CAMPUS  
TUESDAY 16 APRIL  
11AM-2PM

Promoting SRC Services, Student Support, NGOs &  
Community Organisations for Nursing & Midwifery Students