

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY DISABILITY COLLECTIVE PRESENTS:

DISABLED HONI

Week 7, Semester 2, 2020 / First printed 2018

Deaf history / p. 8

Poetry / p. 14

DIY face mask / p. 19





Acknowledgement of Country



Honi Soit is published on the ancestral lands of the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation, who have an ancient and enduring connection to the earth, waters, and skies. For over 230 years, First Nations peoples of this continent have been fighting, surviving, caring for country, and resisting the devastating and ongoing legacy of invasion. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experience disproportionate rates of disability, arising from institutionalised racism, medical discrimination and neglect, and intergenerational trauma. First Nations peoples are considered high risk for COVID19 because the pandemic fell into the shape of pre-existent crises. It is impossible to strive for disability justice without also striving for Indigenous justice. We offer our respect, solidarity, and love to Gadigal elders, past, present, future, always.

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Editorial

2020 has been a hard year for every marginalised community. The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the vicious contradictions at the heart of capitalism across the world. Australia is no exception, despite Josh Frydenberg’s pathetic attempts to convince us all otherwise when he delivered the 2020-21 budget last week. Unemployment is skyrocketing, at the same time as the welfare provisions the Coalition was forced to pass earlier in the year are being rolled back. Rates of homelessness and poverty are going up, and with these welfare cuts, the numbers are only going to continue increasing. National debt is set to reach almost one trillion dollars, but the recipients of this increased public expenditure, from a government until now unwaveringly committed to returning to surplus, are largely business owners and the wealthy.

Of course, the disability community has been hit incredibly hard. Many of us on the Disability Support Pension were never recipients of the Coronavirus Supplement to begin with, having to make do with the two one-off payments given out during the early months to assuage the guilt political class’ guilt. Many of us had been in self-quarantine since local outbreaks in March, well before general isolation, due to concerns for personal safety. As the numbers in NSW begin to creep up once again, some of us have already returned to it. The difficult reality of being a member of a community in which the threat of death of loved ones feels oppressive at the best of times, and that fact has been in sharp focus all year.

And yet, we are still here. For all of the various ways even our bodies constantly try to kill us, the disability community is a very hardy lot. We have to be. We have so many ingrained practices of communal care and support, learned out of necessity and love. We have so much knowledge to share. So much love to give. Amongst all the tragedy of

this year, I have also witnessed our community holding strong together. Mutual aid groups in which disabled people and their unique insights played a key role. Passionate campaigns forcing attention to the horrors uncovered by the ongoing Royal Commission. Blossoming activist working groups locally, and around the country, fighting against the hyper-exploitation of disabled workers. Love and solidarity shared, sometimes in big ways, and sometimes through a message from a disabled friend who knows you well enough to understand that something is awry.

I am reminded of a photo shown to me by a disabled comrade in April this year, of protestors carrying a sign during the AIDS epidemic in the US. It bore the following quote from AIDS activist Daniel Sotomayor: “You just have to do what you can and don’t give up. Because some day there are going to be survivors.”

Disabled people aren’t going away. We have been asserting our place in society more and more every year. There will be survivors, there will be a disabled community, and we are fighting for their future as much as for our own.

This autonomous issue is just such an assertion. It is full of passion, love, and shared community. Inside, you will find pieces on USyd’s Deaf history (p.8-9), a petition to government over the closure of bus routes due to increased privatisation of public transport (p.6) and working class solidarity (p.4). There is poetry (p.14-17), a photo series (p.11) and for the more handicapable crips among you, a pattern to make your own masks (p.19).

This issue, unsurprisingly, is dedicated to the disability community. Our community. May we continue to fight together for a better world for all.

Love and solidarity,
Margot

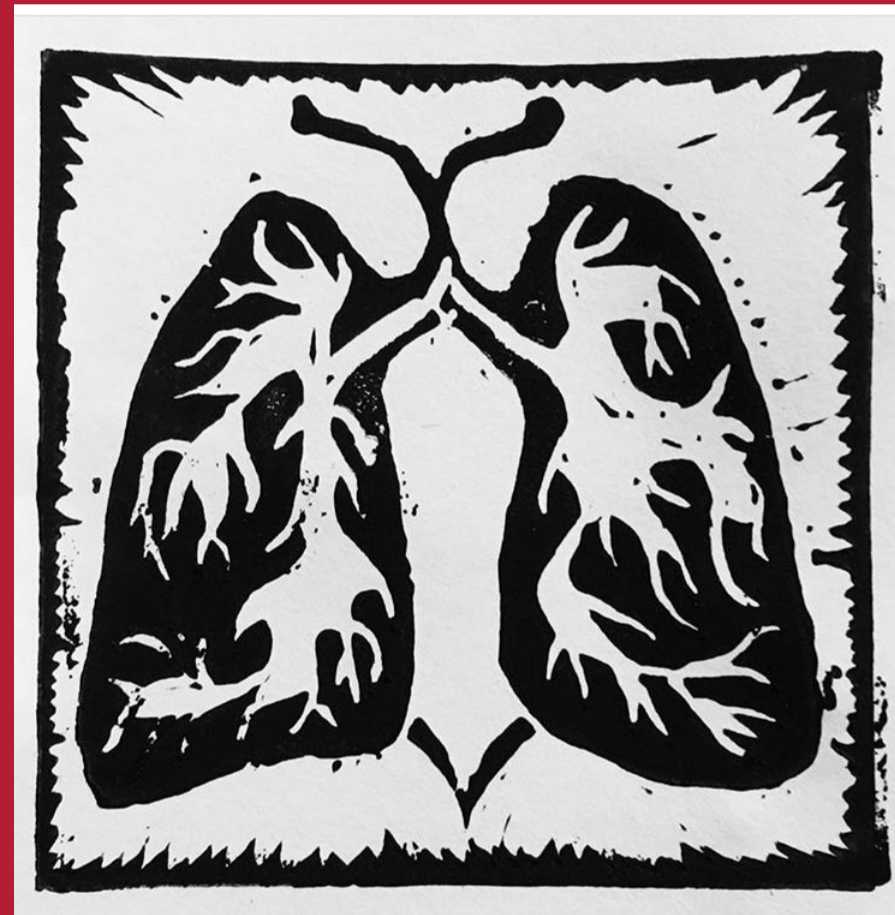
The Disabilities Collective and Caregivers Network

The Disabilities Collective & Caregivers Network

The Disabilities Collective is an autonomous collective for disabled undergraduate students, defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities as “long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.” This includes people who may not personally identify as disabled, or prefer other designators, for example people who are Deaf or hard of hearing, Mad, neurodivergent, mentally ill, otherwise ill, and so on.

The Caregivers Network is an initiative for students who provide substantial informal caregiving support to friends or family members who are disabled.

If you’d like to get involved in activism, social events, editing this beloved nightmare of a newspaper, and more, get in touch! You can find our public Facebook page at facebook.com/USYDdis/ and our Twitter at @USYDdis. Contact the OBs at disabilities.officers@src.usyd.edu.au to be added to either of our Facebook groups, or to be added to our mailing list. You do not have to disclose any details about your disability or caregiving responsibilities to get involved.

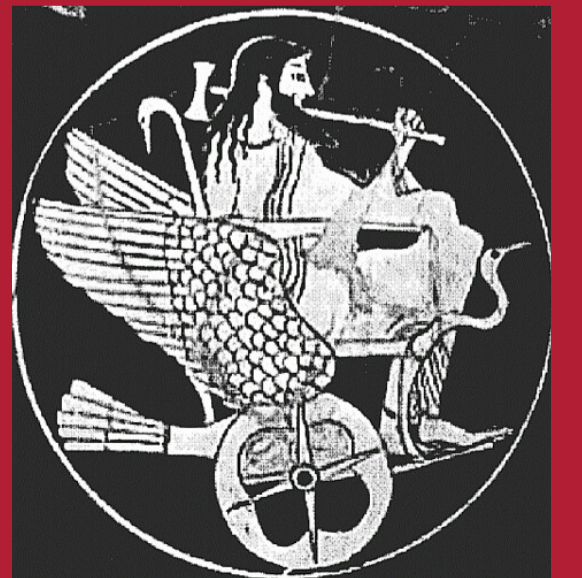


Art by Gae Lee

CAPITALISM WILL NOT SAVE US WE MUST FORGE THE TOOLS OF REVOLUTION OURSELVES

Hephaestus is the ancient Greek god of fire, metalworking, craftsmen, volcanoes, and sculpture; a god of invention, art, and of workers. Homer called him the Crippled God. The ancients considered his name cognate with fire, which they also called the ‘breath of Hephaestus’. He was particularly associated with the flame of creation; that is, the fires of the forge and of invention. Hephaestus was a son of Hera, who threw him from the top of Mount Olympus after discovering that he had been born disabled. He was raised by two sea-goddesses, Eurynome and Thetis (the mother of Achilles, for whom he forged a magnificent shield and also fought a river). He was not a warrior, and forged armour and jewellery more often than weapons. He was often depicted riding a donkey or a flying wheelchair. His forge attendants were blind and short-statured.

We chose the myth of Hephaestus for this year’s cover because we hoped to channel the same energy. 2020 began with bushfires and smoke, followed by a plague. Disabled people are no strangers to hardship but this year has been rough on many of us. We hope that we, too, can forge invention out of fire.



USyd Disability Services

Disability Services is the main point of contact for accessing disability accommodations during your study. Some of the accommodations they can arrange include:

- assessment and exam adjustments, including extra time, smaller exam rooms, use of a computer
- timetable adjustments, including making sure that your lectures are close together, close to bus stops, or held in buildings that are wheelchair accessible or have hearing loop equipment
- alternative formatting
- access to assistive technology
- lecture support
- library services

Contact Disability Services:
Phone: +61 2 8627 5067
Email: disability.services@sydney.edu.au
Fax: + 61 2 8627 8482

SRC Legal Service contact details

The SRC is still operating its full Casework Service, Legal Service and other support for students. While the SRC Office is closed we are providing appointments over the telephone, Zoom or Skype. Call 9660 5222 to book an appointment with a Caseworker or a Solicitor. If you have a hearing or speech impairment, you can call them via the National Relay Service: <https://relayservice.gov.au/>
Caseworkers can answer questions and concerns via email (help@src.usyd.edu.au). Please attach relevant documents.

Your rights as a disabled student

The Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and the Disability Standards for Education (2005) enshrine in law the right of disabled students to access education and training “on the same basis” as non-disabled students. You have the right to:

- use an assistive device or mobility aid
- be accompanied by a carer, interpreter, reader, or assistant
- be accompanied by a guide or hearing dog or other trained assistant animal
- access reasonable adjustments for lectures, tutorials, and assessments so that you are not disadvantaged by your disability
- access lecture materials in a format that you can understand
- seek redress for abuse or harassment on the basis of disability

Disability Community and the Working Class

Margot Beavon-Collin argues for a united front against exploitation

The disability communities' position within the working class has always been complicated. For over 50 years, disability activism has placed a huge emphasis on securing the rights of disabled people to just get a job in the first place, whether it was Joan Hume being employed as the country's first wheelchair user to be employed by a teacher in 1973, to the fights for accessible workplaces and communal spaces that go on to this day. In addition, there has been a well-documented, and long history of antagonism between our community and the union movement. Unions have long been some of the main opponents to continued deinstitutionalisation of disabled people, usually citing the importance of the sector for support workers.

And yet, I argue that a movement aiming to achieve justice for disabled people is not only compatible with a socialist workers' movement, but necessitates one. Ableism as it exists under modern capitalism is a result of class conflict, of the capitalists' assertion that the worth of all others is commensurate with their economic productivity. As disabled people, we are automatically considered less efficient than those that share our God given place within cycles of production. We are worth less, and as a result, worthless.

Take the supports that currently exist for disabled people in Australia. We have the disability support pension, which has long sat below a living wage. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the blatant disregard for disabled lives has been even clearer, demonstrated by a bipartisan project to block the Coronavirus Supplement being extended to DSP and Carer Payment recipients.

Ableism as it exists under modern capitalism is a result of class conflict, of the capitalists' assertion that the worth of all others is commensurate with their economic productivity.

The NDIS, on the other hand, is sold to us as a program designed to assist disabled people to "get the support they need so their skills and independence improve over time". What does this look like in reality? This heavily marketised system relies on the private sector to sell products and services, which disabled people can then use allotted funds to buy. In order to buy them, however, the NDIS recipient must first successfully argue why a product would better enable them to contribute to society.. Criteria that must be met include showing how

a given support will contribute to an increased community engagement (or, preferably, an increased income), and demonstrating its "value for money". The latter is particularly difficult for those seeking specialised physical supports, like recurring sessions with a trained exercise physiologist, and the proofs required can themselves cost thousands of dollars spent on acquiring reports from completely different specialists.

The current minimum wage for a disabled person in this country is \$89 per week, though this can be less if the company has an award that covers SWS workers.

Furthermore, the marketised structure of the NDIS has meant it is totally ill-equipped to respond to what community participation actually looks like in environments outside of a 'typical' suburban, nuclear family context. Research that came out in 2018 by Scott Avery showed how First Nations communities, particularly those in the Northern Territory had been completely underserved by the scheme. Not only did a lack of private corporations nearby mean there was little recourse for spending the funds allocated to people, the scheme didn't cover the things that people needed to help them to continue living comfortably. One man interviewed said, "swags and blankets is something that our families ask for all the time, help with making sure that they've got somewhere warm and safe to sleep at night, and that's a really practical thing and we've done that for years. Now the NDIS is coming and they're saying, 'no', they're saying, 'we don't buy swags and blankets for people'. That's not 'reasonable or necessary'. But if you've got nowhere to sleep, of course swags and blankets are reasonable and necessary."

In the workplace, despite decades of deinstitutionalisation, the hyper-exploitation of disabled workers is rampant. Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs) employ disabled people, usually intellectually disabled people, at vastly reduced rates. As a result, the current minimum wage for a disabled person in this country is \$89 per week, though this can be less if the company has an award that covers SWS workers. The justification for this practice goes back to the history of ADEs. Originally called sheltered workshops, their new name was the result of rebranding in the 1980s during a wave of activism and legislation that threatened their raison d'être as places of normalisation. To adjust to the new neoliberal era, they framed themselves as service providers. The service? The opportunity to be employed. They

claim that there is an intrinsic value in work, irrespective of what the work is and the workers' role in it. Giving disabled people the opportunity to contribute to the nation's economy brings meaning to their lives. If this framing seems unreal, note that this framing is uncritically replicated by the Department of Social Services on their website. Consequently, ADEs are able to wring value from disabled people, force them to work for miniscule wages, and then turn around and tell them to be grateful for bringing some meaning to their lives.

Of course, economic exploitation of disadvantaged groups has a long and varied history. The term "prison industrial complex" emerged in the 1990s, for instance, to describe the ways in which value was being violently extracted from prisoners by private companies. As Angela Davis revealed in her book *Are Prisons Obsolete*, the expansion and proliferation of private prisons occurred alongside the expansion of this capitalist value extraction. Violence, and punitive policing she argued, was the state reacting to the needs of neoliberal capitalist expansion.

In disabled people, as in the prison system, capitalism has found a source of hyperexploitable labour. This is not about giving these people a sense of value and worth. This is fundamentally about profit.

Karl Marx observed that, in their pursuit of profit, capitalists rely on paying workers less than the value that they create. This difference between the value workers create, and what they are actually paid, he called surplus value. Marx argued that, in order to maintain economic growth, bosses needed to find ways to increase this surplus value. In disabled people, as in the prison system, capitalism has found a source of hyperexploitable labour. This is not about giving these people a sense of value and worth. This is fundamentally about profit.

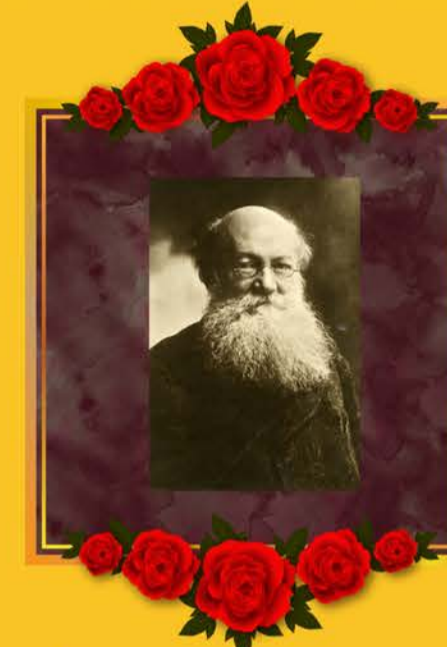
Exploitation and abuse of disabled people is rampant, and the fight to end it is intrinsically intertwined with the fight against capitalism. It is true that some disabled people are members of the capitalist class. I don't care about them. Their money is able to buy them far more freedom than my comrades and I will ever enjoy. For the rest of us, I invite you all to come and link arms with your comrades in a united working class fight for collective freedom. Our struggles, at their core, are the same struggle. Liberation for one group can only come with the liberation of all.

A QUICK & DIRTY GUIDE TO MUTUAL AID

Robin Eames

HISTORY

The term "mutual aid" was first conceptualised by anarchist philosopher Pyotr Kropotkin, who called mutual aid "the necessary foundation of human life". He drew on many ancient cultures where mutual aid is built in to social structures, including Palaeolithic cultures, ancient Europeans, Jewish communities, the San and Khoekhoe peoples, Pasifika cultures, First Nations peoples of Turtle Island and all over the world, including Aboriginal cultures of this continent, specifically mentioning the Kamilaroi and Wirungu peoples.



Old name Kropotkin (aka Anarchist Santa). Russian anarchist/socialist, 1842-1921. Super into bread.

PRINCIPLES HORIZONTAL NOT VERTICAL

Delivered between community members rather than from the state to those subjected by the state, or from people with power and means to people without.

SOLIDARITY NOT CHARITY

Mutual aid is NOT about charity or doing something nice to feel good about yourself. Charity models assume a power dynamic and often hinge on ideas of the "deserving poor" or reinforce stigma for marginalised people.

Mutual aid is not about "helping the helpless", it is about community coming together from a place of responsibility, care, and camaraderie.

We all have needs and we all rely on other people to get by.

In Mariame Kaba's work on abolition, she speaks about her "vision of a different society, built on cooperation instead of individualism, on mutual aid instead of self-preservation."



WHAT YOU CAN DO

Get in where you fit in! Mutual aid can look like lots of different things. It can be organising deliveries of food and essentials, putting together bail funds for comrades on the front lines, driving people to appointments, helping out with food pantries, housing initiatives, childcare, or just checking in on a mate who's having a rough time.

"If you're able bodied and this is new for you, really look to what disability justice folks have been doing for a long time, because we know how to do care collectives... there are many, many, many steps, small and large, that we can take towards creating this world"
— Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha



↑ The USyd SRC's mutual aid initiative ↑

SIGN UP HERE →





A Letter to the NSW Premier and Transport Minister

Theodore Tsolakis on access to transport

Dear Premier,

My name is Theodore Tsolakis. I am writing to you regarding the notification published on the Transport NSW website announcing that the M10 bus route will be withdrawn.

I attend the University of Sydney. I am a second-year student, and I am blind. Independence is extremely important to me. To travel to the University of Sydney campus in Camperdown which I attend, I take the 397 bus, which departs very near to my home in Maroubra, and I change to the M10 at Maroubra Junction, which takes me the rest of the way to the university. My commute on this route is quite safe, simple and convenient. Currently, I do not need to walk to another stop when transitioning between the two buses. The M10 bus route is the only direct route to the University of Sydney from Maroubra. Until my classes were moved online in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic, my commute to university took a little over an hour.

Due to my disability, to learn this route I required and received extensive training from an Orientation and Mobility Specialist from Guide Dogs NSW/ACT covering travel by bus between my home and university, including learning about the various transportation options available to me. This training was funded by the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), and cost several hundred dollars and occupied many training sessions. All of this training will become redundant because of the withdrawal of the M10 bus route. I will now need to receive more specialist orientation and mobility training from Guide Dogs NSW/ACT to learn about the new public transport options for travelling to university, requiring further NDIS funding.

A stable and consistent travel route is particularly important for a blind commuter. The current commute is usually between relatively quiet and uncrowded bus stops. When something changes or goes wrong, I often feel disoriented and anxious. I have experienced several instances of buses not stopping, even when the bus has vacant seats and I am clearly visible, and sometimes bus services do not appear to come at all. This makes it extremely difficult for me, and has on occasion extended the length of my commute by an hour if I cannot make a connection.

A stable and consistent travel route is particularly important for a blind commuter. The current commute is usually between relatively quiet and uncrowded bus stops. When something changes or goes wrong, I often feel disoriented and anxious.

A commute from Maroubra to the University of Sydney without the M10 route would result in a longer journey, with me travelling into the CBD in Sydney or Railway Square. Both locations are extremely busy, and the connection to a bus to the university is not close to where I would alight the bus from Maroubra. I normally travel at peak times, so it is very likely that there will be many other passengers around me, which will make the process of locating the bus stop very challenging, and also difficult for bus

drivers who may not see me when they are in a queue of buses lined up at a busy stop. Neither of these two options would provide me with a safe, reliable or time-effective alternative to my current commute.

Unlike other students who have other travel options such as riding a bicycle to university, I am at the mercy of public transport.

The light rail is also not a viable option for me to travel to university as it would require three transfers in each direction. The light rail stop near Central Station is not close to the bus interchange from which I would catch a bus to university and would require me to cross busy, crowded roads. The design of the light rail stops does not seem to have been made with any thought to its accessibility for blind commuters—it is dangerous to cross to them since they are in the centre of the road; it is difficult to find the correct place to cross to reach the stop; and while crossing the tracks, my long white cane has caught in the grooves of the tracks. Prioritising the light rail above other modes of public transport negatively affects the sector of the population for whom public transport is essential. It is unfortunate that the introduction of a new mode of public transport will make Sydney's public transport network less user-friendly for people such as me.

I would like to implore the Government to consider reinstating these bus routes as doing so would positively affect the options for people with disabilities for a safe and direct commute to their destinations and my commute to university. The termination of the M10 bus route will adversely affect the independence of my commute along with its safety, length and convenience.

Art by Robin Eames

Psychosis and Film

Pei Tan on how horror films create stigma for the mentally ill

Psychosis is used to describe conditions that affect your mind, where there has been some loss of contact with reality. When someone becomes ill in this way, it is called a psychotic episode. Psychotic episodes may cause incoherent speech, frenzied thinking, and delusions. It has also become a common trope in horror films.

In August of last year, I experienced a psychotic episode. For hours, I varied between being manic with frenzied thoughts and slumping into a sleep-like state. Coming out of it, I became all-too aware of how strange my actions had been, and how I had lost control of my body during the ordeal.

I was also scared at the fact that I had exhibited actions I had previously only seen on-screen. Amidst my attempt to grasp reality, I struggled with the thought that I had imitated behaviours so bound up with the horror genre.

A study into the portrayal of psychosis and mental health care environments in horror films explores this common cinematic trope. Using the terms “mental/psychiatric patient,” “psychosis/psychoses,” and “mental/psychiatric hospital” on various film forums revealed 55 films (2000 - 2012), which the study then analysed for findings.

It was found that “a “twist” in the plot often involves the protagonists discovering their tormentors are in fact themselves in another form.

This sensationalises psychosis; according to Goodwin, the study's author, “in almost 70% of these movies, characters are ... labeled inappropriately as having a split personality, which is not a form of psychosis. Glass and mirrors are used to highlight their fragile nature, and to emphasize their ‘otherness.’”

Amidst my attempt to grasp reality, I struggled with the thought that I had imitated behaviours so bound up with the horror genre.

This otherness is a feeling that I know too well, and one that has plagued me ever since my experience. I still vividly remember staring into my reflection in the mirror in a state of dissociation, terrified by how I was acting. It didn't help that this was echoed in these films, which as Goodwin points out, frequently “feature the individual experiencing ... psychosis looking into a shattered mirror or glass object, rendering them incomplete, and highlighting the ‘otherness’, the monster-like qualities.”

In those scary moments, I found myself afraid of myself and this “otherness, the monster-like qualities” I was exhibiting. What was happening to me? I felt so crazy and unhinged -- I felt like I wasn't myself but a “split” version

of me.

Looking back, I realise that such thoughts stemmed from my perception of psychosis, which was largely influenced by its portrayal within popular culture and film. At this point, I have to the question: Is the shock value of psychosis in horror film really worth the stigmatising effect it has on people who actively experience it in reality?

This isn't confined to psychosis, but also the stigmatising effect horror films have on mental health care environments. Even after experiencing a psychotic episode, I was adamantly against being admitted into a psychiatric hospital. It was only when I experienced a panic attack in public that I was involuntarily admitted.

Goodwin's study further revealed that about half of the films which feature mental health care environments “feature environments that are either haunted or deal with supernatural elements, [relating] to the ancient idea of people being damned with mental ill health, painting them as either a modern incarnation of the devil, or as products of the devil”

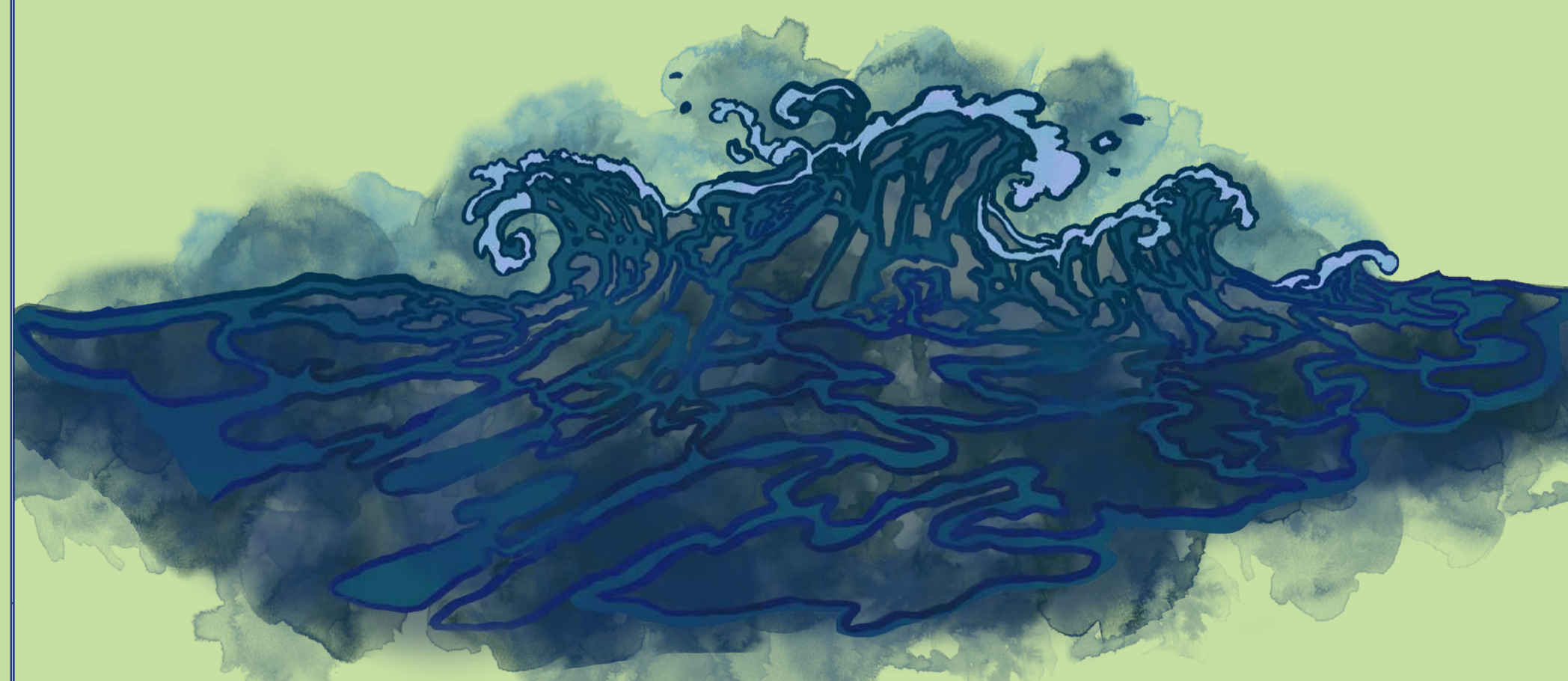
With such negative portrayals in the media, it is little wonder that mental health care environments are so stigmatised. While they certainly aren't perfect, psychiatric wards differ significantly from their cinematic counterparts. The depiction of these places as

spaces for the supernatural and psychopathic killers to wander make the experience of being in a psychiatric ward all the more alienating.

So, what can we do to combat this stigmatisation? As such an established horror trope, it's unlikely that such portrayals will disappear from such films. Additionally, horror films don't always have a negative effect on the portrayal of mental health -- it's the act of treating it as the supernatural, the wild unknown, which contributes to the stigma. Perhaps if horror films sympathised more with those experiencing mental illness, rather than portraying them as unknowable villains, the story would be very different.

The portrayal of mental health on the big screen has improved in recent years, with films such as *The Silver Linings Playbook* revolving around a protagonist with bipolar disorder. This allows audiences to sympathise and empathise with those with mental illness, relating to them rather than being scared of them. The depiction of mental illness within a heart-warming love story contributes to a normalisation of psychological disorders. It's something that I hope to see more in film as society becomes more familiar and comfortable with discussions around mental health and psychosis.

Art by Robin Eames



Deaf History: USyd's connection to Auslan

Words by Ferran Thornycroft

The University of Sydney has connections with significant points in Deaf history, from the building of the oldest Deaf school in Australia to the coining of the name of the language itself.

If you enter the Institute building via the front archway you will see stonework reading “then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf be unstopped and the tongue of the dumb sing”. This is a remnant from the building’s use as a school for children who are deaf or blind. In 1860 Thomas Patterson, a Deaf man, established the first Deaf school in Australia, now known as the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children (RIDBC). Shortly after, the Institute building was built for the school to give capacity for boarders. The school resided in the Institute building from 1872 for 90 years until the site was purchased by the University of Sydney in 1961. The school

moved to North Rocks.

Thomas Patterson had been educated at the Edinburgh Deaf and Dumb Institution and had also worked as the secretary and treasurer for the Edinburgh Deaf and Dumb Society. As a result, he brought the Scottish sign language and teaching methods with him. Different schools were established in Australia by different teachers and some Deaf children went to the UK for school. Thus, Auslan was influenced by British, Scottish and Irish sign language.

The term Auslan itself also has connections to the University of Sydney.

Over time Auslan developed its own characteristics and unique signs. Residential schools, including RIDBC, contributed to the development of language variations. For example, the sign for ‘library’ looks like a hair clip. This is because the

librarian at a Victorian school wore a hairclip and the sign for library became associated with her sign name. Auslan now also has influences from American sign language. From 1860 onwards the school taught blind students as well as those who were deaf. Next time you visit the building or walk past, consider its history. Imagine the Deaf children signing in the halls and running up and down the steps, and classes over the years both spoken and signed.

The term Auslan itself also has connections to the University of Sydney. Auslan is made up of the words AUstralian Sign LANguage and was coined by Trevor Johnston, a linguist who finished his PhD “Auslan the Sign Language of the Australian Deaf Community” at USyd in 1989. Trevor Johnston’s work on the linguistics of Auslan has helped with the recognition of Auslan as a natural language distinct from other Signed or

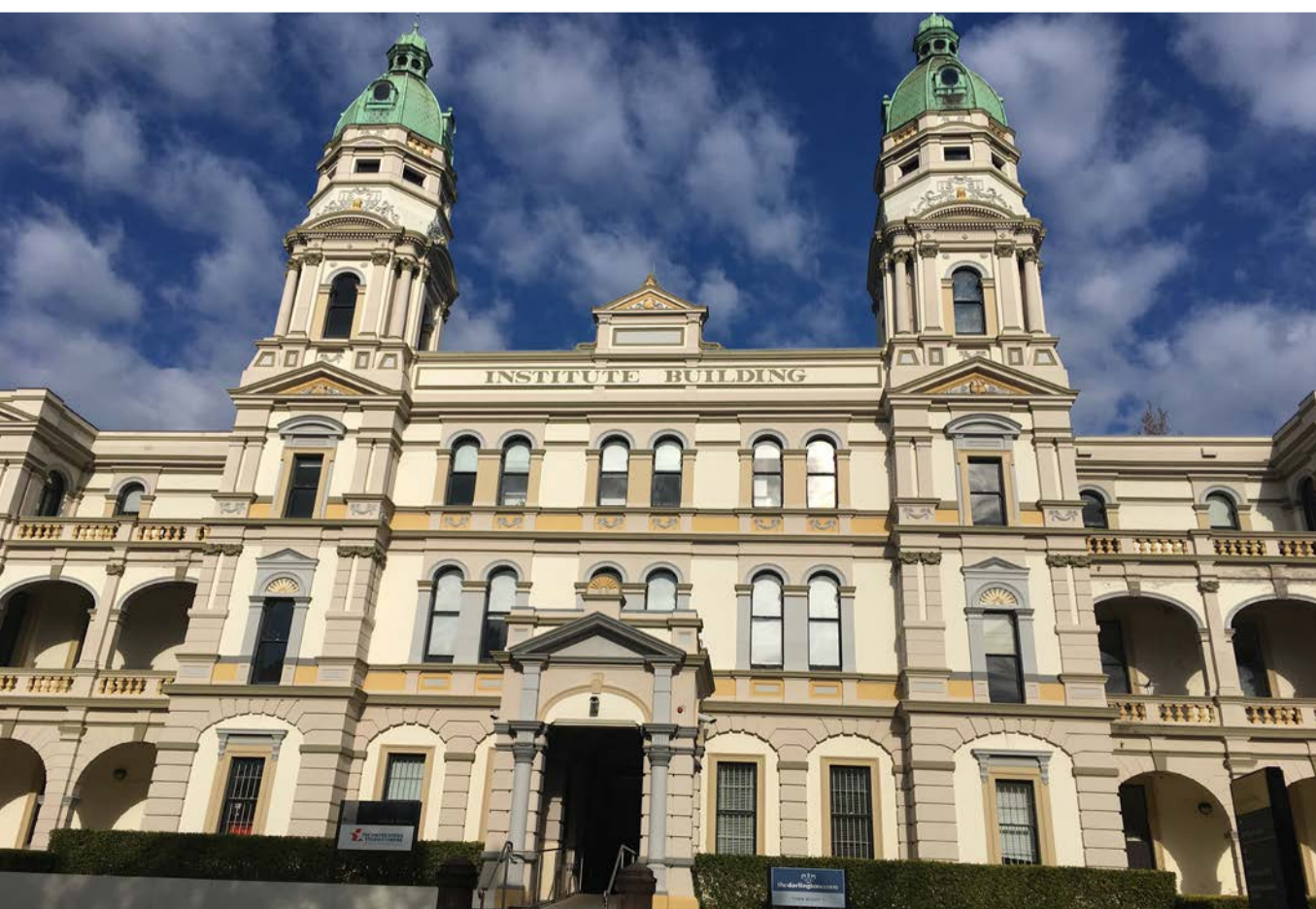


Above: The words inscribed over the entrance to the institute building “then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf be unstopped and the tongue of the dumb sing” are a remnant of the buildings time as a school for the Deaf and blind children.

spoken languages.

Now the university has a sign language society. It was started at the end of 2018 by students learning Auslan. It aims to facilitate others to learn of Auslan and develop understanding of the Deaf community and culture, as well as to provide a space for Deaf and hearing people

to communicate in Auslan. Since 2018 it has enabled over 80 students and staff to start learning sign language and about the Deaf community. The Society works with Deaf organisations to facilitate classes taught by Deaf trainers who share their language, culture, and experience. While beginner classes are not being run this semester, the society plans to run them again next year and can offer advice on getting started. They also run a conversation group and have a petition to ask the University to run Auslan as an elective subject and as a language major. You can check out their website at <https://sites.google.com/view/usydsignsoc/home>



Scan this QR code for the USyd SignSoc website!

A note on language

Deaf and dumb was historically used to refer who were deaf. Dumb was used to mean mute. It is no longer appropriate terminology. Many people who are deaf do speak and people who are deaf are certainly not dumb by the modern meaning of the word!

Currently used terminology includes Deaf (capitalised) which means people who are culturally and linguistically deaf as well as medically deaf. People who are medically deaf but do not use Auslan or identify with the Deaf community use deaf with a lower case. Different people use different terms to describe themselves including hard of hearing or person with hearing loss. Best rule of thumb is to ask and use the term they are comfortable with. People with other disabilities and people involved in the Deaf community also use Auslan to communicate.

In-conversation: Charlotte Lim and Melanie Tran on gender, race and disability

Melanie Tran is a UX designer, disruptor, innovator, activist and entrepreneur. She is the chair of the National Youth Disability Summit Co-Design Committee, and the co-founder of AbilityMate, a company which uses 3D printing to create custom-made orthoses.

Charlotte Lim is an alumna of the University of Sydney and one of the 2020 Disability Officebearers.

As a UX designer with more than eight years of experience under her belt linking health, design and technology and business together, Tran is no stranger to leveraging what it means to be an Asian-Australian woman with disability - with its labels, hangups and baggage, but also with its intimately situated knowledge - as a catalyst for social change.

“The beauty of writing lies upon the fact that boundaries and opportunities are only limited by one’s imagination and creativity,” she tells me. “And it’s also the fact that storytelling is a powerful tool that can be used to help challenge our perspectives and allows us to see the world through the eyes of others.”

What initially drew me to Tran was our likeness. I wanted to understand how she had grappled with the multiplicity of living as a woman of colour who has a disability. “When I first started to... understand what it means to be a woman with a disability, I struggled to figure out whether my disability overpowers my identity as a woman. I would spend a lot of time wondering what people see when they look at me - do they see a woman? Or do they see a person in a wheelchair?”



But the conflict between these identity categories doesn’t phase Tran anymore. “I don’t have the answer to this. But more importantly, I’ve learnt that this doesn’t matter. Because regardless, it doesn’t detract from the fact that I have something different to offer.”

I am curious about how she feels about the everyday aspects - and therefore challenges - of working in a male-dominated industry. “As a woman with a disability... I often get asked how I feel about this or what are some of the challenges. I’d challenge this perspective and ask: what do we have to lose if more women worked in this sector? It would mean that we are placed in a better position to address gender equality. It would mean we are able to create better products and services because it is created by people with diverse backgrounds and unique perspectives.”

Tran is a big believer in celebrating difference. I ask her what she wishes people knew about being a person living with a disability: “You could either see [disability] as a barrier and restriction, or you could see it as a driving force for innovation and catalyst for social change.”

“Being a woman with a disability comes with challenges, but at the same time, it has also forced me to think creatively and helped shape my perspective as a designer. That is exactly what makes each and every one of us unique. And this is precisely the toughest challenge [of being a woman of colour with a disability] - it’s about understanding our unique perspectives and how we can leverage this to help us shape a more diverse and inclusive society.”

I am interested in Tran’s beliefs on tackling tokenism. I assumed that Tran, like many others in the disabled community, did not want to be thought of as just the “disabled designer” or “disabled speaker”. Tran answers with an unexpected vigour: “I think the first step is to take a step back and think about what the term access and inclusion means to you. Everyone has a different definition, but what does it mean to you? What does it look like in practice? Why do you care?”

I don’t have an answer.

“Some would see access and inclusion as a matter of compliance and checking the boxes so that they can continue getting the job done.” Tran continues. “Others would see



regulations as a starting point, and the principles of access and inclusion can only truly be embraced when they go beyond compliance. When they understand that access and inclusion is a journey that enables them to learn, fail and improve.”

According to Tran, curiosity and fearlessness are the two prongs that forge the foundations of social change. “Curiosity leads to questions. Questions lead to understanding. And understanding leads to empathy. Having the ability to empathize would allow you to understand how unique perspectives can contribute to our society and drive the change we need to see.”

She offers me a challenge: “think about your perspective on this. And more importantly, what you can do in your everyday work, to go beyond compliance.”



My last year at Uni2Beyond

Harry Brown on access to education, pandemic learning, and his experiences as an audit student at USyd



Hi, my name is Harry Brown and I’ve been studying Film, TV and theatre for a few years and this is my last year at Uni 2 Beyond. I’ve had many lovely student mentors like Jack, Jade, Elizabeth, Aaron, Melanie, Riya, Nada and Valentina to name a few. It hasn’t been easy studying at home, having to wear a mask and social distancing, but all the amazing supporters at Uni 2 Beyond have made it easier.

Universities need to offer more access to courses and support for disabled people. Disabled people want to experience & enjoy uni life like everybody else. This helps disabled people expand their life experiences & meet new people.

I need educating like everybody else, it helps me to learn how to read, learning how to study, expanding my knowledge, to practice listening and concentrating. But most importantly I have met and made new friends. This has made my life bigger and much more interesting!

I want the same things as everybody else, I want to be independent, catching the bus by myself, learning how to tie my shoelaces, cooking meals, going shopping and reading anything, so I can make my own decisions.

With my disability I go out a lot, meeting lots of different people and attending loads of great events. I have a very good life! It’s been a great experience being part of uni 2 beyond because I have learned so much and made such great friends.



Uni 2 Beyond is an initiative by USyd’s Centre for Disability Studies that supports people with intellectual disabilities to attend lectures and tutorials as audit (non-enrolled) students. The program also facilitates social activities on campus, peer mentoring, and internship opportunities. Learning is informal and participants do not pay tuition fees to the university or receive credits for their subjects.

Pick your struggle

Akanksha Singh on marginality and intersectionality

Kimberlé Crenshaw's analytical theory 'Intersectionality' addresses that gender, race and class overlap and create systemic oppression specific to those intersections. Equality in opportunity can only be achieved after factoring intersectionality into data analysis.

Unfortunately, due to disabled people of colour like me lacking representation, we end up with inaccurate disaggregated data and ultimately, insubstantial equal opportunities and diversity policies. For instance, The Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 needs to be amended through an intersectional lens – considering a truer intersectional picture of employment status and wage discrimination against women with disabilities and/or LGBTQIA+ identifications across all classes and cultural backgrounds.

A 2017 study by the Equality and Human Rights Commission revealed that disabled Bangladeshi and Pakistani men in the UK were experiencing a pay gap of 56% in comparison to white British non-disabled men. Without calculating data through an intersectional framework, Australia's real pay gaps will remain hidden.

Historian David Walker provides one explanation for disabled people of colour's lack of representation in data analysis. He claimed the key theme of the Australian narrative was repressed anxiety. This anxiety stems from a lack of belonging and a culture of racial exclusion.

The umbrella term 'people of colour' in Australia includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and negatively racialised settlers. People of colour in Australia have, and still are, dealing with prejudice and the historical adversity that their communities have endured. Australia's history was founded on devastating frontier violence directed against the continent's First Peoples. In 2019, ABS data revealed that 29.7% of Australian residents were born overseas and migrated to Australia. Even when migrants finally start to feel at 'home' in Australia, media rhetoric and politicisation against racialised migrants

easily distorts this perception of 'home' and induces anxiety.

As a result, people of colour have adopted a survival-of-the-fittest mindset where priority is given to overcoming class struggle and racial discrimination, while other marginalising factors, such as mental illnesses, are viewed as a moral weakness. Seeking psychological help is deemed unnecessary and even shameful in many communities. Although this stigma is widespread, it is particularly evident amongst people of colour.

When a disabled POC's community does not value their struggles and views them undesirably for being 'different' from abled community members, it compounds the adversity we already face. I myself only got diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Anxiety at the age of 17, months after my HSC, and after repeatedly asking my parents for treatment. When I went to get a referral from my Indo-Malaysian General Practitioner, she responded sceptically. She suggested that I was "probably just falsely self-diagnosing". I am grateful for my parents and their support, but had I been heard, diagnosed and accessed support earlier, school might not have been as hard for me.

ADHD and Anxiety have genetic components and often run in families, so it is possible that I have undiagnosed relatives who never received the help they needed. A 2016 report published by The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) emphasised on correctly identifying migrants with disabilities for successful provision of care. European Social Network (ESN) critiqued FRA's finding of German health screenings conducted in migrant centres that "neglect consideration of disabilities".

FRA's report also pointed to the flawed access to care in European countries with limited resources and capacity for migrants with disabilities. To overcome this, there are several disability-identification initiatives that have been implemented for migrants. In Sweden, health screenings now must consider the past and present

physical and mental health alongside any disparities the individuals have experienced. Likewise, the Protect-Able project pushes for effective early screening of asylum-seekers. Australia could too benefit from identification support tools for migrants with undetected disabilities.

Of course, for this to happen, Australia's migration policies must first move away from their blatant discriminatory standpoint against disabled migrants. Our Migration Act (1958) is the only area of the Australian legal system that is exempted from the Disability Discrimination Act (1992), allowing for visa refusals merely based on disability status. This is disappointing in itself. The immigration system's discrimination absurdly lends out to exclude disabled people from simply visiting Australia on holiday. Australian Lawyers for Human Rights and Down Syndrome Australia launched a March 2020 national campaign for policy reforms. Before disability identification support tools are implemented for migrants, basic human rights and protection of migrants and refugees with disabilities needs to be administered.

Aimee Allison, the founder of She the People, says that "effective governance requires us to approach the problems that we face from an intersectional lens." Hence, effective policy-making, along with the ultimate goal of equal opportunity, can only be achieved through an approach informed by intersectional analysis. Currently, international data is failing disabled people of colour. There were 2,022 complaints and 69,397 incidents filed under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Quality and Safeguards Commission between July and December 2019. However, the lack of disaggregated and disambiguous data means that we do not know how many of those reports concerned people of colour, and therefore have no understanding of the specific experiences of people of colour on the NDIS. This is particularly important given that people of colour and people from non-English speaking backgrounds are struggling to access the NDIS. A recent paper from Settlement

Services International noted that only 7 percent of NDIS participants identify as culturally and linguistically diverse, compared to 23 percent in the Australian population.

By actively neglecting the specific needs of remote Indigenous communities and using a standard model across Australia, NDIS disregards First Nations Peoples' varying support requirements amongst their differing communities. The NDIS initially estimated a quota of 20,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people eligible for the scheme; however, the First People's Disability Network (FPDN) estimated the actual number to be around 60,000. FPDN's CEO, June Riemer, critiqued this underestimation and questioned the exclusion, "when you don't even recognise your First Nations in the constitution ... why would the service sector give any credit to First Nations people and their culture, if our own government doesn't?" Australian regulatory bodies continue to act in discord towards the process of Aboriginal sovereignty and self-determination. Indigenous Data Sovereignty (IDS) refers to the First Nations Peoples' right to access and collect data pertaining to them and their ancestors. However, to date, our government limits the First Nations People's access to information. This is merely one other government regulation that demonstrates the exclusion of First Nations Peoples.

Unlike other people of colour communities, First Nations Peoples consider disability to be a community problem, rather than a personal one. Although some Aboriginal languages have created words for 'impairment' (such as nyumpu), most Aboriginal languages do not have a term for 'disability' reflecting their social stance on disabled members of the community being no different from the abled members. However, there are evident systemic racial prejudices in the Australian health care sectors towards disabled First Nations Peoples. For example, treatment for Indigenous people with disabilities in hospitals are delayed, and individuals are labelled as "drunk" or under the influence of other substances.

To implement an intersectionality-informed approach in public policy-making, data needs to be disaggregated keeping ages, disabilities, socio-economic

status, sexual identity and migrant status in consideration. Contextualising data is essential, or else policy-making will continue using ambiguous data that does not represent the true conditions and policies are going to remain ineffective in solving the real issues.

Although I dislike limiting myself to my race or disabilities or any labels for that matter, I was compelled to write this reflective analysis through a disabled POC's perspective. Ending the marginalisation of disabled people requires radical change in social infrastructures and in the public imagination, which views us as defective or requiring charity. It is necessary that people of colour reject stigma around psychiatric and physical disabilities and encourage seeking support or treatment. People of colour must stand in solidarity and work towards equity and justice for disabled people. Disabled people across all cultural backgrounds deserve to be heard.

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Art by Robin Eames

THE DISABLED WARRIOR EMERGES FROM DARKNESS

Robin M Eames

for Margot Beavon-Collin

in Sparta we are dashed against rocks
discarded in Athens drowned in wine-dark
waters of Argos abandoned in Corinth
we are the long-prophesied doom of Thebes
tossed from Olympus but protected
in Kemet where they worship little gods
valued in Babylon beloved by Yehudim
called monstrem in Rome thought portent of
ill fortune foul beasts better slain or caged
in labyrinthine prisons far from the upper air.
in the Rig Veda armoured queens with iron
legs ride into battle like old gods like K'awiil
of lightning & sacrifice whose leg was
a serpent like Tezcatlipoca of the night wind
whose foot was replaced with obsidian
like Nuada king of the otherworld whose left
hand was fashioned from flashing silver.
moon-cursed they call us demons or deities
weird creatures suffering early purgatory
wild things possessed by the planet Saturn
fey changelings & children of witches.
these days the cavalry rides on wheelchairs
smashing curb cuts out of concrete with
war cries roaring out in electronic voices
& we are still dying still drowning still
damned & discarded but we are not dead yet
& when we die we die like dying stars
with fierce love & fire our light spilling
forth still visible from distant galaxies
for long centuries after we are gone the fight
continues the fire burns brightly on

Oracle

Robin M Eames

I have perfected a certain busied appearance
mien of semi-urgent somewhere-to-be
wheeling too swiftly for strangers to stop and ask
What's wrong with you ?
or perhaps What happened (to you)
(to your legs)(to make you different) ? or
Why (the chair)(your legs)(are you here)
(are you like this)(are you alive) ? ? ?
Each question pierces something deep inside me,
leaves me cradling a wound that I try to hide
for fear of being further exposed, of showing
weakness before a predator whose hunger for
justification won't be slaked with my discomfort.
Against the slurry of abled inquisition I raise
my own defences: a certain glint in my eye,
a lifting of hackles, a tightness to the corners
of my mouth, and if these fail I have one final
weapon in reserve: a quizzical tilt and question
of my own: Why do you ask ?
All this not from spite but simply because my heart
is already so swollen with various woes that further
distension would make me unable to move at all,
pin me to my bed and prevent me from rousing,
and I love the world and do not want to leave it.
I want to give my heart more room for love
than grief. I want to keep space for warmth
and not that sudden pit of cold that fills my body
at these innocent cruelties. If they want to know,
then let them voice the truth. The madwomen of Delphi
delivered prophecies of nonsense phrases,
inscrutable, opaque. When asked impossible questions
they gave impossible answers.
You have to figure these things out yourself.

*GOOD CRIPS GO TO HEAVEN
BUT GET STUCK AT THE STAIRWAY*

Robin M Eames

after Quin Eli

Be bad, love. Take that bad attitude
and forge it into armour. Turn chains
into chainmail. Take the rage and rancour
and make it plated bronze, brace your joints
in bitterness. Blaze apotropaic iron
out of acrimony, glare back at staring eyes.
Rebel and revolt. Forget that carceral logic,
be grassroots, be light and fire. Let your disabled body
be fierce and furious, let your disabled mind
be ardent and wild. Wrap steel around your heart
and let your heart stay soft. The life you have
is a life worth living. Be proud, love.
Be loud and unashamed. Fold fear into a shield,
let all of it reflect away. Don't look back,
don't dwell in regret. Let yourself seek redemption
without the tragic backstory, without justification
or explanation, without "what's wrong with you"
or "what happened". Let it happen.
Bite the hand. Demand, don't ask.
If they care, they'll fight beside you. Piss on pity
and inspiration, reject involuntary martyrdom.
Be that transgender menace, that lavender threat.
Be damned, love. You're there already.
The world is burning. Take hell
and make it yours, be hell on wheels.
Be monstrous, be the bad example,
the bad influence, the bad cripple.
Be noncompliant. Speak in your own language.
Live fast, live strong. Fight for liberation
not assimilation. Remember solidarity,
stay strange, keep weird and queer,
and always channel anger into action.
You are loved and not alone. There is more than this
and more to come. Be joyous, my love, be bad.

trauma: a triptych

Noa Zulman

Writers, are, for the most part, crazy people. We're like Hephaestus
of the forge. We're gnarled. We're curled over. We walk with a
limp.

- Courtney A. Kemp

1.
VELCRO: the fabric of survival,
Strapping your sole in, one toe at a time.
you are twelve,
just starting year seven
and the kids in your P.E. class tie your shoelaces together;
so that when you try to run,
you trip
falling
 head
 over
heels
 into the gutter.
(your sports teacher is in the habit of turning a blind eye to such
events)

Later, when they ask:
who would do such a thing,
you remain silent.

Don't they know that teenagers don't have souls?

2.
there are certain words that you can never un-hear
screeching through your synapses like salt to an open
wound;

cripple

weren't you expecting this?
that, in the heat of the moment when he called out your
name

a slur would *slip* out instead?

but policing his passion was never part of the plan
so you purse your lips
part your legs
and pine for a pleasure that is politically correct

3.
Returns Policy for Unwanted Bodies:
Unhappy with your purchase?
Simply pop it back into its official packaging with the
tags attached,
(umbilical cord not required)
And send it back to us within thirty days.

Bodies must be undamaged and in original condition
(no scrapes, breaks, or fakes allowed)
Refunds, exchanges, and store credit available.*

*Terms and conditions apply. Bodies with chronic
illnesses, disabilities, and pre-existing mental health
conditions are not covered under this policy.



Review: SUDS Presents Orlando - Delightful Queercrip Fuckery

Margot Beavon-Collin apologises for the lateness of her review. She is very disabled.

In March, your reviewer was going through some shit. I was caught between coming to terms with a continuously evolving relationship to my own gender, and increasingly forced to come to terms with the impacts my disabilities were having on my day-to-day life. For me, SUDS' production of Orlando, one of the last before the Cellar was closed as a result of the pandemic, was a joy and a revelation.

Using Sarah Ruhl's recent adaptation as a starting point, the cast and crew has been guided expertly by director Sean Landis to create a show so much more than its initial source material.

A cast of five in the original production is expanded to eight, the text's more gender essentialist passages have been cut, or carefully rewritten, and the original staging's sterile pomp and bombast, so typical of mainstage theatre, is replaced with colour, choreographed movement sequences, an amazing original score for string quartet and piano written by Sam Cheng and performed live, and an incredibly impressive centrepiece (a colossal tree constructed by the crew that extended up to the Cellar's ceiling).

The most impressive part of the show, however, is the urgency, passion, and love that every cast and crew member clearly brought to its creation. It is one thing to do a once over of a text, sensitivity guide in hand, in an attempt to render a problematic show "unproblematic". SUDS' Orlando proves that the true strength of student theatre lies in the energy, immediacy, and unabashedly high stakes, politically minded, "we don't give a fuck what mainstream audiences want, piss off, we're making the show our community wants us to make" attitude that young people are so adept at bringing to everything they do.

The question of Orlando's gender, the subject of so many tortured articles in literary criticism, is consequently taken

as completely obvious. Or rather, not. We don't know. Orlando's changing relationship with gender over the course of the play is not a riddle to be solved. It is a process of self-discovery that every trans person confronted with the daunting precipice presented by the process of coming out, leaping off, only to realise that, maybe, gender is a bit more complicated than that, can recognise. Exploration of one's gender is often difficult, not just at the initial point of outing yourself as trans, but long afterwards. There is an imperative for trans people to be absolutely certain about their identities at the moment of coming out, as a shield against the deluge of criticism levelled at us. "You're confused." Yeah, and your virulent transphobia is not helping, Joanne. SUDS' Orlando presents this process of exploration and discovery in a manner that is delicate and bold in all the right places.

The portrayal of the titular protagonist deserves special mention here. Robbie Wardaugh's performance as Orlando was utterly magnificent. Throughout the entire play, they have the unenviable task of simultaneously portraying all of Orlando's doubts, confusions, anxieties, and gender transgressions, while simultaneously being the audience's main point of continuity in a play that spans several countries and around 450 years. They not only succeed, they thrive. I was mesmerised from beginning to end.

In a play so tied to self-discovery, a production that is so conscious of embodiment, and a review in the disability collective's autonomous edition of Honi Soit, special mention should also be made of the casting of Robin Eames, a wheelchair user, in the production. If authentic representation of disabled people on stage is always a breath of fresh air (and it is), they were a tornado. It was so clear to everyone watching how at ease they were on stage, gliding regally as the Queen in one moment, leading a raucous

carnival dance in the next. In a production for which movement and choreography was so integral, Eames never seemed out of place. The entire team clearly spent a lot of time, not thinking about how to awkwardly insert a wheelchair user into a production already fully-formed in their minds, but to collaboratively devise a show from which Eames' performance was inextricable from the show itself. Disabled embodiment is truly beautiful, and makes for incredible viewing. It cannot be replicated by abled actors, no matter how committed to the method they may be.

The rest of the cast were wonderful. This show, absent any of its parts, could not have been as stunning a production as it was. The audience was variously brought to tears by Madeleine Gandhi's scorned lover of Orlando, Isabelle Laxamana's swaggering ship captain, Rachel Seeto's very forward Arch-Duchess (and later Arch-Duke), and Isla Mowbray's gremlin-servant Grimsditch. Sam Martin made a very captivating Sasha, and Max Cattana's Shelmerdine was delightful; simultaneously emotional, vacant, incredibly serious and headstrong.

SUDS' Orlando was magnificent. I saw it three times during its run, and wish I had gone again. It represents everything that student theatre, and theatre in general, should aspire to be.



Photography and art by Matthew Miceli

DIY YOUR OWN FACEMASKS

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

20cm water resistant fabric (outer layer)

20cm of blended fabric (middle layer)

20cm of tightly woven cotton (inner layer)

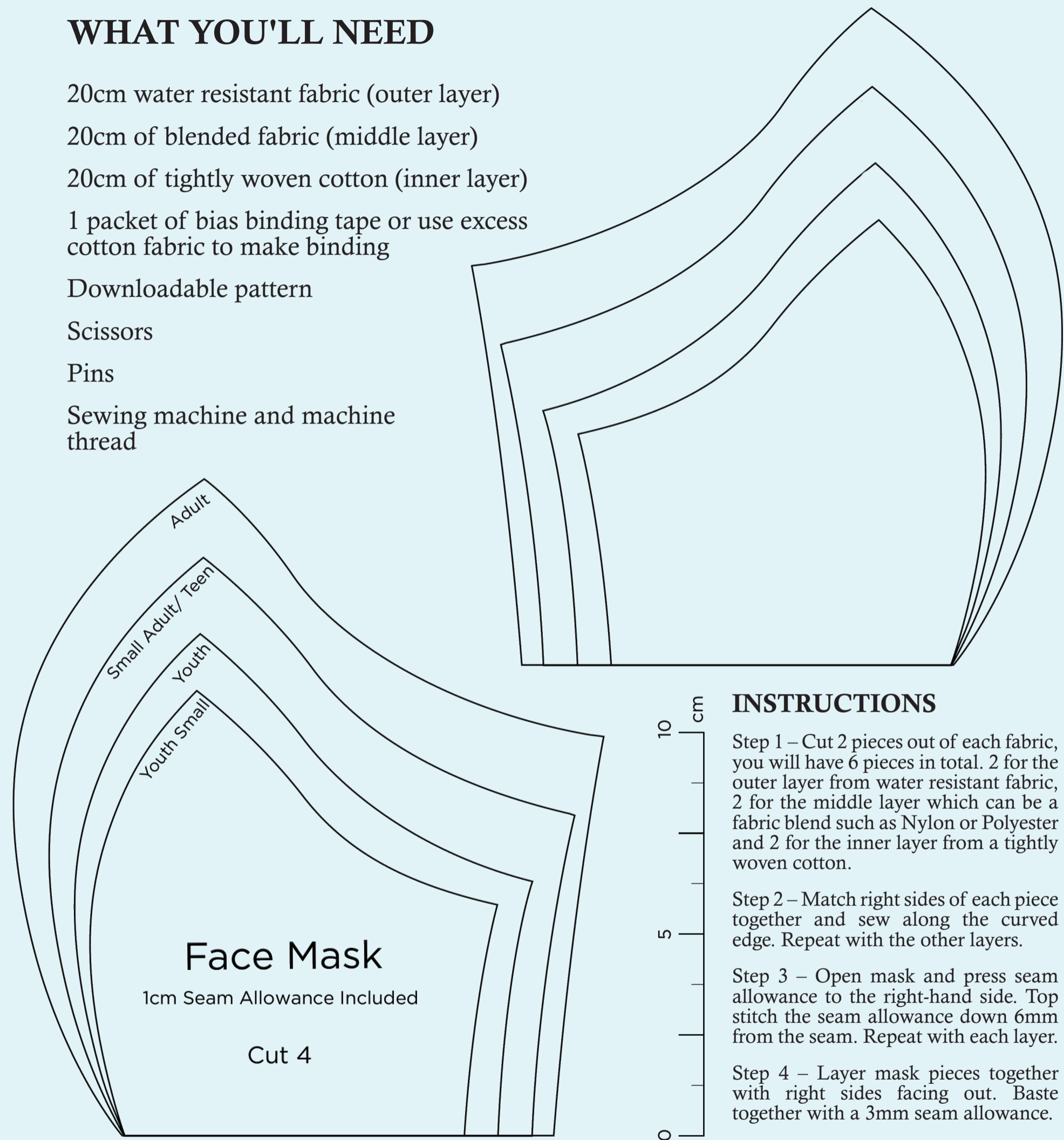
1 packet of bias binding tape or use excess cotton fabric to make binding

Downloadable pattern

Scissors

Pins

Sewing machine and machine thread



INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1 – Cut 2 pieces out of each fabric, you will have 6 pieces in total. 2 for the outer layer from water resistant fabric, 2 for the middle layer which can be a fabric blend such as Nylon or Polyester and 2 for the inner layer from a tightly woven cotton.

Step 2 – Match right sides of each piece together and sew along the curved edge. Repeat with the other layers.

Step 3 – Open mask and press seam allowance to the right-hand side. Top stitch the seam allowance down 6mm from the seam. Repeat with each layer.

Step 4 – Layer mask pieces together with right sides facing out. Baste together with a 3mm seam allowance.

Step 5 – Apply bias tape to 2 sides of the mask. Once sewn, trim the tape to size.

Step 6 – Cut 2 more pieces of bias tape 75cm long. Pin across the top and bottom edges of mask and sew in place.

Step 7 – Fold ends of ties over twice and tack in place. Tie a bow or knot to finish.

President

Liam Donohoe

While the mid-semester break was (hopefully) relaxing for most, it was certainly not a calm or positive one for me or the countless student activists involved in the defence of our education. On Thursday the 8th of October, the Senate disgracefully passed the Higher Education Support Amendment Bill Act 2020, locking-in unprecedented attacks on the funding and accessibility of University education. I would like to start this report by apologising to students for this short-term defeat. I assure you that I did everything in my power to prevent this from happening, and am proud that the USyd SRC was the most effective and dedicated student union in the country, leading and inspiring the national response. Nonetheless, though a promising movement is emerging to reverse these attacks, the Right's (temporary) success in dismantling lingering traces of quality and equality mean that, for now, October the 8th will be known as one of the darkest in Australian higher education.

The passage of this outrageous Bill did not go unnoticed by that promising movement, however. Beyond attending at least 3 meetings and contributing to the broader building, I also had the honour of addressing over a hundred staff and students on the lawns in front of the Parliament House of Australia on Tuesday the 6th as part of a protest organised by the National Union of Students and co-hosted by the SRC, ANU Students Association, and other groups. With the Federal budget, announced later that night, reducing relief and programs for precarious Australians, my speech situated Morrison's attacks in a context of broader class warfare, noting how

General Secretaries

Liam Thomas and Abby Shi.

It's been a busy few weeks for the SRC and activism broadly, from pushing back against the Government's education bill and police repression on campus to conducting our annual election.

I would like to quickly apologise for the lack of General Secretary reports in recent weeks, unfortunately, due to a period of ill health I have been out of action over the last 2 months, however, I'm incredibly excited to be back to finish out my term over this semester.

Firstly, I've been in attendance at several meetings with representatives from University management, where a broad range of issues have been discussed. One of the key discussions had been around the precarious situation for tertiary education with the passing of

Vice Presidents

Charlotte Bullock and Felix Faber.

We would like to begin our report by expressing our anger and sadness at the passing of the Job Ready Graduates Package during the past week. We feel especially angry for students in Year 12, struggling through a final year like no other, who have had their options

the additional joblessness and reduced economic opportunity adds insult to injury for students and low income earners.

Though the Bill passed, largely due to a gutless capitulation by the Centre Alliance which was as gullible as it was evil, the protest nonetheless affirmed the dedication of the USyd Left, if nothing else. It was inspiring to see so many car convoys from Sydney—despite the 3 hour drive, we must have made up at least 50% of the crowd—and I am particularly grateful for the drivers and Canberra comrades who made it happen. But while this is undoubtedly a devastating blow to the sector, and a short-term victory for the Right, I have seen enough in the dedication of education activists and the broader student movement throughout this period that I know we can win what we always really wanted: free, fully-publicly-funded higher education.

To that end, I implore all students to attend this Wednesday's teach-in at 1pm on the Quadrangle Lawns. The teach-in will bring together a diverse range of contingents and provide an opportunity for a thorough response to the success of Morrison's attacks and the ongoing austerity of USyd management. After the last rally on campus, which resulted in hundreds of students occupying City Road, we are hoping to significantly boost numbers so we are not suppressed by the (likely) substantial police presence. In order to aid that, I attended a planning meeting on the 30th, a logistics meeting on the 11th, and will be participating in a building day on the 12th.

Closer to home (both physically and temporally), last Wednesday I attended a rally against cuts at Macquarie University in solidarity

with the Government's shocking education reform bill. This bill is undoubtedly the most serious attack on higher education we've seen in years, if not decades, with cuts to funding for every course and even more barriers put in place to accessible, affordable education. In these meetings, there has been discussion about how the University will respond, with the University considering possible measures to help students, particularly on the issue of failing first-year units locking students out of HECs.

On top of this, I've been engaged in meetings with other members of the SRC Executive to begin putting together the SRC's application for SSAF funding for 2021. The constantly changing circumstances around COVID and uncertainty as to the impacts it will have

further pared back by a government that does not care about them. We are angry for those kids in regional areas, those kids for whom university already seemed like an insurmountable goal. We are especially angry at Centre Alliance, for quashing the dreams of thousands of young people, for the tiniest of

with my comrades there. Our eventual occupation of the Chancellery, which lasted at least an hour, was only thwarted once we were given official move on orders by the Police and chased off campus. Not to be outdone, just the week before I attended a small but poignant demonstration against cuts outside the Anderson Stuart Building. My congratulations and regards to all those involved in both actions, particularly the Macquarie University Women's Collective, who succeeded in defending and restoring the Gender Studies major after savage cuts.

Activism was just one of the duties to which I tended over the break, however. Alongside Swapnik Sanagavarapu, the 93rd President of the SRC, the current Executive and I are in the process of preparing our Student Support and Amenity Fee submission. The SSAF is collected by the University and distributed to the various student organisations following an application process. We expect to get the entirety of our 'base' funding back this year, which should ensure we can continue to pay wages of all professional staff, fund our services, and sustain our collectives and activism. Beyond that, we will also look to secure extra funding to consolidate the Mutual Aid program and other services, via the SSAF contestable funds. We would love to hear any feedback or thoughts on the projects we ought to pursue next year.

One project that we will certainly continue funding no matter what, though, is the SRC Informs program, which we launched earlier this semester. This Tuesday's session will feature last year's SRC Research Officer, Altin Gavranovic, in conversation about the report he completed last year on the realities of student experience at USyd.

continuing into next year is an unprecedented challenge for us to deal with. Over the past year, the SRC has been able to provide a number of critical services for students in a tumultuous year such as our mutual aid program, and there is no doubt that programs like these will continue to be vital for many students in the year to come. We hope to be able to continue and expand upon programs like these next year and as such have identified it as a priority area for funding.

Also, over the last weeks, we have seen several protests held to fight back against the education cuts. Whilst I have been unable to attend the recent protests I would like to commend the student activists involved in organising around this critical issue. Furthermore, I con-

tinued committee meetings, attending the UE: Education Committee on 28 September. Charlotte and Felix have both recently attended meetings to discuss SSAF for next year along with other office bearers.

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Welfare and Environment Officers did not submit a report this week.



The conversation and presentation should be live-streamed via Facebook from 1pm.

The break also saw the usual anthology of committee meetings. Tuesday the 29th and the 6th saw relatively uneventful Undergraduate Studies and Standards and Policies committee meeting(s), respectively. Thursday the 8th saw an interesting Academic Board Indigenous Strategy working group meeting, where plans for more holistic support for Indigenous students were finalised before recommendation to the Academic Board. And Monday the 28th saw my penultimate University Executive Education committee meeting.

Finally, it would be remiss of me not to mention the SRC elections, which commenced, finished, and announced successful candidates over the break. While our first ever online election was not a very smooth one—countless technical errors, communication issues, and delayed announcements come to mind—it is nonetheless finally over. Commiserations to unsuccessful candidates, and congratulations to those who got up—I can't wait to see how you improve the SRC and world next year!. Fortunately (or unfortunately, depending on your perspective) I was also elected to Council, so I'll be around next year to keep an eye on you all!

In the end, the break was as productive as it was disappointing, and, as any mid-semester break ought to be, replete with important learnings: that the USyd Left is the most dedicated and effective in the country, that the Centre Alliance are complete scum, and that the battle for free, fully publicly-funded higher education starts now. I look forward to landing the first blow alongside you on October the 14th.

demn the repressive actions of NSW Police breaking up socially distanced protests and intimidating, harassing and fining student activists. In recent weeks we have even seen police from the riot squad attend a lunchtime organising meeting of fewer than 20 people, for no reason other than to intimidate and harass students.

Finally, with the conclusion of the SRC elections I extend my congratulations to all the councillors and NUS delegates who have been provisionally elected and thank everyone who participated in the election, be it standing or election or voting.

Liam Thomas.

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Mental Health Services - Finding Affordable Help

There are affordable, confidential services in the community who are willing to help you with issues that are impacting your life, and which may be affecting your mental health and wellbeing, and/or your academic performance. There may be things that are worrying you, but you are afraid or embarrassed to talk about them with someone you know. Individual counselling gives you the chance to talk about your concerns in a safe environment. There is no shame in seeking support and guidance. In fact, it is a show of strength to ask for help when you need it.

There are affordable, confidential services available to help you with issues that are impacting your life, and which may be affecting your mental health and wellbeing, and/or your academic performance.

Seeing a counsellor can be a very daunting, yet rewarding experience. You only need to say as much as you are comfortable with. Counsellors and psychologists don't prescribe drugs, they offer a 'talking cure' and can help you to understand the way you are feeling, and the thoughts that you are having. They can really help if you are feeling a bit

lonely, sad or just not feeling like yourself. They can also help with depression, anxiety, and other mental illness.

There are lots of different services available, and many different ways to access them. Some charge a fee, while others provide a "no gap payment" service on Medicare and Overseas Students Health Care. Here are just a few services available to you:

Uplift Psychological Services
(upliftpsychologicalservices.com.au)
– face to face counselling.

Headspace (headspace.org.au)
– face to face counselling, online counselling, group web forums.

Uni's crisis line (0488 884 429)
– SMS counselling

Lifeline (131 114) – telephone counselling

Twenty 10
(twenty10.org.au/get-support/lets-talk)
– face to face, online, telephone counselling – for people who are LGBTQIA+

Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia
(rape-dvservices.org.au/contact-us)
– telephone and online counselling

If you have any questions about how to find help please email help@src.usyd.edu.au, or if you prefer a face-to-face appointment, you can call 9660 5222 to book a suitable time. We are happy to help you.

Ask Abe

SRC caseworker help Q&A

Ask Abe about
Abstudy



Dear Abe,

What do you know about Abstudy? Is it worth applying?

Thanks,
Frank

Dear Frank,

If you are an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and are studying full time, it is definitely worth applying for Abstudy, so that you can focus on completing your degree, with less pressure on working in part time or casual jobs for your

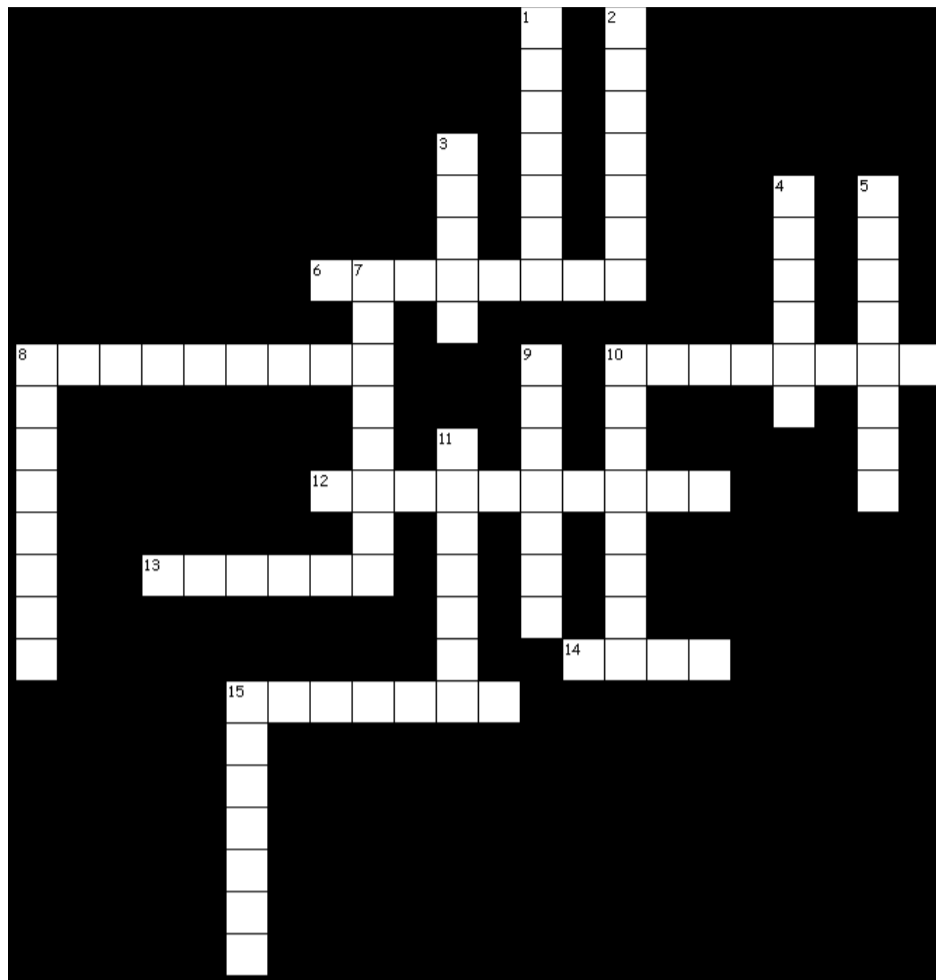
living expenses. To qualify you will need to show a number of things, including being accepted into the community in which you live or have lived. As with any Centrelink payment, make sure that you keep a copy or record of all of the correspondence and conversations that you have with any Centrelink staff, which you can simply do by emailing the information, including receipt numbers, to yourself. If you have any specific questions about this or any other Centrelink payment, please contact an SRC Caseworker by emailing help@src.usyd.edu.au.

Thanks,
Abe

Contact an SRC Caseworker on 02 9660 5222 or email help@src.usyd.edu.au

Crossword: Crippling up (and down, and across)

Note: Surnames Only



Across

6. 8 letters, played rich dickhead quadriplegic billionaire in 'The Upside', 2017
8. 9 letters, played a sexy amputee in 'Rust and Bone', 2012 (Golden Globe nominated)
10. 8 letters, won an Oscar for playing an amputee in 'My Left Foot', 1990
12. 10 letters, played amputee Jeff Bauman in 'Stronger', 2017
13. 6 letters, played a CGI amputee in 'Forrest Gump', 1994 (Oscar nominated)
14. 4 letters, won an Oscar for playing blind musician Ray Charles in 'Ray', 2005
15. 7 letters, played a mute/nonspeaking character who is inexplicably terrible at ASL in 'The Shape of Water', 2017 (Oscar nominated)

Down

1. 7 letters, played a paraplegic character in various X-Men films, 2000-2017
2. 7 letters, played a blind character in 'Wait Until Dark', 1968 (Oscar nominated)
3. 5 letters, won an Oscar for playing a quadriplegic in 'Million Dollar Baby', 2005
4. 6 letters, played a bipolar character in 'Silver Linings Playbook', 2013 (Oscar nominated)
5. 8 letters, played radical quadriplegic Robin Cavendish in 'Breathe', 2017
7. 8 letters, won an Oscar for playing disabled physicist Stephen Hawking in 'The Theory of Everything', 2015
8. 8 letters, played quadriplegic cartoonist John Callahan in 'Don't Worry, He Won't Get Far on Foot', 2018
9. 7 letters, played an amputee character in 'Skyscraper', 2018
10. 8 letters, played a developmentally disabled character in 'What's Eating Gilbert Grape', 1994 (Oscar nominated)
11. 7 letters, played a suicidal quadriplegic in the least romantic film in its genre, 'Me Before You', 2016
15. 7 letters, won an Oscar for scarring a generation of autistics in 'Rain Man', 1989

Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney 2020 Students' Representative Council Annual Elections Results Report

2020
Elections
RESULTS!

I declare the following persons provisionally elected:

PRESIDENT: Swapnik Sanagavarapu

NUS DELEGATES: 7 in order of election:

STUDENTS REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL:

- AC Kristina Sergi
- AD Sarah Halnan
- AG Shanhua Zhou
- AH Thomas Williams
- AJ Isabella D'Silva
- AL Lei Yao
- AM Mary Khoury
- AN Grace Hu
- AP Jayfel Tulabing-Lee
- AQ Drew Beacom
- AW Lilian Campbell
- AX Cole Scott-Curwood
- BA Varsha Yajman
- BE Hektor Vineburg
- BK Hamish McFarlane
- BL Kristin Miao
- BN Anne Zhao
- BN Zhengjie Fei
- BN Qingchun Meng

35 to be elected. Those elected are shown in the ticket order:

- A Margaret Thanos
- B Riley Vaughan
- B Emily Storey
- C Oscar Chaffey
- H Ben Jones
- J Ibrahim Taha
- L Matthew Carter
- O Liam Donohoe
- P Zeyu He
- P Siyao (Melaine) Liu
- Q Haoyu Wang
- S Priya Gupta
- T Matthew Harte
- V Tianyue Chen
- AA Lauren Lancaster
- AB Swapnik Sanagavarapu

HONI SOIT: Fit for Bloom

- Alice Trenoweth-Creswell
- Claire Ollivain
- Deandre Espejo
- Jeffrey Khoo
- Juliette Marchant
- Marlow Hurst
- Maxim Shanahan
- Shania Daphne
- Andrea Obrien
- Vivienne Guo
- William Solomon

- Liam Donohoe
- Shreyaa Sundaraghavan
- Angelina Gu
- Lilian Campbell
- Meredith Eicherly
- Maia Edge
- Jack Mansell



SINCE 2019 FREE FROM INTEGRITY | PROUDLY DEPENDENT ON GOVERNMENT HANDOUTS

THE INDEPENDENT

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

the shameless EICs flagrantly
stealing last year's comedy
template bc it's funnier for cripples

Local yoga instructor to face charges
after thing disabled person said would
happen happened

DSFree!!! Ten tips for sneaky crips look-
ing to defraud the government, from
someone who has spent four years trying
to get on basic disability benefits

Chronically-ill university student reveals
how they manage to do it all in tell-all
interview:
"I don't... I'm very tired"



Cats are autistic, claim EICs of local paper, because it's fukn true

"Yes, we know it's super fucking problematic, and we will absolutely get cancelled for this, but we all know it's true, and someone has to say it," claimed bleary eyed EICs at 1:30am in the Sam Langford Office, blissfully unaware of the absolute brutal evisceration that awaited them on publication day.

"Have you ever seen a fucking cat? Have you met a cat? Have you ever tried to make eye contact with a cat? The slow blink is because they refuse to meet your gaze for extended periods (and also idk, love etc).

"Cats are literally never not stimming. They hate crowds, loud noises, bright lights, being put on leashes and taken for walks, being forced into social interaction, and 90% of the time when they meet new people they're either standoffish or overexcited. I had to buy my cat a fuckin anxiety jacket because we moved some furniture and she got stressed, which I was also stressed by, because I'm autistic, just like most if not all cats."

"Hey, hey, not ALL cats," clarified the other EIC who was basically sleepwalking at this point Jesus Christ. "Don't overgeneralise. Some cats have ADHD."

Letter to the editors

To the editors of The Dependent,

This is to inform you that I have formally requested special considerations for the assignment due today: "Sick Disability Meme #2".

I have received your previous email regarding my previous attempts to get a simple extension. Whilst I acknowledge that, yes, foresight might have put me in a better position to deal with issues arising in the week leading up to the imposed deadline, it is an unfortunate reality that clairvoyance is one of the few things I am yet to be diagnosed with.

I shall endeavour to take your suggestion of keeping "several boxes of tissues/paper towels/perhaps a tea-towel?" near to my workstation to prevent destruction of company property and my homework in the event of any future spontaneous bodily fluid expulsions in the spirit in which I am sure it was given.

I implore you to please favourably consider the attached fifteen doctor reports, three blood tests, and the rough sketch of this morning's tea leaves you requested in order to properly assess my application.

Failing that, please accept this picture of a sweet disabled frog.

He is all I have.





SOLIDARITY

NOT

CHARITY