

UNSW STUDENT MAGAZINE

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS



NATALIE
SEKULOVSKA
/
MANAGING EDITOR

It's interesting to think how our preconceived ideas of what people are like, can turn out to be really wrong. I mean, just look at my baby photo. You'd think it would be impossible to have a kind of passive-aggressive-don't-mess-with-me face while wearing a flower crown and pink, pinstriped overalls, yet I did it.

Fast-forward fifteen years, and I've upgraded to casual resting bitch face, a pretty normal symptom of that's just how my face looks. Believe it or not, I'm actually more of a big, squishy marshmallow than my face would sometimes have you believe.

I guess this is why I was nervous coming into my role as editor this year. Clearly, some people already had an idea of what an appointed (*rather than elected*) Managing Editor of *Tharunka* was going to be like. If I were to take a stab, looking at earlier criticism of the new appointment process, I would say "pretty scary" and "shit writer" would be up there.

But I'm not here to talk myself up. I don't feel that I need to do that because I've left behind eight fantastic issues that have given voice to the views of UNSW students, no matter their gender, sexual preference and ethnicity.

We did focus heavily on issues like sexual assault on campus, LGBTQI rights, the SCA and UNSW Art & Design merge, and UNSW's investment in fossil fuel companies, but that's because

our students were (*and still are*) passionate about discussing them. After all, when you follow the calls of students, you don't need to worry about whether you're being independent or following a mandate. When you follow the calls of students, all of that comes naturally.

At the end of the day, I'm just your average journalism student and yes, I hate coffee and love chai. Maybe that's typical, or maybe that's another preconceived idea used to judge people.

Just because I was appointed into the role of Managing Editor, doesn't mean I haven't fought long and hard for students to be heard. Just because some people didn't like the way I came into the role, doesn't mean I haven't contributed to the strong, vibrant legacy that other *Tharunka* editors have paved the way for. And I look forward to welcoming the new (*appointed*) Managing Editor next year, someone who will be just as enthusiastic and daring as I have tried to be.

/



CASSIE BELL
/
EDITOR



JAYDEN
RATHSAM-HUA
/
EDITOR



CARLA
ZUNIGA-NAVARRO
/
EDITOR



DAVID TU
/
DESIGNER

As Johnathon Larson's masterpiece *Rent* taught us, there are 525,000 Minutes in a year. The signature song asks how we—as individuals and dependants; as learners, lovers, and losers; as workers, writers and warriors—measure a year of our lives.

So it got me thinking, how do we measure a year of *Tharunka*...? Perhaps in diamonds, or in Facebook chat messages. In "I'll get it done by tomorrow"s. In Malcom Turnbull references, or tongue-in-cheek cartoons. Maybe in orange-couch-lunch meetings, in "Gr8"s, or in beautifully designed covers.

Or maybe, we can measure 2016 in calls from the student body for UNSW to take *real* action, against *real* issues. After reading and editing all your pieces this year, one thread runs neatly through each of them: a discontentedness with the way our university is responding to your concerns.

UNSW has many publications, but *Tharunka* is, has, and always will be, the place for the students to write about the issues that matter to them; to critique the chancellery and the culture of our university. I for one think you have done a kick-ass job at that this year. It has been a pleasure to read your words.

The rawness of each piece submitted to *Tharunka* wallops the fortress of my emotional complex like an unrelenting force majeure of friendly giants delivering tough disciplinary love.

It is with these parting words that I hang up my sub-editing towel; drenched with the potent sweat of frolicking through the fecund gardens of literary paradise in which I reclined on hessian hammocks of self-reflection, swaying in the breeze of a thousand student voices, gently caressing the nape of my political and artistic sensibilities.

[The rest of my sentiments will be summarised via a series of haikus]

*Editing a mag
So many words before me
Thank god for spellcheck*

*What a great review
Critical commentary
Time to torrent this*

*Familiar name
Oh look my friend wrote this piece
This is new to me*

*Love my co-workers
Incredibly tolerant
Everything is fine.*

So, we have come to the final editor's note of the year. It is both exhilarating and bizarre to think that the year is almost over, and that this is the last issue of *Tharunka* for 2016. It seems like months have flown by as quickly as a TV montage, and although I want to think I'm a little wiser I also feel like I've mostly just watched a lot of Netflix.

For everyone that enjoyed the creative section this year - thank you. My own little pet project of trying to inject some poetry and prose into *Tharunka* is a success (*I think*) and I am grateful to everyone who wrote in.

Here is some advice to all of you heading into SRC election time (*try to avoid*) and exam time (*sadly, cant be avoided, much like some SRC campaigners*). If you ever feel overwhelmed, make yourself some tea and have a nap. Remember that there are puppies in the world that you can pat, and that a day is only 24 hours long and you can always go home after a terrible one and have a bath. Stay classy, UNSW.

See ya in 2017.

The end of an era. The start of a new.

THARUNKA

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THARUNKA

THE TEAM

/

MANAGING EDITOR

Natalie Sekulovska

SUB-EDITORS

Cassie Bell, Jayden Rathsam-Hua,
Carla Zuniga-Navarro

DESIGNER

David Tu

/

CONTRIBUTORS

Alicia D'Arcy,
Breana Macpherson-Rice,
Charlotte Goodsir, Emma Donaldson,
Gillian Ophel, Harry Holbrook,
Haya Saboor, Jack George Mangos,
Olivia Inwood

/

Tharunka acknowledges the traditional
custodians of this land, the Gadigal
and Bedigal people of the Eora nation,
on which our university now stands.

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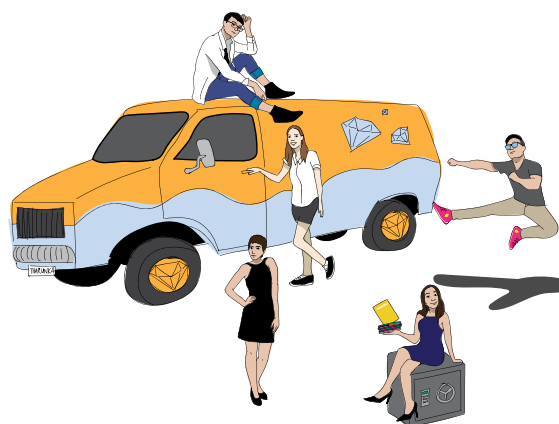
W / WORDS

A / ART

P / PHOTO

CONTENTS

06	The News That Shaped 2016	6
08	Interview With Vice Chancellor Professor Ian Jacobs	News
		/
10	Going Outside & Learning From Past Mistakes	10
11	Ushering In The Jacobs Era	Features
12	Banter Culture	/
14	Australia's Inegalitarian Education System	16
16	The Brave And The Blind	Creative
18	Pickle Poem	/
19	Ackeroyd	21
20	High Street Strut	Regulars
21	Spotlight On	/
22	An Hour From Campus	
23	GREAT! Reviews	26
24	Reviews	SRC



THE NEWS THAT SHAPED 2016

W / A / CASSIE BELL

JANUARY

Fact: Mosquitos are the *number one cause of death* for human beings. No, seriously; the menacing mozzies beat cancer, earthquakes, even other humans... killing almost a million people every year. In January, the World Health Organisation declared an official outbreak of the mosquito-borne Zika virus. Luckily, it seems the insects may have bitten off more than they could chew (*pun absolutely intended*) because only a handful of people were actually infected. Phew.

January also saw people around the globe grieving the loss of two legends. Music icon David Bowie lost his battle with liver cancer at 73, while Professor Snape (*muggle name: Alan Rickman*) also died of cancer, aged 69.



MARCH

The third month of the year saw the end of Summer and the start of the semester. The news was echoing dull.

FEBRUARY

In February, North Korea out *North Korea'd* itself, when they launched a long-range rocket into the sky using forbidden missile technology, and told everyone it was just a routine satellite launch. Good one KJU.

February also saw Hollywood hero and all-around nice guy Leonardo Di Caprio *finally* take home an Academy Award. Strangely, for his role in *The Revenant* wherein he barely spoke but just kind of frothed at the mouth and moaned a lot. Nevertheless, he won. He even used his acceptance speech as a platform for addressing Climate Change *sigh*.

APRIL

In April, news broke of the *Panama Papers*. This was essentially a list of a bunch of rich men, who were keeping their money in offshore accounts and avoiding tax. Notable names included Russian President, Vladimir Putin, and our own leader, Malcolm Turnbull. The world responded with what can only be described as bad acting. Feigned gasps and OMGs echoed around the globe, but... did we actually learn anything new from the 11 million leaked documents? Did they change anything? Vlad and Malcolm are still in office—just sayin'.

MAY

In May, ex-X Factor contestant Dami Im took Australia to the annual Eurovision Song Contest, dazzling the audience with her song, “*Sound of Silence*”. After the international jury vote, Australia was a ridiculous 109 points in the lead, and we were certain we’d just stolen Eurovision from Europe. But the sneaky states had another idea; banding together and voting for Ukraine so that dreams of Ausvision would be crushed. We’ll be back next year with a vengeance...



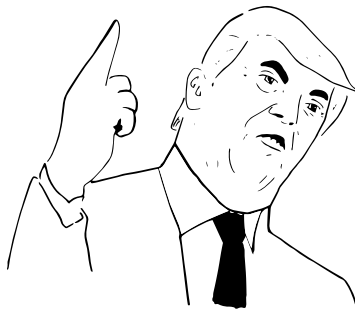
JULY

In July, we watched a 19-tonne truck drive through a crowded promenade in the beachside city of Nice, France. The driver killed 89 people. The world grieved together, and acts of solidarity sought to remind a scared population that human kindness can defeat terrorism.

On 19 July, Malcolm Turnbull was sworn in as Australia’s 29th Prime Minister. He narrowly defeated Labor Party candidate Bill Shorten, 76 seats to 69, and brought the Coalition into government for its second term. Tone Abet did not get picked to be on Turnbull’s team—big shocker there.

SEPTEMBER

In September, South Australia was plunged into darkness when a killer storm caused a blackout across the whole state, affecting the entire population of 12 people (*sorry, that was mean*). Sleepy September didn’t deliver much else, other than warmer mornings and the new blooms of Spring.



JUNE

In June, the people of the United Kingdom ~~lost their fucking minds~~ voted to leave the European Union. The Pound plummeted and Prime Minister David Cameron resigned from office, describing it—in true British civility—as “not the path [*he*] recommended”. Scotland was PISSED and wanted out of its UK family. The government is now on the campaign trail to claw its way back into the EU as an independent country.

AUGUST

In August, we watched the hot mess that was Rio 2016 a.k.a The Olympics from hell. As an athlete, you’d think going to the Games in the land of bikinis and pay-per-pound barbeque would be the stuff of dreams. Until you arrive and your room looks like a scene from Hostel. And your teammates get robbed, rolled and “held at gunpoint after getting out of a taxi at a gas station”. OK, that one went too far... but perhaps we can blame the combination of peroxide and chloride seeping into the skull of US swimmer Ryan Lochte when he told that ridiculous lie to the world’s press.

OCTOBER–DECEMBER

The events above have rocked the globe in all different ways, however, the biggest news of 2016 is yet to be announced. On 8 November, journalists around the world will break the story of the year, when they announce the winner of the US Presidential Election. So far, the race to the White House has gripped the attention of even the most politically jaded punters. Clinton or Trump? Democrat or Republican? Woman or man? Mexico or Mexi-no? Stay tuned kids...

INTERVIEW WITH VICE CHANCELLOR PROFESSOR IAN JACOBS

W / NATALIE SEKULOVSKA

UNSW is proposing to introduce a new academic calendar, in the form of trimesters. What's the idea behind adopting this new structure?

We've consulted with a large number of students and staff, and the message that came through was that people liked the so-called Stanford model – three terms across the academic year plus an optional summer term.

I think it could be exciting. We are attracting really talented, go-getting students, and the more flexibility we can give them, the better. An important aspect is that we have an amazing campus and we only use it for half the year. I want to see the campus vibrant with students for more of the year.

So the structure isn't confirmed yet?

No decision has been made. We hope to make a firm decision by the start of the next academic year. If we go ahead there will be plenty of time for planning, as the new timetable would not commence until 2019.

How are you looking to maximise student consultation about this change?

We will be speaking to elected formal student representatives through the SRC. We'll also have more informal workshops and discussion groups. We want to hear the views of as many of our more than 50,000 students as possible.

UNSW's 2025 Strategy states that the university is committed to work towards the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals, one of which is to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. Given the huge social and environmental consequences of climate

change, what is the university doing to respond to the urgency of this issue?

Climate change is a major threat to humanity. That's absolutely clear to me, and just about every student and staff member in the university.

It's an issue we need to act on now, hence the identification of Climate as our first Grand Challenge. We had an excellent forum in November last year with external speakers to kick off our 2025 Strategy's climate change Grand Challenge. As a result of this event, I was asked to chair an Energy Transition Leadership Forum in partnership with the Australian Conservation Foundation to produce a blueprint for Australia's rapid transition to being carbon neutral. This blueprint, which will be presented to the government, will be published and available for discussion in early November. That's a national call to arms that comes directly from the climate change Grand Challenge at UNSW. I see that as a really good example of action to make change. It stands alongside our research in climate change and renewable energy including a recently announced ARC Centre of Excellence in climate change research and our education in this area.

UNSW currently holds investments in companies involved in fossil fuels. According to Fossil Free UNSW, 78% of UNSW students and non-academic staff out of 1000 people surveyed support divestment. In addition to this, over 160 academics and notable alumni from every faculty at UNSW have jointly signed an open letter from Fossil Free UNSW urging the university to divest. How can the University Council justify making a decision contrary to what the university community recommends?

UNSW has recently been through a process of reviewing the university investment policy to ensure that it is consistent with our overall strategy and our concerns about climate change and other issues. This process is nearly complete and you can anticipate an announcement before the end of the year. As I have previously stated on the issue of divestment we welcome robust debate. UNSW will be a platform for staff and students to have open, robust debate in a respectful, law-abiding way, but it will not as an organisation take a political or campaigning stance on this or other issues.

There are also concerns that UNSW's investment in companies involved in fossil fuels sends a contradictory message, not only to the university community, but also to Australian and global communities, particularly in light of the university's open commitment to tackling climate change. Do you feel that this is a problem?

I anticipate our concerns about climate change and our investments being well aligned in our new investment policy. It reflects a shared wish for Australia to become carbon neutral as quickly as possible. The new investment policy will be announced before the end of the year.

In light of the Respect. Now Always. initiative, how is UNSW working towards creating a safer campus for students?

This is an incredibly serious issue for the university. What is the tolerable level of sexual harassment and violence on a university campus? It is zero. It is not acceptable in a modern, forward-looking, dynamic university to tolerate any level of sexual harassment or violence.

I have been working hard in my role as lead Vice Chancellor for equality and diversity at

Universities Australia for universities to address this issue. I was pleased that the *Respect. Now. Always.* initiative, emerged from those UA discussions. It is not a solution in itself, but it has succeeded in raising awareness across the country.

How do we support victims? When we started the initiative, I really was not confident that we had enough in place. I think we are better placed now. Our website provides many avenues for support: campus security is available 24 hours; there is access to the Student Integrity Unit; provision of counseling and psychological services; access to meet confidentially with a qualified psychologist; availability of appointments with health services; and contact details for the NSW Rape Crisis Centre. We are exploring how we can have more counseling services available immediately and in the longer term.

We're now in a very proactive phase in dealing with this issue. One challenge is that we do not have good information about the extent of the problem on university campuses. That's why we have a really important survey of about 60,000 students from campuses right across Australia underway now. I don't think the findings will be pleasant reading, but it will be a call to arms to redouble our efforts.

Does the university also have a clear procedure for disciplining students who engage in conduct that constitutes sexual harassment?

This is a zero tolerance university, and I do mean zero tolerance. If we hear of criminal activity, the criminal justice system should be triggered immediately. If the matter doesn't reach the threshold of a criminal offence, then the university has its own disciplinary procedures. There is a range of steps that we can take, up to expulsion from the university.

Some students believe that the disciplinary procedures in the instance of the Baxter College incident were not made transparent enough. Do you think that the university should have, or could have, been more open about the process with the student community?

The university's disciplinary procedure is well laid out and for good reason has to follow

a defined process. I'm sure there is room for improvement and we regularly review our processes, but the university will not hide or protect the people who commit these offences. I would not be prepared to be Vice Chancellor of a university where that is happening.

How are colleges responding to the aftermath of the incident?

I'm pleased to report that residents and people running the colleges have been very cooperative with us. We do now have a Charter, which involves the residences associated with UNSW, and our senior leadership team meets with the staff running those colleges on a regular basis.

Is UNSW on track to achieve its Indigenous student intake and retention rates outlined in the 2025 strategy?

For the first time, the university will now have a Pro Vice Chancellor Indigenous, which is a great step forward. The PVC will take overall responsibility for making sure we deliver on our agenda for Indigenous students. We have some ambitious targets. We have said that by 2025, we will match the demographics of NSW for our student admissions and our student graduations. We currently have less than 1% of Indigenous students at the university, when we should have 3%. We will have preferential scholarships for Indigenous students and staff, so getting from 1% to 3% though challenging is eminently doable.

We are also proud of ASPIRE, which is a UNSW led effort to link with schools in NSW to encourage students in those schools to think about going to university. Next week I'm going on a tour to Walgett and Lightning Ridge to meet with elders of the Aboriginal community, and also to visit schools as part of ASPIRE.

Other universities like UTS have just opened accommodation specifically for Indigenous students. Will you commit to seeing Indigenous student housing become a reality at UNSW?

What a great idea. I'm not sure about that, but we'll check. If we're not doing it, let's see if we can make it happen. We want to expand the amount and range of accommodation available to all students.

Most UNSW Art & Design students are pleased to hear that plans to merge with the Sydney College of Arts (SCA) have been called off. Can you comment on that?

We have ambitious plans for our Faculty of Art and Design which is thriving as an innovative, internationally competitive centre. In that context we opened our arms to a request from the University of Sydney, to assist with the challenges the SCA is facing. The discussions ended some months ago and although the University of Sydney is still struggling with this issue we are no longer involved. Our students and staff were understandably concerned about whether the campus was large enough to incorporate SCA students. The number of students at the SCA is relatively small and we would have made sure that we provided whatever resources were needed. But it's not something we had any interest in forcing.

What are your plans with the National Art School (NAS) moving forward?

As far as NAS is concerned, we are happy to have discussions. The ethos of UNSW is to contribute in partnership wherever we can in the best interest of NSW and Australia. If the NAS community feels that there is something we can do in partnership with them, we are of course happy to explore opportunities - but only on the basis of partnership, which will add value for the arts in NSW.

Note from the Managing Editor: UNSW has organised a number of activities for Global Climate Change Week. We will be publishing the full timetable online.

In response to the question about Indigenous housing and accommodation, Professor Eileen Baldry, Academic Chair UNSW Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Board, has confirmed that, "UNSW provides Indigenous student accommodation scholarships for Indigenous students in UNSW Colleges. The largest Indigenous student accommodation program at UNSW College is provided by Shalom College. Each Shalom Gamarada Scholarship covers full board and tutoring support at the College to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students studying at UNSW."

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GOING OUTSIDE & LEARNING FROM PAST MISTAKES: TROUBLE IN THE NAMOI

W / BREANA MACPHERSON-RICE

This mid-semester break, I didn't expect to find myself in the boardroom of a coal mining company, throwing curly questions at their chief ecologist and soil scientist over a platter of sandwiches. As we tucked into a classic egg-and-lettuce and engaged in some jovial-but-sinister banter about what the term "in perpetuity" actually means, I couldn't help but feel that this was a little surreal. For all my largely theoretical studies of earth science and vegetation, of climate change and social justice, I was now in the very tangible belly of the beast. It felt simultaneously gargantuan and mundane.

Alongside four friends and two new acquaintances, I wondered just how we ended up there. Some measure of knowing people and being in the right place at the right time had seen us environmental science students from the city be enlisted by some locals to help scrutinise the rehabilitation and offset areas of this mine (*which I think it would be wise to leave unnamed*). So, clad in hi-vis and PPT and armed with only my brain and a notebook, I found myself in the unique position of enforcing some kind of accountability on the mammoth coal industry that is quite actively destroying the future of life as we know it on this planet. Not something you get to do every Wednesday, hey?

We headed out to one of the mine's biodiversity offset sites, which had a quite long and complicated classification like "derived native grassland (*low quality*)" — euphemistic ecology speak for "reclaimed grazing paddock". It was a pretty stunning example of the often-gaping chasm between paper and real life, and as we looked out over hectares of trees in plantation rows, I began to get a sense of why many locals are less than impressed with processes of development and decision-making out here.

The next site, on paper, is an example of a successfully rehabilitated ecological community that was once bulldozed to make way for the mine. What we actually saw were a few more than the minimum twelve species required to tick the approval box. Whether the weedy sparse hill is a sufficient substitute for its grassy open woodland predecessor, is up for debate. The contract chief ecologist doesn't mind—he's just doing his job, and he reckons he's doing it pretty well. But it's increasingly obvious that he doesn't live here. On the other hand, the local botanist we met two days previously had a very different opinion of this kind of adequacy.

In the bus jovial small talk was interspersed with hard-hitting questions, and I was struck by how these ecologists, managers and engineers could easily substitute for any one of my classmates in ten years time. As the day went on and they each alternated between boasting and squirming in response to our questions, I kept coming back to this idea. How many of my peers—how many of you reading this article—will end up making excuses for ethically compromised corporations in the next decade? And what can we do about it?

I ended up spending the best part of the week out here in North West NSW, yarning with farmers and locals about the impacts of this mine on their community. It's pretty obvious that what ends up on the minister's desk is only a fraction of the knowledge you'd get if you spoke to these folks. I guess what I'm trying to say is this: fellow students—go outside. Talk to people. Read up on your history. Whatever job you take on, the knowledge you get from a briefing paper and a textbook is never going to compare to the lived experience of those who've been sniffing out trouble since before we were born. We all owe it to our elders to not use ignorance as an excuse.

USHERING IN THE JACOBS ERA

W / HARRY HOLBROOK

When Ian Jacobs took on the role of Vice Chancellor in 2015, students and staff were prepared to give him a year to assess and respond to the changes facing the UNSW community initiated by his predecessor, Fred Hilmer. 2016, however, was to be the year that Jacobs would begin to shape the university based on his own unique vision for its future.

Instead, what we've seen is a deliberate and firm attempt by Jacobs to further commit the university to a more palatable, but not substantively different, version of Hilmer's vision for a corporatised UNSW. The Chancellor is intent on creating a degree factory, that ignores the needs of staff and students and fails to recognise UNSW's fundamental role in shaping the future of our society. Jacobs has fallen into a disappointing trend of economic rationalism and has made clear his own ideological support for Hilmer's corporatised UNSW.

On climate change, sexual violence on campus, and the standards and structure of the university's education model, Jacobs has put the business interests of the university before the interests of students, staff and the wider community. On the environmental front for example, Jacobs has engaged in greenwashing, launching the Climate Change Grand Challenge initiative and celebrating the climate change research of academics at UNSW. This is done, however, merely to appease the public and absolve the university from the need to commit to any serious action to reduce the impacts of climate change.

After 3 years of campaigning by Fossil Free UNSW, students occupied the Council Chambers in April calling for the university to divest in fossil fuels. Jacobs' reaction was to send an email to the entire staff and student body rejecting divestment stating that "the university will not adopt a political stance". The reality is that continued investment in fossil fuels is in itself a political stance. One which places profit before the future of people and the planet.

Under Jacobs' leadership, the university has also resisted taking meaningful action against sexual violence on campus, despite the highly publicised incident of students at Baxter College singing a rape chant. Although Jacobs was quick to condemn the actions of the Baxter students and has personally been involved in Universities Australia's *Respect. Now. Always.* campaign, it appears that no significant changes have been made to UNSW.

Survivors of sexual assault are still expected to report to an ill-equipped Student Integrity Unit that also deals with allegations of academic misconduct. Alternatively, they

can submit a "complaint" where they are asked what steps they have taken to "resolve [*their*] concerns". Perhaps most disturbingly, only two Baxter students faced disciplinary action for their misconduct.

In relation to changes to the education model at UNSW, a Heads of Agreement was signed by the University of Sydney and UNSW to merge Sydney College of the Arts with UNSW Art and Design, essentially closing SCA with very little or no student consultation at either university. An organised campaign by student activists scared UNSW out of the agreement, though the University of Sydney remains committed to closing the Rozelle campus and moving SCA to Camperdown. Rumours remain of a merger between UNSW Art & Design and the National Art School in Darlinghurst.

Simultaneously, plans for a trimester model originally flagged in the 2025 Strategic Plan have been further pursued by Jacobs with the release of the proposed UNSW3+ Model in September. This ignores well founded criticisms made by the National Tertiary Education Union about the impact of trimesters on the quality of education, staff working conditions and student outcomes. At the University of Technology Sydney, students have complained of feeling "ripped off" by the trimester model, and have been critical of the increased stress caused by the increased pace of learning. The same fate awaits students at UNSW.

In connecting these issues, we see the broad commitment made by Ian Jacobs to a corporate agenda, where UNSW is a business providing a product for students, rather than a bedrock of our society. Education can, and should be, a public good rather than a desperate cash grab by the university. The introduction of trimesters and the merging and closing of faculties is demonstrative of a desire to cut the costs of education, whilst still charging students the same fees.

To ignore the connections is to ignore the reality—that Ian Jacobs remains wholly committed to a corporatised UNSW that churns students out for profit, whilst protecting its own reputation, failing to commit to the safety of students on campus or addressing the significant social changes that we face.

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BANTER CULTURE: SERIOUSLY OUTDATED

W / ALICIA D'ARCY

In April of this year, a video was leaked from a Baxter College party bus showing a group of boys singing a chant, that can be best described as glorifying rape. It was shocking footage and appropriately, there was immediate condemnation from media outlets, students and the university itself.

In a *Sydney Morning Herald* article published in May, Vice Chancellor Ian Jacobs stated, “no level of sexual harassment or assault at our universities is acceptable”. Jacobs pointed to UNSW’s participation in the Australia-wide *Respect.Now.Always.* campaign and accompanying survey as evidence of this.

This claim of zero tolerance, however, rings false when the university has been consistently sluggish in implementing the necessary policy and cultural changes.

It was only in August that the university finally took disciplinary action against the boys from the video who came forward. They were temporarily suspended by the college and given a formal warning. This punishment—applied to only two boys out of many—is a mere slap on the wrist.

Moreover, the university is *still* lacking a discrete sexual assault policy or reporting system. Even if students or staff wanted to take action on an incident of sexual assault or harassment, there is no proper mechanism they could use. They can approach the Student Integrity Unit to make a complaint, or Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS) for support. However, both services are overburdened, underfunded and do not specialise in incidents of sexual assault.

When questioned as to when we should expect a concrete policy and reporting system to be implemented, a university spokesperson said that they were awaiting the results of reviews and audits before they made any promises, but that they “intend to have improved systems and training procedure in place for next year’s enrolments”.

Sarah* is a resident of UNSW Hall. Hall is a newer college that has less of the traditions and party culture that The Kensington Colleges (TKC) boast. Nevertheless, it still has what Sarah calls a “culture of banter”.

“It’s the little things. People are always making jokes, for example ‘no means yes, yes means harder’,” she says.

These sentiments are echoed by Chris*, a former resident of a TKC college. In his college, people wrote the names of hook-ups on bathroom walls and published them in an internal publication. It was only recently that sports chants were based around the idea that, since the boys have conquered the opposition on the field, they can now conquer the opposition’s girls off the field.

All these things are symptomatic of patriarchy: only men can live up to that certain level of bravado, and it is only men who are socially rewarded by how many hook-ups they have or who feel empowered by otherwise demeaning sports chants.

Apparently, if you are not outspoken in the right ways, nor heterosexually proud, then you are deemed a “ghost”. This is, quite literally, an erasure of identity: you do not exist at college if you do not conform to certain expected behaviours—if you are not what Chris calls “one of the boys, or one of the ‘party girls’”.

Having sex is seen as an act of conquering, where the reputation gained by having your name written on a bathroom wall outweighs any concern as to whether your partner is sober enough to be able to consent, or whether they are enjoying the sexual interaction in the first place.

Sexual assault and harassment in environments like colleges are not “bad apple” incidents or outliers, but rather, are expected consequences of a toxic social concoction with problematic power dynamics. Sarah says there are many instances where girls have been

involved in sexual encounters that they are now not sure about.

“They say, ‘I was drunk but they were more drunk’, or ‘I wasn’t completely sure, just more angry at myself for letting it happen’”, says Sarah.

In the *Talk About It* survey completed by the National Union of Students last year, 27 per cent of respondents indicated that they had experienced sexual assault or attempted sexual assault. 23.5 per cent of these occurred in university accommodation.

How can these behaviours be explained?

Sarah thinks that frequent, casually sexist jokes stem from guys trying to fit into a social hierarchy, a hierarchy becomes worse the longer it exists.

Chris, too, identifies these behaviours as deriving from a sense of group identity and tradition.

“People go to college because they seek to absolve themselves with a sense of family they wouldn’t otherwise have. Such an environment is not conducive to being autonomous, feeling you can make a decision contrary to the established narrative – that narrative being archaic, gendered and essentialised,” he says.

“They feel a responsibility to uphold traditions and culture that was sacredly handed down to them.”

The university has made *some* progress on policy—an outcome that seems predominantly due to the desire to not be as bad as the University of Sydney. A Working Party—including student, college and university representatives, as well as experts in gendered violence—was formed this year in order to develop practical responses for the university to implement.

Sarah was particularly impressed by the recent consent training, which was very

different to the one at the beginning of the year. It was no longer gender segregated which meant there could be honest conversations between guys and girls. Moreover, there was a greater focus upon negotiating consent and how to respond if someone reveals that they have been sexually assaulted.

Clearly, numerous policies are on their way. A more difficult task, however, is the ability of the university to achieve cultural change within the colleges.

Sarah said she saw a large amount of backlash within many colleges where people thought the university crackdown and media criticism was unjustified and unfair.

Chris said that there is now a large disconnect between the university administration and the student executive, where some students from student leadership and activities bodies have resigned and publicly denounced the actions of the Dean.

UNSW has undoubtedly been slow in implementing any response to sexual assault policy on campus. However, it seems that the more pernicious factor slowing down change is the “banter culture” in colleges themselves, whereby so many college students, both women and men alike, are reluctant to enforce any change or even recognise there’s a problem to begin with.

That’s not good enough. Blaming the media or out-of-touch university administrators doesn’t excuse action (*or inaction*) that perpetuates serious and long-lasting harm.

Change is urgent and difficult, but it is possible if both the university and college students work together.

University action	Completed?	Expected completion date
<i>Audits and reviews:</i>		
1. Internal university audit	In progress	Unknown
2. Universities Australia/Australian Human Rights Commission nation survey	In progress	Early 2017
3. UNSW-based Australian Human Rights Centre research—Gendered Violence Research Network	In progress	Early 2017
<i>Other:</i>		
Discrete sexual assault and harassment policy (<i>i.e. with mechanisms and consequences</i>)	No audits/reviews in progress	Unknown
Single online portal with a dedicated reporting option sexual assault and sexual harassment	In progress	Unknown
Development of RESPECT website	Yes	-
Training programs	Currently trialling consent workshops for college students	Unknown
Senior staff awareness through briefings	Yes – limited details on what this actually included, however	-
<i>Awareness through:</i>		
Screenings of The Hunting Ground	Yes – screened at colleges and for the greater university. Fairly well attended with 30-50 people at a session.	-
Arc: Let’s Talk Consent video	Yes – distributed on Facebook	-

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AUSTRALIA'S INEGALITARIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM: REVIEWING THE GONSKI REVIEW

W / OLIVIA INWOOD

When describing Australian society, the word “egalitarian” is used a lot; the idea that Australia is not dominated by class systems and equality and merit is favoured. However, if we look back on the Australian education system in 2016, the statistics paint another picture.

A report issued by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) this year, *Low-Performing Students: Why they Fall Behind and How to Help Them Succeed*, states that a socio-economically disadvantaged student in Australia is six times more likely to be classed as a low performer than an advantaged student. The average gap between high and low socio-economic groups in education performance was seven per cent for OECD countries compared to 22 per cent in Australia.

Students from low socio-economic backgrounds continue to be disadvantaged when it comes to education. Despite this, when reading about Australia's education global standpoint, this criterion is often ignored. According to the Mitchell Institute's 2015 *Educational Opportunity* in Australia report:

“While Australia's highest-achieving students are among the best in the world, the vast differences in educational opportunity across socio-economic groups challenge Australia's claim of an education system that is fair and competitive by international standards.”

If we go back to 2013, the Gillard government hired an independent team of advisors, chaired by David Gonski, to recommend how the education system in Australia should be funded. These recommendations (*which totalled 41 changes*) are known as the Gonski Review and concluded that a “needs-based” funding approach should be taken. Accordingly, schools with more disadvantaged students would receive more funding.

At the time, each state individually signed up to the Gonski Review, with variations in the funding allocated to each state, depending on when they signed up. Gonski funding was

to be rolled out over a period of six years. The greatest amount of funding given would be during the last two years; 80 per cent of this going to public schools.

The Australian Education Union (AEU) has already stated that the Gonski review has led to improved outcomes for students in their *State of Our Schools Survey* (2016). Many of these improvements included extra support staff for those with learning difficulties and specialist literacy and numeracy teachers. Although there were also negative findings in the survey:

“Despite the increases in Gonski funding, 45 per cent of principals say their school is either under-resourced or significantly under-resourced. This figure is up to 65 per cent in Victoria, where Gonski funding was delayed until this year.”

The Gonski reforms are supposed to be a long-term project. Without the entire six-year plan, the true results of Gonski will not be realised. Dr Ken Boston, one of the architects of the Gonski Review recently stated that there was no prospect of Gonski being fully implemented as recommended. He commented on the current state of education funding:

“It is surely unacceptable that the 20 most expensive independent schools in NSW receive more than \$111 million per annum in public funding, when the gap in reading performance between the top 20 per cent and bottom 20 per cent of our 15-year-olds is equivalent to five years of schooling.”

On 23 September the Federal Education Minister, Simon Birmingham, met with the state education ministers to discuss negotiations for a new four-year school funding model that would commence in 2018. Senator Birmingham has already stated that the Liberal government would provide an additional \$1.2 billion for Australia's schools over the next three years, but this is only one third of the \$4.5 billion that was promised under the Gonski review by the Labor Government.

Additionally, based on the Coalition's plans for education funding, an AEU supported

analysis by education academic Dr Jim McMorrow, has stated that out of the planned \$1.2 billion funding “only \$450 million (38 percent) would go to public schools and \$750 million (62 per cent) to private schools”. This is based on the Federal Government's plan to continue indexing funding to private schools, but take away the funding originally promised for public schools.

What remains missing now are the original intentions of the Gonski review: a needs-based funding approach. Education funding must be redistributed completely in order to address inequality. The first four years of Gonski have started making these changes, although this is a process that requires long-term commitment. Again, without the next two years of needs-based funding, educational inequality will only get worse.

Australia needs to rethink its approach to education. Private schools are seen as lucrative and are spending funds on facilities—not to improve educational outcomes—but to compete against other elitist schools in the business of securing high fees.

Education should give rise to social mobility. If students don't receive the support they need during their schooling years, their socio-economic disadvantage will continue to exist beyond the time they graduate. In order to have an egalitarian society, it is in Australia's interest to move away from seeing schools as money-making enterprises.

In early 2017, the Federal Government will offer a final education funding plan to the state and territory ministers at the Council of Australian Governments. At the moment, while Australia continues to debate the economics of education, opportunities are being missed to ensure current low socio-economic students are receiving the support they need. It would be worthwhile to get to a point in the future, where we don't need to keep churning out statistics to prove that educational inequality exists and can instead actively discuss how we can reform the education system.

2016 SRC ELECTIONS

ON THE GROUND VOTING **17TH - 20TH OCTOBER 2016**

Polling Stations: Below are the times and locations you can vote for your SRC representative:

MON 17 OCT

8.30am - 10.30am	Library Walkway
11.30am - 12.30pm	Quad
2.30pm - 3.30pm	Quad
4.30pm - 6.00pm	Main Walkway Lower Campus (near Anzac Parade)

TUES 18 OCT

8.30am - 10.30am	Law Building
11.30am - 2.30pm	Quad
4.30pm - 6.00pm	Main Walkway Lower Campus (near Anzac Parade)

WED 19 OCT

8.30am - 10.30am	Main Walkway Lower Campus (near Anzac Parade)
11.30am - 2.30pm	Library Walkway
4.30pm - 6.00pm	Robert Webster

THUR 20 OCT

8.30am - 10.30am	Library Walkway
11.30am - 2.30pm	Quad
4.30pm - 6.00pm	Main Walkway Lower Campus (near Anzac Parade)

For detailed information,
please visit arc.unsw.edu.au/src

CREATIVES

THE BRAVE & THE BLIND

W / HAYA SABOOR

There is this boy. Strawberry blond hair, whipped with streaks of gold from the sun and always messy from the wind. Wild, crazy, hazel honey eyes gleam with an ever-present excitement for the unexpected. He's tall and can easily be spotted in a crowd. His lean body with a six-pack clearly visible underneath his shirt makes the girls swoon as he gracefully walks by without noticing their drooling smiles. He walks to the edge of a cliff and looks below at the rocks, his mouth twitching into an uncontrollable smile. A smile just for her – his her.

Her long Cadbury hair brushing against her knees as she runs with the waves towards the shore. She looks towards the cliff, her hazel honey eyes light up and form a smile similar to his. They stare, an unspoken promise passing between them and then they are gone – he to his laboratory and she to her beloved sea. They are 20 and both so in love.

The prompt ringing off the clock strikes 7pm. Two hearts skip a beat each, two sets of lips curl into smiles, beautiful and secretive. Calmly they pack their things, and make their way to the waiting bus. Hand in hand they climb on, he lets her have the window seat as always. Her head on his shoulder, he plays with her hair. "You look tired," he says. She lifts her head to look at him, opens her mouth to reply but his lips against hers, stopping her. Breaking he says, "You are tired, I know that." Smiling she says, "Does anything get past you?" He laughs heartily. She loves that sound. "Where you're concerned? Highly unlikely. Now rest, our stop isn't for another 30mins." Putting her head back on his shoulder, he strokes her hair, until their stop comes. But the station no longer exists.

Blown to pieces, smoke and fire everywhere. People running, screaming in pain and fear. The two get off the bus and just stare at the destruction around them. *Blast* The wind picks them up and throws them apart like autumn leaves.

He wakes with an aching head and blood running down his neck. Where is she? Through the smoke and fire, he sees a familiar body. He tries to get up but his legs are stuck. He tries to crawl, but it's no use. And as he watches, the body catches fire, right in front of his eyes. He screams. Another blast. All goes dark.

Dressed in a yellow sundress with a blue ribbon belt and matching hat, she waited outside the steps of her house, waiting for him to walk to her. "He will come! He always comes." Her mother stood at the door, watching as her beautiful daughter waited on the porch for...

"Ivy, my darling, no one is coming." She whispered to herself. Sure enough like every day, her daughter began to convulse and shake uncontrollably. Ivy's mother ran to her side and skillfully gave her the serum to calm her spasms. She was used to it now.

Seven months since that fateful bomb blast. Seven months since her daughter was burnt under the bus. Seven months since she had lost her daughter. Ivy now lying in her bed and staring at the ceiling, asked her mum, "Who is he?"

Her mother knew about whom she was asking, but remained silent. Ivy pulled her legs up to her chest, and hugging them began to cry, "Who am I?" she wailed. "Who is he? The one in my dreams, the one in front of my eyes all the time? Mommy tell me, who is he?" Her mother tried to comfort her, but how could she tell her daughter of the now blind boy who refused to let her see him?

Aiden's foot hit against the table's leg, but it was fine. It didn't hurt like it used to. He heard his sister walk in, "How is she today?" he asked. "Beautiful as any other day," she replied wryly.

"You know what I meant to ask." He almost yelled at her. She sighed, "She dolls up, and waits on the steps for the boy she dreams of. I think you should go see her."

He chuckled with a resentful sound, "But I cannot see." Perhaps it was a good thing he could not see his sister's tears. "You know what I meant," she said, wiping the tears rolling down her eyes.

"Aiden! His name is Aiden. Isn't it?" Ivy was jumping up and down on her bed, holding an old photograph of the two. On the back it read: "AIDEN AND IVY 2005." Ivy got off her bed and ran down the stairs looking for her mother. In her excitement, she forgot to cover her head with a hat, and ran out of the door anyway.

People on the street stopped and stared at her. She ran as fast as her legs allowed her, until she came to a familiar crossing, the same traffic junction from the photograph.

He was there, with his dark glasses, staring into nothing. She screamed, and ran to him. "It's you. It is you."

Though he recognised her voice, he made no attempt to show it. Slowly, he turned to her and touched her face. He gasped in pain and surprise as his fingers traced her burn marks.

"Aiden? What's wrong?" she timidly asked.

He gruffed, fighting back his tears and said, "You are not Ivy."

Her paranoia kicked in with these words, "But the doctors said I am Ivy."

"No."

"But then who am I?"

"Just a girl. Burnt under the bomb, faceless, like so many others."

She saw her reflection in his hollow eyes. She screamed. She jumped. She hit the platform where she had lay in torment seven months ago. The fire was set ablaze once more.

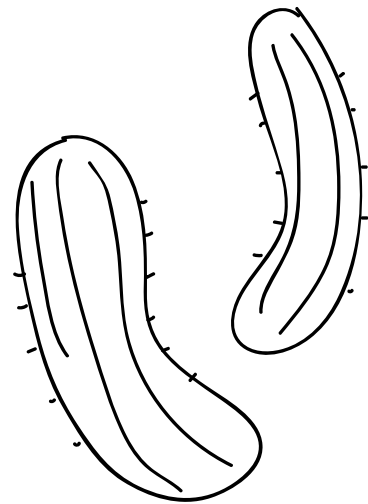
PICKLE POEM

W / JAYDEN RATHSAM-HUA

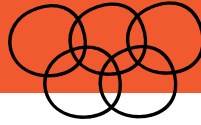
If a burger is unfinished, where will my pickles go?
If my Reuben sandwich is uneaten, where will my pickles go?
If a pickle plant is never picked, where do the pickles grow?
If my love for pickles is never said aloud, when will I get my pickles?

If “double down Californian supreme cheese heart stopper stacker” is not
only a word, where do they fit the pickles?
If “hungry” is no longer a feeling, how will I finish this antipasto platter
like seriously come on now.

I don't care about pickles anymore.
My one and only love.
Just kidding.
I still like pickles.



2016



Rio



ACKEROYD

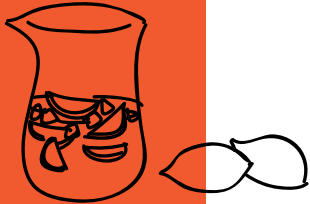
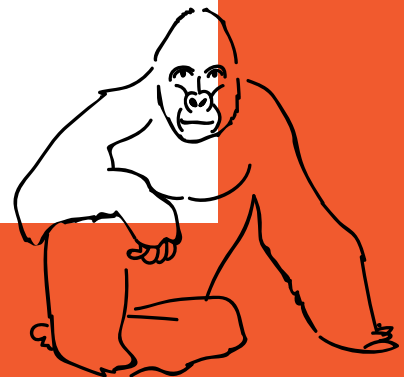
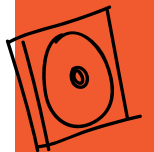
W / CHARLOTTE GOODSIR

O Retro, Retro! Wherefore art thou Year in Review?
Deny thy future and refuse thy name;
Or, if thou wilt not, let 2016 be over,
For there is no more Prince and Bowie.

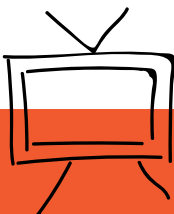
Shall I hear more, of Clinton speak and Trump hiss?

'Tis but thy name that history will cringe;
Wait now T-Swift is dating who?
Brandgelina, over, boo hoo. Aniston is afoot,
Olympics were good, but Paralympics had charm.
New Gilmore Girls and s*#t hit the fan. O, Jesse, why
did you not give Rory your name!
What 2016 became? Zika virus and terrorism made us
stop and oh!
Pokemon Go! was pretty neat;
Brock Turner's sentence didn't last like it should,
Shorten's Mediscare election appalled,
Beyonce's Lemonade released and the internet froze
Stranger Things went viral. OITNB take aim,
And in the aim of looking artsy
Kanye made a wax model of himself.

Two households, Kardashian and Jenner, no dignity,
In Pure Imagination, with Gene we lay our scene,
Caster Semenya created scrutiny,
And Suicide Squad hit the big screen.
JonBenét murder reveal and the audience froze.
Great British Bake off is back for those in midlife;
Cats having brain freezes, mind blown
Why won't Justin Trudeau make me his wife.
Drake's banger One Dance had us in love,
Does Rihanna ever age?
Lady Gaga's reign will never end, Me Too always gets
me in the groove,
Even though the photoshop video did enrage;
Harambe memes need to end,
Seriously, if you don't I will have to unfriend.



STRANGER
— THINGS —



HIGH STREET STRUT

W / GILLIAN OPHEL

Late again like the slug that I am
oozing onto High Street full of self-hate to fuel a 5-minute walk down to two.
Ready? Set. Go on justify it
you were caught up in other work
can afford to miss the first few minutes of class
nothing important is ever covered
why bother
though probably more pressing than the memes and merde
that occupied your screen for the last hour and a third

Scent 1: cigarettes
As I pass the smokers' nest they look at me
free of interest freeze-frame
Lighter lips cough breath.
But me I'm booking it striding forwards at least seemingly
Left foot meets the ghost of Tuesday
2 past no comment from the understanding tutor
Right foot meets the ghost of Wednesday
5 past a frown a 'disrupting the class is just, well rude
Dear Student, I expect better of you.

Scent 2: the stables.
Or horse shit depending on how honest we're feeling
The rustic homey stink of the farm.
New study shows:
If You're Always Late, It Probably Means You're Smart!
If You Procrastinate, It Probably Means You're Smart!
If Your Life's Falling Apart, It Probably Means You're Smart!
Truth describes such tripe as another creature's poo

Scent 3: smokes again.
Repetition, old friend rolling new beginnings back into old trends.
Get up early. Floss your teeth. Meditate.
Lose Weight. Plan your time. Cut back on drinking.
Stop swearing. Stop spending. Start saving
Change.
(If it takes 3 weeks to form a habit, how many weeks to undo 20 years)
Change, then regress.

Scent 4: desperation
As I near my destination
my clockwork procrastination sparks a surge of fresh frustration
Here I am, late again, doing the High Street strut,
stuck like a stick in the mud rotting in this rut called Life As I Live It.
One day I'll be punctual I say, late again,
Unaware of Time swooping down, throwing me high in the air so I can see what could have
been had I only been there,
I have dreams, hopes, sweeping ambitions for this tiny life of mine,
but how can I change the world when I can't get to class on time?

SPOTLIGHT ON

W / CARLA ZUNIGA-NAVARRO



OSMAN FARUQI

Name, current position, favourite milkshake

Osman Faruqi, News and Politics Editor, Junkee Media. Banana + Honey, Sometimes bee pollen. I have no idea what bee pollen is but it sounds fancy.

You have a prolific Twitter account frequently retweeted by BuzzFeed. What's the most memorable thing you've tweeted? Who is your favourite Twitter personality that you follow?

I tweet way too much, haha. A recent, incredibly embarrassing moment was when I promised to get a tattoo if Australia elected a hung parliament. And for a while on election night it looked like we were going to get one. The official Twitter account decided to retweet it and I got roasted online for a very long time.

At the moment the best person to follow, hands down, is... Clive Palmer. Despite losing his seat and being in all sorts of legal trouble, Clive has adopted this super positive and chill vibe. It's great.

You openly spoke out against the decision to change the editorial team from student elected to appointed roles. What made you take this stance?

The history of student media is fascinating. In Australia, it's often been something that has been fought for by activists trying to create a platform where they can discuss ideas that weren't getting published in other outlets. Universities didn't want strong, independent student newspapers and in many instances student unions didn't want them either. But they were fought for and we got them.

There are lots of flaws with a model of directly elected editors. But if they have genuine independence and they've won a democratic mandate, they are then in a position to reflect the values of the students they are writing for. If students want the student newspaper to focus more on issues like sexual assault on campus, holding student politicians to account, they can vote for those editors.

What was a highlight of your time editing Tharunka?

We once did a feature issue on Fred Nile's attempts to wind back women's reproductive choices. The front page had an image of a crucifix entering a vagina, with the headline "Church Fucks State". Andrew Bolt called us "arrogant and contemptuous barbarians". It was awesome.

How has Tharunka impacted your current work and how you have developed as a journalist?

Getting involved in student media is easily the best thing you can do if you want to work as a journalist. It gives you practical skills and experiences that are incredibly useful in your day-to-day work. Newspapers like *Tharunka* have been around for a while and are really highly respected in the media industry.

As a current Junkee Editor and Guardian contributor, how do you personally view the future of Australian journalism and the importance of student journalism in sustaining and feeding into the industry?

It's a difficult time for the contemporary media industry, particularly in Australia where the market is pretty small. There are fewer jobs than before, it's extremely competitive and the way we do journalism is changing all the time. I think student journalism is incredibly important in giving young writers a chance to learn the tools of the trade and get much needed experience. The best journos I know are former student journos.

How do you view the Tharunka legacy?

Tharunka has such an incredible legacy. People like Richard Neville and Wendy Bacon have made their mark on the Australian cultural scene and they started at *Tharunka*. I hope it sticks around and stays true to its independent history for years to come.

AN HOUR FROM CAMPUS

W / JAYDEN RATHSAM-HUA

BIRDWATCHING @ LANE COVE NATIONAL PARK

Although fun, assembling a group of friends for a night out on the town can be a daunting task. Sometimes the best course of action for sharpening the saw is to get away from the 'thwub thwub' of an underground disco warehouse and reconnect with mother nature. This is why I recommend that you wake up at 5:00am to go bird watching in Lane Cove National Park. Now I know this sounds crazy, but once you actually go, you'll realise a few things: firstly*,

The great thing about bird watching is how accessible it is. All you need is a bag of nuts, picnic fold-out chair, thermos of hot chocolate, binoculars, sketchbook, pen (*alternatively a quill if you want to hilariously service the theme of the day*), camouflage outfit, gum boots, bird whistle, bucket hat with stitched-on fishing tackle, pocket sonar detector, geiger counter, saxophone, bottle of holy water, a Gorillagram, mouthguard, and a harpoon.

Getting there: Google Maps it.

As you enter the national park in the early hours of the morning, you will notice a tranquil mist spreading over the riverbed. This is a test of focus by mother nature, as it has nothing to do with bird watching and you should ignore it and continue deeper into the woods.

First bird sighted:

A turkey. Upon seeing my first bird within the first 5 minutes of arriving at the park, my body was not only awash with an appreciation for the sublime, but I had also become bored enough to pack up and call it a day. Yes, they were conflicting feelings, but I am a complex man.

Second bird sighted:

A duck. Fuk Yuen, a yum cha restaurant in Chatswood serves incredible Pe King Duck. This was the first thought that came to mind when I saw the duck. The second thought was**



Third bird sighted:

Australian Darter. As you can see, the Australian Darter is often confused with the Cormorant, which belongs to the same avian family. We had a similar instance of confusion when distinguishing a standard magpie from a black and white wren, as its body was rounder and beak stouter. It was especially warming to classify passerine birds, relating to or denoting birds of a large order distinguished by having feet that are adapted for perching, including all songbirds. Interestingly, the order *Passeriformes* comprises more than half of all bird species, the remainder being known informally as the non-passerines. All passerines in Europe belong to the sub-order *Oscines* (*the oscine passerines*), so that the term is effectively synonymous with 'songbird'. If you've read this far please help I'm being held under the Arc Office on the UNSW Kensington campus against my will, and am forced to write these extremely informative articles send help.

Bird watching. Highly recommend.

** unable to finish sentence: I didn't realise anything about birdwatching.*

*** the first thought was the only thought.*

OPAL STUDENT CONCESSION CARD HACKS

W / JAYDEN RATHSAM-HUA

Surviving on a student budget can be really difficult. Especially when it comes to transport. Thank goodness for the Opal by Opal inc. student concession card. It makes travelling cheaper. It's great. It's fun. Did you know there are even more ways to make use of your Opal by Opal inc. student concession card?

Here they are. These are it.

This one's pretty easy. If you find yourself in a pickle and don't have anything to mark your book with, simply head to <https://www.opal.com.au/en/get-an-opal-card/>, click on the 'Get an Opal Card' tab, follow the online prompts and before you know it, a certified and activated opal card will be on its way in the post for you to use as a bookmark.



Ever run out of corn chips to scoop your delicious dip with? Here's a solution that's always been right under your nose and in your wallet. An Opal student concession card is predominantly inedible, and can be used as a fantastic scooping device for your dip indefinitely. I guarantee that your dip will deplete faster than your Opal student concession card. It's fantastic.



When I find myself breaking and entering the occasional house, it's always such a drag when you forget your lock picking kit. Thankfully, you can use your Opal student concession card to get to those hard-to-reach lock mechanisms. Before you know it, you'll be 'tapping in' to Esmeralda's expensive bedroom jewellery casket in no time. Ding!



Ever find yourself 'salting the grapes?' Heard of the term? It's very versatile, and for me, refers to when I find myself sitting by myself at home, suddenly realising how lonely and single I am, and crying uncontrollably into a bottle or glass of wine in a feeble attempt to cushion the full force of reality hitting my crumbling psyche. It's great. Your Opal student concession card is not only a fantastic drinking buddy but serves as one of the best listeners I know. And when it comes to how grounded we are from teetering over the edge of a full-blown breakdown, it's comforting to know that the both of us are low on balance.



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SKELETON TREE

BY NICK CAVE AND THE BAD SEEDS

W / EMMA DONALDSON

I became a Nick Cave fan when I was about 15 years old. Known for a sort of literary Gothicism, where any suggestion of meaning is tied up in symbolism, wordplay and irony, Cave's work provided my 15-year-old self with a space of interpretation almost infinite. There's endless tangential drifts and expansive inflections in story and time in every song, offering either an antidote or a solace (*but certainly not a solution*) to the somersaulting mess that is adolescence: developing an understanding of oneself, those around us and the systems that immerse us.

Comparably, the cognitive space that this new record gives me is about the size of the box I would have bought my school shoes in.

Skeleton Tree, Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds' 16th studio album was in its infancy when Cave's 15-year-old son Arthur tragically fell to his death off a cliff near the family home in Brighton, England. I find this album to be distinctly claustrophobic because despite my iterative and perhaps desperate interpretation of its symbolism and wordplay, I can converge only upon the now empty, discarded shoebox of Arthur Cave. The spectacular, expansive grey spaces of previous albums that I loved have disintegrated into vacuums and rigid, prismatic walls have converged on my understanding of Cave's work for the first time in my life. This album is unmistakably about the trauma of living and loss.

Cave still sings from the point of fictional characters, but where the emotions in the songs used to be theirs, they are now clearly his. The inflections in meaning that previously guarded the artist's feelings from listeners are now inflections in his voice, nearly breaking in "*I Need You*". There are pulsing bassy tones, pattery drum drifts and trembling atmospherics that describe what it's like to be tethered to a void. And then there's the aching confession: "*I used to think that when you died you kind of wandered the world/In a slumber 'til you crumbled... Well, I don't think that anymore.*"

I cannot offer a set of everyday feelings or experiences that are comparable to listening to this record. The only feeling comparable to losing a loved one is losing a loved one.

Inside a space in time, art and emotion that occupies the volume of a shoebox.

DARK SOULS AND THE ABSURD

W / JACK GEORGE MANGOS

Video games have a unique opportunity to immerse us in their world, yet many do not take advantage of this potential. In celebration of the recent release of *Dark Souls 3*, I would like to discuss one video game, Bandai Namco's 2011 release *Dark Souls*, which fully realises the artistic potential of interactivity.

Warning: this article contains *Dark Souls* spoilers.

A brief introduction

Dark Souls is a hack-and-slash dungeon-crawler (*think swords and shields, monsters, and magic*), set in a dark fantasy universe in which humans cursed with the "Darksign" are condemned to immortality. The player controls one of these undead, who is sent to Lordran, the birthplace of the game's world, to fulfil an ambiguous prophecy to "know the fate of the Undead".

Key gameplay mechanics

Dark Souls is famous for its profound difficulty, yet this difficulty is thematically deliberate. The enemies in the game are wildly more powerful than the player, yet are predictable. To progress, an enormous amount of repetition is therefore required – by the end of the game, many players will have memorised not only how each type of enemy moves and attacks, but also exactly where each enemy stands in each zone. Boss battles are similar. Each boss, initially completely overwhelming, can through practice be defeated by understanding and exploiting complex attack and movement patterns. It is important to recognise this as "natural" difficulty, which is difficulty that is fair, fits with the game's tone, and is rewarding when overcome, as opposed to "artificial" game difficulty. The character's progression is therefore mirrored in our own steady improvement over many hours of practice; every triumph is not the triumph of the character, but becomes your own.

The game world, the character, and the player's role in constructing the narrative

For the most part, the player is left to their own devices, with very little guidance on where to explore, and almost no explanation of the world itself. The soundtrack, beside boss battles, includes no non-diegetic sound, mostly leaving

the player with only the sound of their character moving through the landscape, evoking an atmosphere of profound solitude. This furthers the sensation that the story of our character is unlike any other player's, forcing us to "create" the narrative ourselves through guided interpretation. A similar feature can be seen in the NPCs (*non-playable characters*) we find within the game world.

Even the game's sole quest, set in Lordergan, is similarly player-focused. It is only around halfway through the game that we are given an explanation of what "knowing the fate of the undead", the very reason we are in Lordergan, actually means. It is revealed that we are in Lordergan to kill and replace the reigning deity, a Giant named Lord Gwyn, allowing a regeneration of the power that sustains the world, releasing the undead from the grip of immortality and renewing the crumbling ruins of Lordergan. Renewing this power is referred to as "kindling the first flame", and is a process meant to emulate the birth of the game world as we find it. However, if the player takes an alternate route through the game early on and kills a particular boss prematurely, it is suggested that kindling the first flame will lead, eventually, to another immortal curse arising, and will only perpetuate the reign of Giants. The player is therefore prompted to choose against replacing Lord Gwyn in the game's final moments. Should the player not kindle the first flame, we pursue an unknown path without the power of the first flame, ending the Age of Giants and beginning the Age of Man, but maintaining the undead curse. The player has no way of knowing which choice is the right one, if a "right" choice even exists in the game's ending. One clearly does not play *Dark Souls* in an attempt to reach the ending of a narrative. In fact, regardless of whether the player kindles the flame at the conclusion of the story or not, the game begins over from the very start, each time with a successively higher difficulty, suggesting the irrelevance of our final decision.

An overview of absurdist philosophy, specifically the ideas of Albert Camus

Why, then, do players continue to play, electing to start the game from its beginning over and over? Further, why do they go beyond the difficulty of the game and punish themselves by playing without leveling up, or without armour or weapons, as is popular among *Dark Souls* veterans? The absurdist, particularly Albert Camus, believed there was a fundamental disconnect between the universe in which we live and the consciousness of man. Man seeks meaning, yet in the absence of religious faith, the principal characteristic of the universe is that it is not hostile but indifferent. This relationship, an insolvable tension between the needs of men and the inability of the universe to provide for them, is what leads to the "absurd" nature of man's existence. For Camus, the solution to this irresolvable problem is to confront it, and to live your life with the full understanding that your actions are performed in the face of an "absurd reasoning". He alludes to the myth of Sisyphus to

illustrate his ideas – Sisyphus, the Greek hero condemned to roll a rock ceaselessly up a hill, only to see it fall each time, can create his own happiness by considering his labour, as meaningless as it is, as his own.

How is absurdism expressed in Dark Souls?

This is the very happiness that Hidetaka Miyazaki, the director of the game, attempts to emulate. As we have seen, the game's story and lore, as difficult as they are to uncover, nevertheless bring us no clear answers on why we should continue to struggle against the game's difficulty. Upon completion of the game, our decision is dismissed and we start again. Yet, the enjoyment comes not from the meaning of our "labour", as we have concluded that it is meaningless, but the labour itself. Faced with the prospect of enemies even more difficult the second time around, many players start the game fresh. This cyclical experience, where we see our boulder roll to the bottom of the hill each time we beat the game, likens the player to Sisyphus – we make the game our own. In a similar way, uncovering the game's lore forces the player to conceive their own interpretation of the game's narratives, creating meaning in a universe where so little is clear.

Dark Souls does not only reaffirm Camus' ideas. In one key way, it challenges them. In the game, the curse of immortality leads many to madness, a process called "hollowing". Importantly, hollowing is inversely related to an in-game attribute called "humanity" – the less humanity the player's character has, the more hollow they become, with effects on the player's combat abilities and appearance. We can see this process occur to NPCs in the game – they lose their sense of meaning, become progressively more hollow, and concurrently lose their "humanity" attribute. Importantly, the game links this process to the player's experience as well – when we get up to walk away from the game, or stop playing entirely, we can interpret this as our character going completely "hollow", mad and without direction, no different from the insane undead that the player fights. Therefore, our decision to stop playing, to stop pushing forward and fighting, corresponds with our character succumbing to insanity. While Camus would argue that even an immortal, like Sisyphus, can find meaning in meaningless labour, the game suggests that the weight of immortality is simply too high for human consciousness to bear. Eventually, all players leave the game, and thus eventually, all undead characters in the game will go hollow, defeated by the meaninglessness of their effort.

Irrespective of whether you engage with absurdist ideas, *Dark Souls* is clearly an incredibly artistic and moving game, one that engages us in a way separate to simple gameplay and to cinema. It demonstrates what video games are capable of when they immerse us in the universe we're playing, and creates a dialogue worthy of genuine discussion.

2016 SRC ELECTIONS

WHAT IS THIS ALL ABOUT?

The Student Representative Council (SRC) is charged with protecting and promoting your rights on campus. The SRC is democratically-elected to represent and campaign for your interests within UNSW, in the broader community and to Government.

With SRC elections happening in week 12 we took the opportunity to chat to each of the three SRC Presidential candidates about their plans for the coming year. The order the interviews appear was determined by a random draw. If you would like more information about the candidates, we encourage you to contact them or talk to their team's throughout the election.

VOTING

Voting in the SRC election is your opportunity to talk to and elect people who you believe will make UNSW a better place and represent your interests. Voting will take place from the 17th -20th October in range of locations across campus. Check out arc.unsw.edu.au for further details.

The views expressed in this article are not of Tharunka, but curated from the candidates by Arc @ UNSW Limited.

For detailed information,
please visit arc.unsw.edu.au/src

**VOTING OPEN
17 - 20 OCT**

Michael Murdocca

IGNITE

WHAT KEY ISSUES WILL YOU ADVOCATE FOR IN 2017 IF ELECTED?

The Ignite team is committed to making sure that we have achievable policies that can directly improve the lives of students.

Textbooks are a giant expense for all students. There are currently rules (called parallel import restrictions) that prevent textbooks sourced from sellers outside Australia being sold to you. These rules eliminate competition and allows textbook publishers to effectively charge whatever price they like (that's why our textbooks are so expensive!). Ignite will join the National Union of Students in the campaign to change these laws.

We will also campaign for the cost of textbooks to be placed on HECS and introduce a textbook voucher system so you don't have to pay for them when you can least afford it. The SRC should always ensure that student money is being spent wisely on student services. Ignite will implement sleep spaces on campus. As Welfare Officer this year I have seen students with disabilities struggle to gain access to resting spaces to meet their needs and this must change. We will advocate strongly for student lockers on campus and ensure that we expand the mental health services and resources that are available for students.

Ignite opposes the current plans by the university to introduce trimesters and supports divestment away from fossil fuels. Ignite also supports affirmative action for women and other diverse groups being implemented across university boards, committees and councils. We will always focus on the rights of marginalised groups. We have the largest number of international students on our ticket because we recognise they have been under-represented on the SRC in the past. We will fight for international student transport concessions and take a strong stance against workplace exploitation and sexual assault on campus. Ignite wants a better, cheaper and more fun campus experience for every single UNSW student.

HOW WILL YOU ENSURE STUDENTS FEEL THEY ARE TRULY REPRESENTED BY THE SRC?

The SRC needs to be a body that is relevant, accessible and effective for students. The Ignite team sees the SRC as a service provider & lobbying body. We don't believe an effective SRC can only be about protesting.

We will achieve this in 3 main ways:

- We will ensure that the SRC itself reflects a broad cross-section of student experiences. Our candidates were selected because they are active, engaged, well-connected leaders from across campus. We don't have a political agenda, and want to focus on the needs of each and every UNSW student.
- We will establish a Faculty and Societies Summit to engage with key student representatives as well as discuss how we can make the SRC more relevant to the concerns that are faced by clubs, societies and students generally across campus
- We will make the SRC more transparent and accountable by releasing all monthly progress reports online, including our vision and strategic plans to show progress towards our commitments.

An Ignite SRC will be out and about on campus. We should consistently engage with the student body and be an open rather than insular institution. We will seek to collaborate with different groups and use these links in order to improve awareness of our programs across campus.

HOW HAVE Arc AND THE SRC IMPACTED ON YOUR EXPERIENCE AT UNSW?

On a personal level, I've been an active member in clubs and societies and the SRC since my first year of university. Getting involved in the Law Society as Wellbeing Coordinator and other initiatives

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IGNITE WANTS A BETTER, CHEAPER AND MORE FUN CAMPUS EXPERIENCE FOR EVERY SINGLE UNSW STUDENT.

such as being a camp leader and peer mentor was influential in making me understand how societies can have an impact on student life.

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I've been an Office-Bearer on the SRC since the end of 2014 and also served as a Club President. This has enabled me to meet all sorts of people who are passionate about student life and have many ideas to improve UNSW. In fact I signed up our General Secretary candidate to my Office-Bearer stall when she first came to uni! You can meet so many amazing people through Arc and the SRC and I want to make sure that both are vibrant organisations which truly enhance the student experience.

As a former National Executive of the National Union of Students and a current member of the University Council, I believe that student advocacy is enhanced when we build relationships with different stakeholders who have a role in affecting students. This will be a key goal of Ignite in 2017.

I also speak on behalf of the Ignite team as a whole in saying that all of us believe in the capacity for the SRC and Arc to make a difference. Please check out our page or contact me on 0425 951 711 or michael.murdocca10@gmail.com for more information.

**VOTING OPEN
17 - 20 OCT**

Aislinn Stein-Magee

ACTIVATE

WHAT KEY ISSUES WILL YOU ADVOCATE FOR IN 2017 IF ELECTED?

In 2016 the Activate team had a vision to make our campus the best – here in Sydney, in NSW, anywhere. We brought in 24 hour study spaces, and in 2017 we plan to bring you a whole lot more. We have been fighting for more social sport and more sporting facilities on campus, and we want to ensure you have the opportunities and the platform to be who you really are at UNSW. We know that students are not just students – we are sports superstars, we are dancers, we are poets, we are social butterflies, we are hardworking and we are so much more as well.

The Activate team know this, and in 2017 we want to bring you more opportunities to make UNSW the place for you to shape your own journey. We also believe that your university experience should be as safe and as enjoyable as it possibly can be, and we want to continue the great work that the current SRC has done in fighting to prevent sexual assault on campus and fostering a culture of respect at our university, because you deserve to be respected and feel safe on campus.

The Activate team also knows that there are major changes coming your way. One of the major issues that will affect students at UNSW is the proposed implementation of the trimester system. Although we are yet to see trimesters here, reactions at other universities such as UTS suggest that the move to such a calendar could have extremely negative effects on students and staff.

Activate is committed to standing against any academic calendar changes that would increase stress on students, increase stress on staff and decrease the quality of learning here at UNSW, and are done with minimal student consultation. More student consultation, more student representation and more student engagement is something that the Activate team is passionate about bringing to students at UNSW, because above all else, you are the lifeblood of this university and you deserve to be heard.

HOW WILL YOU ENSURE STUDENTS FEEL THEY ARE TRULY REPRESENTED BY THE SRC?

I am incredibly proud of the diversity of the Activate team this year and our experiences, ideas and perspectives about how to improve your experience here at UNSW and we know you too have your own experiences and ideas about what you'd like to see from the SRC and UNSW, that's what makes our campus so vibrant.

The Activate team has the diverse knowledge, the hardworking drive and the willpower to make sure that we are truly representative, and the ideas to continue and grow the SRC's engagement with you so that we are your true voice on campus – consult with you, change with you, and most importantly, fight alongside you.

We have experience in fighting for you in the past and given the opportunity, will put our hearts and souls into doing it again. Just as we demand student consultation from university management, we also hold ourselves to the same standards. We want to hear from you by engaging as much as possible through forums, social events and every possible opportunity for students to suggest issues or ideas to us that they might have. Not only will this ensure a truly representative SRC but also a more inclusive and dynamic campus that is working for us.

HOW HAVE Arc AND THE SRC IMPACTED ON YOUR EXPERIENCE AT UNSW?

Arc and the SRC have what have transformed my university experience from anything I previously thought it could be. Arc has provided so many opportunities, support, services and even just fun and de-stressing activities that make the UNSW university experience, in my opinion, the best university experience around.

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THE ACTIVATE TEAM HAS THE DIVERSE KNOWLEDGE, THE HARDWORKING DRIVE AND THE WILLPOWER TO MAKE SURE THAT WE ARE TRULY REPRESENTATIVE...

Arc is a community that encompasses so many elements of student life and has meant that my university experience has been diverse, engaging and even challenging in the best possible ways. The SRC has given me what I consider to be an extremely valuable privilege that I am forever thankful for, and that is the opportunity to represent students on the issues that matter to them, and the opportunity to improve the life and experience of my fellow students, ranging from on campus to all the way out in the wider world.

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The SRC for me, and I hope for all UNSW students, an opportunity to take the best things about university and improve them further, and take the worst things – the barriers to fair education, negative changes to learning and the like – and really have the ability to fight back against them and have my say. The empowerment that comes from being involved in the SRC and realising your power as a student to shape your own learning experience and your own destiny, and help others to do the same, is what I treasure the most, and something I hope, if elected, I can give to as many students at UNSW as possible.

Gene Brownlie

LEFT ACTION

WHAT KEY ISSUES WILL YOU ADVOCATE FOR IN 2017 IF ELECTED?

Left Action candidates have been key activists involved in the fight against \$100k degrees and university restructures at USyd, UTS and here on campus, and for student rights and welfare more broadly. We've also consistently campaigned for refugee rights, marriage equality, and against the likes of Pauline Hanson and the far-right racists of Reclaim Australia. Earlier this year we helped to organise a campaign against the racist Daily Telegraph headline declaring Australia was "settled", not invaded.

We stand for an activist, left-wing SRC that is dedicated to campaigning around progressive issues, and against the university management and Liberal government. We think that rebuilding a culture of student protest is vital both for rejuvenating student unionism and for placing left-wing politics back at the centre of political debate in Australia

Left Action wants an SRC that will fight against racism and Islamophobia. We will demand UNSW expand scholarships for refugee students, and that additional prayer rooms be created for Muslim students on campus. We'll push for the university to cover the cost of more healthcare on campus, such as dental, and for more LGBTI-friendly healthcare. We support the call for UNSW to divest from the fossil fuel industry, and more broadly support the campaign against coal seam gas.

We'll also combat the university management's plans to implement trimester restructures - which are purely about making more money, regardless of the negative impact it will have on staff and students.

HOW WILL YOU ENSURE STUDENTS FEEL THEY ARE TRULY REPRESENTED BY THE SRC?

The democratic involvement of students in the SRC should go beyond just a vote in the elections in week twelve - we should be striving to involve broader layers of students in all campaign work.

It's only through active student unionism, with an orientation to building campaigns which will mobilise students, that genuine representation is possible.

We want to see SRC meetings opened up to ordinary students, so that anyone can have a say over how our student union is being run outside of the small election window.

Finally, Left Action candidates will not hide our political affiliations. We're open and proud of the fact that many of us are socialists who strive to see a better world, free from the barbarities of a profit-driven system. We don't align ourselves with either of the major political parties, who have for years cut funding to tertiary education and welfare for students, continue to support the detention and torture of refugees, and have played political football with the rights of LGBTI people by refusing to grant marriage equality.

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WE STAND FOR AN ACTIVIST, LEFT-WING SRC THAT IS DEDICATED TO CAMPAIGNING AROUND PROGRESSIVE ISSUES

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HOW HAVE Arc AND THE SRC IMPACTED ON YOUR EXPERIENCE AT UNSW?

Personally, student unionism represents something more important than just lobbying for greater student services, or cosying up to the administration. Certainly, it's about more than spring-boarding your career in big-P Politics. Unionism in general fosters a spirit of solidarity across borders and through history — and our student unions should be no different. The UNSW SRC itself has an inspiring history of struggle against right-wing conservatism, imperialism and neoliberalism. Student unionists fought against conscription and the Vietnam War, apartheid in South Africa, in solidarity with Palestinian resistance and for the rights of Indigenous Australians.

Student unions can play a decisive role in progressive change. We saw that as recently as 2014, with the fight led by the National Union of Students (NUS) and our SRC against the Abbott government and university fee deregulation. That was a movement which not only defeated the deregulation policy three times, but also inspired a broader movement which rejected the whole of Abbott and the Liberals' anti-worker, anti-poor agenda, which undeniably contributed to Abbott's downfall.

Left Action candidates are dedicated to a vision of an SRC which isn't concerned so much with the personal experiences or ambitions of those involved in it, though instead with revitalising a tradition of progressive militancy.

VOTING OPEN
17 - 20 OCT

WOMENS



This month the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) national survey into students' experiences of sexual assault and harassment is being rolled out. You might be one of around 10,000 UNSW students selected at random and asked by email to partake in the sample. If not, you still have the opportunity to make a confidential submission online through the AHRC website. The project is giving all past and present students, especially survivors, the chance to have their voice heard on this important issue to influence decision-making. It's part of a broader campaign in which we're demanding that universities stand up to protect students through education, stronger policies, new reporting mechanisms we can trust and improved access to support services.

To spread the word and engage the whole UNSW community in the conversation, we've just launched a new Facebook page called *UNSW for Respect!* Please check it out and share amongst friends. We'll also be hosting stalls and events this month to further promote the survey and campaign, so keep an eye out or jump on Facebook to find out when and where.

And! Exciting news! *Drumroll*

Week 11 will see us present the FIRST EVER Women's Revue at UNSW! Titled *Hysteria!*, it's completely devised, produced, directed, written and performed by women. Are you experiencing muscle soreness from fruitless attempts at breaking through the glass ceiling? Vision blurry from prolonged death-staring at the manspreader on your morning commute? Suffering fatigue and tiredness from attempting to navigate your existence within a patriarchal society? You may be suffering from *Hysteria!* Make sure you book tickets fast for Thursday 13th & Friday 14th October in Studio One.

As the semester winds down, there'll also be plenty of end-of-year socials and activities. To stay up to date or get involved with any of these initiatives, and more, join the *UNSW Women's Collective* Facebook group or come along to a meeting, Wednesday and Thursday 12-2pm in the Women's Room!

ENVIRO



Hi team!

Welcome back to Semester 2. Hope you all had a restful midsemester break.

As always, we'd love to catch some of you at our Enviro Collective meetings, which occur on Fridays 1-2pm in the Arc offices (*halfway up the rainbow stairs*), or at our Fossil Free UNSW meetings on Mondays at 1-2pm in the same space.

If you can't make meetings – that's totally fine! Find the UNSW Enviro Collective public group on Facebook to share your ideas with us, or even skype into one of our meetings. Shoot us an email at enviro@arc.unsw.edu.au.

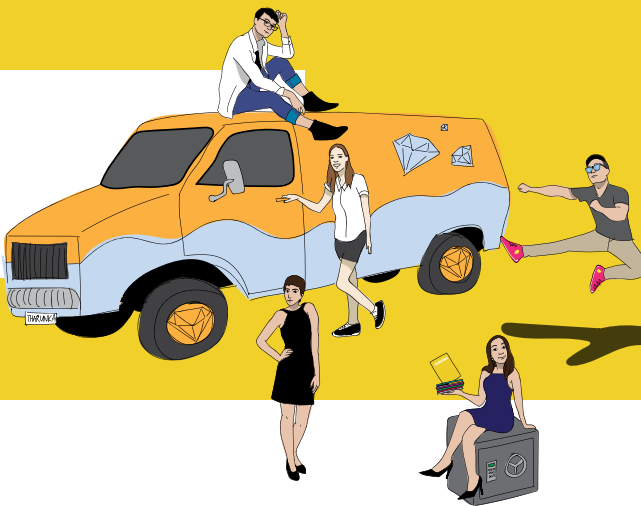
A bunch of old and new Enviro Collective friends attended a road trip to Maules Creek (*near Boggabri in North West NSW*) over the midsem break to learn about the possible effects of coal mine expansion on the Leard and Vickery State forests. I would particularly love to thank Breana and the rest of the amazing Australian Student Environment Network (ASEN) team for all their tireless work in organising this adventure for us.

The enviro collective have been working hard to bring you some fun events during Global Climate Change Week in week 11 of this semester. Keep an eye out for us, and I encourage you to really take the time during this week to consider all things Climate Change.

On the Fossil Free UNSW front, we're continuing to encourage UNSW to divest its money from fossil fuel companies like many public institutions (*including Queensland University of Technology and the City of Sydney*) have done in the past few months. We simply think it's the ethical choice to make that's going to be good for all our futures!

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NOVEMBER



S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		01	02	03	04	05
06	07	08	09	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

IMPORTANT DATES:

EXAM PERIOD

4-19TH NOVEMBER

