

THARUNKA

UNSW'S STUDENT MAGAZINE / AUGUST 2017

INTERNET

THARUNKA

THE TEAM

/

MANAGING EDITOR

BRITTNEY RIGBY

SUB-EDITORS

ALICIA D'ARCY, SHARON WONG,
DOMINIC GIANNINI

DESIGNER

LEO TSAO

/

CONTRIBUTORS

ABBY BUTLER, ALBERT LIN, ALEX LINKER,
ALEX ROSE, AMY GE, ANNICE SAVILLE, BREANA
MACPHERSON-RICE, COURTNEY THOMPSON,
EMILY HONG, ESTEE SARSFIELD, JACK MANGOS,
JUMAANA ABDU, LYDIA MORGAN, NICHOLAS
GEROVASILIS, ROSIE BOGUMIL, SABEENA
MOZAFFAR, SARAH HORT.

/

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WHICH OUR UNIVERSITY NOW STANDS.

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WHATEVER YOU HAVE TO SAY TO tharunka@arc.unsw.edu.au
(WRITING, ARTWORK, IDEAS, FEEDBACK, LOVE LETTERS, PICTURES OF
CUTE DOGS - WE WANT IT ALL).

CONTENT WARNING

THIS ISSUE DEALS WITH
THEMES OF:

- PAEDOPHILIA AND CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE
- SEXUAL HARASSMENT, ASSAULT
- ANXIETY, MENTAL HEALTH

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Letters From the Editors


Brittney Rigby | LinkedIn

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2nd

Brittney Rigby

Managing Editor, Tharunka

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Brittney Rigby is limping to the finish line of her Law and Journalism degrees. She writes some stuff from time to time. She edits other people's stuff too. She'll be super duper happy if she gets a job in what everyone tells her is a "dying industry" (tell that to Rupert Murdoch's back pocket).

Brittney is occasionally a hard worker, but she'd prefer to be paid for having long baths, tagging her "friends" in memes and watching Netflix in ripped pyjamas. She would also agree to volunteer work if it involved interacting with dogs (walking, patting, staring at etc) or sampling cheese pizzas.

Brittney is looking to take the next step in what she's sure will be an illustrious (possibly underpaid or non-existent) career, and would love to chat about her next opportunity at b.rigby@arc.unsw.edu.au. (Holla if you're offering a five day weekend. Stay outta her inbox if your offices have a double-glazed glass ceiling.)

Telstra 10:57 pm 22%

Features Editor

Alicia D'Arcy

@ali_dddd_

pls don't @ me

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Happy Foundation Day @UNSW!

Here's a trip down memory lane. (PS Visit our stall today for a copy of the new issue!)

Alligators and Rolls Royces: Foundation...
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Sharon, 21

University of New South Wales

less than a kilometre away.

Creative Editor


I once won a giant pretzel in a beer drinking contest. And sometimes I write about things.

✕

★

♥

Virgin Mobile 8:28 pm 87%

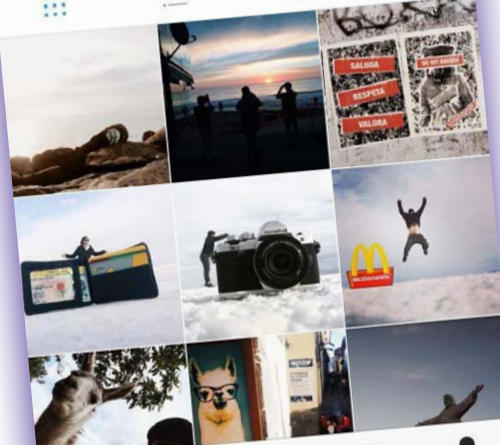
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Online Editor

Amateur radio star and professional disappointment

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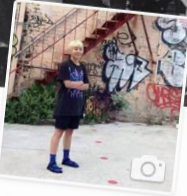
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Edit Bio

Worked at VICE Deutschland

Studied at Berlin University of the Arts

Lives in Sydney, Australia

Edit Details

Agony Ibis

CW: Reference to
paedophilia and child
sexual abuse

Dear Agony Ibis,

I find myself in an ethical quandary. My employees have come to expect beanbags, gourmet lunches provided five days a week, bicycles and an office so extensive it's a "campus". This shit ain't cheap. To bankroll these perks and keep the IT hipsters from turning against us and hacking the shit out of our systems, I relocated the company headquarters to Ireland for ... reasons (although most of our operations are still run out of the US).

It seems the luck of the Irish is beginning to run out as folks are starting to realise I am paying about the same amount of tax as an accountant with several negatively geared properties.

With the new financial year in full swing, I need to find a new tax minimisation strategy. Any hot tips?

Kind regards,
Google

Dear Google,

Thank you for getting in touch. I can sympathise with your position. Why should a company that earns billions of dollars per year mining our data have to contribute to the roads, schools and hospitals its employees rely upon?! An outrageous proposition.

When faced with such a doozy of a problem, I like to look to other, more established players for inspiration. The perfect example here is the Catholic Church. Despite being the world's richest organisation, they pay no tax and have even established their own country! Genius!

Start with the formalities: register as a religion (while you're at it, you'd better employ some paedophiles to rack up some child sex crimes so that it all looks legit. Send your recruiters to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse - you'll be overwhelmed by the number of experienced candidates), turf any women you may have foolishly put in leadership positions, turn your San Fran "campus" into your own city-state (I like the sound of The Googlecan myself) and you'll be well on your way to a tax-free life.

Just one favour though: in exchange for this expert taxation advice, could you be a dear and remove all references to "bin chickens" from the Internet please?

Yours,
Agony Ibis

Letter to the Editors: Mental Health at UNSW

Dear Brittney and *Tharunka* Team

I wanted to firstly congratulate you on the Semester 1 *Tharunka* that so directly and relevantly highlighted the issues of mental health and students with disabilities at UNSW. In particular, the article by Annabel Green and Annabelle Thorne was revealing ("Mental Health at UNSW – Can More Be Done?"). I also note that the most recent *Tharunka* continued the discussion in an article by Stella Ladikos that highlighted mental health issues on campus.

From May 2017 I have taken up the role of Director – Student Life reporting to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Professor Merlin Crossley. Within my broad portfolio of student services is the responsibility for the health, safety and wellbeing of UNSW students, and both the UNSW Health Service, and Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS), sit within that portfolio. In my first few weeks in this job, I have started to understand the breadth and depth of the "conundrum" that is student mental health at UNSW. In fact, when overlaid across the Australian higher education landscape, it might better be described as an epidemic.

And further abroad, the situation seems to be even more chronic. I read an article last month that said that university student leaders in the US have become so concerned about the student mental health crisis that they have sent a large petition to 20 top universities (including Princeton, Harvard, Yale, Columbia and MIT) requesting that new ways of dealing with student mental health are explored. The petition comes on the back of the horrific statistics that seven students have died this year in those institutions from suicide and the wait time for mental health services is measured in weeks, not days. Additionally, last year, when I met with the President and Vice-Chancellor from Arizona State University, Professor Michael Crow, he distressingly told me that at ASU, on average, eight students attempt suicide annually.

Our own Vice-Chancellor Professor Jacobs and Professor Crossley were made aware just this month by the UNSW Student Leadership Group (Arc@UNSW Chair Edward Bartolo, SRC President Aislinn Stein-Magee and PGC President Jane Aslanidis) that students are keen to see an over-arching plan to deal with student mental health at UNSW. The concern is that unless we move quickly to address the issue, the consequences could look more like those outlined by our friend universities in the US.

Whilst the problem is significant, UNSW has some expert advice and resources to access in addressing the issue, and developing a student mental health plan. I have already discussed with Professor Phillip Mitchell, Head, School of Psychiatry, that it would be good to access some of his expert team in running some workshops to not only look at sizing the problem at UNSW but also to explore models to better address student mental health. Importantly, we will address the issue by involving student consultation at the earliest stage of the planning.

It is necessary to emphasise that this is a multi-dimensional problem that will require a multi-layered approach. I don't believe it is possible to continue with the current model of service delivery if we are going to address the issue at scale. However, any solutions should emerge from our targeted workshops and through extensive consultation to help to develop a future plan. There is clearly a long road to haul and no panacea for university student mental health problems, but we need an over-arching plan to get better at helping students and it needs to start now.

Neil Morris

Director UNSW Student Life

CW: sexual harassment,
assault

TRIGGERED FEMINAZI #SJW GETS #OWNED

“On Wednesday night last week, I was indecently assaulted.”

This is the first sentence of Georgia Mueck’s post to a Newcastle nightclub’s Facebook page. It’s prompted, at the time of writing, over 1,000 likes and hundreds of comments. The status details Mueck’s experience with two men who boasted about touching her in the smoker’s area of the nightclub, before security guards failed to act.

I read the status and immediately shared it, in solidarity with Mueck, because my friends and I have had similar experiences, and because it’s an incredibly important issue to bring to light. My intention was to encourage my male friends on Facebook to support their female friends if they are ever in a scenario of sexual harassment or assault. As I posted the status, I began to slowly scan my own feed and noticed that I had shared a lot of similar posts, and written some of my own. Snuggled amongst poignant think pieces such as “BREAKING NEWS: Puberty was very kind to Hector from Mortified” were statuses I had written about detention centres, feminism and mental health.

I am a certified #socialjusticewarrior (#SJW).

When you Google “social justice warrior”, the first three results are: a definition from Urban Dictionary, a YouTube video titled “Social Justice Warriors Triggered Compilation” and

an article detailing the “Totalitarian Doctrine of #SJW’s”. The (urban) dictionary definition of a social justice warrior is an “individual who repeatedly and vehemently engages in arguments on social justice on the Internet, often in a shallow or not well-thought-out-way, for the purpose of raising their own personal reputation”.

There’s an internal conflict that ensues each time I consider posting on my Facebook or Instagram about an issue I’m passionate about. Am I actually spreading any awareness or doing anything pragmatic? Or am I just feeding some self-serving hope that people see me as #woke? Am I, as Ella from the TV masterpiece *Please Like Me* quips, just “jerking off my soul, trying to glean a smug self-satisfaction from other people’s pain”?

In trying to find out whether such statuses support or scorn, I looked in the same place anyone searching for factual and reliable answers does: the comments section.

The top comment on Mueck’s post was from the nightclub. “Great,” I naively thought. “A complaint on social media, and the mass traction it gained, will force the venue to enact some tangible policy change.” Alas, I was wrong. The comment accused Mueck of being “offensive” for suggesting that the establishment is complicit in instances of sexual assault. This wasn’t a great start in my quest to

find out whether something positive can come out of #sjw posts.

The remainder of the comments section was littered with guys tagging their mates, asking if they were the ones who harassed Mueck, and people questioning why she didn’t just reciprocate the assault by punching her attackers. Jokes perpetuating rape culture and victim blaming? I had hit another patriarchal roadblock.

I decided to look towards other examples of online social movements that had made a difference in the “real world”. The fact that “Kony 2012” was the first thing that came to mind wasn’t exactly a great start. Sure, hashtags such as #BlackLivesMatter, #JeSuisCharlie and #LoveWins have raised awareness and informed the public about incredibly important issues. But does sharing a post or tacking on a hashtag actually assist those affected by unfair racial targeting by police forces, freedom of the press and LGBTQI+ rights?

“I think the more we make people aware of this issue, the more likely change is to occur, and social media is the number one way to gain traction and reach people,” Mueck said. =

“People who have tried to call out social issues have always been met with opposition, because people don’t like the status quo to be questioned or changed.”

I often feel helpless when I watch a documentary about sustainable fashion or read an article exposing the reality of factory farms, because I have absolutely no idea how to make a tangible change. I know that the ice caps are melting, the Great Barrier Reef is dying, and that sexism, racism and classism exist. I know

that I should be doing something to help, but I only have 24 hours in a day and priorities that I refuse to detail because they may involve overpriced breakfast foods and yes I am sorry for perpetuating harmful stereotypes of young people but I am not sorry for #livingmytruth.

I understand where Mueck is coming from, and I think the vitriol and trolling she’s met has a lot to do with the dismissive attitudes towards anything associated with millennials or the Internet. Whether any of us ever do anything truly altruistic is one thing, but it’s undeniable that young people have a genuine interest and passion in issues of social justice. The reason why we are so often categorised as being disengaged with politics and world events is largely because of the way we utilise tools like social media to advocate for such issues.

When I spoke to Georgia last, she had put together a form for victims of assault and harassment in Newcastle nightclubs and bars. In collating this database of experiences, she is hoping that venues will crack down on rape culture and the way in which such events are dealt with. Prior to social media, Georgia could never have reached such a large audience in such a forum. She wouldn’t have the ability to collect anonymous stories. She wouldn’t have been able to share her story so quickly after the situation occurred. Sure, a hashtag or online campaign can’t physically change legislation or the policy of a nightclub, but it does have the ability to spark conversations and promote understanding and passion.

(Also, I really cannot criticise anyone who uses the insane gift that is technology for advocacy, when I spend my most of my time watching *Project Runway* on Netflix. #realtalk.)

NO MORE SECRETIVE

THE DEATH OF PRIVACY

In 1890, with the advent of the flexible film camera, Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis co-wrote an article in the *Harvard Law Review* in which he lamented the growing threat to privacy. Over a century later, with the rise of ATMs and the Internet, *TIME* magazine declared “The Death of Privacy”. A decade on, in 2010, Eric Schmidt, Steve Jobs and Mark Zuckerberg repeated this aphorism.

There is no doubt that the arc of history has inexorably bent towards individuals sharing more and more information. Companies collect data on our political engagement, our consumer habits, and even our whereabouts. Many of us don’t even know what information we are giving up. We are far too time poor, and far too apathetic to read “terms and conditions” documents that set out the demise of our privacy in size 6 font.

The far more important question then is “How important is our privacy?” For young people, at least, the answer seems to be, not important at all. Even if we are often not explicitly aware of the manner in which companies collect data on us, our active participation in these forums is at least suggestive of a revealed preference for better and more targeted services over enhanced privacy. Ultimately, the benefit of privacy lies in two things: the instrumental value feeling safe, and the agency to separate our private and public spheres, as we desire. It follows that it is perfectly reasonable for individuals to believe that sharing more about ourselves is eminently worth a more tailored and meaningful online experience.

No doubt there is a price to pay for our willingness to share more. The hacking of dating website Ashley Madison in 2015 highlights

this. However, there is good reason to suggest that this incident was largely the result of poor data security by the company. Government oversight and regulation have an important role to play in this space. Policies, like that enacted in Europe, which give users the right to demand information held by companies about them, and for that information to be deleted, are also useful responses.

However, many governments have capitalised on this perceived indifference towards privacy. When cocaine dealer Antoine Jones objected to having a GPS placed without a warrant on his vehicle, the Obama administration challenged his fundamental entitlement to privacy. It argued that American citizens do not have a “reasonable expectation of privacy” when they’re in the public square, whether it’s their driveways, their front lawns, or even e-mails sent through public networks. If accepted, this is concerning, because it belies the notion that we ought to be in control of our privacy, and cede it for our own utility.

Likewise, with the increasing sophistication of terror networks, governments are seeking unprecedented access to user data. To be clear, telco companies should assist authorities wherever it is possible. The obligation is precisely analogous to the obligation on any private individual or business to help law enforcement. It is this premise which governments have rhetorically emphasised in justifying these laws. However, this is the status quo. What is being proposed is far beyond this. Devices are presently designed to encrypt communications on an end-to-end basis, such that they are protected even from telco companies themselves. For governments

looking to disrupt terror networks, navigating this encryption is not as simple as information sharing between telcos and authorities. Facilitating law enforcement’s access to this data would effectively require a fundamental shift in the way in which companies protect their users’ communications. In other words, re-designing devices with weaker encryption would compromise all users’ ability to maximise their privacy.

It is possible that most individuals would view this as a fair trade off: weakened personal information security in exchange for arming governments with more effective information to counter terrorism. Nevertheless, the problem is that governments are failing the very standard which they impose on private companies: to unambiguously set out what impact their actions will have on our privacy. If and when we forfeit our privacy, we should at least be empowered agents in that decision. Privacy may almost be dead, but we should be able to take comfort in knowing we were the ones who killed it, and reaped the benefits.

#actually: How People With Disability Are Using Hashtags to Reclaim Online Spaces

Over the last few years, there's been a trend towards the use of hashtags prefaced with the word "actually" in online disability spaces and discussions, particularly on Twitter and Tumblr.

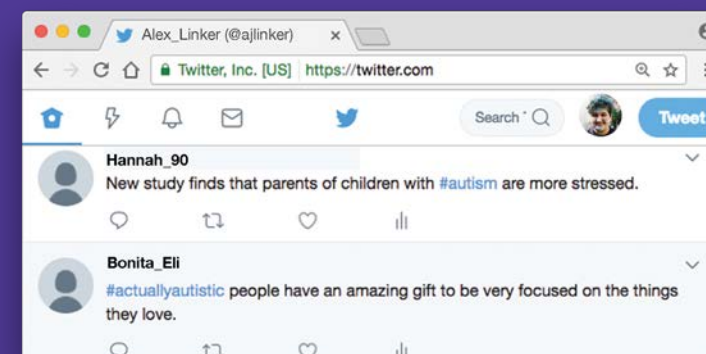
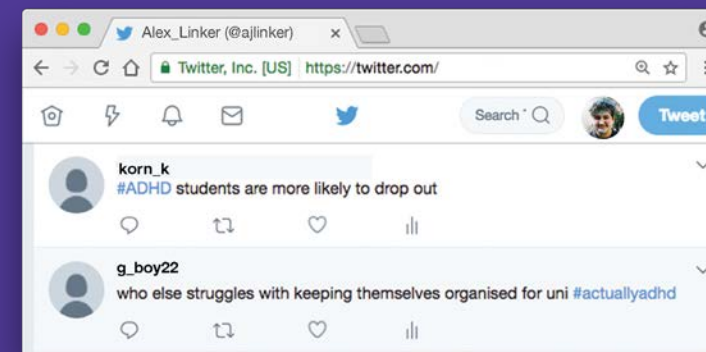
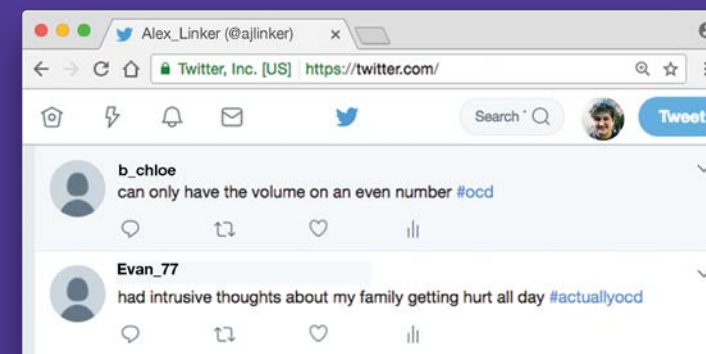
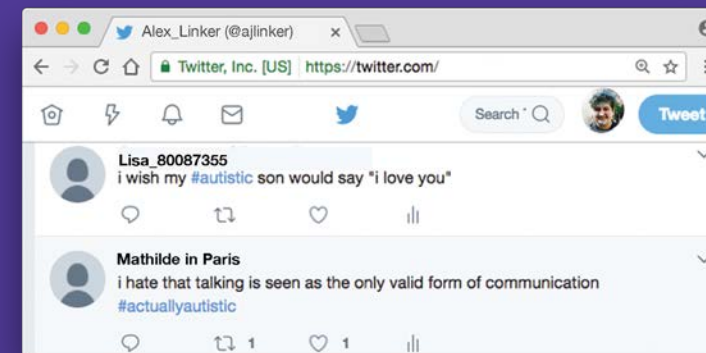
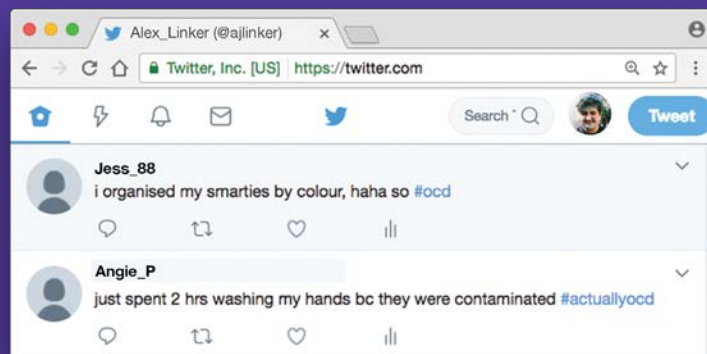
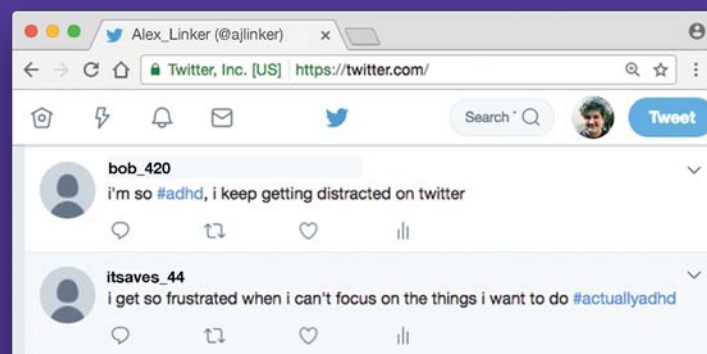
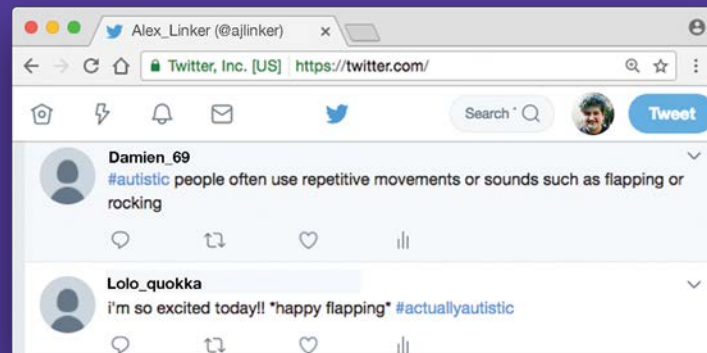
This trend originated with #actuallyautistic, as a way for autistic people to connect with each other without being inundated with posts from the family and friends of autistic people.

Since then, it has spread to communities such as #actuallyOCD and #actuallyADHD to separate these communities' posts from those of people who tweet about being "sooo #ocd" because they like to be organised, or "sooo #adhd" because they got distracted once.

It's important that people recognise that disabilities like ADHD and OCD are serious. They're not to be joked about or used as a descriptor of simple personality traits or behaviours.

The hashtag #actuallyXYZ allows for communities to be built and people to connect with others going through the same things whilst avoiding medicalisation, cure talk and other discourse. It allows us to talk about our experiences in a safe(r) online space.

Here are some examples of the difference between general Tweets and those posted by members of communities using #actually:





HASHTAGS, MEMES AND GOOD OL' FASHIONED ORGANISING: HERE'S WHAT WE NEED TO DO TO #MAKEOURWORLDGREATAGAIN

I hear a lot of random hypotheses about why the future is looking pretty dire. But one of my favourites is that it's because of "the Internet". Cue some middle aged man waxing nostalgic about the days before smartphones where people would *actually talk to each other* and there was no such thing as alternative facts, etc etc. Now that we have THE INTERNET, millennials have fallen victim to one or more of: poor attention spans, selfie-narcissism, clickbait, anything and everything else that's bad about the world, depending on the flavour of the month. All of which are, of course, leading to our inevitable demise.

I have heard this trope so many times that I could probably write a textbook. Terrified as I am about the serious impending doom facing our planet if we let the fossil fuel industry continue to trash it, I attend a lot of meetings attended by people organising around climate justice. These meetings also often attract a lot of retirees who have extra time on their hands and a renewed sense of just how deeply messed up the world is. I love them dearly. But if I had a dollar for every meeting I have been in, only to hear one of the many baby boomers loudly lament, "Where are all the young people?" ... Well, I'd have some serious cash. Each time I sit there, taking deep breaths to buy myself some patience, so that when I inevitably retort that the ~young people~ are probably working overtime or cramming for assessments because you need to sell your organs to make renting in Sydney even kind of "affordable", I don't sound too aggressive.

Is it any wonder that we communicate in gifs and memes when for

most of us, "free time" is a luxury that is painful to even daydream about? And can we pause for a second before assuming that's a bad thing? From #BlackLivesMatter to #StopAdani, some of the most powerful campaigns around the world right now have a humming online presence propelled by hashtags, connecting online anger to real life movements. Not to mention that they're being led by a whole bunch of fierce and intelligent young people who aren't settling for the dregs

of a future that older generations have pitifully left us.

I just don't buy this idea that millennials and our online lives are stunting social change. The Internet, and social media sites, are fundamentally just tools, and like any tools, they can be used well or poorly, for good or bad consequences. Saying, for example, that *memes* undermine young people's potential to mount a fight against the relentless cuts to education, penalty rates, affordable housing and every other issue we're faced with simply misses the point. The problem is not that we're using new (and frankly, hilarious) cultural forms online to communicate – it's when this substitutes real political action. And if that's ever the case, I'd be more inclined to attribute that to deliberate structural factors that are making it harder for people to politically organise and easier for people to be rewarded for shallow online engagement.

But I do have one sage reflection. I think that if we're actually setting out to achieve meaningful change, we need to apply the same solid principles that you would to a decent Tinder match: take it offline. While our ever-connected devices and novel online languages are allowing our generation to communicate in ways baby boomers couldn't even dream of, it only amounts to little if it's not grounded in the real deal, physical organising.

When these different strategies work together, all hell can break loose. Take the

recent upset in the UK election, for example. The revolution may not be televised, but I wouldn't be surprised if it ends up on Facebook live stream.

This is why I'd encourage us all to say yes, share the hilarious and existential trimester memes, but also collect your scraps of spare time and put it towards organising to win. From our VC to our PM, leaders aren't worth much if they're not held accountable. And with the skills to wield the most powerful tool of our time on our side (here's looking at you, Internet), I'm pretty damn excited for what we can do.

CW: Anxiety, mental health

TO BE ANONYMOUS: A BLESSING OR A CURSE?

People often display exuberant overconfidence on the Internet. It's one of the things I've noticed most, particularly when they're commenting their opinions and judgements on other people's posts and statuses. It's perhaps their sheer audacity that surprises me the most. Whether it's in the comments section of social networking sites like Facebook or Reddit, or anonymous conversations with strangers on mobile apps such as Kik and Whisper, I fear that people have either forgotten what it is to be respectful towards others or they just enjoy the thrill of the troll. The majority of these commentators would never have the courage to say such things in the "real world". But the Internet provides them with security: a computer screen, a fake or anonymous user account, a physical and emotional distance. It has made me question the role of anonymity on the World Wide Web in the digital age.

To analyse this, I drew upon my own experiences: the times when I have used the Internet and been thankful for the anonymity it provides me, alongside the times when I felt foolish for using anonymous platforms. I referred back to the times I was not able to identify the stranger who offered me advice, a compliment or even a joyous mocking. My feelings towards this inability to identify (and connect with) the people I'm interacting with are mixed, particularly because of my mental health. My insecurities, and anxiety, my triggers and coping strategies, are all affected by how I'm able to interact with, and know, people online.

When my anxiety hits me, I feel lost, confused, and trapped in the moment, as if I alone am carrying the entire world's burdens. I deserve all the wrongs that have happened to me. I

am destined to be abandoned by all my loved ones. I am no longer deserving of the affection they once offered me. At times, my emotions become so intense that I begin to question my very existence on this Earth.

It is in times like this that I'm thankful for my online hidden identity, as I open my WordPress and begin to blog, venting on the digital surface. I am too ashamed to admit these thoughts to another human in the real world.

How foolish and immature am I to be getting emotional over a boy I crush on? How did they managed to ruin my childhood and walk away guilt-free? I hope they die a slow and painful death.

I have a strange relationship with the other bloggers who read and comment on my poetry and other posts – they know me only as a pseudonym. I appreciate this distance when I need it most; when I am anxious, I do not wish to be judged or ridiculed further when I am already ridiculing myself. Even if I encounter a troll or critical comment, I can always reassure myself that they don't know me. They'll forget about me in a second, scrolling, tapping, opening another app. My laptop screen is a shield, hiding any trace of who I really am, allowing me to choose what parts of myself to display.

When I'm vulnerable, this control gives me some relief.

However, at other times, the type of reassurance I desire cannot be obtained from behind the comfort of a screen. When I post on the anonymous app Whisper about how much I

hate myself, how I look, and who I am as a person, there are many kind responses. They say that I am simply being too harsh on myself.

But they barely know me. They haven't seen the "real" me in the "real" world.

And in this way, I want the same thing online as I do offline. Please "like" me.

Binky: A Commentary

So there's an interesting social media platform that's been making the rounds recently, and it's called Binky. There are Binks (posts), you can comment on stuff, you can swipe left and right, and you can also "re-bink" things. Of course, the twist here is that nothing matters on Binky.

Binky is the ultimate anti-social media app, designed to simulate our daily social media routines without forcing us to interact with the latest controversy, celebrity death, or that one aunt who keeps posting weird Minions quotes.

So how did we get to this? How did we get to the stage where we need something to act as a proverbial binky (get it?) for our social media habits?

We're in the adolescence of the information age, and the floodgates have been opened. We have access to more information than we could ever need or want, and that's changing our habits. We consume media at an insane rate and there's no going back. The influence of smartphones means most of us automatically browse Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter whenever we have a break.

It's too much information. It's too damn much.

Enter Binky. It's a chewed pen to the cigarette that is social media: it lets us go through the same motions without paying attention, and it doesn't mind. But perhaps that's what it's there for, to slowly wean us back off social media.

What does this say about us? Are we easily influenced? Is Binky the cliché red pill that pulls us out of the social media matrix? No. Of course not. It's a tool, just like all media.

Binky is making a statement about our habits and how we spend our time. It's also a really good joke. But hey, what do I know? While it's currently only available via the iOS App store, I'm going to download Binky as soon as it's available on Android. I'd recommend you do the same.

SATIRE

THE METADATA'S ALRIGHT

To my fellow university students,

I know we are young and complaining is kind of our thing, but it's time to rein it in. I get it, you've heard about these new metadata retention laws, and you're terrified. Not just terrified, you're livid. You've read a thinkpiece or two and you're ready to revolt, or at least tweet angrily. I'm here to set the record straight.

This is a “perfectly legitimate” and “well thought-out” law.

Gentle reader, rest those tireless fingertips for one moment and I'll answer your *completely illogical concerns*.

**"I DON'T EVEN UNDERSTAND
WHAT THIS NEW LAW IS!"**

As of April this year, Internet Service Providers (ISP) are required to keep records of your telecommunications data, or metadata, for a period of two years. During this time, a variety of government organisations have warrantless access to it. Remember, it isn't mass surveillance, it's metadata retention! Very different, don't you think?

**"OH MY GOODNESS! NOT MY
INTERNET HISTORY!"**

If this was your first reaction, then fear not! Metadata is just data about data, not all your weird messages and dodgy Google search history. If you were to send a tweet for example, the content of the tweet isn't stored. In the words of Steve Dalby, Chief Regulatory Officer of iiNet, it only includes "Who wrote the tweet, their biography, their location, when it was written, how many other tweets have been written on that user's account, where the author was when the tweet was posted, what time it was, whom it was sent to ... [and] where the author is normally based." That's isn't so bad, right?

It isn't access to your messages, just access to an unprecedented quantity of metadata, which can be analysed using sophisticated data-mining programs that have the potential to reveal your relationships, political affiliations, sexual orientation, and your mental and physical health. *See?* Nothing to get all hotheaded over.

**"THIS WON'T EVEN BE EFFECTIVE
AT STOPPING CRIMINALS!"**

Come on now, it has been *indisputably* proven that metadata retention is an effective and essential tool. "Wait a minute, that can't be true! You simply download Tor or get a VPN. I'm an average Internet-using uni student and I know that; surely child pornographers and terrorists can figure it out," you might say. That's where you're wrong again!

Take Germany for example. (Ignore the inconvenient fact that its law was repealed and replaced for being unconstitutional.) When Germany retained metadata for six month periods, criminal convictions increased by a whopping 0.006%! It doesn't really matter that the American Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board found there wasn't a single instance in which the NSA's metadata retention uncovered a terrorist plot. It doesn't matter because, in only seven years, they can say it "arguably contributed" to the identification of one (yes that's right, *one!*) unknown terrorism suspect! What more *concrete* evidence could you ask for?

**"THIS HAS GOT TO BE
OUTRAGEOUSLY EXPENSIVE!"**

The best part is cost efficiency! A 2015 report estimated that our new metadata laws would cost somewhere between \$188.8 and \$319.1 million. Ever so kindly, Joe Hockey graciously announced the government would commit \$131 million to assist ISPs. That only leaves a small \$57-\$188 million gap to be covered by the Australian people. Well worth it, if you ask me.

**"HOW DO I KNOW MY DATA WILL
BE SAFE?!"**

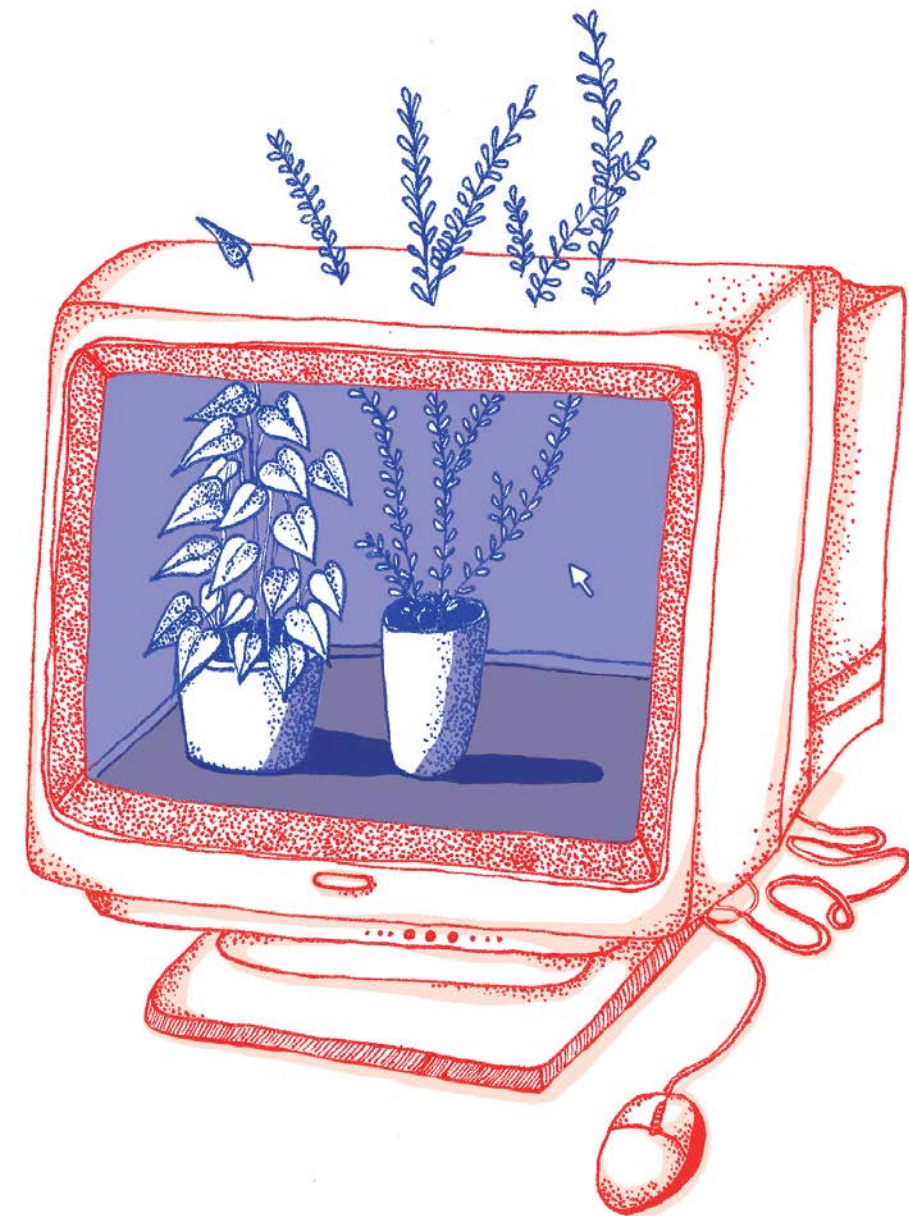
The government is one step ahead of you, again! There are strict regulations requiring your information to be safely encrypted. Of course, the government can't tell you exactly where, or how, all this personal information is being stored, since they don't exactly know either. ISPs don't have to tell them. But wherever it is, it's probably very safe. It might be in Australia, or maybe in China, or maybe somewhere else entirely. Rest assured that your data is probably just wherever it's cheapest to store it. Sounds good to me.

**"WHO'S SEEING ALL THIS
INFORMATION THEN?"**

In terms of who can access your information, it's any organisation deemed to be an "enforcement agency." Currently, there are 61 agencies listed. Best of all, any agency can apply to be added to this list (with approval at the Attorney General's discretion). So yes, the list could continuously grow, but we have the government's word that access is completely essential for every single agency. Your personal information is *totally vital* for national security!

To wrap this up, it's time to take a deep breath and quit freaking out about nothing. This is clearly a “well thought-out”, entirely “evidence-based” law, which totally justifies the serious privacy dangers and millions of dollars it is costing. At the end of the day, terrorists are just not smart enough to download VPNs and there is no way they could bypass this incredibly high-tech system. It's totally obvious this won't just be an expensive, ineffective law that accomplishes nothing more than breaching the fundamental rights of everyday Australian citizens.

Yours sincerely,
A fellow (*VPN-using*) student



WELCOME TO THE VIRTUAL PLAZA

BY JACK MANGOS

Art never exists in a vacuum, and nor does the artist. Watching a film, or reading a novel, or listening to a piece of music not only involves experiencing the work itself, but the work as a response to the artist’s environment, to other thematically relevant works, and to other artists. This is, I think, what allows subcultures to form; without a consistent set of ideas or a shared response to social circumstances, there could be no drawing together of disparate artistic media.

We are now in an age where the Internet is one of the most dominant cultural features of our lives. The Internet mediates a good portion of our interpersonal communication, as well as our access to information and media. The question, therefore, can be asked: has the Internet facilitated the creation of new subcultures that, otherwise, are unlikely to have ever existed? My answer would be a firm yes, in the form of a deeply self-referential and ironic online subculture known as “Vaporwave”.

To begin to elaborate on this answer, it is helpful to see how a familiar subculture, early hip-hop, was drawn together by a shared response to the world. Early hip-hop was born out of anger at widespread African-American poverty, in combination with the devastating effects of the crack cocaine epidemic and the war on drugs. This anger combined with the development of new technology, such as turntables, to create a genuinely new form of music.

However, the iconoclastic culture of hip-hop extended far beyond the music. DJ Afrika Bambaataa, one of the earliest influential hip-hop artists of the eighties, described what he called the “four pillars” of the hip-hop subculture: rapping, DJing and record mixing, breakdancing, and graffiti art. Importantly, as argued in Jeff Chang’s book *Can’t Stop Won’t Stop*, all elements of this subculture developed in tandem, influencing each other and growing synergistically. Further, they all gave voice to the unheard anger, and the defiance, of poor

African-Americans. Hence, another influential early artist, KRS-One, suggested a fifth pillar, “knowledge”, be added, to emphasise the importance of the political and social drivers of hip-hop.

In a similar way, the Internet has provided the requisite stimulus for Vaporwave. Vaporwave originated in around 2010 on websites such as Reddit and Bandcamp. Just as hip-hop had defiance and the drive for self-expression at its core, Vaporwave has evolved as a paradoxical critique and embrace of late-stage consumer capitalism, a contradiction responsible for binding the community together and driving the artistic development.

Vaporwave is both a style of music and a style of visual art. As argued by YouTuber Adam Neely, the music had its origins in producers, including James Ferraro and INTERNET CLUB, experimenting with nostalgia-driven plunderphonics. “Plunderphonics” is the musical technique of treating existing sound recordings, including existing songs, as if they were musical instruments themselves – “playing” them through heavy editing to create new sounds. The songs these original Vaporwave artists drew upon were 80s pop, funk, and soul. These “plundered” songs were edited in combination with samples drawn from a wide range of nostalgic commercial sources, such as the AOL “You’ve Got Mail” soundbite, old K-Mart elevator music, sounds from 1990s operating systems, and dial-up and automated speech recordings. Arguably the most popular Vaporwave song, “リサフランク 420 / 現代のコンピュー” by MACINTOSH PLUS, for example, is a slowed-down and edited version of Diana Ross’s “It’s Your Move”.

Listening to Vaporwave almost always involves experiencing tension. On the one hand, the chopped and slowed plunderphonic techniques have a calming, almost hypnotic, effect on the listener. In particular, the songs of the early, and most innovative, Vaporwave period sound fractured, and make us feel a “foggy” confusion

and sedation. However, Vaporwave is also made with very high-quality sound, the electronic sharpness contrasting with the sedative experience. The nostalgic sound effects work in favour of both. They provide crisp noise to keep the listener engaged, yet also dislocate the audience, pulling us backwards in time. Adam Harper, writing for *Dummy Mag*, argues that the effect mimics hypnagogia, the state between being asleep and being awake. Vaporwave attempts to simulate the half-consciousness where dream and reality mix.

The music alone forms an incomplete picture of the subculture, but is enough to understand the movement’s politics. For the sake of clarity, its message can be directly contrasted with punk. Punk was concerned with building authentic music from the ground up, a style that could not be commercialised as the punk artists thought rock music had been. Hence, punk attempted to maintain the “purity” of rock by increasing the BPM, making the vocals harsh and aggressive, and turning up the volume, all of which was intended to make it inaccessible to the general public, and to corporate interest.

Vaporwave does the exact opposite, and seeks to investigate capitalism “from within” instead of challenging it “from without”. By sampling, mixing, chopping, and mashing heavily commercial music and sounds from the 80s and 90s, Vaporwave questions the promise and idealism of that era. It was a time when capitalism had prevailed over communism, when greed was good and, crucially, a time when computers became commercially available for the first time, offering a brighter and easier future. The disappointment of many at the hands of neoliberal economics, in combination with our clear failure to achieve the promised techno-utopia, gives rise to the resistance within Vaporwave.

Yet, not only does Vaporwave critique capitalism, it is also resigned to it, which is particularly communicated through the sedating effect of the music. This is designed

to mirror the numbing experience of being constantly bombarded by advertisements and commodities – the experience of being “lost” in a global marketplace where our chief responsibility is hedonism. This is why, as Adam Harper argues, the music is so heavily inspired by sounds at the junction of the private and the economic, such as the shopping mall, the office lobby, and the hotel reception. These are the spaces where capital makes itself the most clearly known, where the environment is the most clearly manufactured and, therefore, inspires Vaporwave the most strongly.

However, just as in the case of hip-hop, Vaporwave has its own unique (and widely recognisable) visual art style. This artistic style, referred to as “A E S T H E T I C S”, contributes to the overall experience. A predominance of pink and blue colours, as well as the motif of pixelated palm trees in many Vaporwave music videos, calls to mind Miami of the 80s, a “virtual”, or manufactured, playground. The effect is to universalise what Miami was to what our global economy now is. The reliance on outdated computer graphics, particularly old video games, further reveals the extent to which our pleasures are designed on our behalf. The inclusion of Greco-Roman sculpture in Vaporwave videos and album covers suggests the impossibility of acting ethically and rationally when our environments are so meticulously designed that we have no firm ground on which to judge our behaviour. We are, like marble statues in a computer-generated landscape, hilariously displaced. Importantly, just like in hip-hop, the elements of Vaporwave are synergistic. The significance of the imagery is only established by listening to the music and, similarly, the sense of alienation produced by the music is magnified by the visual mixing of the virtual and the real.

The combined effect of the aesthetic and music of Vaporwave is described as creating a hypothetical, hyperbolic environment known

as the “Virtual Plaza”: one enormous shopping mall, the “end-point” of our consumer culture where we roam endlessly and meaninglessly. In the Virtual Plaza, everybody is reduced to a subject in the global economy, even those who own the stores and the advertisements. While this may be a somewhat horrifying hypothetical, the reflexivity of Vaporwave also acknowledges its desirability. Who isn’t, after all, tempted by the soft comforts of the food court? Even more strongly, who can resist the addictive cycle of the promised pleasure and disappointment of each new commodity? It is as though, in the cushioned voice of an automated phone line operator, Vaporwave is telling us, “We hope you enjoy your time at the Virtual Plaza, because there may be no way out”.

The question of the role of the Internet in Vaporwave can thus be answered. The Internet is much more than the repository of the sounds and images required for Vaporwave production. The Internet is, rather, one of the best examples of the intersection of the virtual and the real. As a completely manufactured environment, which is used as a retreat from, yet is a product of, global capitalism, the Internet spurs Vaporwave’s criticisms and resignation. The final question, therefore, must be asked of you, the reader: as you finish this article and return to Facebook, or ASOS, or Netflix, is it possible that your time in the Virtual Plaza is already underway?



WHAT'S UP WITH WHATSAPP IN CHINA?

WhatsApp, one of the final frontiers of internationally-owned social media platforms in China, has been reached at last by the country's "Great Firewall".

Major news sources confirmed thousands of user reports that Chinese filters have blocked attempts to exchange images and videos through WhatsApp. This disturbance is reminiscent of the partial disruption which preceded a total block of Google's Gmail in 2014.

The Facebook-owned messaging service appears to join China's increasingly comprehensive blacklist in its crusade for "cyber sovereignty", alongside various video streaming sites, news outlets, and Western media. Technological titans Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Facebook have all been affected. Indeed, this incident spells continued disappointment for Mark Zuckerberg, and his public and persistent efforts to woo Chinese authorities into favouring his products with a few cracks in their digital fortress.

While local application WeChat dominates in popularity within China, WhatsApp has attained the strange privilege of becoming what the *New York Times* refers to as the "lingua franca" of the global community. With over a billion WhatsApp users worldwide, a ban on the otherwise ubiquitous messaging platform may throttle relations between mainland China and its enormous emigrant population, as well as with overseas business contacts.

Besides driving business towards domestic industry, incapacitating WhatsApp also coerces users into more open channels of conversation. WhatsApp's end-to-end

encryption capabilities are integral to carving out a sliver of confidential communication in China's regime of censorship and surveillance, especially after Telegram was disabled in 2015 for its association with the activities of Chinese human rights lawyers.

Interference with WhatsApp is not the only recent development in China's consolidation of control over Internet content within its borders. The government has issued a directive to the nation's three telecommunication providers to prohibit access to virtual private networks by February 2018, which will eliminate the primary recourse for Chinese citizens in circumventing the country's highly restrictive web filters.

Furthermore, foreign companies have petitioned for clarification and delay of a new cybersecurity law that came into effect in June. Apple is building a data centre in Guizhou province, in compliance with the statutory requirement for "critical information infrastructure operators" to store users' personal information and "important business data" locally. Human Rights Watch warns that the ambiguity of this "abusive" legislation may afford the Chinese government broad powers to target multinational companies and regulate an indeterminate scope of their activity.

The timing of these tightening constraints coincides with the volatility of the current political climate. To forestall the martyrdom of political prisoner Liu Xiaobo, Chinese censors have taken unprecedented steps to eradicate images of the Nobel Prize laureate in private WeChat messages after his death on 13 July, in addition to filtering out all permutations of his name in Internet search results. Similarly,

the recurring blackout of references to Winnie the Pooh returned recently, in an ongoing campaign to stifle suggestions of the cartoon bear's resemblance to President Xi Jinping since 2013.

Most significantly, the twice-a-decade National Congress of the Communist Party is due to take place in October or November. With a leadership reshuffle so imminent, it remains to be seen whether WhatsApp will become a permanent victim to a five-yearly low in the ruling party's tolerance for instability, privacy and online freedom.

SPOTLIGHT ON

Adrian Agius



Adrian Agius is a combined law and commerce student, majoring in Information Systems. Adrian has been significantly involved in bringing “Hackathons” to the Law School at UNSW, and was recently nominated for the Lawyers Weekly Australian Law Awards as Law Student of the Year. We chatted to him about coding, Hackathons and the role of the Internet in the legal industry.

HOW DID YOU COME TO BE PASSIONATE ABOUT TECHNOLOGY AND CODING?

My father is a network engineer and we’ve always had no shortage of devices around the house. So I guess you can say I’ve always been interested in technology. Coding came later when I wanted to start building my own things and putting some creativity into the world around me.

COULD YOU EXPLAIN WHAT A “HACKATHON” IS?

Hackathons were originally events designed by technology companies to try and detect problems in software. Companies would award a prize to people who could break products currently on the market or in development. By identifying these issues in software, these companies could ensure they were producing a better, more secure product.

Nowadays, the concept has been extended to breaking norms and traditions through the invention of new products. [A Hackathon is about] thinking of creative and novel ways to do things that seem a bit archaic. They aren’t strictly technology based either, but typically, existing issues are solved via technology solutions.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR ROLE IN THESE HACKATHONS?

I’ve been both an organiser and participant in Hackathons. I’ve made it my goal to bring these events to law, given that they are usually done in other industries. I’ve done so by initiating and running the UNSW Law Hackathon, HackJustice. The concept of HackJustice is to address issues faced by community legal centres (CLCs) through technology. A combination of mentoring and cross-disciplinary thinking provides students with different avenues to solve legal problems, which benefits both them and the CLC involved.

We also ran an inequality Hackathon earlier in the year as part of the UNSW Grand Challenges Program. This year I also flew to London to participate in the Online Courts Hackathon run by the UK Ministry of

Justice. It was a massive event with over 200 people from different countries.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE MOST INTERESTING AND COOL SOLUTIONS THAT HAVE COME OUT OF THE HACKATHONS AT UNSW?

I’ve seen everything from chatbots to artificial intelligence platforms that predict matter outcomes. Although these are great, I think the fact that law students look to technology to solve problems is the most interesting thing to come out of these events as each produces solutions that grapple with the law in differing ways.

WHAT CONTINUING PROBLEMS EXIST THAT YOU THINK HACKATHONS COULD TACKLE IN THE FUTURE?

The things I’ve learnt from dealing with CLCs in these matters is that there is no shortage of problems. Underfunding and understaffing have meant that even the most basic of systems do not exist within these organisations, something that should be made the subject of discussion for organisations much larger than HackJustice. Elsewhere, I’d like to one day tackle things like paper and resource consumption in firms and court costs, both of which offer the potential for significant cost reductions where justice is concerned.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE BIGGEST ISSUES THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ADDRESS WITH REGARD TO THE REGULATION OF THE INTERNET?

Can’t stress the importance of fighting for privacy online enough. That in itself brings with it a whole host of issues around data sharing (how our data is used), encryption (how our data is secured) and net neutrality (what we can access and how easily). They are interesting debates and often deter many because of the perceived technicality required to participate. This however isn’t the case, and I’d encourage everyone to try and get involved because ultimately, it is about the consumer and their data – and that consumer is you.

HOW DO YOU THINK THE NEAR-UBIQUITY OF THE INTERNET HAS IMPACTED UPON OUR PRIVACY?

It offers more opportunities for others to invade our privacy, something that wouldn’t be the case if the issues mentioned above were appropriately dealt with and enforced.

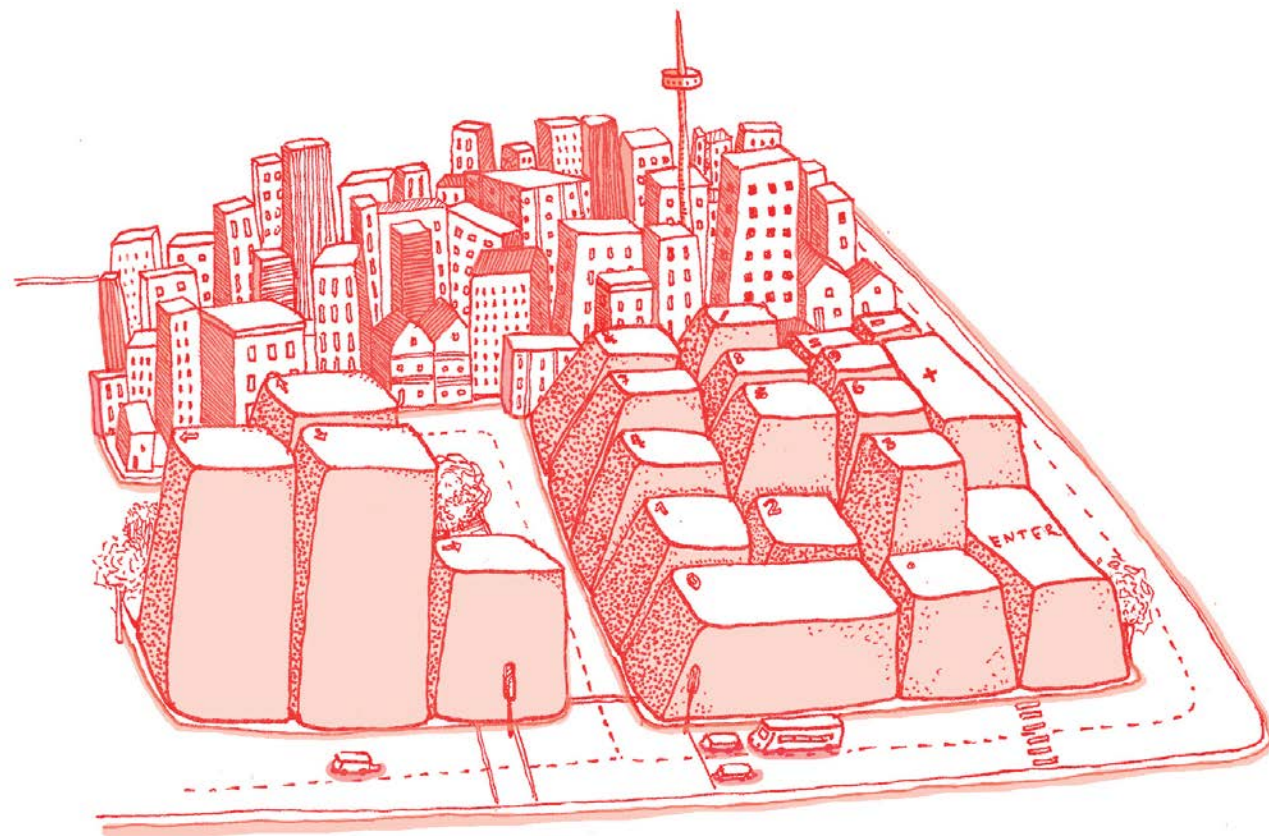
WHAT DO YOU SEE YOURSELF DOING IN THE FUTURE AFTER YOU LEAVE UNI?

Something law and technology related. Exactly what that means, I’m not quite sure.

WHAT’S YOUR FAVOURITE APP TO USE?

I regularly rant about #legaltech on Twitter. It’s always the first thing I download on my device.

BY ESTEE SARSFIELD



BY ROSIE BOGUMIL

A Roadmap

My body is a roadmap,
Of white ridges, undulating hills and
Curves of red mingling with slashes of grey,
As if a snail raced to cross this broken landscape.

Slow and steady is the path from darkness,
While I – the typical hare – cannot bear the harshness
Of reliving these moments.
Moment by moment by moment

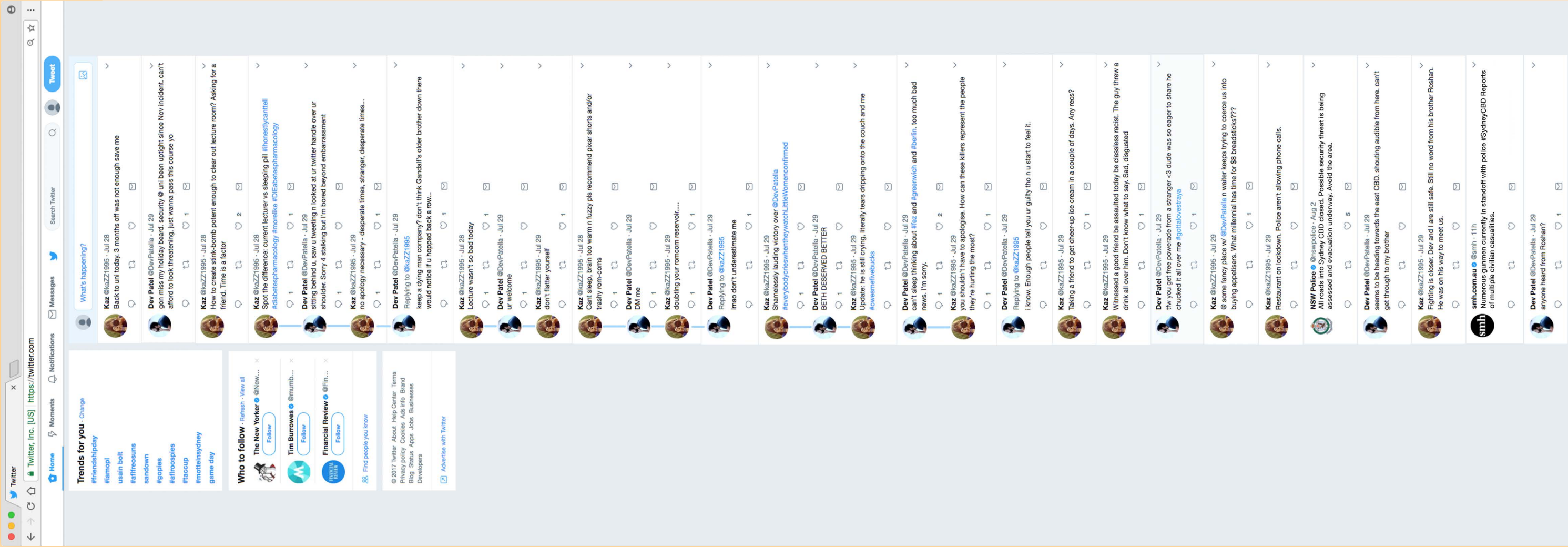
The light gets further away,
Until it is untraceable. And I,
With no other option but the impossible,
Add fault lines to the map.

A sinusoidal function cycling through emotion,
My only refuge from hurt
Found in the refuge of pain.
It comes back to that same question,

Over and over and over.
And my answer remains the same.
As always, once again, just one more time,
I reply identically to insolence.

As if I know why
I desecrated my own body, and formed ridges
Where there should have been plains
And scars where there should have been none.

My body is a roadmap, and like a roadmap,
It is worn, weathered, and rough
Around the edges, from the trials of this
Adventure called life.



A Slice of Guilt Pie: Force-Fed

Eurydice only has two bars of wifi signal

i

Eurydice only has two bars of wifi signal,
so she can't send Orpheus
this awesome meme
she found.

ii

Orpheus with her admiration in his hands;
Eurydice grasps his desire, slips on the pavement —
He buys an ice lolly with pocket change, waiting;
he doesn't know yet.
The birds lift off the street.

iii

Down to the place she goes.
Wails
while descending,
Phone held high.
(No wifi on the way to the underworld)

iv

“Can I have the password?” she asks Cerberus.
“No.” (Times three).
More wailing; Hades to intervene.
Hades pauses. Utters, “Tough luck dear.”
A grimace, moves on.

v

Eurydice, lying on the dais, weeps.
Death is light as a curtain upon her.
Take it off,
take it off,
she cries.

vi

Library of the dead's rank
with shadows, but she's a shaft of
light. Cold fingers dog-ear Shakespeare,
scuffs at Faulkner. Hades is furious.
She grows lighter still.

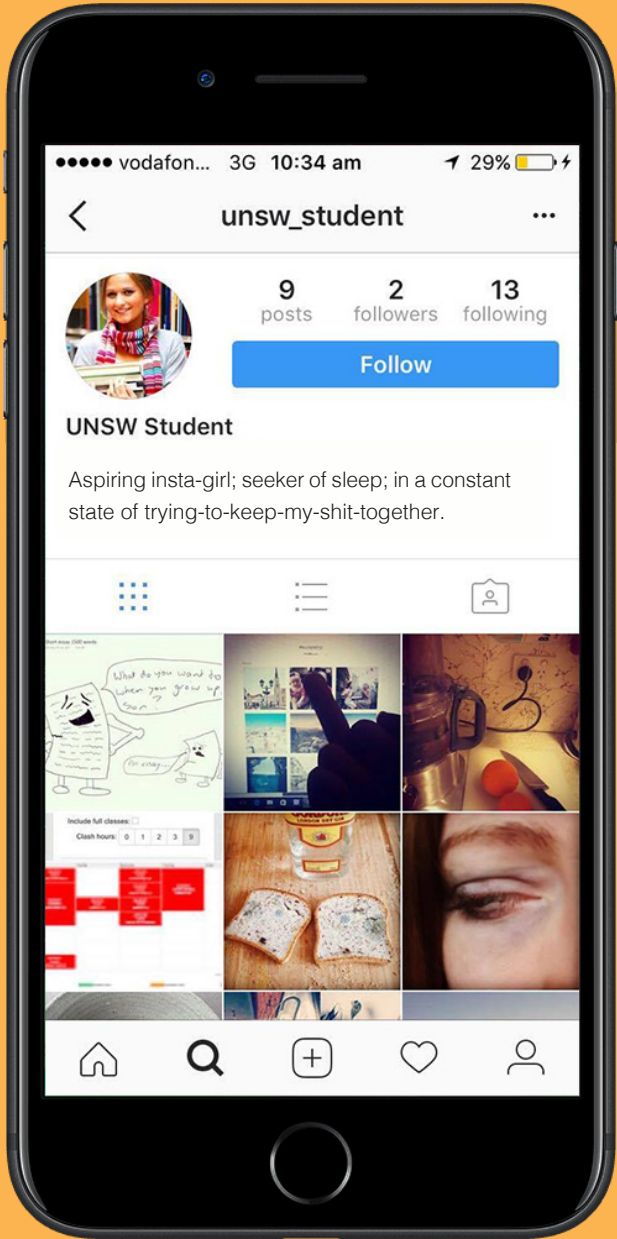
vii

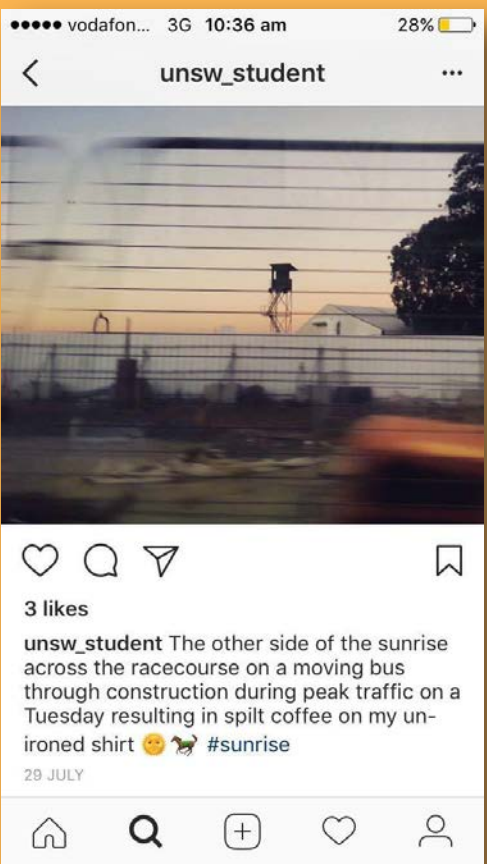
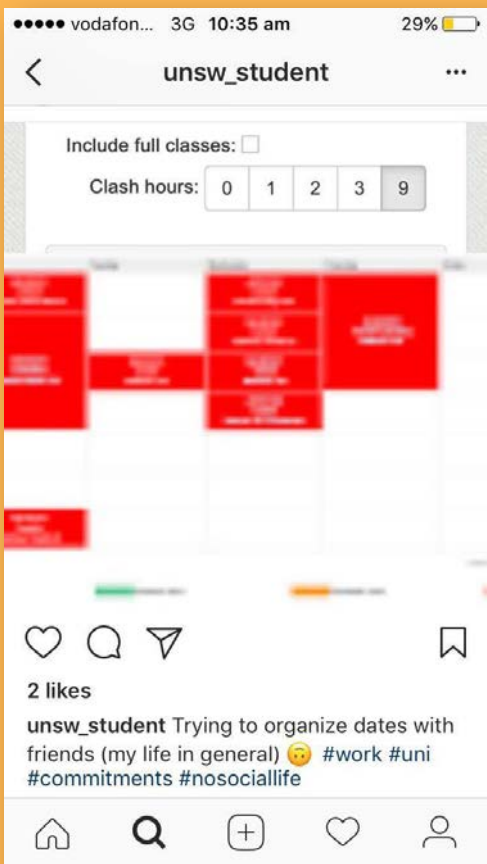
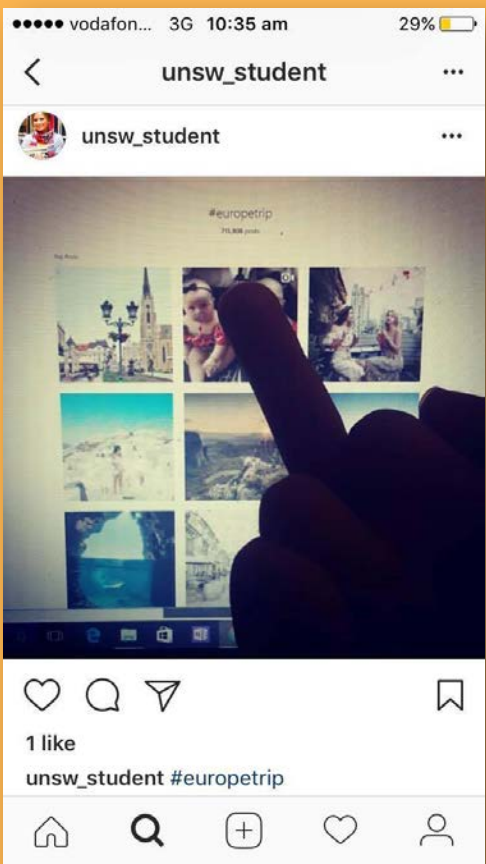
By the window sill, she grows close
with Persephone,
(you know the way it goes).
Somewhere
A symphony is starting.

viii

“Come up, where we gnash our teeth
and struggle in the light of day.” But that which binds
so tight
is not enough. “What's become of you?”,
he calls. No answer.
Orpheus re-emerges, all alone.

UNSW Insta-Girl





Reviewing: An Okay Tinder Date

Having fallen prey to a number of boring sexual encounters, a Tinder date which turned into a year-long, tumultuous relationship, and the gossip that virally infects a friendship circle when you sleep with your mate's housemate after a night out, I was reluctant to redownload that little flame we've all grown to know and love. I invested hours into swiping, only to receive dry, monotonous conversation as payment. And this just hardly seemed worth it when I could be ordering UberEats and watching Netflix with my cat (who expects nothing from me except for the occasional replenishment of her food bowl).

However, through the haze of "always up for beers and banter!"s emerged someone who sparked my interest. As we graduated from Tinder-talking to Instagram mutuals to Facebook friends, I figured it was time to meet my potential suitor.

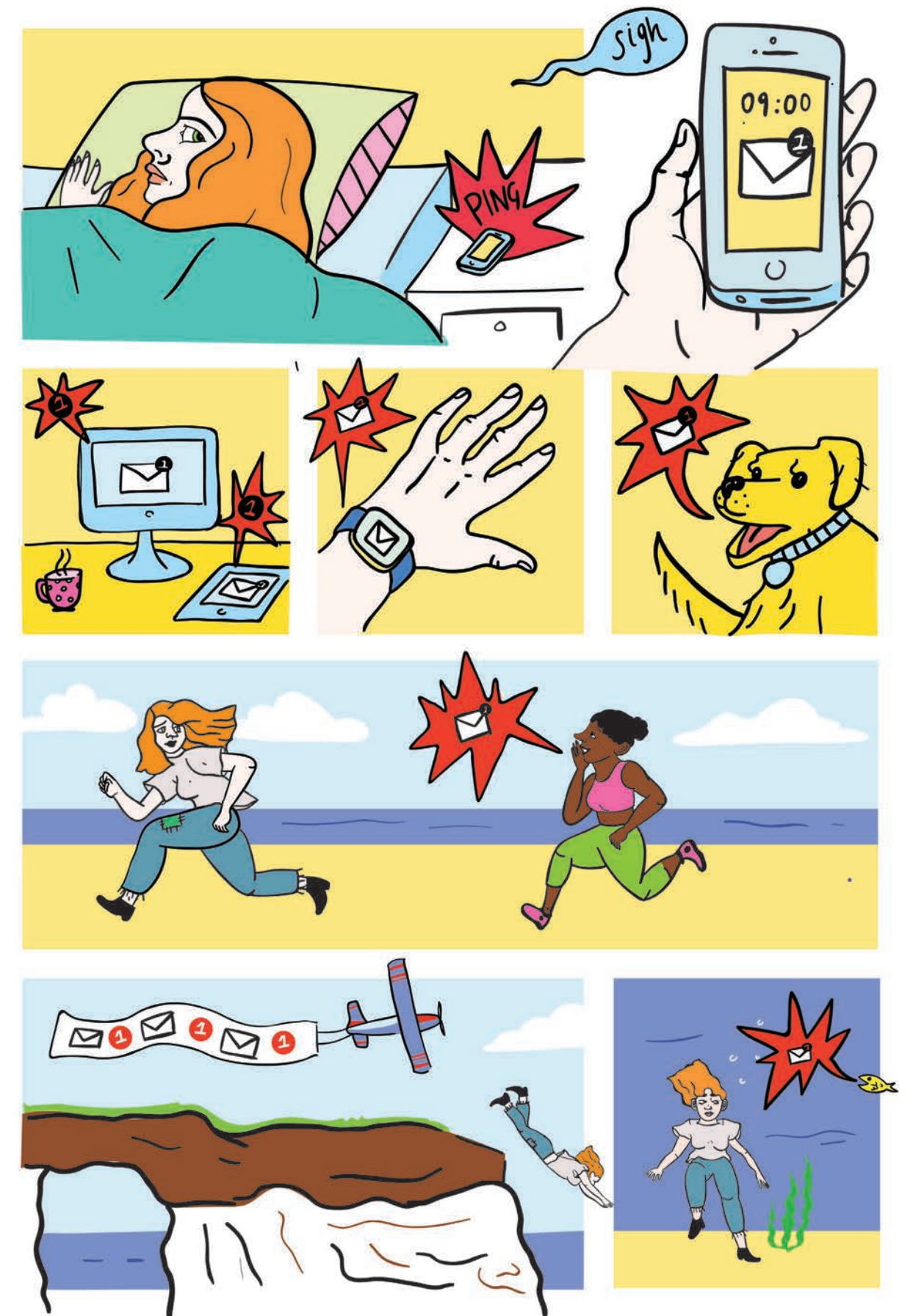
As I stepped into his choice of sparsely lit establishment on a Friday evening, I was instantly overcome by the smell of what can only be described as the budget-hipster cologne of craft beer and Ikea candles. Having looked over his profile again whilst on the bus to the venue, my eyes scanned the crowd for Matt, 25, "Just another Irish lad enjoying Sydney's Inner-West".

At first, I was worried that he would be unrecognisable without his usual photo props: a chocolate Labrador named Fergus and an Ashton guitar. Additionally, the pub's attempt at up-scale ambient lighting would mean he'd have to dress sans Ray Bans (unless I'd accidentally agreed to go out with the Newtown-millennial version of Bono, in which case I'd be heading straight to the cheapest bottle of wine available at BWS).

Fortunately, he waved at me from across the room and stood to greet me. Whilst aesthetically pleasing, I was immediately suspicious of my date's decision to sit at a table with stools, rather than the actual chairs available, which at least offered the potential for comfort. Who *chooses* to sit on stools?! Immediately offering to buy me a drink, we were able to bypass the first-meeting awkwardness and launch straight into a conversation about how bad the traffic was on the commute there. As we warmed to one another with the help of two whiskey sours, our discussion moved on to more interesting, albeit safe, topics such as childhood mischief and fun animal facts.

Overall, I am pleased to report that within the 120-minute window, I was treated to a night of adequate entertainment. I believe there is room to explore the possibility of a sequel in the future. Whilst there were no notable performances, the standard of the evening was higher than that of drinking wine alone in my room.

I give this date 3 and ½ stars out of 5 (I have requested that my date refrain from publishing this score on his profile like an unoriginal, Average Tinder Joe).



SRC



PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

Hi UNSW!

Semester 2 is well underway, and I hope you've all settled back in.

We've been busy planning our campaigns and events so that we can continue to fight for your rights and deliver the services that you need.

Join us to continue the campaigns for a better 891 service and to stop the Trimonster to make sure that we have the best educational experience at UNSW, and one that's accessible for everyone.

If you missed out on Free Brekky or subsidised RSA courses in Semester 1, don't worry, they'll be back this Semester, along with lots of opportunities to get involved with your SRC!

ABOUT THE SRC

The Student Representative Council (SRC) is the peak representative and advocacy body for students at UNSW. We run campaigns aimed at improving UNSW for all students, fighting for the issues you care about, and also providing you with a community to chill out and socialise with. The SRC is a platform for you to shape your own educational experience, create real change for you and your fellow students and make community connections that will last you a lifetime.

WHAT'S ON

Check out our website in Semester 2 to check out what's happening!
<http://www.arc.unsw.edu.au/voice/src/upcoming-events>

ABOUT COLLECTIVES

Our collectives include Education, Environment, Ethno Cultural, Indigenous, International, Queer, Students with Disabilities, Welfare and Women's.

The Collectives are a great way to get involved in a community, make some friends, and campaign around the issues that matter to you

Campaigns include:

Fix the 891 Queues - Accessible and safe transport to and from UNSW

Divestment - UNSW must divest from fossil fuel companies and invest in a sustainable and ethical future

Stop the UNSW Trimonster - Fighting back against the introduction of harmful trimesters

End Sexual Violence on campus - After the release of the Australian Human Rights Commission survey on 1 August, action must be taken by universities and governments to end sexual violence on campus

Free Speech Isn't Free - Focusing on the mistreatment of Women of Colour who have spoken out in the media

Free Breakfast

And heaps more to come in Semester 2!



ABOUT SPACES

Need somewhere to chill out on campus? A quiet place to study? A place to connect with like-minded people? Maybe just a microwave or fridge for your lunch? The SRC has you covered. We have equity rooms – safe spaces for you to hang out, nap, or get some readings done.

- Welfare and Disability Room - A place for autonomous collectives, and also for any student to chill out in the meantime.
- International & Ethno-cultural Room - A safe chill place for ethnically and culturally diverse students and international students.
- Women's Room - The women's room is a safe and autonomous space for women identifying students.
- Queer Space - A safe autonomous place to relax and connect with other LGBTIA/Queer students. Meetings and other activities are run by the Queer Collective on a weekly basis.

Head to the website to find out where the rooms are located and how you can use them.

COLLECTIVE TIMES

Check out our website and Facebook page to find updated Semester 2 Collective times!



WANT TO CONTRIBUTE?

SEND YOUR STORIES, IDEAS AND OTHER SUBMISSIONS TO
tharunka@arc.unsw.edu.au



