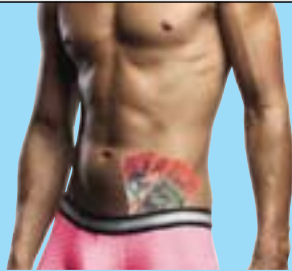




THE UNAUSTRALIAN

UNEMPLOYED
GAYS TAKING
WELFARE
BENEFITS



JANET ALBRECHTSEN:

Why I
eat babies



THARUNKA FOUNDATION DAY | VOL 55, ISSUE 5 | JULY 2009

SCANDAL

Teenagers today having better sex than you ever did

Political correctness gone mad

as faceless bureaucrats of Middle Eastern appearance waste your hard-earned tax dollars giving condoms to kids

EXCLUSIVE



INSIDE

Greens to blame for everything

ARC
UNSW Student Life



Editorial

Welcome in Thalunka edition fifth for year 2009, theme in 'Foreigners', hope you make good time read with us.

Foreigners edition very good value for you! On page 10 got story about Asian parents turn very silly gong-gong when come to Australia. On page 20 got man want make violent with refugee. Also got very crazy angry man on page 28, name in 'Kwan', we think he from China too.

Also, in this issue is commemorate Foundation Day for university. Did you know UNSW is first founding in 1949, same year with People's Republic? Now got many Chinese come study with you, ha ha. Maybe they come read Thalunka too, only English not so good for them.

Hope Thalunka make you benefit for mind and fun time for reading.

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tharunka

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INSIDE

02	EDITORIAL
04	LETTERS
06	WORLD NEWS OF THE WORLD
	FOREIGNERS
08	WAR MINUS THE SHOOTING
12	NOT RACIST BUT
20	REFUGEES
21	THE OTHER EPIDEMIC
	UNIVERSITY
16	SCAVENGER HUNT
30	OB REPORTS
	LIFE
10	GUIDE TO ASIAN PARENTS
24	THE SLUTTY ENGLISH LANGUAGE
28	DICK SMITH
	REGULARS
11	DR LURK
13	BELLAMY'S BAROMETER
18	HYPOTHETICALLY SPEAKING
27	AGONY AUNT
29	REVIEWS

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Tharunka acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which the University now stands.



Ethical Consumption or 'Guilt-wash'?

DEAR THARUNKA EDITORS,

Last edition Matt Cobb-Clark wrote in to say that Fair Trade is 'for suckers' and that it's economically unsound (Tharunka vol. 55 issue 4). I'd like to weigh in on this because Fair Trade is a sensitive topic for me but also because, uhm... who can resist jumping in on a good food fight?!?!

This is how Fair Trade works: Fair Trade products guarantee farmers a minimum price for their produce, be it coffee, tea, bananas, chocolate, rice, sugar, or honey. If the non Fair Trade market price rises above that minimum, the farmers will be paid the higher price. A share of the 'premium', or the higher price for Fair Trade products compared to non Fair Trade products, is democratically invested into community projects, such as schools, health clinics, sanitation and roads. This process is regularly audited. This spares farmers from being ravaged by the volatility of commodity markets.

Fair Trade has been making a big difference to the lives of over 7 million people. For example, Clinic Café Timor, the largest provider of rural health care in East Timor, is wholly funded by proceeds from Fair Trade which are pooled by the farmers and democratically invested.

What is Matt's problem? He reckons that Fair Trade is a mechanism for 'price gouging' and taking advantage of 'suckers', as a) Fair Trade is more expensive and b) not all of the price difference you pay for Fair Trade products goes back to the farmers.

Part a) of Matt's argument just misses the point. Fair Trade is not a brand. It is a certification system. Hence, there will be expensive Fair Trade certified brands and cheaper Fair Trade certified brands. There will be some really good quality Fair Trade chocolates out there, and maybe some more questionable-tasting stuff. If cheap is your game, even Aldi has no-frills Fair Trade!

Because Fair Trade in Australia has a long way to go to catch-up with the movement in the UK and Europe, we don't have nearly as much variety and choice along the spectrum. Mostly we have a niche market (although it's growing fast!) whereby only high quality Fair Trade products can provide the bigger margins needed to compete at lower volumes of sales. When you pay an extra 50c for Fair Trade at the Coffee Republic, it's not just because of the ethical guarantee. It's also because the Fair Trade certification is coupled with other good things, like certified organic and 100% premium Arabica blend (which the regular stuff ain't).

Now for part b). Yes, some coffee shops that sell Fair Trade might 'take a little extra off the top', although it's nothing like the 90% figure that Matt suggested. So what? People often pay more for similar products based on superficial differences in packaging and brand recognition. That's what capitalism is – choosing to buy whatever you want for whatever reasons you like. Why are those who do so on the basis of being ethically conscious singled out for being 'suckers'? Is everyone who buys Lipton a 'sucker', just because they could have bought Home Brand tea for a lower price? Or are they exercising their discretion as consumers in a free market, just like I do when I buy Fair Trade?

Matt is right when he says we should be wary of claims about ethical consumption. Just like 'green-wash', the ethical-consumption movement can be easily subjected to 'guilt-wash' if not armed with some basic knowledge about economics and social issues. However, Fair Trade is not just good intentions and marketing fuzz. It is a robust system of accreditation and guarantees, which guard its credibility against would-be 'guilt-wash' copycats.

So don't let economic snobbery make you feel ashamed to think about the ethical significance of your product choices. You can be confident that Fair Trade is making a change to the people's lives by empowering them out of poverty through trade. Vote with your wallets indeed!

BOBBY CHEN

Ode to Level 3

Before Level 3 of the UNSW Library became an IKEA playground, there used to be a row of desks along the window, behind the old reference section. Everyone knew this was prized seating: space for just five people, a view straight onto the Library Lawn and best of all, swivel chairs.

In memory of this peaceful corridor, I would like to cite an inscription I read on one of the desks last year, which I jotted down in my notebook at the time. Each line was written in a different pen and by a new person's hand.

Read separately, each sentiment seems trivial. Read together, there is something quirky and wonderful about these anonymous thoughts, like the collective consciousness of a year gone by and the people who experienced it...

"I miss Africa.
I miss cheap oil.
I miss my dog.
I miss my family.
I miss my childhood.
I miss my 8.50 every day.
I miss Mr Rogers.
I miss him a lot.
I miss the way my girl holds me.
I miss the summer time, and the freedom that came with it.
I miss sleep.
I miss you.
I miss Boston.
I miss the days when designer handbags were more affordable.
I miss thinking everything I saw was beautiful.
I miss feeling happy.
I miss home-cooked food – real food.
I miss my Katie.
I miss stress-free high school days.
I miss being thin."

EMILY MARGO

Bothered

DEAR THARUNKA,
Why do you always assume that I give a shit? I'm sick of reading articles that assume that I have shit to give or shit to partition to causes that only pinkos with small deposits of shit to allocate would give a shit about. This is really getting out of hand - inevitably the whole thing will turn into shit (just like Your Day!) and people with no shit to give will use *Tharunka* as a substitute for their dietary shit intake, or queer-evolution-proponents like me will have absolutely no more shit to fling at others.

Sincerely,
ALAN ZEINO

Kwan's Finger on the Pulse (of a Dead Person)

DEAR THARUNKA,
I'd like to tip my hat to Matt Kwan for his highly controversial and timely piece on Princess Diana's death (Tharunka vol. 55 issue 3). By controversial, I mean passe, and by timely, I mean completely irrelevant. Next time Matt should pick on someone who can actually defend themselves, because I'd like to see them kick his ass. I was cheated of this experience in Brisbane.

It's not 1997; it's no longer edgy to bash someone who is already dead. I'm just afraid that next week will be "Mr. Kwan attacks Holocaust Victims". Come on Kwan, if you're going to be controversial at least be fucking entertaining.

Sincerely,
KRISTYN GLANVILLE

An Offer That May Interest Our Readers

HI THERE,

I hope you are well.

I am writing because I am currently working on the publicity for the National Institute of Circus Arts (NICA) and they are calling out for applicants from around Australia to audition for their prestigious 'Bachelor of Circus Arts' degree, with auditions being held around the country later this year.

The NICA Bachelor of Circus Arts degree is the only one of its kind in Australia and NICA graduates have gone on to perform in well-respected companies that we know and love such as Circus Oz and Cirque du Soleil.

I am hoping that you will be interested in covering this in some way to get the word out to your audience as I think that they would benefit from knowing about this opportunity. Applications for the course close on September 4th.

Kind Regards,
AMAYA COURTIS

[Ed: Their website is www.nica.com.au]

ELABORATE JOKE ENDS IN SHITTY PUN

For upwards of five minutes yesterday, a man told an increasingly elaborate and confusing story to several attentive friends. He began with an outlandish setup then described a series of events. His friends were enthralled, unsure if the story was true or if this was some sort of joke. Eventually a conclusion was reached, and it was revealed that the entire story was leading up to a bad play on words. The joke was that this man had told this stupid story and made everyone listen, but that the story went nowhere and the payoff was a bad pun, a hilariously small result considering the time and effort expended. Groans were heard and the man laughed with satisfaction at his trick.

JAUNTY GANG OF RAGTAG PIRATES ATTACK, RAPE AND MURDER SWEDISH TOURISTS

Oh what adventure can be had on the high seas, free from restriction of the laws of men and nations! 'Midst the myriad islets and rivers of Mindanao and the Sea of Celebes, daring men of courage ply their roguish trade, striking fear in the heart of all who sail there. One such man is Bayani "the Bloodthirsty" Cayetano, the one-eyed terror of the South Seas, who with his misfit crew of rogues and buccaneers, attacked and pillaged a tourist yacht last week.

Striking from several directions, the pirates stormed aboard, brandishing weapons, and proceeded to terrorise four Swedish tourists on a round-the-world trip. They repeatedly raped the women before butchering everyone on board. The dashing outlaws then seized valuable electronic equipment and a safe full of cash, torching the vessel after they had made off with their booty. Such daring!

Over a dozen boats have been attacked so far. The pirate vessel is a fishing boat equipped with stolen radar, several motor boats and a cache of weapons the envy of Long John Silver himself. She sits low in the water, so she does, laden with such a hefty haul as this!

Try as they might, killjoys from the Philippine and Indonesian navies have been unable to repress the valiant crew. Attempts at capture invariably end in frustration, as the bumbling landlubbers are left trailing in the bloody wake of these scandalous, larger-than-life adventurers. Oh the life of a pirate!

American student offers opinion in tutorial

Chelsea Charity McCarthy, an exchange student from the University of Notre Dame, America, is normally a typically shy and quiet international student who sits at the back, wearing a sweatshirt proclaiming her university of origin. However, yesterday she broke her silence and many stereotypes, in what is believed to be an unprecedented action for an American exchange student: she gave an opinion about a subject under discussion in a tutorial.

Nervously and quietly, she began. Chelsea was careful to preface the statement with a reminder that she was, in fact, American. She began with the words "I dunno how you guys do things here in Australia" before moving to explain how things worked "back home". Other students listened keenly, eager for this rare insight into the lives of Americans, a reclusive and mysterious people whose country remains obscure and unknown to most Australians. The American also noted that she voted for Barack Obama and never for George W Bush.

JACKSON CORPSE REANIMATED, DANCING

Famed entertainer and talented song-and-dance man Michael Jackson died after being taken to a hospital suffering cardiac arrest, but his shambling corpse has subsequently been seen stalking dark streets and terrorising easily scared African-American girls in a musical and expertly choreographed fashion.

Along with a gang of other similarly lurching abominations against nature, Jackson's rotting cadaver reportedly launched into a Bollywood type dance routine under the moonlight. Observers described the terrifying display of unnatural occult magick as "Thrilling".

Many media reports are blaming Jackson's death and subsequent reanimation on 'the Boogie' but the official coroner's report is expected to blame it on the moonlight. Sightings of a cat-like monster or werewolf remain unconfirmed at present.

New Genocide Scandal Rocks NRL

The world of Rugby League has been shaken to the core by fresh allegations of player misconduct. The evidence of ethnic cleansing that emerged this morning has further harmed the game's already dismal public image. According to NRL sources, the rumour mill has been in overdrive for weeks as UN prosecutors investigate the Sydney Roosters and Parramatta Eels over allegations that players have partaken in numerous atrocities over the last decade, including the wholesale destruction of entire ethnic groups.

The NRL has a troubled history of war crimes off-field. In 2001, former Tigers prop Slobodan Milošević was indicted for crimes against humanity in the Hague. Augustin Bizimana of the Brisbane Broncos is still wanted for his alleged role in Rwandan genocide of 1994. The NRL has responded by appointing consultants to reform the internal culture of the game, as league executives worry that new fans will be discouraged by the continual atrocity scandals.

Roosters coach Brad Fittler reacted with fury to the allegations, arguing that the club had a strong code of conduct with a zero tolerance policy on mass murder. Players found guilty of such offences would be suspended immediately without pay, he said. For their part, the Eels acknowledged past misdeeds but said that club culture had changed. CEO Denis Fitzgerald said that "incidents of torture and terror campaigns against civilians are no longer a problem at Parramatta."

Scientists discover link between hairloss, evil poisoning

Yesterday researchers at the CSIRO confirmed something the medical community has long suspected. Hair loss, also known as alopecia, is primarily caused by a hormonal imbalance of evil which inhibits the growth and emergence of new follicles. "Men and women with normal hair growth generally produce low to moderate levels of evil, which is secreted harmlessly through the glands around the follicle. Once the evil passes a certain threshold, however, it starts to clog the pores which prevents new hairs from coming out," explained researcher Dr Yumiko Katatori.

The two-year study compared the hormonal readings of mice suffering from alopecia to those with healthy hair coverage. The researchers found that balding mice displayed consistently higher blood-evil content readings. Furthermore, the rate of hair loss accelerated as the mice, driven to despair by their increasingly

threadbare appearance, became progressively more evil. Thankfully, owners of receding hairlines do not need to switch immediately to a life of selfless altruism. Dr Katahori was keen to reassure the public that as with all lifestyle choices, moderation is key. "It's all about balance. A moderate indulgence of evil, like being rude to your partner or ignoring global warming, is a normal part of a healthy lifestyle." She did, however, warn sufferers of alopecia to avoid world domination, Halliburton and the finance industry.

Flatmate appears to have no emotions

Ben Palanto, 23, is a generally decent flatmate. He cooks occasionally, cleans up after himself and hasn't broken anything that anyone knows about. His housemates, however, are unnerved by the way his existence seems to be devoid of any joy, pain, passion or drama. He works part time at a butcher's shop, comes home and watches TV. Nothing else seems to happen. Other members of the household have experienced ups and downs including moments of ecstatic joy and deepening sorrow. Yet these waves of human circumstance never seem to wash over Ben, who has maintained the same monotonous habits and cordial, reserved demeanour as long as anyone can remember. "Whatever goes on around him, he pretty much just stays the same," commented Rhys Stevenson, 22, the closest thing Ben has to a friend in this world. "But then you could say that's not surprising, because not much ever happens around him."

Housemates differ on whether Ben experiences no feelings whatsoever or whether there are feelings inside which have been stunted and repressed. Receptionist Mu Yong, 24, believes he is utterly emotionless like some sort of robot. Rhys, however, is less dismissive of Ben's humanity. "Sometimes he feels like watching television or sleeping. Those are emotions, right?"

Grieving Mother Just Hopes This Happens Again to Someone Else

Four years ago, the tragic, avoidable death of 26 year old Brent Alpham in a workplace accident left a gaping hole in his family that will never be filled. His mother, Alyssa Alpham, says, 'No matter how many days go past, we're always waiting for him to come home. It's like a nightmare that goes on and on.' In honour of his memory, she has established the Brent Alpham Memorial Trust, an organisation dedicated to a single aim: ensuring that the fatal errors of safety and procedure that led to her son's death are repeated again and again at worksites across Australia.

Tears rise to Alyssa's eyes as she explains the passion behind her cause. "We are lobbying across the industry for the kind of lax, negligent standards that killed Brent to be adopted at every Australian workplace. It's the least we could do." Alyssa has already raised over \$1.2 million in her son's name and hopes to double that sum within the next two years. The money will be spent mounting sabotage operations on industrial plants and lobbying for the repeal of Operational Health and Safety laws.

Says Alyssa: "I will not sleep at night until I know that someday, somewhere, someone else will be visited with the same sheer unending torment I've had to endure since I lost my son." Readers inspired by her struggle are encouraged to donate to the Trust, or to write sinister letters to their local safety inspector encouraging him to abandon his post.

WARR

Minus the Shooting

BART CUMMINGS

Marc Hinton is a rugby journalist in New Zealand. True to his audience, he loves New Zealand's national rugby team, the "All Blacks". They are a very entertaining and exciting team and have been for a century or more, testament to the popularity of the sport over there and, I suppose, all those protein-rich lamb chops. But recently he wrote a curious article about the NZ anthem and the failure of the All Blacks to sing it with the hair-raising gusto it deserves. Some players would murmur it feebly, others close their eyes in meditation, while still others dart their eyes about in fearful uncertainty as the close-up camera panned along. "What message does it send?" Hinton asked. "Not a great one, that's what. That their country's anthem doesn't mean anything to them. That they're professional rugby players and they don't have to feel proud Kiwis."

The odd thing about nationalism in sport is that nearly everyone on some level understands that it is a pretty silly idea overall. There may be the odd pub troll who bellows nasty triumphalism whenever the Wallabies win a Test match (especially against the All Blacks), but usually the jingoistic banter that goes with Test rugby is bandied with an ironic smile. As if we all know that our nationalist prejudice is not actually genuine. And yet national pride does seem to be – at Wallabies matches 80,000 people in ANZ Stadium will stand and sing *Advance Australia Fair*, no matter how awkward and silly it feels (and sounds).

Why do so many people want to be proud of their country? And why particularly in sport? These questions are important because nationalism – the identification of oneself with millions of others under a single label such as “Australian”, and/or pride in a way of life which is also nothing but a fixed label (“the fair go”, etc.) – is a destructive and mind-deadening idea which we should quickly abandon. George Orwell saw how the nationalist, as someone who thinks mainly in terms of competitive prestige, discovers deepest resonance in football and boxing: “sport is war minus the shooting.” Orwell would not have changed his opinion in the face of modern day Test rugby: “You play to win, and the game has little meaning unless you do your utmost to win. On the village green, where you pick up sides and no feeling of local patriotism is involved, it is possible to play simply for the fun and exercise: but as soon as the question of prestige arises, as soon as you feel that you and some larger unit will be disgraced if you lose, the most savage combative instincts are aroused.”


Of course it doesn’t need to be this way. There are highly popular sports which are followed not because they stir pride of country or local tribe, but because they are a stage on which strong, charismatic characters are tested by extreme pressure. Professional tennis remains popular at the highest level even though an Australian audience has no patriotic investment in the outcome of a match between Federer and Nadal. And also it’s just fun to watch a ball bounce around. Sport should be celebrated for its glorious uselessness, like art. Not for its claim of sustaining the fiction of national identity. But nevertheless, many rugby fans remain attached to the idea that the Wallabies represent something called “Australia” and that national disgrace follows every Test defeat. Why is it so?

The appeal of Grand Narratives like nationalism must rest partly in the comforting idea that we can be part of something bigger than ourselves. The thing about this promise is that you have to suspend disbelief to accept it. How can you be a part of a “nation” when you share little to nothing in common with the TAB seagulls standing around clamouring at the Foxtel broadcast with you? How can the Wallabies represent you when none of the players know you or would even care if you watched or not? And more broadly, it seems like an unnecessary diminution of our own individual value to even need to be part of something bigger in the first place.

There are Marxists who argue that nationalism has a double-task: domestication of the workers and despoliation of foreigners. Nationalism – feeding on the idea of competitive prestige – domesticates the working class by repositioning them as the persecutors instead of the persecuted. I’ve been to different pubs and watched a lot of rugby, and the hoary old council workers and labourers there who cover their vulnerability with alcohol and bravado tend to become aggressive and insufferable when their team beats someone. I’m ashamed to say I’ve been that guy too. I don’t suggest that they and I have been manipulated by the ruling class. I would still enjoy watching the sport even if it weren’t tied up with the illusion that my personal reputation were at stake each weekend. But maybe I’d watch a bit less of it.

Rugby is naturally much more about the joy of large fellows bumping into each other and falling down than it is about patriotic pride. The term has taken on a different meaning than I intend it here (although accepting the sport’s latent homoeroticism would be a legitimate topic for another day) but I think there should be greater scope for fans to ‘play for the other side’. Support the All Blacks for a change, perhaps. Our allegiances should be to what is fun and exciting about the sport, not about what it pretends to represent beyond itself.

“Why do so many people want to be proud of their country?”



A Racist Asian's Guide to Asian Parents

BOBBY CHEN, alias Robert H Chenswick, explains the workings of a common but debilitating disease.

Are you clumsy, intimacy-deprived or socially awkward? Do you suffer from poor eyesight and the early onset of white hair? Do you sometimes retreat into an online MMPORG fantasy world while pretending to study? It sounds like you are suffering from one of the most crippling hereditary disorders known to science: ASIAN PARENTS.

Like most genetic diseases, you are born with Asian parents and will be stuck with them for life. The trick is not to let them dominate your life. As with diabetes, another Asian predisposition, the application of strict personal discipline may be enough to keep them under control. All sufferers must undergo routine injections of "stand your ground", and those with especially severe symptoms may need the "DON'T BEND OVER AND TAKE IT LIKE A BIATCH ANYMORE" upgrade.

Unfortunately, maintaining your Asian parents at the chronic rather than the terminal stage of the disease is the best that can be achieved using modern technology. Much like other common Asian maladies, such as gambling, infanticide and World of Warcraft, the Asian parent cannot be cured outright. However, there are steps that can be taken to alleviate the symptoms. When they sign you up for Saturday school, skip class and play handball. When they coerce you into taking piano or violin lessons, tell them music makes you dumb at maths. Most importantly, when you hit puberty you must start watching lots of SBS, especially late night Swedish movies where people do not wear clothes. This is the only proven method of reversing the sexual retardation that occurs from an untreated case of Asian parents.

Still, you're not quite safe yet. Try doing two unit maths for the HSC. If the local library has a cafe, tell them you are going to the library but hang out at the café instead, preferably with girls or boys you think are cute. It's still legit and even if you are found out, your Asian parents may quietly reward you for your ingenuity at finding loopholes in the rules. Finally, when you go to university, DO NOT STUDY COMMERCE AND LAW. This is the final step before you transform into an Asian parent yourself. Reclaim all those wonderful creative urges you felt as a kid, before your Asian parents stamped them out from right under your flat nose. COFA might be stretching it, though, unless your Asian parents have already progressed to an advanced stage of growth, such as if they have become doctors or lawyers themselves.

Don't be too hard on your Asian parents though. It's not their fault they work their arses off to feed you and educate you and provide you with a level of comfort far superior to what they grew up with, just so

"Much like other common Asian maladies, such as gambling, infanticide and World of Warcraft, the Asian parent cannot be cured outright."

they can suck the life out of you at the same time. All the peculiarities of the Asian psyche can be traced back to the rice fields of not many yesteryears ago, hence their relentless preoccupation with whitecollar status. Whose collar is whiter than a doctor's? Lawyers with white shirts have pretty white collars, too.

Furthermore, Asians only abandoned the practice of arranged marriages as recently as 50 or 60 years ago. No wonder Asian parents are emotionally confused. Their parents, and the parents of their parents, lived in a world where emotions were not geared towards making decisions for oneself, but towards survival, resilience, stoicism and fatalism.

Which is why the only cure for Asian parents is to break that cycle of emotional fatalism and take control TODAY! Separate what you want from what your parents want. And unless you are particularly crafty, don't try to strike a bargain with them, because they will always win in the end. They will literally get another full time job to pay for your Easyway habit so long as you keep going to Saturday school. Stretch the boundaries of acceptability one little bit at a time. If Lance Armstrong can beat testicular cancer and win the Tour de France seven times, then YOU can beat Asian parents and do an Arts degree.



Dr Lurk

Dear Dr. Lurk,

Do you have access to any of those Inner Health Plus stuffed toys? You know – the round, blue bugs with the orange plus sign on their belly and buggy eyes? I work at a pharmacy and I've been trying to hoard as many as I can. Seriously, one day I will reach 25 billion! No, it's true.

BENJAMIN, B Med

Ben...

Are you talking about the Probiotic supplement with the television advertisement of good and bad bacteria jumping up and down on a see saw and then all the good bacteria swarming towards the camera with bright expressions and exclaiming "Have you had your Inner Health Plus today!"? I've never heard of it and don't know anything.

Lurk

P.S. I have sent some interns to the pharmacy address on your envelope. Please cooperate with them peacefully and you won't be harmed.

Dear Dr,

Obviously you won't have an answer to this query because you are a fictional character, but I was wondering if you knew how to cure a badly swollen tongue.. People stare at me when I speak because my massive tongue lolls out like a baby dugong. I guess it's just an allergic reaction to something but I look and sound like Jabba the Hutt when he gets strangled by Princess Leia. Please help me out.

TUCKER MAX, IT assistant

Dear Tucker,

Thankyou for coming to me with this humiliating condition. I recommend a short course of envelope sealing and licking of your own elbows, and please send pictures of yourself doing these activities to my office.

Yours thintherely,
Gordon Lurk

To Doctor Gordon Lurk,

I have recently received a medical certificate from one of my Engineering students attempting to get out of a hole-digging exercise. The student has been diagnosed with "a debilitating Irritant Gas Inhalation Injury", but he has a history of presenting such excuses at the last minute. Already I have been asked to accept that his brother, aunty, and pet sea abalone have died during separate assessment periods. I begin to have my suspicions, but I don't want to voice them until I have all the evidence. This certificate was undersigned by you. Can you please confirm that his injury is legitimate?

Yours sincerely,
Assistant Professor WENDY HOOKLEDONK

Dear Professor,

Student truancy was a rite of passage in my own days as an undergrad. Completing assessments was left to the working class and the migrants. The rest of us focused on what mattered, such as TimeZone and our weekly meetings with the Imperial Wizard of the local branch. I still have eye-holes cut out in my lab coat.

Now, your student came to my office with the completely honest, selfless intention of offering me his body in exchange for a signature. I chose to make him swallow some farts which I had bottled, and indeed I can confirm that he has suffered an acute, but temporary, reaction. I recommend that you relieve him from this assessment but continue to set him more in the future.

Yours Professionally,
Dr. Gordon Lurk



NOT RACIST BUT

SU-MIN LIM

There's nothing funny about the bashing, stabbing, screwdriving and petrol-bombing of scores of Indian international students in Melbourne this year. There is, however, a certain comic value in the Houdini-esque contortions which police and commentators are prepared to undergo in order to blame the violence on absolutely anything other than racism.

'No, I don't think they are,' opined one Deputy Commissioner Kieran Walsh. 'They are very quiet natured people, they are very passive people...they have a tendency to travel on their own.' Inspector Scott Mahony: "They need to make sure they walk through a well-lit route, even if it might be longer, and they are not openly displaying signs of wealth with iPods and phones, and not talking loudly in their native language." Victoria University representative Andrew Holloway: "They tend to work at 24/7 conveniences, petrol stations, late-at-night shops, and therefore are more likely to be on the public transport network late at night time."

Thankfully, attacks on Indians who are simultaneously loud, quiet, talking in their native language, travelling alone, wealthy and working at late-night convenience stores have fallen to zero in recent months.

Yes, it's racist and it sucks. That, while tragic, is not really surprising. The intriguing bit about this whole curry munching/bashing saga is why people are so eager to believe that a series of violent, sometimes sadistic attacks on a minority has nothing whatsoever to do with race. I think the answer lies in a confused conception of what racism is and who racists are. It's a way of thinking which narrows our understanding of racism so as to absolve virtually anyone besides the most virulent neo-Nazi skinhead from the imperative to change their behaviour.

Definitions first. From the media response to the Indian attacks, there seems to be a sliding scale of what does and does not constitute racism, ranging from

1. Burning crosses and lynching people
to – *Definitely Racist*
2. Calling someone a dago, nigger, chink etc
to – *Pretty Racist.*
3. Grabbing iPods off brown people
– *Is That Racist?*

Categories 1 and 2 are uncontroversial. Category 3 is – well, not ideal, exactly, but not deserving of the special condemnation that comes with the ‘racist’ tag. Racism is defined as a hatred for a group based on nothing other than their provenance. It has to be extreme. It has to be explicit. And it has to be pursued with pure and single-minded dedication, undiluted by reference to anything other than the genetic identity of its object.

Think Gerard Henderson in the SMH: “In Australia, the word “racist” is invariably overused. However, at times, some ethnic groups are treated with a degree of insensitivity or indifference.” Apparently insensitivity and indifference don’t go far enough to make you racist. You have to do something really bad for that. Or *The Age* report on how Chinese jobseekers have to send almost double the resumes of their Anglo counterparts to achieve the same results, a phenomenon described as “more subconscious than racist.” Racism has to be conscious and deliberate – it doesn’t count if it wasn’t on purpose. In this context, it makes sense for police to deny that an attacker provoked to violence by an Indian voice is acting out of racism. Bashing Indians because they’re Indian – racist. Bashing Indians because they use an Indian language – not racist!

The trouble with this anorexically-narrow definition is that it becomes virtually impossible for anyone to be racist. Racism is limited to behaviour so obviously irrational that you pretty much have to get an actual swastika tattooed on your forehead to qualify. Actual racist people are rarely that honest, even with themselves. One of the few positive externalities of the Holocaust is that most of us recognise, at least in theory, that hating people solely for their genes just doesn’t make sense. So everyone finds some sort of justification: they don’t speak English, they’re too loud, they smell like curry. Even the white supremacist group Stormfront doesn’t couch its ideology in terms of colour alone, claiming to stand for ‘culture’, ‘speech’ and ‘free association’. Interestingly, the Stormfront forum contains passages designed to assist members in ‘Defeating Anti-Whites Without Employing Baseless Racism.’

“Racism is limited to behaviour so obviously irrational, you pretty much have to get an actual swastika tattooed on your forehead to qualify.”

I’d define racism as any behaviour that discriminates against a particular ethnic group causing harm. It includes the jobseeker getting knocked back for no reason, the student beaten up for the iPod which everyone else carries with impunity. Racism happens, as the bumper sticker says, and it happens in insidious ways which do not disappear without the conscious effort of society as a whole. This effort is unlikely to take place if we refuse to categorise any but the most cartoonish bigotry as racist.

Now – if that’s what racism is, who’s doing it?

I have lost count of the articles I’ve read in both the Australian and Indian media drawing attention to the fact that not all of the Indian-stabbers have been white. Indeed, the multiplicity of ethnicities involved (Caucasian, Asian, African, Lebanese, Aboriginal, Pacific Islander) suggest that curry bashing is fast becoming an equal opportunity sport, enjoyed by yooofs of every colour and creed. Unfortunately, beyond stating that non-whites beat Indians too, few commentators have managed to draw much significance from this observation. If, as Paul Sheehan of the *Herald* would have it, the perception of whites-only racism is a ‘distorted story’, then what story should we be telling?

Here is my version. People of a minority background are often racist. This should come as no surprise to anyone.

The constant need to remind ourselves that non-whites have been violent betrays the assumption that non-whites should never be violent and racist and that for them to do so violates the natural order of things. It’s not clear why this should be the case. Why, for example, should it be any more remarkable that a Pacific Islander kid would beat up an Indian student than that a white kid would beat up an Indian student? No ethnicity enjoys moral superiority. The surprising part is not that people of minorities commit racist crimes, but that anyone thought it was reasonable to expect that that they wouldn’t.

Assuming that minorities can’t be racist is silly and dangerous for a few reasons. Firstly it’s obviously factually inaccurate. Anyone with YouTube can see that some of the people bashing Indians are white and some are not.

Secondly, it defines all minorities in terms of their separation from the dominant group, in this case white Australians. If difference incites racism between, say, »

“These days you can’t even burn down a mosque without someone calling you a racist.”

John O’Farrell in *Global Village Idiot*

Indians and whites, why wouldn’t it do the same between Indians and blacks? The Vietnamese, Sudanese, Lebanese and Indian traditions are as different from one another as hommou from cheese, and yet somehow because both are minorities in Australia it’s assumed that they will get along. At least they have their not-whiteness in common.

Perhaps the commentators who were surprised that people of one minority would target people of another had imagined immigrants standing together, united in difference by their shared marginalisation, ennobled by oppression. This would be pleasant but it does not seem to be what happens.

Assuming that minorities will or should be less racist than whites is one step away from another, more dangerous assumption: that minorities have to be better behaved than whites, and that this is how they earn their right to live, work and participate equally in society. It’s kind of like how all of the black people in ‘To Kill a Mockingbird’ are nice all of the time. Awarding civil rights to fictional characters who are uniformly dignified, thoughtful and loving is a no-brainer. Real life black people, however, are sometimes nice (Barack Obama!) and sometimes nasty (O J Simpson!) and sometimes frigging annoying (Will.I.Am).

I think the idea that minorities are inherently incapable of being racist goes both too far and not far enough. Too far because it presents a whitewashed (sorry) image of what a multi-ethnic society should look like. Not far enough because it implies freedom from racism is something you earn by being more tolerant, compassionate and law-abiding than the mainstream, rather than something to which everyone is entitled out of simple justice.

I wrote earlier that the Holocaust taught us how racism is wrong in principle, but I am beginning to think that this isn’t the case. Our response to the Holocaust is based on the sheer horror of stacks of incinerated Jews, not on a principled stance that racism is bad in itself. The current social consensus against incinerating Jews is something of an improvement, but we were starting from a very low base. Violence can still be racist without race being the sole and explicit motivator and racism is still a problem when not accompanied with violence. The language of race today is well-calibrated to deal with the racism of 50 years ago. If a man turned up today with a plan to purge the Aryan nation of impurity we would be cunning enough to recognise his racism straight away (although there might be some confusion if he shaved off his moustasche.)

Racism these days does not necessarily wear a moustasche. Racism is still racism even if you didn’t mean it, even if that wasn’t the only reason, even if you happen to be a member of a minority group yourself. Defining something doesn’t necessarily cure it (see sexism, homophobia, climate change) and probably in the weeks to come we will hear of more screwdrivers making contact with curry-infused flesh. But at least we can recognise what is going on.

HOT

Heated floor tiles in houses that are nicer than mine so that when your housemate forgets to put down a bathmat and then slops their wet feet all over the floor, the water will totally dry off into nothingness, the bathroom will be fresh and clean and ready for the next person to defile it.

Clothes left on your heater are not even a source for comedy; they're just amazing is all.

Light bulbs that you change while the switch is still on so when you put the new working lightbulb in, you don't know that it's suddenly going to light up in a bright yellow flash of roaring heat and you yell "HIT THE LIGHTS! HIT THE LIGHTTTTSSSS" in a frenzied attempt to save the integrity of your poor fingertips and your now-seared fingerprint. This goes under 'HOT' because it provides you with a surge of adrenaline.

Dogs in winter wearing people-clothes to keep them warm, especially when it's a knitted sort of doowhopsie but one that still lets them wee freely without having to be untangled cos that sort of arrangement only leads to tears and urine-soaked wool.

NOT

Most of my temperature-based NOTs this week are focussed on the idea of leaving your warm snugly little cocoon in the mornings in order to brave the outside world.

Waking up early, like when I have to wake up at 6.30am for work a couple of days per week, and it is SO COLD that I don't turn the fan on in the bathroom when I shower, even though we have so much of a ventilation problem in there that there are whole colonies of mould farms in there, working and having babies and just making the parts of our wall not covered in pictures from Zoo Magazine their own personal Terra Nullius.

Being the last person to have a shower in the morning, when everyone else has had a long pleasant leisurely one, and in particular your housemate and his girlfriend have showered together while loudly discussing the queer and transgender readings of each book in the collected works of R.L. Stine and you've decided you'll never again look at *Goosebumps* the same way. And then you get up to shower but all that trickles out is a lukewarm stream of 'meh' and you are SO SO COLD particularly because you've woken up late enough for the fan to be on.

Snuggies: these are stupid backwards robes that make you look like the hari-krishna guy who made his robe fleecy so he could meditate in as much comfort as possible. I don't care how warm you say you are, because as Nana Bellamy once told me: "if your back ain't covered, then you ain't warm, bitch". Nana's wisdom.

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JESS BELLAMY

Look guys, it's Winter, it's dark and gloomy all the time, I've been ferretted out of my den of infinite happiness by a torrent of abuse from Agony Aunt Dave, and when you're being ferretted by a dickhead gronk of a law student, the inspiration don't flow so free and easy no more.

Let's just say, if Dave were a goldfish, he'd be one of those goldfish that tries to have sex with all the other goldfish in the bowl and when the other goldfish are all "NOOO you look like Gollum, please move back from our downstairsies" then he'd set himself a mission of murdering all the other goldfish so that if he couldn't have them, he wouldn't let them have anyone else. And he'd have the tank to himself; he'd be lonely but victorious, and victory is all that matters after all.

So after that attempt at a metaphor, I've decided that today we're getting super-literal.

UNIKIDS

An ID card from a student previously enrolled in UNSW Asia	250
Revue T-shirts (Max 5, must be from different revues)	50
PHOTO: Most convincing Photoshop of a Hollywood celeb at UNSW	100
PHOTO: Best outfit on the lady at Naked Lady Lawn	150
Longest serving undergraduate (transcript as proof – defer not counted)	100
Most pass conceded on an academic transcript	150
Mouldiest sandwich in a glad bag	50
Consumption of mouldies sandwich in glad bag	200
Longest overdue book from UNSW Library	200
PHOTO: Fred Hilmer either hugging a staff member in the Arts Faculty, vandalising UNSW property or having a beer at the Roundhouse	1000
PHOTO of you at the entry points of the underground tunnels at uni (double if you can get in)	250 ea
Tickets to a Roundhouse gig (max.10)	10 ea
Merchandise from the Union or the Guild, half points for Source	20
VIDEO: UNSW mentioned on a TV show (20 points for UNSW TV)	750
Student cards from other Sydney unis	10
Student cards from other non-Sydney unis	20
A Coffee Cart from Uni	500
Photo of a rainbow gay pride flag visibly flying from a window at Warrane College	100
A copy of the minutes from this years' Arc AGM	40

VIDEO

ALL VIDEOS MUST CONTAIN TEAM MEMBERS	
Your team Rick Rolling on a boat on the Harbour	500
Your team doing the theme from <i>Friends</i> in any fountain in the city	500
Best rendition of shower scene from <i>Psycho</i>	200
Best sock puppet show (bonus for good plot)	350
A Birthday Message to UNSW from either of the following celebrities: (double if you get them to UNSW on FD09) Frank Woodley, Bob Carr, Mike Whitney, Jennifer Hawkins, Peter Garrett, The Chaser boys	1000
You singing or dancing in front of a class in lecture (lecturer must be present and lecturing – double if they joins in (double for attempting the full Monty)	500

THE BIG GUNS

PHOTO or Otherwise: Most creative milk crate contraption	700
PHOTO/VIDEO/ON THE DAY: Biggest and or coolest Flash Mob	1000
PHOTO: Most Impressive sand castle	650
PHOTO/VIDEO: Most creative use of bubble wrap	550
PHOTO/VIDEO Most elaborate LEGAL stunt (points awarded for attempt)	10000

ON STAGE

Best rendition of the Napoleon Dynamite dance to " <i>Canned Heat</i> "	500
Male member from team to wax their legs (subject to hairiness)	400
Female member from team to have a member from the public give them a hairstyle with clippers	600
Live butterfly to be released at foundation day	50 ea
Weetbix eating competition, most amount consumed within one minute	100
Dog food flavour guess	100
Correct dog food flavour guess	500

FREAKS AND GEEKS

Biggest edible banana	100
A Mathematical formula undeniably proving beyond a doubt the link between Satan and Barney the Dinosaur	666
Person with the longest name (need ID for proof)	10 p/l
Road kill (Must have been dead before hand). Score depends on animal	10 – 100
Unopened bundle of MX 40, max 5	100
PHOTOS: Most grammatically incorrectly named Asian restaurant	200
Largest sex toy	150

NOSTALGIA

Clancy the great roller-skating chimpanzee figurine	500
Fuzzy Wuzzy Bath Soap	100
Most hilarious baby photo – also must include you in the photo	100
Funkiest afro (subject to coolness)	150
A team member dressed as a Wookiee	100
Happy Meal Toys of the 20th Century	10 ea
Oldest Disney movie on VHS	50
A record from any popular one hit wonder from the 60s	200 ea
Something from USYD's 60th Birthday	60
PHOTO: Cutest Puppy	80
The entire of series of <i>Voltron</i> on VHS	100
The original Nintendo Console (x4 for bazooka plug in)	50

STALKERS

All people to be kidnapped or video of you trying...	
Katy Perry or Pink (Triple if you can get them to UNSW)	1000
Peter Combe, Rolf Harris or Tripod (Double if you can get the UNSW)	1000
Wes Carr (Double with hat)	10
Agro from cartoon connections	500
Natalie Tran, YouTube celebrity and UNSW student (half points for attempted kidnapping video, full points for bringing her in person, double points for a team member appearing in one of her videos)	250
Photo of team member in bikie leathers with premier Nathan Rees	500



SCAV HUNT '09

To register a team for the Scav Hunt, go to www.foundationday.unsw.edu.au

HYPOTHETICALLY SPEAKING

"You are having dinner with some especially Ethnic friends. Unfortunately, the extreme whiteness of your tastebuds means that the food, which they have gone to a great deal of trouble preparing, is completely repulsive to you. Maybe they put dog or ginseng in it or something. Should you smile and try to wash it down with some bubble tea, or explain that you're just too fucking white to put the stuff away?"

Thomas

Before I begin the rant, I'd like to say that this has happened to me on a number of occasions. One could say the polite thing would be to smile and eat the repulsive crap that has been dished out into your bowl, which seems suspiciously to have "Fido" written on it. I, however, have never enjoyed the gift of tact.

As a guest you have certain responsibilities. Conversely, so do the hosts. Their inability to accommodate your bland palette reveals a lack of respect for you, your dining preferences and your white supremacist ways. If the situation was reversed and you were dining back at my place, I wouldn't shove my steak, gravy and potato

It's time to represent for the white man.

abominations down your gullet, grinning all the while like a moron farting in the bathtub. Instead I would politely pour out some delicious kibble and mix for you to chow down upon with relish. Hell, I'd even go so far as to give you a nice Pedigree Dent-a-Bone to chew on afterwards as a reward.

However, we are not in my home - which, by the way, doesn't smell like a god-damn barn. Therefore, I put it to you that we are not such good friends seeing as you didn't even have the decency to offer me an alternative. Honestly, even cereal would have done me, you cheap racist fucks.

It's time to represent for the white man and let loose with a barrage of profanity. Perhaps a follow-up lecture on what constitutes food will be required, depending not only on what animal they serve, but specifically what part of that animal you are required to digest. Is it your fault this country doesn't consider cat livers a staple part of a normal healthy diet? Would it really have killed them to go to the supermarket and buy some simple fucking sausages to place on the barbeque until they were black with flavour and wrapped up in warm blankets of white bread?

Fuck no.

Perhaps they did consider it, but on top of their inherent disdain for Australian culture was superimposed their obvious disdain for you. Who's racist now? Sure, I might tell you to get out of the god-damn country if you don't look like me, but at least I don't try to poison you with chitlins laced with mystical blends from the local apothecary.

This is Australia, bitch! When we invite guests over, we cater to their every need. Which is why I keep a good assortment of Pal and Chum handy even though I don't own a dog. It isn't that "you're too fucking white" to put their so-called "food" away, but rather that they are too fucking ethnic to dine with.

Perhaps they should learn what people who weren't raised in a Third World country consider to be food. Take them to McDonalds' to begin that well-needed education. If they refuse, then storm off in a huff. What the fuck do you care? There are plenty more "ethnics" out there to make friends with.

Next time they ask you to dinner you should say, with your hand scratching your crotch: "Nah mate, no can do. Gotta take the missus out to the pub cause the game's on that night. Bazza an Chook all got it set up! Ya can come along, but they don't serve dog there. Ha. Ha. Ha. Jus kidding, but not really."

"You're just too fucking white to put the stuff away?"

"I'm just too fucking white to put the stuff away?"

"Should you smile and try to wash it down with some dog shit completely repulsive to you. Maybe they put dog shit means that the food, which they have gone to a lot of trouble to make, is completely repulsive to you. Unfortunately, the same especially Ethnic friends. Unfortunately, the

The weird ethnic dishes that your friends have been kind enough to create for you are no worse than any of the other things you eat on a daily basis. The only difference is that you haven't gotten used to the concept of eating sautéed dog with added ginseng because you haven't tried it before. There's only one way to fix that. So eat it, damn you, eat your way to cultural sensitivity, eat it with a smile and maybe get them to bring you some boiled black fungus and bird spit soup on the side.

Spare the Rod and Spoil the Refugee

SING KENG LOON explains why desperate people should be violently beaten and humiliated.

It is simple really. Australia has a boat people problem because they are too lenient with these people. After experiencing persecution, terror and possibly threats to their lives at home, the danger posed by a voyage on a fishing boat pales in comparison. Get through those tough seas between Indonesia and the northern tip of Australia, and these people get a new lease on life.

But reintroduce caning as a punishment and these people will think twice. There is no need to debate about whether the Liberals or Labor have a better policy to deal with these illegal immigrants. John Howard proclaimed loudly that Australia will determine who comes onto this island. But at the same time, he spent a total of \$20 million dollars on a detention centre in Nauru. Recently, although Kevin Rudd has announced the end to the Pacific Solution, recent reports have shown that Australia is still footing the bill for comfortable living quarters at the Christmas Island detention centre for these illegal immigrants.

It is obvious that illegal immigration is a complex problem for this country. Firstly, this problem saps valuable resources. Secondly, it provides inconvenience for the humble folks on Christmas Island. Lastly but most importantly, this issue wastes everyone's time and effort in a prolonged and intractable debate.

Caning is a cheap and no-frills solution to these problems. There is nothing like a shearing split on the tender skin of the bottom to remind these people that coming on shore is forbidden on this continent. If I were a refugee, I would really reconsider my trip down south if I realise that Australia has a zero tolerance, cane-all-boat people policy.

In this world where every country practices realism, there is no need for Australia to champion any sort of human rights or sympathy. Talks with Indonesia and Malaysia will be futile because these countries just don't care. They have a multitude of problems to take care of. Boat people using their country as a springboard into Australia are the least of their worries. Neither can Australia police its own shores. With such a vast coast to patrol, it will be impossible to chase every stray fishing boat.

Hence the only way out for Australia is to introduce draconian measures to put people off taking a boat in the first place. Let them in, cane them and send them back. It is as simple as that. Really.

One only has to look to Singapore as an example. Singapore, being an island, has a problem with overstayers and illegal immigrants as well. Yes, some still test their luck, but Singapore canes them all and as a result, these people look to their backside to remind themselves of the consequences of entering this country.

Australians have approximately 46,000 unlawful citizens in their country. They cannot afford to have a half-hearted policy on illegal immigration anymore. With this country locked in a web of disagreement, dramatic pictures of boat people streaming in will continue to dominate the front pages of the newspapers.

It is time to take a stance.

Does Australia tolerate these illegals or not? Are they allowed in? There is no room for moral ambiguity.

In or out. Australia must decide. If it is the latter, then the cane must be unleashed to deter such adventurous immigrants.



THE

OTHER

EPIDEMIC.

Dealing with Rape in South Africa

EMILY BEK

"Almost everyone in the village has been raped. The women find it almost normal."

CHANTAL KAGHOMA,

Head Nurse at a Medecins Sans Frontieres Clinic in the Congo

The prevalence of rape in South Africa is shocking. In June this year, the Medical Research Council published a study in which 28% of men interviewed said they had raped a girl or woman, 2% had raped a man or boy, 8.9% had raped with other perpetrators and 10% had been raped themselves. As the authors of the study wrote: "Rape is far too common, and its origins too deeply embedded in ideas about South African manhood." African healthcare workers describe a spreading 'epidemic' of rape.

How does a society reach a point where such a heinous crime becomes routine? Part of the problem, of course, is the incredible hardship endured by South African culture over the last century. Culture exists within a context. In a traditional context, "manhood" in South Africa may have encompassed fighting, killing cows, raping women, and stealing children. However, it was also subject to limitations including extensive physical demands on young men and close family and community units. Fundamentally, rape is an expression of power for which there is little purpose or opportunity when traditional power structures are well defined.

This is not the case in modern South African townships, where the social fabric has been torn apart by poverty, AIDS and crime. In this context, ideas of sexual entitlement that are 'rooted' in culture can lead to practices that would be entirely foreign to those generations from whom the traditional way of life is derived. South African men have been moved, sometimes almost forcibly, into townships where individuals live in high-proximity and relative anonymity. Previous limitations on their behaviour have disappeared.



Let's draw an analogy. Hunting sea turtles is an important cultural practice for many islander peoples. In a traditional context, there are major limitations on the capacity of turtle-hunters to actually catch turtles. When the same traditional hunting is practiced with speedboats and rifles, however, a previously sustainable tradition can quickly become destructive.

If rape by South African men is indeed embedded in culture, this poses particular challenges for the criminal justice system. The perpetrators might see their behaviour as acceptable. But it is considered absolutely wrong by the international community - and under South African law.

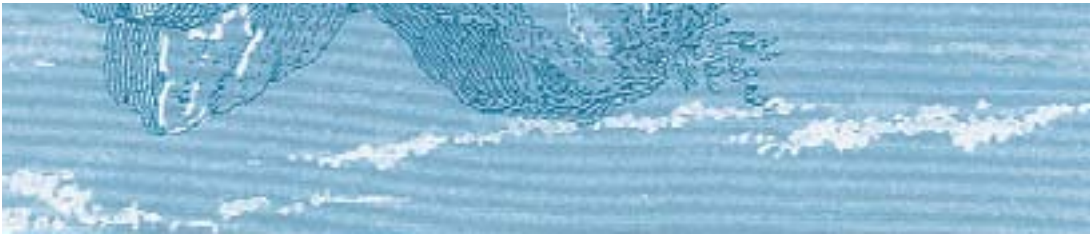
What happens when culture and the law diverge? In Australia many Indigenous people face the conflicting demands of Western law and culture. Indigenous Australians are often convicted of minor offenses, such as public drunkenness or petty theft - behaviours that are not condemned under their traditions. Sometimes they are able to plead cultural appropriateness as a mitigating factor in sentencing.

In extreme cases, however, the concept of cultural appropriateness becomes difficult to sustain. In 2004, a Northern Territory man who had kept his young wife in chains, and repeatedly raped her, used cultural appropriateness to plead for lenient sentencing. This triggered a push to remove the cultural appropriateness defense from sentencing, a move that would only further increase incarceration rates for indigenous people. This backlash illustrates that while some illicit behaviour may be culturally specific, culture cannot be allowed to condone sexual violence.

While the letter of the law in South Africa condemns rape, the criminal justice system seems to tacitly excuse it in practice. Only 7% of reported rapes lead to a conviction. A recent report by Solidarity suggests that 88% of child rapes in South Africa are not reported. This approach seems outrageous, but there may be no real alternative. When 28% of men in society are criminals, incarcerating them all isn't likely to fix any social problems.

Jail just isn't the ideal environment for raising enlightened men. Climbing incarceration rates extract a cost of their own - families with absent parents were found to be significantly associated with the perpetration of rape in the MRC survey. In practical terms, the government would collapse if it lost that many tax payers and had to pay for their incarceration.





A legal system must reflect the values of the people it serves if it is to gain their confidence. That is why the Western legal system is pegged to Western culture and traditions. But when there are seemingly irresolvable conflicts between the legal system and a significant minority of the population, perhaps the only response is to accept an imperfect system.

Yet culture cannot be an excuse for rape, and so there will have to be changes in the culture of these young men in South Africa. It is definitely possible for cultures to change. Honour killings are unthinkable in the West today. However, look back far enough and you can find practices reminiscent of honour killings in the Western world. In Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, when Titus learns that his daughter Lavinia was raped, he kills her:

'Because the girl should not survive her shame, And by her presence still renew his sorrows'.

Historically, cultural change has been driven from within. Having grown up among the left wing of Canberra, I'm something of a cultural relativist. I don't like the idea of judging other cultures as 'wrong' and I don't think it works in practice. In Australia, support for Indigenous communities (especially the intervention) seems to be delivered on the premise that the problems facing these people stem from their 'aboriginality'. I hope that South Africa can avoid falling into this trap and instead work cooperatively and inclusively with South African men.

The starting point for change is not the international community demanding the eradication of the African 'manhood' culture. The true starting place for cultural change needs to be high profile men in the community. They need to generate a consensus that rape is not part of culture and culture cannot be used as excuse for tolerating the intolerable.

The entire question of rape in South Africa is riddled with delicate issues of gender, culture and politics. I've tried to tread softly but will surely have put my foot in it somewhere, so I'm sorry. The story has seemingly been forgotten by the media – a testament, I feel, to the minefield these issues represent. The challenge is to have productive discussions anyway.



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SEAN LAWSON

ately I have been claiming to anyone that will listen that the English language makes people slutty. Teen pregnancy rates are higher in Australia and other English-speaking countries than in other rich countries. It's a shocking disparity and one that demands explanation. In the United States every thousand women under 20 have over 50 babies (one for every 10 teens), in the Netherlands they're having seven.

Our teens make way more babies than the Germans, the Greeks, the Koreans. They're over doubly as fertile as Spanish teens. We're just pumping the little bastards out. In fact, according to United Nations statistics, the three rich countries with the worst teen conception rates (that's teen births plus abortions) are New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Ireland, Australia and Canada are all also well on the fecund side of average along with Hungary and Portugal. In fact, despite our problems, Australia has the LEAST birth-happy teenagers in the Anglosphere. Our 19 births per 1000 teens is well below New Zealand's 29.

So what's to blame? Misleading article title aside, I don't believe it's any inherent phonetic or syntactic features of the English language which are causing teenage anglophone women to have more babies (although maybe the word "baby" is just irresistibly cute compared to the Dutch "kinderje" or Swedish "bebis").

ANGLO CULTURE

It's really tricky to step outside one's own culture and realise that we do in fact have one, but it's a valuable thing to ask – what does the dominant anglo culture do well and what does it do badly? Do English-speaking nations have a common sexual culture, or set of cultural attributes that makes us more susceptible to teen pregnancies than the plethora of other cultures that exist in developed countries from Japan to Italy to Denmark? I'm convinced that we do. This point becomes particularly important when we realise who we as a culture and language group are doing worse than. Not only is it the very liberal and pragmatic Northern European countries like the Netherlands and Sweden, but also the more traditional conservative family-values oriented countries like Korea and Spain.

Why does culture matter? All rich societies have to varying degrees undergone a sexual revolution and an associated change in family structures and sexual practice over the last fifty years. We've become freer and more sexualised, and we have weakened traditional attitudes and taboos. This can be measured in different countries through things like the lowering age of first sex, rising age of first birth, sex outside marriage becoming normal, and the lowering percentage of teen mothers who are married. This is basic stuff to anyone with any idea of how the world worked before 1960.

All things being equal, such increasingly liberal attitudes would be expected to raise teen birth rates because of all the uninhibited sex going on, but thankfully there are huge downward pressures on birth rates too, increasing the motive and means not to have kids. Motive and means are both really important here.

MEANS AND MOTIVE

Either people have the ability to avoid childbirth or they don't. There is contraception and knowledge available to teenagers, or there isn't. Contraception and knowledge are absolutely critical to efforts to promote sexual health, female liberation and reduced birth rates in the developing world. In the rich world however, we mostly take them for granted. After all, people know about condoms and there is generally some form of sex education.

However this isn't enough to explain different birth rates. Clearly whilst the Netherlands has extremely frank and upfront sexual education, not every country with low birth rates has similar practices. Singapore has very minimal biologically oriented sex education, for example. And sex education isn't enough on its own. Everywhere, there are problems with bad curricula, embarrassed teachers, neglectful schools, over-protective parents. Sex education and access to condoms can't be treated as a cure-all, and I don't think they can explain the differences between us and non-anglo countries since even Catholic countries with shitty education systems such as Spain and Italy are doing better than us.

Even in the seemingly straightforward examples of Northern Europe, it's clear that sexual education alone isn't the silver bullet. Surveys show that Dutch parents are over twice as likely to discuss sex with their kids than in the UK, etcetera. It's almost as though a society has to be either more conservative or more liberal to effectively replace fear-based morality with knowledge-based self-responsibility. We still seem to retain residual taboos which prevent parents from stopping their kids from screwing, but

just enough shame and embarrassment that parents also don't bother talking to them or letting schools teach sex education properly. We could rip off Sweden's "start at age 5" model but without the backing of a similarly open culture and responsible parents, it probably wouldn't work.

But let's go back to those wily Catholics because they bring us nicely to the question of motive. It's trickier than means, because all the knowledge and contraception in the world won't stop kids getting pregnant if they don't bother trying not to get pregnant. One type of motive comes, as I said earlier, from traditional sexual morality and strong family bonds. Kids are scared of the consequences, of disapproval, parental reaction, and so on. Fear is a motivator.

Unsurprisingly, compared to other countries, laissez-fair anglo parents have long since trended away from this sort of stern moral stance. Traditional morality as an anti-pregnancy force is substantially weaker in, say, Japan or Greece. Not to imply that these countries are less modern, but rather simply that family bonds and old taboos remain stronger. This can be borne out with statistics. The majority of teen mothers in Japan and Greece are married, whilst it's about 8% in Australia, which possibly suggests a lot of shotgun weddings, but also more people simply marrying young and starting families in their late teens like many people did 30 years ago in Australia.

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

But there's another aspect beyond the "traditional morality" dimension, namely cold hard socio-economic forces. The short version is that poorer, less educated, lower self-esteem, more dysfunctional groups of people have more teen babies, but I'll let a United States study elaborate: "The likelihood that teenagers engage in unprotected sex, become pregnant, and give birth is highly correlated with multiple risk factors. These factors include growing up in a single parent family, living in poverty and/or a high-poverty neighbourhood, having low attachment to performance at school, and having parents with low educational achievement." It's possible to correlate with a reasonable predictive accuracy the level of income inequality in a society with its teenage birth rates, and likewise with the percentage of people aged 15-19 who aren't in school.

Who has the highest inequality in the developed world? That'd be the anglophones, countries following the Anglo-American model of free enterprise and a relatively minimal welfare state. Who has lower inequality? Most European states, even the traditional and conservative ones which probably aren't at the forefront of effective sexual education or contraception prohibition, manage to run a society with far fewer people trapped in poverty cycles, with no hope of social advancement or career attainment. They keep income inequality down, provide decent educational opportunities, and they keep kids in school through those vulnerable late-teenage years better than we do. The Dutch have this socio-economic variable working in their favour too, clearly complementing the existence of high levels of knowledge with the motivation for kids to use it.

So to bring this together, this is where I think the big difference between anglo countries and other countries comes. There's no one success strategy, but we've fallen into a gap between three successful strategies for preventing teen pregnancies, kinda sucking at all three. The first strategy of strong traditional values which seem to work in more conservative countries have disappeared and it's debatable how much this is a good or bad thing; liberation at the cost of chaos and family breakdown. The second strategy of a Dutch-style pragmatic and open sexual culture with good sex education and open parental dialogue isn't there either because sex education is sporadic and ad hoc in Australia and riddled with abstinence-only agendas elsewhere. Regarding the third aspect of success, giving kids motive to avoid childbirth; it firstly depends on having the knowledge to be able to, but we also have a relatively low level of social inclusiveness or 'hope for the future', which generates lots of poor kids, who don't really have a strong incentive to avoid teen pregnancy in the form of job prospects or decent educational outcomes.

Statistics mostly taken from
www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/repcard3e.pdf,
 a 2001 UNICEF league table of birth rates.

(Dave)
the
Agony
Aunt

Dear Auntie,

I am in a bit of a pickle. For some time I have had a small crush on my employer. At the end of every shift I go up to him so that he can sign my timesheet, and there is pressure on me to make some kind of witty parting comment so that he'll think I'm smart and funny. I'm afraid I've just run out of things to say about the fact that he signs my timesheet. I've tried "Hey, I've been chasing your signature all day", and "That's quite a loop you have there", but yesterday I could think of nothing and so blurted out "Can we jump between the timesheets?". He heard it but said nothing, and we went on as if nothing had happened. What am I going to do?

In frustration,
 - DANIELLE DINGLE

Dear Danielle

Believe me, Dannie, I know exactly what it is like to have people expecting you to deliver the funny, day in, day out. But are such expectations realistic? Should everyone who has ever met Jerry Seinfeld feel obligated to make a joke? Should every kid who meets Michael Jackson feel obligated to let him molest them? You need to find ways to show him that you have other talents - something that will capture his interests beyond timesheet jokes. In the space of a liberated, 21st century office, there is only one answer. Cleavage.

Dear Auntie,

I was working in the lab late one night
 When my eyes beheld an eerie sight
 For my monster from his slab began
 to rise

And suddenly to my surprise -

He did the mash! The monster mash.

With concern,
 - DR. FRANK

Doctor,

Doctor, I can't tell what the problem you need help with is. This "mash" sounds relatively harmless and the monster benign - is your concern, then, over the late nights in the lab? Studies show that stress and overwork are the fastest ways to end up a graveyard smash. Try and vary your routine, and get out there some more! Online dating may lead to a different type of monster mash, but your slab will also rise just the same. Some people will recommend you try turning to religion - but honestly, my last imaginary friend was really mean to me in high school. Either way, you definitely need a new hobby, because I just can't see a monster reanimation craze catching on in a flash.



A Dick in more than just a name

MATT KWAN

Dick Smith is often trumpeted as being a real Aussie bloke who stands up for Australia. Unfortunately, Dick has plenty of un-Australian traits. He is hypocritical, self-promoting, and a liar.

He markets himself as a battler, fighting against the tyrants of the global marketplace trying to take over Australia. He has set up a company called Dick Smith Foods as a means to win this war. Unfortunately for Dick, he seems to have a mild case of amnesia. Dr Lurk should check him out. Dick has forgotten that he made his first fortune flogging cheap electronic goods in his Dick Smith Electronics stores.

Nevertheless, Dick has perpetuated the myth that Arnott's biscuits are really not Australian (despite still being produced in Botany) and that buying Arnott's means buying American. He makes similar comments about Vegemite, despite the fact that Kraft buying the rights to it has ensured its survival. He has also used Dick Smith Foods as a vehicle for humour. His Tim Tam knock-offs are called Temptin'. This is worse than all the puns perpetuated by Dave the Agency Aunt.


However, Dick has qualified his pronouncements by advising us to only buy Australian products 'when it's as good'. I took this to heart and did some investigations by buying biscuits. Rather than buy my usual favourite, Shortbread Creams, I purchased the Dick Smith equivalent, oddly-enough, also called Shortbread Creams, which is made by Paradise Food. It was not as good. I wish I had stuck to Arnott's Shortbread Creams. I have also found that Paradise Food copies almost all Arnott's products and all products are discernibly inferior.

In this context, we can construe Dick's earlier statement as meaning we shouldn't buy Dick Smith biscuits. Or, we could construe his statement as meaning that his products were just as good as Arnott's. They are clearly not, so if we take this construction, he is a liar. Whether or not he is telling the truth or lying, his credibility is diminished. He is either a purveyor of crap food or a person who should be investigated and prosecuted for falsely representing that goods are of a particular standard or quality under the Trade Practices Act 1974 (Cth), s 75AZC(1)(a).


It is apparent, in any case, that Dick is providing Australian consumers with inferior products but people are being convinced to purchase them anyway because they have an Australian flag on them. This is a bit like coffee shops

marketing fair trade coffee. Fair trade coffee is usually inferior to regular coffee but more expensive. However, the difference is that if you only buy regular coffee, you are not supporting the 'fair' coffee traders. Regardless of whether you buy Arnott's or Dick's, you are supporting Australians. Only a small percentage of sales receipts actually go to the foreign owners. I suggest that consumers not buy Dick's biscuits so as to not encourage him.

Dick is not only guilty of poor economics. Wayne Swan is probably worse, and he's the Federal Treasurer. But at least Swan doesn't put a grinning likeness of himself on the Budget. Dick Smith Foods' logo is essentially an Australian flag defaced with his face. It is not like he is good-looking.



“Putting your face on corporate logos is something only Americans like Colonel Sanders do”



Australians are typically humble and not arrogant at all. Dick is the opposite. Putting your face on corporate logos is something only Americans like Colonel Sanders do. When Dick sold his electronic goods company, he insisted that his silly face continue to be incorporated into the logo. He also insisted that the chain still be named after him, which I will concede was a good business decision. However, Dick Smith Electronics has finally realised how embarrassing it is to be associated with Dick, and recently removed Dick's silly grin after a corporate logo makeover. Good riddance.

Some admire Dick for his exploits in the 1980s: he was apparently the first person to have piloted a plane around the world via the poles, to have flown a helicopter around the world, and to have flown a helicopter to the North Pole. These are great achievements, but another self-promoting businessman, Sir Richard Branson, has done more.

Some might say that I am falling victim to tall poppy syndrome because I am jealous of Dick's success. Yes, I sometimes wish I had lots of money, but that is beside the point. There is no reason to be jealous of Dick. He is an embarrassment to himself. Peddling poor economics and prostituting himself to business, whilst having little regard for business ethics, Dick has embodied the more pejorative definition of his name.



THOM LOVEDAY

Changeling

Changeling is an alright movie about a woman whose kid gets kidnapped, and when the police find him, it turns out they found the wrong kid, which they refuse to admit. Sounds like the pigs to me.

It's a pretty interesting film, let down by the horrendous miscasting of Angelina Jolie. Her performance is fine, and she actually manages to look the part – far less hookerish than normal. The problem is that I can't forget that she's Angelina Jolie, and that Angelina Jolie has like ten kids, many of which she probably wouldn't recognise by appearance anyway. It's a fact that's impossible to forget. It's not her fault, but the reality is I'm exposed to it every day. Angelina Jolie probably doesn't even know how many kids she's got, and if one went missing, if she even noticed, she'd probably just shrug, get on a plane to some far-off impoverished nation like Tasmania, and buy another child.

In my mind, casting Angelina Jolie as a good or concerned mother is like casting zombie Anna Nicole Smith as Mother Teresa. Sure, she might give the performance of her after-life, but it's kind of hard to forget that she's the reanimated corpse of the least nun-like celebrity that ever wandered the spectral plane.

Also, on the subject of casting, they cast the guy from *Burn Notice* as the main antagonist. Really? Are they fucking kidding? I hate that guy and his shit-house "MacGyver-style" inner-monologues: "Man, I'm totally gonna outsmart this guy with my fuck-yeah awesome roll of duct tape." Seriously, that line was pretty definitely taken from the *a Burn Notice* script.

If they wanted someone MacGyveresque, why didn't they cast Richard Dean Anderson? I know he was in *Stargate*, but as horrendous as that was, I still forgive him. Where is he these days? Someone give him a run! Once I heard he actually did build grenades from pine-cones. It wasn't even for "MacGyver" either. It was to keep some kids off his lawn or something. After all, he does live next door to Angelina Jolie – the poor little bastards were probably looking for food.

Also, I'm pretty sure the kid didn't turn out to be a soul-eating demon at the end, as the name implied. Seriously disappointing.

The Hangover

Four dudes go to Vegas for a bachelor party, they have a night where they don't remember a thing, they wake up to the chaos they caused. There's a tiger in the bathroom, Andy from the (American and frankly superior) *Office* is missing a tooth, and no-one can find the groom. Chaos ensues as they try to piece together the night before, which we never see directly. Overall, it's structured like a detective story, or perhaps *Memento*, except instead of gritty drama or mindfuckery, the "show you the consequences then work backwards" device is used for fairly hilarious comedic effect as they try to fill in the blanks from the night before.

The weirdest thing is that this borrowed structure works. It hooks you as each element is revealed. Such cleverness is jarring from a movie which is basically dude-movie slapstick but then again, sometimes great movies just step outside genre conventions and do the job of another genre better than that other genre usually does it. For example, *Mean Girls* wasn't just a dumb high school movie but a frankly brilliant satirical comment on the desperate emptiness and ennui of modern existence, which made its point more effectively than *American Beauty* ever did. Similarly, maybe it takes a buddy comedy set in Vegas to really get to the heart of what a well-crafted mystery really is.

Also Jeffrey Tambor (ie George Bluth from *Arrested Development*) is in it, but not nearly enough.

There's also some horrendous cliché, and it's pretty sexist and racist at times. Heather Graham is the hooker with a heart of gold who ends up with the nerdy dork. Girlfriends and wives are heinous ball breakers, the worst moments in the movie come when they're doing the whole "omg marriage sucks" thing or showing the whipped nerdy guy being whipped and nerdy. Sexism is fine if it works and is funny and the writers are aware they're being sexist, but these jokes are old and boring and lazy and just take away from the rest of the funny. By contrast the racism is pretty awesomely done because it's weird and funny. Maybe they felt this gender-stereotype cliché was necessary to keep things grounded and realistic but it just detracted from an otherwise fucking hilarious movie.

I still can't decide if this movie is good or not. It's really funny, but it's also really stupid. It's got some clever and delightfully surreal moments, but also retarded gross-out humour. It's got that clever mystery structure, but it's also pretty clichéd a lot of the time. It's a fucking paradox. You should probably see it, even if you don't like lowbrow humour.

PRESIDENT

Charishma Kaliyanda

A student organisation that promotes a vibrant campus culture can make a real difference in making sure students remember their university experience for years to come.

The Student Services and Amenities Fee is yet to pass through the senate, and will most likely come in to effect from next year. The legislation will allow universities to charge a fee of up to \$250, which will then go towards funding essential services and activities on campus. Services like clubs and societies, student publications (like *Tharunka*), food and beverage outlets, advocacy services, and legal services. You can view the list of services at

www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/policy_issues_reviews/key_issues/VSU/#Summary_Report

Many of the services that fall under the guidelines are already provided by Arc or the University. This fee should go towards student run and controlled services so you can have a say in how your money is being spent and so you can make sure the services cater to your needs.

The SRC wants to know what services you want us to provide you. We also want to know what you don't like about your faculty, or if you would like to see changes to administrative procedures, such as navigation in myUNSW. Are your tutors/lecturers easy to contact? Do you have the support you need?

The SRC will be holding a series of forums where you can come and let us know what you want to see in your university, in your studies, and in your student organisation. We will also be collecting surveys to find out what you want.

Help your Student Representative Council make student life better for all of us and for future students by getting involved and contributing in any way you can. Please contact me for any info you need.

QUEER STUDENTS OFFICER

Victoria Edwards

Welcome to second semester! Over the break we've made some great improvements to the Queer Space (920 Chemical Sciences), so come along to one of our meetings and check it out! The semester 2 meeting times are:

Queer Girls: Mondays 1.30-3.30PM

Queer Boys: Tuesdays 3-5PM

Mixed Group: Wednesdays 4-6PM

We've also got some great events coming up. On Saturday 1 August (Week 2) there's a National Day of Action for same-sex marriage. We'll be meeting other protesters outside Town Hall at 12PM before marching to Darling Harbour to hold a mass illegal wedding outside the National Labor Conference, and similar events will be held around the country. More info and registration at www.caah.org.au/nda/sydney

In Week 4 we're teaming up with the Ethnic Affairs Department for Acceptance Week, holding our own This Is Oz photo stall (www.thisisoz.com.au/) keep an eye on *Blitz* for more details on that, and in Week 7 it's our very own Queer Week.

To keep up to date with the Queer Department, join our e-mail list at groups.google.com/group/queerplay

STUDENT WELFARE OFFICER

Matt Ward

Hey all,
I write to you fresh from Education Conference. A time when activists from all over the country get together to discuss Education and Welfare issues and plan campaigns for Semester 2. Some great things came out of the conference this year and we will be implementing a lot of these campaigns on Campus. Though I acknowledge the positive steps made in the budget there is still a long way to go. We will particularly be organising around the removal of the gap year criteria and effects this will have on students. There will also be campaigns run on your rights at work, student accommodation and student poverty. We aren't alone on these matters either. Activists around the country will be campaigning on similar issues – united we can achieve more. Stay tuned, exciting things to come.

ETHNIC AFFAIRS OFFICERS

Aaron Chan & Celeste White

Acceptance week is
Coming up in week four
Comprising trivia, presentations and
Ethno-cultural discussions galore!
Participating in
Trivia could be exciting
As it will be for the
New title of Multicultural Trivia Champ
which you will be fighting!
Check out Week 4 *Blitz* for details, and
Eye out the posters too, because....

Acceptance Week, is coming to a uni
near you!

Kind regards,
Celeste and Aaron.

STUDENT WITH
DISABILITIES OFFICER**Marita Morgan**

Hey Everyone,

Hope you all had a good break and are
ready for another busy semester. There
is a lot happening this semester in the
disability department of the SRC.

We are having a disability awareness
week in Week 3 which includes various
events such as a sign language
workshop, a sports day, and a student
with disabilities panel etc. We will also be
having a mental health awareness week
in Week 11.

If you want to get involved in either of
these weeks or have any suggestions of
events or campaigns that you would like
to see this semester contact me! I want
to hear from you!

Don't forget I'm in the Blockhouse on
Level 1 Tuesday and Thursdays afternoon
from 3-5pm! My email is
m.morgan@arc.unsw.edu.au or sign up
to our e-list groups [groups.google.com/group/
unsw-swd-collective](https://groups.google.com/group/unsw-swd-collective)

POSTGRADUATE OFFICER

Georgie Smith

Welcome to a new semester! The big
news for postgrads is the establishment
of the Postgraduate Council. The what?!
The PGC is a council of students elected
by their peers - you - to represent
postgrad interests. This is huge, and
hugely exciting! Get involved - email me
on postgrad@arc.unsw.edu.au.
Cheers, Georgie

INDIGENOUS STUDENT OFFICER

Warren Roberts

Hey people!

There are great events happening
around campus. I am organising more
discussion groups for campus on the
following issues: Northern Territory
Intervention, Indigenous Health, and the
Stolen Generation. Keep an eye out for
posters around campus for these events.
If you want to get involved, come to the
weekly meetings on Tuesdays in Block
House Training Room one at 4:30pm-
5:30pm. It would be great to see more
students getting involved. If you want
more information you can contact me by
email. Have a great semester.





*Are you an image-maker?
Interested in padding your already impressive portfolio?
To contribute imagery to **Tharunka**, email our Designer :
elliottbryce@gmail.com*