

THARUNKA

University of NSW's Independent Student Newspaper



EDITORIAL	2
CALENDAR	2
AGONY IBIS	2
SHORTLIST	3
LETTERS	3
NEWS	4-7
Warrane Punished For Sexist Conduct Nick Timms	4
Do We Need A Voice For Men? Crystal Moran	5
Conservative Club Controversy With Rival Liberal Factions Continues Ammy Singh	6
Coalition To Propose Crack Downs On Torrenting Matthew Bugden	7
Christine Lagarde Discusses The World Economy, Women's Rights And Climate Change Action At Sydney's Seymour Centre Matthew Baker	7
COLUMNS	3, 10-11
Noodle House Yarns David Bailey-Mckay	3
The Hirst Report Ned Hirst	10
An Expert's Guide To Life Dylan Chalwell	10
They Are Just Chilling, Stop The Killing Connor Mulholland	11
Being Political Without Being A Wanker Jeremiasz Sieczko	11
FEATURES	8-9
Redfern Creative Hub Gives Kids A Different Kind Of Education Freya King	8
Thailand Torn Chiara Gargano	9
COMICS & CREATIVE	12-14
LEFT VS. RIGHT	15
Sydney Lockout Laws Lauren Mccracken	
One-Punch Reform Fuelled By Emotion, Not Facts Nicholas Gerovasilis	
REVIEWS & SATIRE	16-18
SRC, PGC, SDC REPORTS	20
SPORT	22-24
Roosters Can Boast, They Are Best Rugby League Club In The World Niko Pajarillo	22
Say Sport? A Social And Political Commentary In And Around The Playing Field Raylenne Galloway	23
Serena Williams & Indian Wells Lawrence Leung	23
UNSW Sport Preview Sam Davies	24



Connect with *Tharunka*
twitter.com/tharunka
fb.me/tharunka
tharunka.tumblr.com

VOLUME 60, ISSUE 2

Week 2 - Week 3

Welcome to the long-haul kiddies! It's week 2 and here's the second issue of Tharunka, our shining beacon of independent student journalism on campus. We here at Tharunka hope that none of you are still suffering from the drawn-out effects of O-week. For those first years, or 'freshers', our hearts go out to you as you've probably been through a fun-filled and tiring first couple of weeks. Now the real 'fun' begins; class!

If you live on campus you may notice our front cover is taken up by the façade of the Warrane college, an establishment praised in the early 70s for its cultural diversity but perhaps notoriously known on campus for its all-male population and - as Nick Timms reveals in his article - sexist attitudes. And in the same vein, Crystal Moran reports on Men's Rights Activists (MRAs) and their somewhat confusing perceptions of gender imbalances.

The spectacular factional biff within the UNSW Young Liberals also continues as Ammy Singh follows-up on the IGM that never happened... or did it happen? That depends on who you're listening to. One thing is certain, the video is pretty hilarious.

As the Liberals on campus begin to crack up, Matt Bugden looks to the Liberals at the top of the ladder who have begun looking at cracking down on internet privacy and perhaps even the re-introduction of the filtering system contemplated by the previous Federal Labor government.

This issue also sees the usual crop of reporters, columnists and contributions sprinkled throughout but with a new section added entitled 'Left vs. Right'. We've put it up to two political activists from both sides of politics to explain their views on the new alcohol laws Bazza O'Fazza and the NSW government have brought in.

Our new sports section continues to impress as Sam Davies shines a light on UNSW's sports clubs. Arc took the helm of UNSW sports late last year so it'll be an interesting year to see how the Arc governs in comparison with the chancellery. Reylene Galloway, Niko Pajarillo and Lawrence Leung also lend us their wisdom in the sports pages with takes on subjects like Serena Williams and her history with a certain tennis tournament to the Sydney Roosters and their hope to continue their triumphant plays from last year.

All round, another exciting - and perhaps a smidgen controversial - issue of Tharunka for your fortnightly dosage of campus news and culture.

Until next time, we bid you adieu.

Jake, plus your other lovely editors, Ammy and Freya.

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Editors	Reviews Editor	Photographer
Ammy Singh,	Sarah Fernandes	Tina Giannoulis
Freya King,	Graphic Design	Comics
Jacob K. Glud	Chere De Koh	Leigh Rigozzi
Copy Editor	Front Cover	Dom Foffani
Araz Eleyasian	Tina Giannoulis	Paden Hunter

Contributors: David Bailey-Mckay, Nick Timms, Crystal Moran, Ammy Singh, Matthew Bugden, Freya King, Matthew Baker, Chiara Gargano, Ned Hirst, Dylan Chalwell, Connor Mulholland, Jeremiasz Sieczko, by Jeremy Szal, Lauren McCracken, Nicholas Gerovasilis, Tia Singh, Catherine Knight, Simon Anicich, Connor Mulholland, Kyle Redman, Dylan Chalwell, Owen Briggs, Niko Pajarillo, Reylene Galloway, Lawrence Leung, Sam Davies

Contact
tharunka@arc.unsw.edu.au
PO Box 173, Kingsford, NSW, 2032

Tharunka acknowledges the Bedegal and Gadigal people, the traditional custodians of the land on which the University stands.

Tharunka is published periodically by Arc @ UNSW. The views expressed herein are not necessarily the views of Arc, the Representative Council or the Tharunka editing team, unless expressly stated. Arc accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of any of the opinions or information contained in this issue of Tharunka. Any complaints should be made in writing to the Marketing & Publications Coordinator.

Date

Events

11th Mar /15th Mar12th Mar /17th Mar /22nd Mar /23rd Mar /

Tuesday, 11th - Saturday, 15th of March

A Creative Practice Lab Production: MONKEY*Myers Studio, near Gate 2, Kensington Campus*

Apart from smashing stuff, eating too much and showing off, what do a monkey, a pig and a fish man with the world's first diamante skull necklace have in common? They are all helping to save the world from hordes of flesh-eating demons, of course. Directed by Ben Winspear, Monkey is a theatrical retelling of some of the best bits of Wu Cheng'en's incredible epic tale of cosmic struggle and personal redemption. The play is a major production evolving from the course, Performance Production 1: Staging the Text. Tickets are sold online at unsw.to/monkey for \$15 full/ \$8 concession.

2014 UNSW Careers Expo*12pm-5pm, Hordern Pavilion*

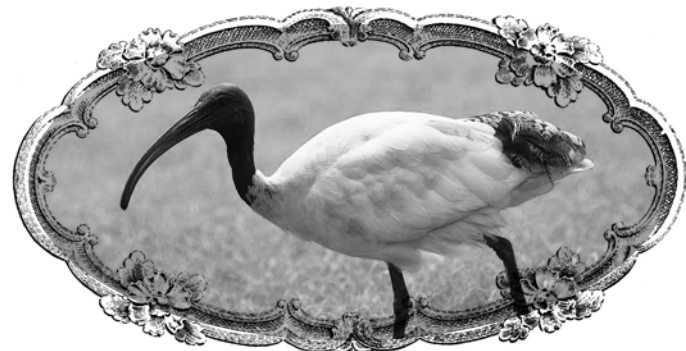
One would say it's like a cattle auction, but UNSW's website bills this as "a chance for students to meet and discuss employment opportunities with organisations interested in UNSW graduates. Employers will be looking for students who stand out from the crowd so it is important for you to research the organisations and to impress them with your questions on the day." The event is free but registration beforehand is essential.

St. Patricks Day (18+ ONLY)*12pm-10pm, The Roundhouse*

Live Irish bands, giveaways, face painting and Guinness for \$6; what better way to celebrate a traditional Irish holiday!

How I Met Your Amma - An 'Oli Olli' Production*6:30pm-10:30pm, Science Theatre, Kensington Campus*

The UNSW Anjali Tamil Society is putting on 'How I Met Your Amma: the musical' to celebrate its 22nd anniversary. The play will be the societies twist on the popular TV sitcom with the proceeds going to 'the Unifund project' to abet university students in Sri Lanka who have been detrimentally impacted on as a result of the recent civil war. See the Facebook event for ticketing details.

Kyary Pamyu Pamyu*Doors open 7pm, The Roundhouse*

Agony Ibis

Hi Mr Ibis,

How do I survive my arts degree?

Love,

Joseph Frechmann Styles

Mr. Styles,

Give me a moment (laughs to self in wild, absurdist way)...

There's a reason some toilet paper dispensers on campus have 'receive arts degree' here written on them.

Yours,

Ibis

Dear Agony Ibis

Why is the new cofa campus so white?!

Yours truly,

Frustrated design kid

Frustrated design kid,

I have two theories; one being that it is a conspiracy perpetrated by Kensington campus students to slowly ensure cofa students go blind.

OR

It's a conspiracy on the part of the architects! They want

more creativity out of you cofa kiddies, which meant constructing an all white courtyard in the hope that you trip out in the space due to visual sensory overload.

Either way it sounds as though someone has it in for you Paddington children.

Yours,

Ibis

Dear Agony Ibis,

I'm thinking of sleeping on campus this year. You know, in the study spaces and on those big couches in the library. It was just such a drain on the soul to commute from the Blue Mountains. Any protips?

From sleepystudent

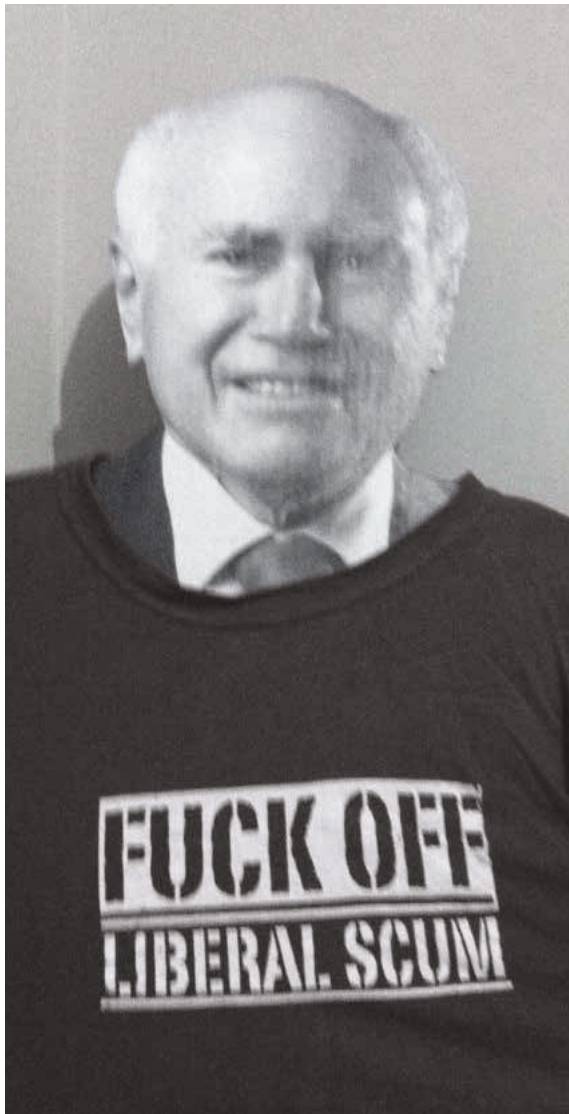
Ah! Sleepystudent! You're perhaps the first person to contact me with a problem I can give proper advice for! I advise against sleeping on campus. And library people hate it. So the only pro-tip I could possibly give you is that the only way you can do what you want to do is to construct a bed on campus, preferably on the Physics Lawn out of the way of the main walkway.

Yours,

Ibis

Short List

BITE SIZED CAMPUS NEWS



SRC undertakes review of NUS affiliation

This year the SRC has formed an internal working group to review and formulate submissions regarding the affiliation of UNSW to the National Union of Students (NUS). Last year the SRC held off affiliation to NUS after there were concerns brought up about how well the Union represents the affiliated members as well as the conduct of the union during events such as the annual national conference. This review comes as NUS conducts a structural audit this year of its internal processes in relation to the roles of Office Bearers on both the state and national level and how NUS conducts its relations with its affiliated universities.

John Howard cardboard cut-outs stolen

Young Liberal student societies at UNSW and the University of Sydney were struck in O-Week by the theft of their life-sized cardboard cut-outs of former Prime Minister, John Howard.

Despite an attempt to guard their Howard cut-out more vigilantly following the UNSW Freedom Club's loss earlier in the week, the Sydney University Liberal Club also lost their cut-out within two days. It is understood that the Freedom Club cut-out was stolen after a post was made on the club's Facebook page expressing an intention to steal the Howard cut-out and asking for help.

Tharunka has received a photograph of one John Howard cut-out in his new home, curiously exhibiting a condition akin to Stockholm Syndrome.

"Now Liberals all over the country will tremble at the silent sound of our eternal return," said Benjamin Conway, a self-described liberator of oppressed John Howards unable to escape the monotony of inexhaustible capitalist momentum in postmodernity.

The perpetrators of the theft have spoken to *Tharunka* and hinted that both Howards are unharmed and are being held in separate locations, reportedly Marrickville and Leichhardt.

Trouble in Freedom Club paradise

Following the loss of their John Howard cardboard cut-out, 2014 is shaping up to be a bumpy ride for Young Liberals on campus. Alongside allegations of a failed attempt at club stacking featured on page 6 of this edition, the Freedom Club Constitution may also be under greater scrutiny from Arc this year. With the Freedom Club's 2014 AGM yet to occur, stay tuned for further developments on this front.

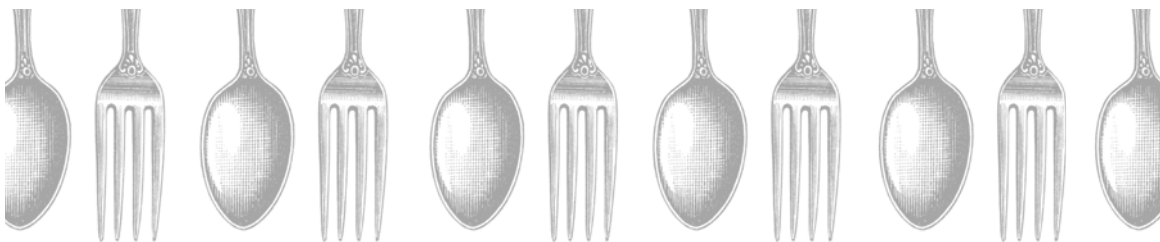
Student Unity almost* has new campus convenor

In the last Shortlist, *Tharunka* reported that Labor right faction Student Unity, found locally in the UNSW Labor Club, has a new campus convenor in Jack Power. Having jumped the gun slightly on this one, *Tharunka* apologises for the insinuation that Student Unity would deign to hold a democratic ballot for a convenor, given the plethora of ex-convenors still recovering from suspiciously knife-shaped wounds in their backs.

Indeed, as Power himself told *Tharunka* when asked if he was convenor, "Not... yet."

From 'Bike-curious' to 'Bike-ology'

Arc has rebranded a new volunteer program after a complaint was raised with the organisation by the SRC Queer Officers. The complaint was made directly to Brad Hannagan, Arc's CEO, in an email which stated that the branding "trivialises serious issues that many students face as bisexual-identifying and questioning individuals. We feel that using this pun on a queer personal identity will reflect very poorly on Arc." Arc has since changed the name of the volunteer program to 'Bike-ology'. According to Arc's website the service is free and run by students for students to help them learn about, maintain and socialise with other bike enthusiasts.



NOODLE HOUSE YARNS with DAVID BAILEY-MCKAY

Since our ancestors first mastered fire and learnt to cook a mammoth steak medium-rare, dining out has been a social staple. A good dinner with close friends can make the blandest of meals digestible, and a well-cooked meal can make even the most boring of guests bearable. This desire to seek friends and food reveals so much of the human condition.

From planning the assassination of a Roman emperor to determining positions on a SRC, long lunches, drinks and late dinners are all essential. Whether this is to gain someone's trust, or to understand one's allies, associates or rivals, a good meal allows this. If Zoe Barnes had had a dinner with Frank Underwood instead of texting him, she would have realised he was a power-hungry psychopath and a train station was probably not the best place to meet up.

Whether it is in business, politics or relationships, eating acts as a powerful factor in deciding how a relation-

ship is formed. We relish when the boss takes the office to lunch as a thank you for your hard work and for not informing the ATO about that special briefcase in their office. It provides a chance to talk to that attractive person from accounting, and remember that, although you may be the lowest person on the corporate ladder, you still have a better Friday night than 80 per cent of your workplace.

It is through a person's eating habits that so much is revealed. Self-control, dexterity, sense of taste and an understanding of the world is all revealed when eating with others. Rarely do people like George Costanza end up leading great social movements; nor will your friend who suggests McDonald's as fine dining achieve long and lasting relations. So next time you're out and planning a heist or club EGM, remember nothing builds loyalty and respect more than steamed pork and chive dumplings. But I couldn't possibly comment.

Letters

Submit your Letters & Comments to **THARUNKA**

✉ tharunka@arc.unsw.edu.au
 t twitter.com/tharunka
 f facebook.com/Tharunka
 ✉ *Tharunka*, PO Box 173, Kingsford, NSW, 2032

Re: Freedom Club Liberals attempting to stack out the Conservative Club IGM

"At least Craig Thomson could organise a root in a brothel. That's more than can be said for these unprincipled muppets who ironically call themselves the "Freedom Club" but do nothing but restrict freedoms for others. Maybe in future, they won't need the assistance of Liberal Party staffers and the Sydney Uni Liberal Club members to shut down conservative clubs; after all, they are destroying conservatism themselves."

Lucas Montezuma, University of Sydney Labor Club

Warrane Punished for Sexist Conduct



Nick Timms

The sounds were all normal as Rachel Kohan and the rest of Shalom College's female soccer team played their match against Creston College. Cheers from the sidelines. Cleats clumping in the turf. Exhausted players panting. A new sound, however, soon began to drift through the air:

"Shalom girls are sluts, Shalom girls are sluts, Shalom girls are sluts..."

New information obtained by *Tharunka* has revealed that in this female college soccer match at the end of Semester Two last year, a group of Warrane men stood on the sidelines for the majority of the match, chanting what many of the players saw as gender-related insults and verbal abuse.

"During the game, they at one point were chanting 'sluts' at our team. They were saying 'Shalom girls are sluts', and they also told a girl, who was a bit bigger, that she was pregnant and she should have an abortion," Declan Kelly, the male Sports Director of Shalom College, said.

"A ball hit her in the stomach, and they said 'that's an abortion for you'. The girl was pretty upset. She's not a soccer player or anything, she was just playing for a bit of fun, and to get singled out by a whole bunch of supporters at a game they have nothing to do with is pretty terrible."

"It's meant to be a friendly game, and it wasn't even their team," Rachel Kohan said.

"I was mainly just trying to ignore it and play the game, but yeah I think some of the girls were quite taken aback, and they were like 'excuse me?'"

Warrane College, founded in 1971, is UNSW's men's only college. It was conceived by members of Opus Dei, a

Catholic institution that believes that work and other occasions of everyday life are opportunities to grow closer to God. People of all religions and ethnicities are welcomed in the college, and in fact their multiculturalism was praised by the Minister of Immigration in 1972. Women, however, are not allowed above the ground floor of the building.

As a result of Warrane's behaviour, Mr Kelly decided to send a complaint to the Inter-College Sports Association (ICSA) outlining that "numerous girls came to Rachel and myself saying that they felt victimised by Warrane players". ICSA oversees the entire year of college sport, including the overall points tally compiled from all the competitive sports played.

A committee that included the members of ICSA, who are sports directors from each college, and Tom Morrison, the then-President of the Inter-Residential Council (IRC), decided that a punishment was necessary following an assessment of the complaint.

"The punishment that the disciplinary committee decided on was that Warrane College would be docked points," Mr Morrison says.

"The number of points was decided as such that it would be a significant deterrent, and send a message that this kind of behaviour wasn't tolerated. So we decided that we were going to dock either 10 points, or enough points so that they lose a place, whichever is greater. Because Warrane was really far in front, we took off a place, so they ended up dropping from first to second, but the number of points lost was something like 50 or 60."

Upon receiving this punishment, Warrane tried to get it repealed through a number of avenues.

"Warrane initially appealed the decision of the committee to ICSA, where it was upheld. They ran complaints to the

Arc board, where it was again quashed," Mr Morrison says.

According to Mr Kelly and Rachel, Warrane's president came to one of their college meetings in an attempt to have the punishment revoked.

"He was saying that because it was a small group of individuals that were the culprits, that it's unfair to punish the whole college," Mr Kelly says.

But Mr Kelly believes that since the actual group of men who were making the comment have never come forward, and their identities have not been revealed, this is not a fair argument.

"I emailed their president a few times asking for an apology, and he personally apologised, but we never got an apology from himself or Warrane directed towards the girls involved," he says.

"I'm sure they had no investigation or no intention of finding out who did it. I'm sure they all know, but they would never tell us. I'm sure they don't take it seriously, they thought that they got the rough end of the stick."

This incident came after various other complaints throughout the year regarding Warrane's conduct at sporting events. In a cricket match at the start of the year, a complaint was made about one of Warrane's sports directors harassing an umpire from Basser College.

"Their sports director, who's supposed to be leading by example, he ripped into him. He was just like 'you're a fucking cheat', in the middle of the field in front of everyone," Mr Kelly says.

Shalom also faced a similar experience in a boys soccer match.

"There's a guy on our team who's short, and they called him a midget," Mr Kelly says.

"A bunch of supporters stood behind our goals and were just telling our goalie that he was a pussy and that he was 'shit'. I asked them to be fair and not stand be-

hind the goals, and they just didn't really care."

Tom Morrison is hopeful, however, that the punishment will be an effective measure against further similar behaviour at inter-college sports matches:

"I think it was an effective punishment. I think it sent a clean message, and I don't think they are going to do it again."

"One of the sports directors was really nice, and genuinely apologetic," Mr Kelly says.

"There's obviously people at Warrane who aren't like that, and I feel bad for those people. As soon as I meet someone from Warrane, I just assume they're a misogynist. There's always been that perception of Warrane as being a sexist all-boys club, and I sort of think that's been reaffirmed. I don't think there's been that much of a change in how we feel about each other."

Though *Tharunka* approached the Dean of Warrane, Arthur Escamilla, for comment on the situation, he chose to make his comments via email and did not send his response to our questions in time for our deadline. Other members of the administration, such as the assistant deans, could not be reached.



Do we need a voice for men?



Crystal Moran @manlycarrots

The NSW Branch President of the National Union of Students, and University of Sydney student, Hannah Smith has come under fire from men's rights groups after publishing a blog piece slamming the men's rights movement and related posterage near the University.

In the piece hosted by the NUS Women's Department, Ms Smith endorsed the tearing down of posters by new men's rights group, Men's Right's Sydney (MRS).

After the men's rights website, A Voice for Men (AVFM), condemned her actions, Ms Smith received a number of attacks which she described as "quite personal and violent".

Citing groups such as the Men's Shed Association and ACON, Ms Smith told *Tharunka* that great work is being done for men and masculinity, and that men deserved spaces to discuss the issues which affect them. She said however "that the men's rights movement as it exists is just masqueraded misogyny. I think that the discourse as it is currently is quite violent and aggressive; mostly just casting a vision of feminists as Nazis and oppressors, which is certainly not true. I just don't think that the current men's rights discourse is necessarily the right one."

While Ms Smith questions the legitimacy of the discourse, many comment-

ers accused her of shutting down free speech. Ms Smith responded by saying that "free speech doesn't allow for hate speech, and I think often the things that come from [the men's rights movement], including the response that they gave to me are incredibly hateful, and incredibly marginalising and discriminatory."

When asked what it was about the specific posters in question that Ms Smith found to be hateful and thus warranting her endorsement for their removal, she initially struggled, before suggesting that it was their attempted co-opting of the the African-American civil rights movements and queer movements.

Inspection of the first poster revealed it featured the phrase "you don't fear and hate Black people, do you?", "You don't fear and hate gays Or lesbians, do you?", as well as repeating the question for Jewish people, women, and men. The other poster displayed images of famous male civil rights activists, such as Martin Luther King Jr and Mahatma Ghandi, as well as other men engaged in professional pursuits, with the tagline "Men - Only one thing on their minds, right?"

While it may be a stretch to claim these are examples of co-opting movements, or that either of these posters constitutes hate speech, the response Ms Smith received from individuals identifying with men's rights activism is consistent with her belief that the movement is fundamentally driven by privilege,

anti-feminism, and a hatred of "all these upstart women taking away their rights. "A not uncommon view, considering the responses I got when writing this piece - 'how do those guys live with themselves?' and 'what rights are they lacking anyway?'

MRS co-founders Adrian Johnson and Tom Voltz said that while they saw Ms Smith's actions as a breach of their right to speak freely, they called abuse directed toward her "very unfortunate. We do not condone true misogyny, we do not condone violence, we do not condone threats - not only is it morally reprehensible, it's just not constructive", and attributed it to trolls and outliers, rather than indicative of the movement as a whole.

Mr Johnson said that at its core, their movement stood to combat "the idea that men are 'actors' and women are 'acted upon' and say that both are true - men are actors and can be acted upon, women are actors and can be acted upon".

One of the ways they see this enacted in public policy is by addressing the public discourse on domestic violence and lack of services for male victims. Mr Johnson said they want "male victims of domestic violence to be as recognised and as worthy of help as female victims are." While supporting the aims of organisations like White Ribbon, they say language like 'violence against women' and 'men's violence against women' effectively erases heterosexual male, as well as LGBTI victims of domestic violence.

The movement is also concerned with men's health outcomes, particularly the longevity gap, and significantly higher rates of male suicides and workplace injuries and deaths. They cited analysis by News Limited which revealed Australia spends four times more spending on women's healthcare than men's. "That's not to say that women's health issues don't need attention - of course they do - but the inequity there is so large that it can't be ignored," Mr Voltz said. Mr Johnson also said he wants greater research into male contraceptive options, especially the preclinical contraceptive Vasalgel. Mr Johnson says that this would not only mean that men and women could share the burden of reproductive management, but "give us the ability to create a world where no baby is born without both of the parents consenting".

With such ambitious aims, there are legitimate questions about whether MRS, and the wider movement can achieve them. In Ms Smith's piece, she wrote that "perhaps it wasn't worth making a fuss about this obviously ineffectual 'organization'" and their limited tangible activism. Director of AVFM Australia, Jim Muldoon, said that while "there are some groups who have made their voices heard on specific issues at certain time [but] unlike feminism, men's human rights groups are not government funded, so all resources for research, printing and advertising and other activities necessary for effective lobbying are extremely limited."

It's not difficult to see why. Firstly, a tenant of MRS and AVFM's brand of activism is anti-feminism; an assumption that feminism causes or exacerbates the problems men face through false statistics, misandry, and highlighting female issues over male ones (never mind that many of the issues described can be directly attributed to traditionalism, and to Governments, courts, and corporations which are by definition patriarchal in their leadership structure). When I suggested that probably does not reflect behaviours condoned by *Tharunka's* feminist readership, Voltz and Johnson said that "normal feminists are not doing enough to police the feminists in power". In contrast, their perception is that the men's rights movement is "very good at policing its own".

During the interview process, both men came across as genuinely decent people, and there are examples where MRS, and they as individuals, shut down assholes. But given the image men's rights activism has in the public mind, it is hard to believe that they honestly think their movement is meeting the very high standard which they set for feminists. While it is a sound assertion that it is practically impossible to police fringe-dwellers who use personal attacks and threats of violence online, when AVFM's founder and a perceived leader of the movement can write a piece which recommends beating the shit out of a woman and making her clean it up (and then later claim it as a satirical joke), it's pretty clear you failed Policing Your Movement 101.

Toward the end of the interview, both founders of MRS said that they consider themselves egalitarian humanists, but Mr Voltz qualified it by saying "The reason I advocate for men is because no one else is... I think that people of colour should have equal rights, I think all religions should be free from discrimination, women, men, any group - I believe everyone should be treated equally, but it's not practical for me to advocate for everyone".

Mr Johnson suggested that he "specialised in men's rights activism because [he] experienced those sorts of issues for [himself] so it's easier to speak from that point".

On both points, feminist activists would probably claim similar ground.

There are clearly issues which affect men because they are men. Those men and those issues need a voice, and advocates who will actually cause change (instead of shouting into an echo chamber). But the curse of the men's rights movement is it spends all its energy in a misdirected fight against feminism when most of their issues really seem to be with traditionalism. Rather than expecting feminists to be building utopia for everyone and being disappointed when they haven't achieved it, men's rights activists could join all the other advocates speaking from their experience and help build it together.

Conservative Club controversy with rival Liberal factions continues



Ammy Singh (@ammyed)

The controversy surrounding the creation of the Conservative Club at UNSW has continued, with new details emerging of an alleged failed attempt at club stacking, after members of the soft right Liberal-aligned Freedom Club failed to sign up as members at the Conservative Club's Inaugural General Meeting (IGM) in order to obtain voting rights.

The inter-factional war has seen members of the soft right Liberals in the Freedom Club, and their Sydney University Liberal Club (SULC) counterparts, attempt to prevent the Conservative Club from forming on campus due to a perceived connection with the hard right, religious faction of the Liberal Party.

Anneliese Oldcastle, candidate for Vice-President of the Conservative Club, said the club "is not aligned to any political party". The club constitution cites "encouraging, fostering and promoting the beliefs of Burkean Conservatism" among its aims.

UNSW Freedom Club President, Taylor Gramoski, had previously alleged to *Tharunka* that the organisers of the Conservative Club "exhibited blatant disregard for democratic processes" at the meeting, further claiming that the club "is being created as a blatant duplication of an existing Liberal club - the Freedom Club".

Tharunka also understands that multiple complaints by Freedom Club members have been made to the Arc Student Development Committee (SDC) in an attempt to prevent the Conservative Club being affiliated by Arc.

This follows a similar attempt by the Freedom Club to prevent the formation of the now-affiliated, non-partisan Students for Liberty UNSW club in 2013, wherein Gramoski "strongly urged" the SDC to decline the club's affiliation for reasons of potential duplication with the Freedom Club.

Vice-President of the Freedom Club, Natarsha Terreiro, previously told *Tharunka* that any claims to being apolitical by the Conservative Club are "laughable", claiming that "the people proposing to create the Conservative Club are a fringe group of extreme far right Young Liberals".

"Similar clubs have been created in other campuses, namely the University of Sydney, with the intention of stacking

existing Liberal clubs, all assisted by the same far right Young Liberal operators," Terreiro said.

Among these clubs is the Sydney University Conservative Club, which was implicated in a controversial attempt to take over the soft right-aligned SULC in 2011 by encouraging 60 international students to become financial members of SULC, with the intention of stacking the club's 2011 AGM. The Sydney University Conservative Club is affiliated with the Australian Council of Conservative Students (ACCS), an organisation which the UNSW Conservative Club also passed a motion to affiliate with at its IGM.

Tharunka understands that Oldcastle and other organisers of the Conservative Club were approached by the ACCS executive to start a Conservative Club at UNSW.

Gemma Whiting, President of the ACCS and current Vice-President of the University of Western Australia Conservative Club, said, "The ACCS is a non-partisan body promoting conservative interests across Australia and representing these views on campus. It's an ideological movement entirely removed from any party or factional politics."

According to the Conservative Club membership list obtained by *Tharunka*, among its 14 members are four international students, while many other members are aligned with the hard right Liberal faction.

Audrey So, a final year international student who proxy voted at the IGM, told *Tharunka* her involvement in the Conservative Club is strictly non-partisan.

"When I heard the first meeting was disrupted by Liberal Party staffers and Young Liberals from other universities, I wasn't sure I wanted to stay involved. I have no interest in party politics, [and] as an international student I'm not even eligible to join a political party here," she said.

James Foster, a member of the hard right Liberals in his first year at UNSW, said he was concerned by the behaviour of non-Conservative Club members at the meeting.

"What I saw at the IGM was a group of people who had not signed up for the club deliberately making a scene to attract security and staff," Foster said. "I found this a little confronting, but also quite concerning that Young Liberals and the Freedom Club would sabotage a new club meeting simply because we were

ideologically different."

Oldcastle agreed. "The meeting was bombarded by multiple Liberal Party staffers and Young Liberals intent on disrupting a democratic meeting," she said.

Tharunka has obtained an attendance list of the IGM showing that alongside Gramoski, Terreiro and several other members of the Freedom Club, two members of the left-aligned Liberalism Society were present, including club president Mrith Shanker.

Shanker told *Tharunka* that while the decision is ultimately Arc's, she would not support the affiliation of the Conservative Club due to the connection of some members to the controversial failed AGMs of the UNSW Liberal Club in 2012.

"Taylor [Gramoski] did call me up earlier in the day to ask if I wanted to come along to the meeting, but I was just there as an observer," Shanker said.

Gramoski is a staffer for Liberal MP in the seat of Robertson, Lucy Wicks, and currently a casual employee for Minister Pru Goward, as per the Parliamentary Database. In earlier correspondence with *Tharunka* regarding the Conservative Club, Gramoski asserted at times that he has never been an employee of Minister Goward, and later that he is a former staffer for Goward.

Goward faced similar controversy in 2011 when staffer and hard right-aligned SULC President, Adrian Pryke, was fired for his involvement in an attempted stacking of the SULC AGM.

Also in attendance at the Conservative Club IGM was Freedom Club member Sam Diamant, a staffer for factional leader of the NSW soft right Liberals, Mitchell MP Alex Hawke. Fellow Hawke staffer and Macquarie University student, Vincent So, was also present.

Tharunka understands that among the Sydney University members in attendance at the meeting was NSW Young Liberals' Country Vice-President and perennial SULC President, Alex Dore. SULC members Josh Crawford, William Dawes, and Dean Shachar also attended.

In relation to the allegations of undemocratic processes made by non-members present, Oldcastle told *Tharunka* that membership of the Conservative Club was open to all students, but the Freedom Club members led by Gramoski simply failed to ask for membership forms.

"As per the club Constitution and the Arc Clubs and Societies Handbook, students must complete a membership form in order to be granted voting rights. This is not a privilege automatically conferred on attendees of the IGM," Oldcastle said.

The membership clause in the Conservative Club constitution stipulates that "full membership of the club shall be open to all UNSW students... and they shall be required to complete a membership form". All full members are granted voting rights. This clause is identical to the Arc model constitution supplied to

clubs and societies, and consistent with the Arc Clubs Procedures guidelines.

Oldcastle said all attendees at the meeting had access to the constitution. "The Freedom Club and Sydney University Liberals arrived at the IGM around ten minutes before it opened. They asked to see a copy of the Club Constitution, and were provided this without question. Several attendees, including Sam Diamant, read the document. Furthermore, the attendance sheet was placed clearly in the middle of the table. It was passed around and signed by most people present."

According to Conservative Club President, Sun-Yong Kim, the non-members present attempted to disrupt the meeting by shouting at the chair, Chris Rath.

"During a motion to accept the Constitution, Sam [Diamant] forgot to vote against the motion so began loudly shouting to try and shut down the meeting. He didn't seem to realise that as a non-member, he wasn't entitled to vote. Dean Shachar and Sam Diamant were yelling at the chair, who was trying to move onto the next agenda item," Kim said.

Tharunka has obtained video footage of this juncture of the meeting, in which Shachar can be seen repeatedly saying, "It's been shut down", while Diamant shouts, "No one has been elected. Did we vote for anyone? What vote? What election? What election?" until being told to stop speaking by security. The video can be found on the *Tharunka* website.

Henry Innis, former treasurer of the Australian Liberal Students' Federation and former Vice-President of SULC, who this week reached out to all NSW Young Liberals in an email advocating for democratic internal party reform, told *Tharunka* that destructive behaviour is currently endemic to university Liberal clubs.

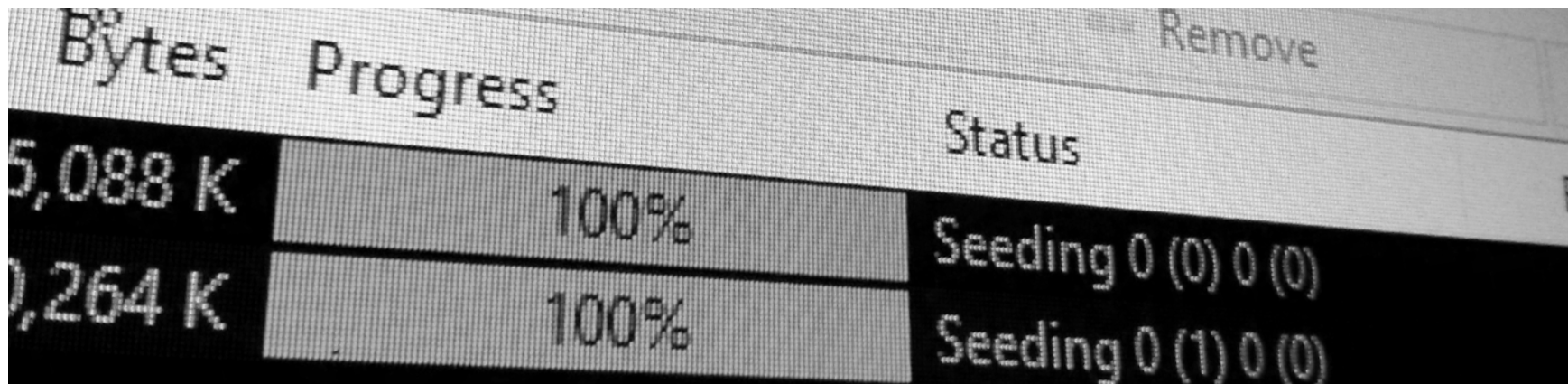
"University clubs have a long history of being the factional recruiting grounds of the Liberal Party," Innis said. "That's the reality, and that's why they're so tightly contested. Our current system makes individuals have to go to extreme means to control the university campuses, which is a great shame for many of the fantastic people involved."

The Conservative Club's affiliation to Arc is due to be considered in March, and as yet it is unclear what the outcome of the application will be.

"Arc is currently aware of the situation and the SDC will examine the relevant affiliation documents as we do with all affiliation documents," SDC Convenor, Andrew Shim, said.

Taylor Gramoski, Natarsha Terreiro, Sam Diamant, and Alex Dore did not respond to multiple requests for comment by *Tharunka*.

Coalition to Propose Crack Downs on Torrenting



Matthew Bugden

The Abbott government is considering reforms that would make it more difficult to download content using torrents, as well as undermining the online privacy of Australians.

On February 14, Attorney-General George Brandis' response to the Australian Digital Alliance forum held in Canberra revealed that the Abbott government was considering a graduated response scheme to deal with online copyright infringement. This is despite assurances given by the Coalition to ZDNet in the lead-up to the 2013 election that it had no such intention.

Graduated response schemes, currently in place in several countries, create legal requirements for Internet service providers, "To issue graduated warnings to consumers who are using websites to facilitate piracy," he explained. After three warnings, consumers risk bandwidth reduction, blocks to offending websites and account suspension.

According to Brandis, the government is also considering reforms that would require ISPs to block access to websites that facilitate piracy, such as popular torrenting website The Pirate Bay, bypassing the need to warn users about the illegality of their behaviour.

Brandis said that the reforms would bring Australia in line with its international trade agreements, which he lists as some of the Abbott government's "signature achievements".

It is no secret that the "signature achievements" to which Mr Brandis refers are the ongoing negotiations of the specific terms of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), one of the largest and most comprehensive free trade agreements ever proposed to date. The agreement comprises twelve parties, among which, New Zealand, Indonesia and Australia are represented, and would apply to a diverse range of industries, such as pharmaceuticals, and tobacco and agricultural subsidies.

There has been much controversy

surrounding the TPP, both regarding its substance and the degree of secrecy surrounding the negotiations. The "Advanced Intellectual Property Chapter for All 12 Nations with Negotiating Positions" only became available to the public in late 2013 when it was leaked by WikiLeaks, at which point, it had already undergone several rounds of closed negotiations.

Trade Minister Andrew Robb dismisses the public's concerns regarding the anti-democratic nature of the process as groundless conspiracy theory – a "straw man set up by anti-traders". The TPP has certainly attracted the criticism from fringe elements as well as populist agitators. Besides WikiLeaks, it has been criticised by notorious hacker-activist Kim Dotcom, whose file-sharing site MegaUpload was seized by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) in early 2012 using invalid warrants. Dotcom calls the copyright and IP provisions of the TPP an attempt by Hollywood "to turn the Internet into a totally censored and controlled network to their liking".

If Dotcom is to be believed, and Hollywood lobbyists are responsible for the TPP's copyright and intellectual property provisions, then the trade agreement represents a significant broadening of the Hollywood lobby's efforts. No longer is its sphere of influence restricted to U.S. domestic politics, but is now aimed at enforcing copyright globally.

The reforms to copyright proposed by the TPP, if enshrined in domestic legislation, would be a significant departure from the current law in Australia governing illegal downloading. In the 2012 High Court case of *AFAC v iiNet*, the Court unanimously held that Internet service providers have no duty to take any action when Hollywood production companies, through their domestic lobby AFAC, provide evidence that users have downloaded copyrighted material content.

A recent report from Monash University law professor Rebecca Giblin suggests graduated response does not actually deter people from torrenting. Indeed, other developed countries have found the most effective way of reducing

illegal piracy is by ensuring that affordable legal alternatives are made available to consumers. This echoes iiNet CEO Michael Malone's suggestion that copyright holders need to make paid content available to Australians "in an affordable and timely manner".

According to Malone, Australia's mass engagement in Internet piracy is due to not having services like Netflix, a popular on-demand Internet streaming service available to viewers in the Americas and most of Western Europe. But U.S. ambassador to Australia Jeffrey Bleich disregards our lack of on-demand Internet streaming entirely, framing the issue solely in terms of legal culpability. In an article entitled "Stopping the Game of Clones", Bleich actually likened Australians torrenting content to the popular HBO series *Game of Thrones* in terms of how "epic and devious" they both are.

Unlike countries that have graduated response schemes, Australia does not possess the infrastructure to offer a cheap and legal Netflix-style alternative to torrenting. Countries like the U.S. and Japan all have highly sophisticated telecommunications networks, with lightning-fast broadband, whereas Australians are stuck with the Coalition's mediocre fixed-line National Broadband Network.

This happens to work out very well for Rupert Murdoch, who strongly opposed the creation of a fibre-optic NBN during the 2013 federal election, using his conservative mouthpieces, *The Australian* and *The Daily Telegraph*, to put forward his "vision" for Australia's future. Murdoch, who receives an estimated \$25 – 30 million in subsidies from Australian taxpayers every year, questioned whether the NBN could be financed in the present situation.

Behind all the soapboxing, however, the media mogul was aware that Labor's version of the NBN would lead to Netflix-style on-demand television, which would deal a huge amount of pain to his television monopoly, Foxtel, just as it did to his Time Warner Cable in the U.S. a half a decade ago.

Former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd

has called Murdoch out on his true motives for helping to kill the NBN, inviting us "to ask the question why Mr Murdoch really doesn't want the National Broadband Network to be connected to everyone's home and everyone's small business".

For all the inconveniences that a graduated response scheme represents, it pales in comparison to the curtailments to the online privacy of the Australian public proposed by the "Telecommunications Legislation Amendment (Submarine Cable Protection) Bill". The bill, proposed in 2013, would change the substance of the *Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Act 1979* (the TIA Act), which has hitherto protected the privacy of communications transmitted through established cable networks in Australia. The TIA requires that warrants be provided by any authority that wishes to examine the data sent and received by phone and Internet users.

The Submarine Cable Protection bill would remove these protections, providing a legal requirement for ISPs like Telstra to disclose the Internet histories and phone records of its customers to police and intelligence agencies, domestic and foreign, without providing a warrant. It would cede regulatory responsibilities from the courts to non-democratic entities – ASIO, as well as the NSA – giving both entities the ability to monitor and retain the data transmitted by Australia's undersea cables. It would require ISPs to "provide assistance to law enforcement and national security agencies regarding telecommunications interception and access to telecommunications data". Finally, and most troubling of all, it would exempt all of these operations from disclosure and scrutiny in open court, much the USA PATRIOT Act.

If the Abbott government decides to act on its proposed reforms, the way that Australians consume media will change radically, as will acceptable legal standards pertaining to privacy.

Redfern creative hub gives kids a different kind of education

Freya King @freyakings

Gushing about a really great TED talk is a state most undergraduates will at one point or another find themselves in. We have all experienced the inspiration hangover - the type that sees you beaming, bouncing and motivated for the next few days. You're really going to jump in and give *IT* a red-hot-go. You are ready to make your mark. Hell, you will probably be presenting your own TED talk on *IT* next year.

Actually doing *IT*, making *IT* or being *IT* is something far more unusual.

But *IT* is exactly what Cath Keenan, and close friend Tim Dick, did after watching Dave Egger's TED talk - *My Wish: Once Upon A School*. Rather than settle for being inspired, they set out to incite change and inspiration in their community - specifically the Sydney community, by starting up The Sydney Story Factory.

Keenan describes The Sydney Story Factory, a not-for-profit creative writing centre for young people in

Redfern, as a place that "aims to nurture young people's creativity."

"What that basically means is that we are interested in their writing skills and their communication skills... in improving their self confidence, self entity and resilience. [We are] really interested in their engagement with learning, how improving writing skills can help them; how making writing enjoyable can help them engage with learning more broadly."

With Australia's education system being drawn into the headlines weekly, be it Gonski, NAPLAN or debate over public vs. private, Keenan says she believes one of the areas our system could lift it's game is in the way we prioritise (or rather don't prioritise) kid's creativity.

"There is less and less space in the curriculum for creativity in primary schools. If you look at the writing that happens, it's very structured, it's very prescriptive, and a lot of it is boring - even if you are a kid that likes writing."

Keenan says that if the Sydney Story Factory achieved what they wanted - they would put themselves out of business.

"What we would ideally like to do would be to show the importance of the type of creative programmes that we offer for young people... that it would just become part of the school curriculum," she says.

"[being a long way from that now] makes organisations like ours really important. There is a lot of international research that looks at the benefits of quality creative arts programmes for young people... if you [young people] are involved in these things you are more likely to go on to University; at school you will concentrate more; you will watch less TV; you will be totally engaged. It has a huge knock on effect."

It isn't only the kid's who benefit - just spending an hour at The Sydney Story Factory on a Sunday morning will inspire and invigorate you just as much as one of those much-loved TED talks.

"20 kids coming in after school... hungry and tired, and go 'yeah, I'm excited, let's write a story.' That is really exciting," reflects Cath.

If you are interested in soaking up some second-hand child wonder and creativity, head on over to www.sydneystoryfactory.org.au to find out more.

Christine Lagarde Discusses the World Economy, Women's Rights and Climate Change Action at Sydney's Seymour Centre

Matthew Baker
@matthewjbaker07

On February 20, the ABC's Q&A program hosted the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Managing Director, Christine Lagarde, at Sydney University's Seymour Centre.

Ms Lagarde was in Sydney for the Group of Twenty (G20) meetings between central bank governors and finance ministers of the 20 major economies. The meetings are part of Australia's role as chair of the group for 2014.

With the one of the focuses of this year's Leaders' Summit - to be held in Brisbane this November - on economic growth, Ms Lagarde was asked to outline how such growth can be achieved in both developed and developing countries.

"Altogether, they (the G20) represent about 80 per cent of global GDP. So what they do together actually matters," she said.

The program gave Ms Lagarde an opportunity to discuss a variety of issues that she faces in her role with the IMF, including the world economy, the problem of rising inequality and the role of women in positions of power.

There was a particular focus early in the discussion on the congruent roles the IMF and G20 play and how the G20 is able to help the IMF achieve its primary goal of "stability in the world, in order to induce prosperity".

Ms Lagarde was quick to divert atten-

tion away from any possible perceived criticism she or the IMF may have for governmental policy in Australia, particularly when it comes to issues such as government austerity and action on climate change.

"There is a huge debate out there... as to whether or not redistribution can actually fix that, and particularly redistribution through taxation. So I'm not going to take a stand on that," she said.

In addressing the role of government austerity, Ms Lagarde suggested implementation of such fiscal consolidation should be assessed on a case-by-case basis. According to Ms Lagarde, countries which face high levels of debt and cannot borrow on acceptable terms should look to fiscal consolidation to tackle financial problems:

"Heavy debt, that is running a high deficit and that is under financing pressure because it cannot obtain financing... is in a situation where it has to do fiscal consolidation. We see no alternative to that. On the other hand, a country that is not under such pressure should indeed focus on growth."

When asked about the rising inequality that exists in both the developed and developing world, Ms Lagarde stated "inequality is in the way" and "is not conducive to sustainable growth".

The more contentious point was how governments and organisations like the IMF should address such inequality.

She said: "I'm not taking here an ideological view because it's not the role of the IMF. But...it's really pretty obvious

that rising inequality as we see it at the moment, in both advanced economies, in emerging market economies and in low-income countries, this rising inequality is not conducive to sustainable growth."

Although Ms Lagarde avoided answering whether such a problem is best addressed via redistribution, such as through taxation or other means, she did emphasise the importance of investment in health and education as a means to combat this issue.

Rising income inequality was also addressed as a key part of the wider inequality problem. Ms Lagarde placed particular emphasis on the findings of a recent Oxfam report which found that 85 of the world's richest people own as much as the poorest half of the world's people.

When asked about the issue of governmental action on climate change, Ms Lagarde stated the problem "needs to be tackled both on a domestic basis and on an international basis".

Ms Lagarde also noted that her "personal firm belief is that we cannot wait until an international body or an international agreement is actually found or reached".

However, she was not willing to put forward which method her or the IMF favoured - whether that is via a carbon tax, an emissions trading scheme or a policy of direct action.

Instead, the managing director praised the Australian Government for committing to the previous government's carbon reduction targets. She also

stressed the importance of recognising the "external cost" that environmental degradation has on the long-term health of the economy:

"Environmental degradation...is something economics will call an external cost to transactions [and] to the economies. And that externality has a price. For the moment, it's not well priced. It's hardly priced at all."

The role of women in the economy and positions of leadership were also considered in the discussion.

Ms Lagarde discussed her support for quotas for women in business, which she called "a necessity" in order for more women to enter the upper echelons of the corporate world. The managing director cited her time at Baker & McKenzie, where she formerly served as chairman, as highly influential on her stance on the issue.

As for the role of women in the wider economy, Ms Lagarde stressed the potential many countries are missing out on by not giving women equal access to the job market. She noted that a key to the success of equal opportunity for women in the workforce is to get more men - in particular those in power - on board with such objectives.

The discussion concluded with Ms Lagarde re-emphasising the essentiality of education for women, as well as making working life more conducive to all women, in the process of economic and social advancement.



Thailand Torn: A Country at War with an Unseen Enemy

Chiara Gargano

Red and Yellow collide like some disastrous ketchup-and-mustard calamity – Will Bangkok be the pyre that sets alight corrupt politicians, protesting vigilantes or democracy itself?

An elderly rural worker is stooped in a troubled sleep, rocking softly to the motions of the crowded Skytrain zooming around Bangkok. Clad in protest paraphernalia, her wrinkled tan skin is irritated by the oversized blue, red and white straw hat slowly covering her eyes – her bright yellow shirt is ill-fitting, contrasting to the pristine city-folks tailored wears.

A comical image to some, but a telling and almost perfect representation of the conflict erupting in Bangkok's streets. Like the elderly train-farer, the exterior exhibition of protest is loud and violently supportive but, at the core, is a sleeping confusion and discomfort.

It is approaching the fourth month of protests in Thailand's capital where the People's Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC) is calling for a resignation of the current Pheu-Thai (For Thai) Prime Minister, Yingluck Shinawatra.

The protests have claimed 10 lives and left 600 injured, reports the *Bangkok post*.

Yingluck is the sister of former PM Thaksin Shinawatra, ousted in 2006 via military coup for allegations of corruption, authoritarianism, treason, conflicts of interest and muzzling the press.

She campaigned in 2011 under the banner, "Thaksin thinks and the party does", and won the election by a landslide victory.

Thailand is ranked twelfth worldwide for having the largest percentage of income inequality, 88 per cent of the population being rural poor.

The Shinawatra political victories have been pinned on their strong rural welfare campaigns – mere propaganda

in the opinion of the PDRC.

PDRC supporter Taam Yingcharoen, 17, agrees that the Pheu-Thai government has given more focus to the lower class, but it is only an exercise in promulgating false hopes.

"It's very normal when you have a government supporting only the lower class, they're bound to win the election," Taam said. "The rice subsidy is a great example of the false hopes that the government are giving to the poor. Four farmers in the past month have already killed themselves because they can't feed themselves."

The 2011 rice subsidy scheme was an attempt to boost the primary industry by the government buying rice stocks at 50 per cent higher prices than the global market value.

In a duel attempt to also raise revenue through constricting supply to the international market, the scheme did not anticipate the flooding of rice from India and Vietnam leading to a supply glut.

The result from the scheme is that farmers have not been paid for their wares in eight months, rice stocks are rotting in their holdings and it has left a gaping hole in the government's budget, rounding to about eight per cent.

Additional rallying points for the protesters include recent changes in the constitutional law, which disallow public scrutiny for any passed bill and dilutes the powers of the King in the law-making process.

The catalyst for the December protests was primarily the attempt to pass the "Amnesty Bill", which would effectively give a pardon to any political crimes committed after 2004. This conveniently primed Ex-PM Thaksin Shinawatra for his return to politics.

Former PM Abhisit Vejjajiva has said that the government has been acting in contempt of the law.

"A government that doesn't support the constituents that have not supported their election campaign don't deserve

our support in policies," he told the BBC.

Valiant though the PDRC's attempts seem, their methods in obtaining power are mired with contradictions.

PDRC protests have disrupted the civil peace by creating blockades at Bangkok's main squares and crossings. In addition, their refusal to participate in an official election and their bid to supersede the current government with an unelected people's council wholeheartedly subverts the meaning of a liberal democracy.

"Democracy has gaping holes," Taam said. "Communism is perceived as something inherently evil – but there are perks to it that make it credible. That's why people accept it. When we are using undemocratic acts as a weapon, sometimes it's the only way to attack undemocratic actions."

Criticism from the Western media has labeled the PDRC movement as an attempt by the Bangkok elite to stop money moving out from the city's capital.

"If you've been to the protests, you would see that it is filled with every social class – lower class, middle class people and even people are rolling in with Lamborghinis – I've seen it myself," Taam said.

Unconfirmed reports have been circulating that the PDRC have paid a number of rural poor to sit in at protests to boost numbers and increase socio-economic diversity amongst participants.

Certainly, a view of Sala Daeng can confirm a number of people have used the protest space as a camping ground and, additionally, a market space for protest merchandise.

One among the alleged mercenaries is Sombat, a homeless Thai national who has made the Sala Daeng pavement his home for the past two months.

"I'm not sure what needs to be done, but I'm just here because the government is corrupt," he said. He is one of many, sitting passively as Thai flags are waved manically and Thai nationalist

songs are blared from the speakers.

Statistics from the World Bank indicate that while the government's fiscal attempts at improving income inequality have been moderately unsuccessful, the gap has begun to close under the two Shinawatra leaderships.

Retired Canadian couple, Wayne and June Farina, have been part of the protests since its inception in early December 2013. They suggest that the statistics aren't the full story.

"There...[are] a lot of things that run under the surface here in Thailand that unless you live here for a long time you won't ever see or know about. The whole place is run by just a couple of families," Wayne said.

Sitting in the heart of the Sala Daeng protests, the Farinas spoke of the intricacies of corrupt business deals.

"The government draws up a contract for \$200,000 million Baht and they only have one bidder – they don't have two or three bidders because it's not public information. What happens to that money is – politicians pocket half of it and half of it goes to the company that has to do their job," Wayne said. "There is no transparency here."

June has hosted several meetings publishing the breakdown of the Thai budgetary allocation (which is not normally public information), saying that the funds allotted to education are shamefully low.

"Education is the key to ensure the new generation is protected from corruption. When one side has all the money and the other side has only ignorance, it's the perfect environment for corruption to fester," June said.

Student activist Taam agrees, conceding that education is better than an undemocratic revolution, but sees no end to the cycle of corruption.

"Corruption is a huge problem – it's a crime that every government commits. I don't think it will ever end. We just have to keep fighting for our rights – fighting against the grain is just part of the cycle," he said.

The Hirst Report: God and Global Warming

Ned Hirst



Christopher Booker is a British journalist and a religious conservative who doubts the veracity of conventional evolutionary theory. Writing in a column for *The Telegraph*, he said that proponents of Darwinism based their views on “nothing more than blind faith and unexamined a priori assumptions, fanatically intolerant of anyone who dares question their beliefs”. In fact, he makes no attempt to align himself with scientific orthodoxy in any field, so it should come as no surprise that he is also the author of a prominent tome in the world of global warming scepticism, *The Real Global Warming Disaster*. The book is published in the UK by Continuum, which focuses on works in the humanities, particularly specialising in literature, spirituality, philosophy and theology. It doesn't publish any scientific books, and *The Real Global Warming Disaster* is classified as History.

It is perhaps unsurprising that Booker was unable to find a publisher that conventionally dealt with science to run with his work (he has no formal scientific credentials), but what surprised me was when, in 2012, the book was tacked on to the end of a catalogue detailing Continuum's religious range. Did the publisher sense that there was crossover appeal between spiritual books and global warming scepticism? Perhaps I was reading too much into it, but I was provided with the impetus to think about the connection between the two.

As far as I'm aware, there have been no studies conducted that would reveal a link between the belief in global warming and a belief in God. But according to a study conducted by the Pew Research Center in the U.S., 84 per cent of Democrats or Democrat-leaning voters believe that global warming is a threat, compared to 46 per cent of Republicans. Another study also conducted by Pew Research found that amongst evangelical Protestants attending church once per week, 88 per cent voted Republican in the 2004 presidential election. Although this is clearly too inexact to prove causation, it does indicate a sizeable percentage of the population who both believe in God and do not believe in global warming.

There is no philosophical reason why that should be the case; the two belief systems are not incompatible and there are many religious leaders, including Pope Francis, who speak about the dangers global warming presents. However, there is a scarcity of these advocates in elected positions. According to a study by the Centre for American Progress, 58 per cent of Republicans in Congress either deny the existence of climate change or oppose any action being taken to alleviate its effects. This seems too large a number to attribute to individual quirks of character; there is something about accepting the scientific consensus surrounding global warming that is repellent to Republican ideology.

Although they are by no means representative of their fellow Christians, three of the most prominent Christians in Australian public life – John Howard, Tony Abbott and Cardinal George Pell – are all global warming sceptics. They are also all intelligent, highly educated men who, presumably, are not averse to accepting expert consensus in other fields. When it comes to climate science, there is again some kind of ideological blockage. Late last year, John Howard delivered

a speech in London, which he called, “One Religion is Enough.” It is interesting that he immediately invited a comparison between his religious belief and his scientific scepticism. His fundamental premise was that the zealous fervour, as he saw it, surrounding global warming is undermining the democratic process because it suggests that we should restructure our society in a way dictated by climate experts.

But this is aggressively responding to an argument which has not been made. Nobody suggests that governments should forfeit their ability to make their own decisions on how to deal with global warming. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change does suggest that they should do something. And parliamentarians cannot will climate change out of existence. Howard, however, cannot accept that it is a scientific issue.

Howard recounts his changing policy platform on global warming, but for him it was just playing it as he would any other popular issue. There was too much community support for action to continue doing nothing, but as the issue gradually faded from popular consciousness, it again became feasible to present non-action on climate change as part of an electable platform. A pretty cynical attitude, and one that only makes sense if you are completely convinced that global warming is not happening.

Despite his claim, “I have never rejected, totally, the multiple expressions of concern from many eminent scientists,” Howard additionally says, “The history of mankind has told me of his infinite capacity to adapt to the changing circumstances of the environment in which he lives.” But human history is not very long, and anthropogenic climate change is a new addition. John Howard is basically sceptical of the idea humanity could be destroyed. Like the prominent climate change sceptic, James Delingpole, Howard cannot understand how this generation has the temerity to forecast its own demise.

G.K. Chesterton is quoted as saying, “Once a man loses belief in God, he will believe anything.” Presumably when he said this, he didn't have peer-reviewed scientific papers in mind as a source of mass delusion. But people do now believe that humanity is capable of destroying itself. And this, fundamentally, is God's work.

I may be putting words in John Howard's mouth, but I suspect his inability to reconcile his religious faith with the bleak predictions from “many eminent scientists” arises from the fact that the end of the world was never something to be determined by humans. The Rapture is God's business. It is as though the free will of people extends only so far; God will prevent us from driving ourselves to oblivion. This is an idea which I doubt too many people hold; religious or otherwise. It is a concern, however, if it is an attitude shared by a handful of conservative politicians in whom much power is vested. It needn't be this way.

In 2008, Vatican City became the first sovereign state to completely offset its carbon emissions. In a statement, the Pontifical Council said, “Evil lies in the structures and things that accelerate pollution, and not listening to our inner voice that cautions us to become aware of limits, and not assessing the decisions to be taken in a perspective of fraternity and merciful kindness towards the generations to come and common universal good, with an eye to the future.”

Amen.

AN EXPERT'S GUIDE TO LIFE:

How to Beat Your Old School Friend Max L_____ * in Age of Empires II: HD Expansion

Dylan Chalwell



Oh yeah. Here it is. Friday. Well-earned and well-received. High-fives all-round. No, scrap that; DOUBLE high-fives all-round.

And you know what Friday means. Yeah, that's right – it's time for some unadulterated, unfettered, uncompromising adult fun.

And the good news? Mum and Dad are out tonight. They're grabbing dinner at a vegan restaurant in Newtown with Uncle Felix and his new girlfriend who smells – not unpleasantly; just distinctively – like Chicken Crimpies. They won't be back until late; mum grasping a little see-through container of leftovers (shredded cabbage) and Dad sporting red wine and ersatz-meat stains just below his collar.

So you go to the fridge and grab a beer that's been labelled ALEX'S BEER DO NOT DRINK, but this is a Friday so *anything goes*. It's a twist-top, but you have a notoriously weak grip so use the bottle opener from the second drawer instead. Don't be a hero.

Then you head upstairs and boot up Dad's computer and spend a moment reflecting on the majesty of *Age of Empires II: HD Expansion* as you wait for it to load. “More civilisations. More unique units. More bizarre historical matchups,” the voice-over in your head says. So true.

Online, an acquaintance with the screen name YourMateFinnegan is keen for a 1v1 situation – and it pans out just how you expected.

“Like I say, I haven't played since high school,” he says right before he surrenders. CRAM IT buddy, you think. Save your excuses for Family Dinner Night.

Then you notice someone else is online.

“Hey mate, how's it going? How about a bit of a battle?”

“Sure, Max,” you speed-type back. “Let's do this.”

Max, Max, Max. The man with a fancy degree from a fancy uni with a fancy Swans membership (actually, you're a 2014 member too! Go Bloods!).

He calls you via Skype and you engage in polite banter. You try not to reveal just how afraid you are. Max is not like YourMateFinnegan. Max is like Varsity in *Mighty Ducks II*. He plays to win, and he's very good.

So how do you beat him? I'm glad you asked. There are three simple steps.

1. Strike early. As soon as you can, divert funds away from researching scientific breakthroughs (*Loom? Wheelbarrow?* I think not) and start pumping out militia at the local barracks.

2. Cripple his economy. Send your troops (see point 1) to crucial resource zones in his territory.

3. Build a massive guard tower literally in the middle of his base. This point is a) self-explanatory, and b) the most important. You need a few villages to do this. You need to be sneaky. Failure is not an option.

How do you know if you've succeeded? Well, any minute now, you'll hear Max over Skype. “You got me this time,” he confesses. (You detect a note of panic.)

“Same time next week?” he suggests.

“Maybe, man. We'll just have to see.”

You make sure you sound casual, even though deep down you're bursting with pride. For the first time in a long time, the Vikings have defeated the Aztecs. Your people rejoice.

* Identity protected

They Are Just Chilling, Stop the Killing

Connor Mulholland (@connormul94)

In recent weeks, thousands have congregated upon Cottesloe Beach in Western Australia and Manly Beach on Sydney's North Shore to protest WA Premier Colin Barnett's controversial catch-and-kill shark policy.

The measures, announced on December 10, were described by WA MP Troy Buswell on World News Australia Radio as "a targeted localised hazard mitigation strategy". Buswell asserts the basis of the program to be "catching sharks that are, or are about to be in a close proximity of beaches [in order to], then by extension... [make] those beaches safer".

The "targeted localised hazard mitigation strategy" shall see baited drum lines placed offshore. Fisherman will then patrol bait lines and any sharks over three metres in length that enter these zones shall be killed. Current Federal Environment Minister Greg Hunt has also provided an exemption under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act for critically endangered and protected great white sharks to be killed. The first shark to fall victim to the strategic killing occurred on Australia Day – the shark was reported to be a tiger shark found off Old Dunsborough Beach.

Whilst the ominous shark fin circling its prey – made famous in *Jaws* – has long instilled fear in beach goers, the stark reality of shark attacks and its prevention paints a very different picture. It must be unequivocally acknowledged that these measures equate to a strategic cull of various shark species. This cull would not only decimate the shark population and prove ineffective in reducing shark attacks, but would also cause far broader ecological concerns.

The motive driving the WA catch-and-kill policy is simple to follow – reducing the number of sharks should, therefore, reduce the risk of shark attacks. This simple logic, however, fails to grasp the nature of shark attacks and the extensive mobility of shark species.

Indeed, shark attacks as a cause of death in Australia

is negligible. Taronga Zoo's Australian Shark Attack File, the most comprehensive data on shark attacks within Australia, outlines that there has been an average of 1.1 fatalities a year over the past 20 years. During an individual's lifetime, the risk of drowning at the beach stands at 1 in 3,362 compared to 1 in 292,525 for a shark attack. Public hysteria, however, shall always prevail over statistics when individual safety is concerned.

Critics of Barnett's "bait-and-kill" measures also point to the failed model of the United States. The state of Hawaii implemented a similar shark-control program in the 1960s and 1970s – there was found to be no significant correlation between the 4668 sharks culled and a reduction in shark attacks.

John West, co-ordinator of the aforementioned Australian Shark Attack File at Taronga Zoo, said, per The Australian, "The rise in Australian shark attacks, from an average of 6.5 incidents per year from 1990 to 2000 to 15 incidents per year over the past decade, coincides with an increasing human population, more people visiting beaches, a rise in the popularity of water-based fitness and recreational activities and people accessing previously isolated coastal areas." A recent report published by the University of Florida supports this trend. Fatalities from shark attacks have significantly declined, with less than 10 per cent of attacks proving fatal in the past decade, despite increasing human activity in the ocean.

The reality of any program aimed at reducing the shark attacks must focus upon education and awareness, rather than targeted culling of endangered species. There shall always be the risk of a shark attack so long as individuals continue to venture into the ocean. Would you walk into a lion's den and proceed to lure and kill all lions after being attacked? I would hope not.

Continuing this methodical culling would serve to merely damage the fragile biodiversity of our oceans. The Pew Environment Group (an American NGO), in their submission to the United Nations over the dangers of shark culling, noted that such programs have a "destructive ripple effect throughout marine ecosystems...

[as] sharks eat seabirds, so...a reduction in shark numbers leads to more seabirds who then eat up the bait fish needed by tuna, another endangered big fish".

Rather than jumping to the cries of public panic, let us look at a sane and logical solution. The pre-emptive slaughter of these sea creatures is an emotional response to a problem that requires a scientific and rational solution. Premier Barnett, whilst I am sure your motives are pure, there is no magic-bullet answer to this issue – and culling the sharks will not help. What is needed is a combination of further research into shark behaviour, monitoring systems and increased education.

The sharks are just chilling, so stop the killing.



Being Political Without Being a Wanker

Jeremiasz Sieczko

We are very lucky to live where we do. Australia's beaches are the envy of the rest of the world, we have a culture that encourages us to look out for one another, we live without fear of war or famine and, for most of us, there is always food on the table and drinkable water in the taps. There aren't many places as lucky as ours.

We don't, however, often let ourselves make the connection between these virtues and the constant political struggle to keep it lucky for as many Australians as possible. Australians typically would rather be oblivious of the democratic political system that creates such an environment.

This is no complete surprise when the tone being set by the political elite is littered with examples of corrupt Labor party careerists and privileged greedy Liberal party businessmen. No wonder that most Australians would rather disengage from the political scene when what happens in politics is so typically un-Australian.

It is all too easy to turn a blind eye to politics when we see our politicians lowering single mother benefits, ripping money out of public education, enabling the exploitation of our natural resources at the cost of our sacred land. Not looking out for our mates and our Dreamtime land doesn't sit well with most Australians.

Disengaging from the problem only shuns it when it is so evidently clear.

Caring about politics can be difficult because all too often it is a very negative experience. There are often multiple political problems and, usually, each of these are equally important and upsetting in their proposed resolution. The recent treatment of desperate asylum seekers coming by boat to Australia is an example of this. You'd think that a wealthy nation such as Australia would uphold the basic human rights of refugees and a United Nations Refugee convention – apparently not.

Excuse me while I go cry into my pillow.

We shouldn't let scenarios such as this upset us to the point where we will shun it. Instead, it should represent why we need to stay politically engaged.

The great thing about living in a democracy is that our politicians are somewhat bound to listen to the people they claim to represent. You can often see this power of the people in the role the media plays; politicians are often terrified of how they are portrayed in the media. A recent example of this is the NSW government passing alcohol lockout laws after a campaign by both the *Sydney Morning Herald* and The Daily Telegraph created public uproar.

Participating in a democratic society can include acts such like writing letters to our politicians, contributing opinion pieces to your student newspaper or creating political artworks. You can also go out and get involved

in a lobby group that works to raise awareness and change the government's mind on specific problems.

When we think of being politically engaged we often think of having to join a political party; the fact is that joining a political party isn't the answer for most people. But being part of a political party and being politically engaged are two different things. If joining a political party isn't your jam, do not let it hold you back from being valued member of our democratic society.

Being politically responsive is important. In our society we seem to be quite afraid of talking about politics with our friends and family in fear of conflict. Talking about it with those close to us has an important role in challenging and developing our political vision. Reacting to what is happening in politics by simply talking about it can be a valuable first step towards learning to be politically engaged.

The very last thing we should do is disengage from what is happening in politics and completely ignore the issues we feel strongly about. What happens in politics very often has a direct impact on our lives and those of many other Australians. The fact that we are able to attend a great public university such as UNSW without our parents having to mortgage their house is a testimony to this. We shouldn't take what we have for granted and we should make sure we keep Australia lucky for as many Australians as possible.

October 31st, 2007

I get stoned on board the Spirit of Tasmania and stand on the deck, looking back at land.



As the sun goes down, the land fades away and is replaced with an empty sky, the horizon, and a black sea.



Three drunk men join me on the balcony, casting dark looks my way and muttering beneath their breath as they smoke cigarettes.



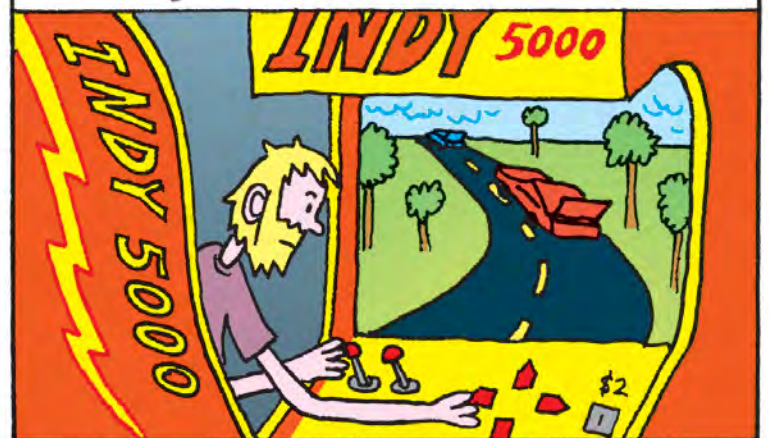
I imagine them coming up behind me, picking me up by the legs and hoisting me over the edge. Nobody notices.

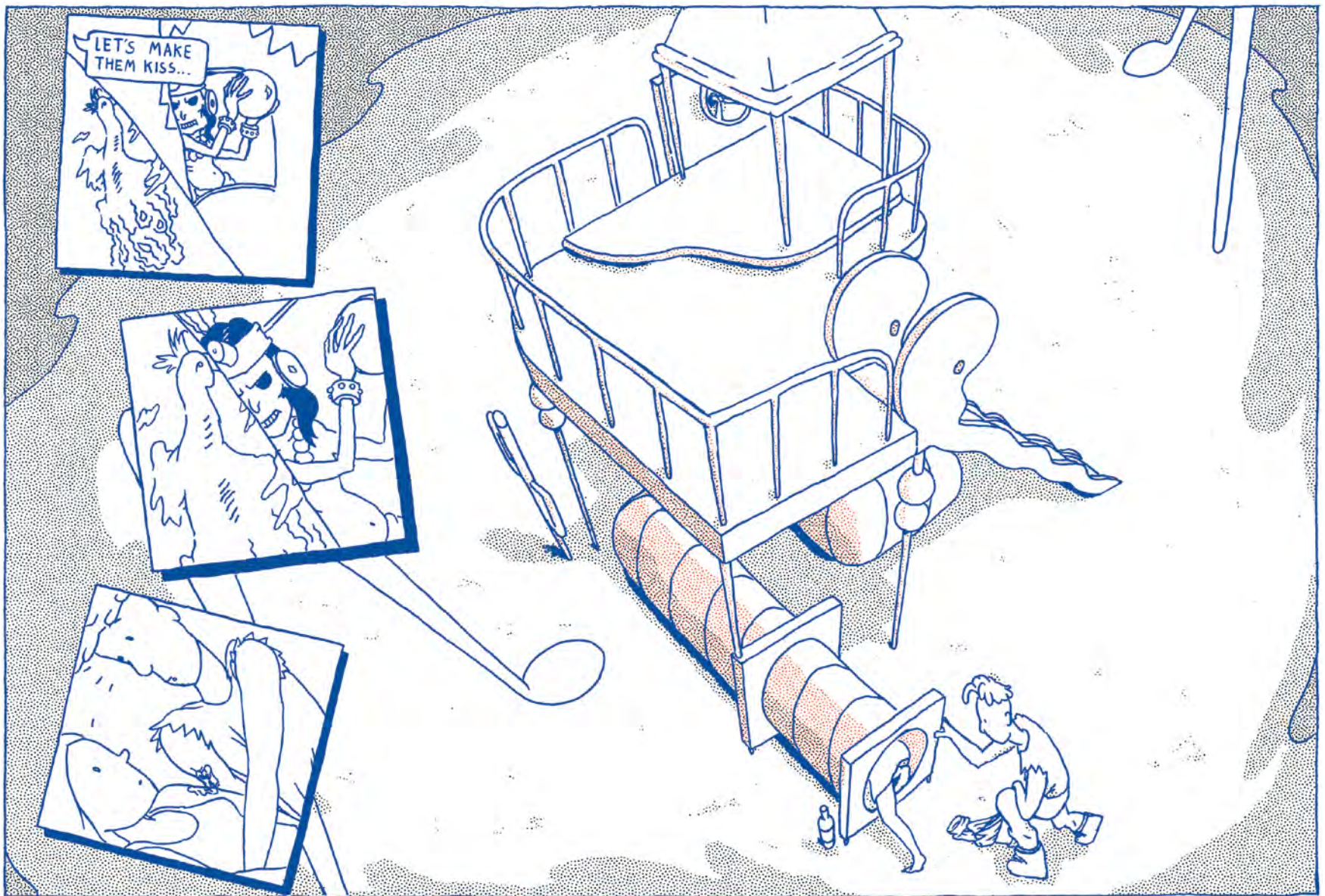
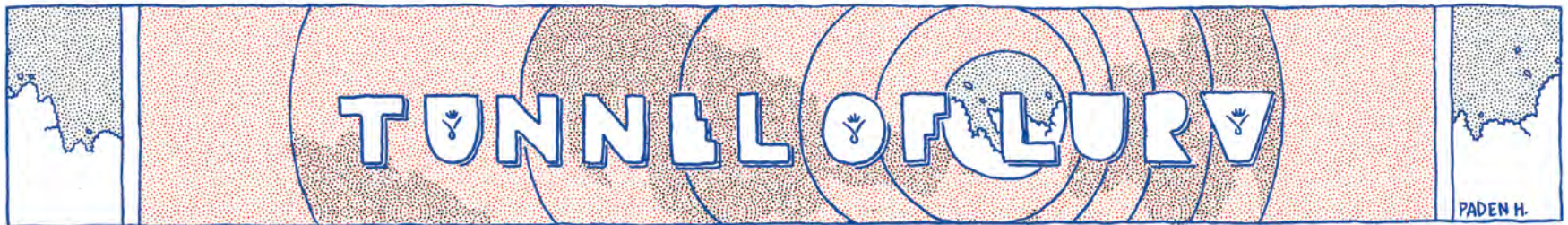


I lie back in the sea as I sink, looking up at the receding lights of the ship. Darkness envelops me and the last air escapes from my lungs.



Later, slightly disappointed not to have been murdered, I make my way to the games room.





The Rainmaker

by Jeremy Szal

David Krane knew something was wrong the moment he stepped foot into the town. Not just the sort of wrong he was used to. No, not that at all. It was *really, really* wrong.

Wrong was one hell of an understatement.

The unsettling fog shifted and spun around him like a spectral embrace as he walked, heavy boots crunching on gravel and broken glass. He almost felt cold fingers brush against his face, but it was probably the wind.

Yes, it was definitely the wind.

Countless houses were boarded up on the streets, their windowpanes covered with tape and plastic. Metal skirtings blocked gates, and doors had massive wooden boards nailed to them. Rubbish, blackened bins, wrecked cars and broken toys were thrown everywhere, like some giant had emptied his bins on the streets. Krane had never been anywhere this unsettling...or quiet. He shivered despite the warm coat. He liked to think he had seen it all, but he knew it was a lie. His thoughts were cut off as he stepped on a splintered piece of wood, a stabbing pain spiking through his heel.

'Shit,' he murmured, stumbling over to a rotting bench and examined his injuries. A nail or a shard of glass had pierced his shoe and breached skin, drawing blood. Suddenly, the rotting bench he was sitting on collapsed, sending a *crackling* noise bouncing down the streets. Confused by the situation, he got to his feet and dusted himself off.

'Hehe. Hehe, haha.'

It sounded like a child laughing.

It felt like an icy bucket of water had been emptied inside him. He glanced around, looking for the source of the sound. There was nothing.

I'm losing my mind, he thought. His hand instinctively reached for the 'puffer' in his pocket. At least there was no one around here to hide it from. He pressed on the trigger and sucked on the gush of the delicious poison, his mind returning back.

He glanced quickly at the directions on the sketchy map that he had been given. He spotted the marked house and set off. He just couldn't shake the feeling that someone – or *something* – was watching him. Watching, watching, watching...

*

HEHEHEHEH. YOU'RE REALLY CLUELESS, AREN'T YOU?

It's 12th of Nov, 20--. I've arrived at -----. It's quiet. Where the hell is everyone? I just wanna get this done and get the hell out of here and never, ever, ever come back.

*

The rusty swings in the park rattled in the wind, chains whimpering with terror. Krane ignored them, stepping over a pile of rubbish and navigating his way

through a graveyard of broken building scaffolds and timber panelings. He turned up the stairs and onto a balcony soaked with rain and moss, possessive black vines snaking up the woodwork. He tried the door handle, surprised to find it open. He entered the dimly-lit house, the hallway aligned with still portraits of what was probably the former residents. They looked hollow and empty, as if someone had sucked all life and joy out of them with a straw.

Suddenly, the door slammed shut with a gigantic clang. He walked back to investigate.

Somehow he wasn't surprised to find that it was locked.

WHY DON'T YOU JUST TURN AROUND?

*

I swear I'm going crazy. This is one screwed up town. And what's with all the toys on the ground?

*

There was a half-eaten slice of cake in the kitchen, and Krane hadn't eaten in hours. He greedily wolfed it down, not even caring how old it was. It was only when he was hungrily chewing on it did he realize that it was warm and tasted fresh. He quickly swallowed and gazed at the cake. It couldn't have been cooked recently...half these houses had been empty for years. The thick dust on the floor could attest to that.

He gave up trying to think about an answer. Logic never worked with stuff like this. Glancing down at the plate he noticed the words "slice of life" engraved on it in loopy letters.

Slice of life, he thought. *Heh*.

Another one of those awful portraits hung in the kitchen. Actually, this one wasn't so awful. It showed an old woman with a weather-beaten face, chuckling at some private joke as she smoked on a heavy pipe. He raised the cake in her direction. 'Grandma, you make some damn good cake.'

He didn't expect a response and wasn't disappointed. The portrait didn't move.

It was time to find a way out of the house. He turned around to go when he noticed that the fridge was on. Now that was strange. He grasped the rusty handle and yanked it open.

Countless body parts were aligned neatly across the shelves, their stumps still bleeding heavily as they bucketed their contents onto the floor. Krane slammed the door shut, guts piling on the floor.

In the hallway, it just got worse. Images were flashing before his eyes, colours screaming at him, twisting, turning. Three bloodied corpses in the hallway, lashings of blood on the walls and floor. The portraits all staring, their faces contorting into savage snarls. Something screaming. An axe being lifted and smashing down. A fire. Smoke, ash, burning. Things burning.

Burning, burning, burning.

Shit, shit, shit, shit, shit...

He fumbled for his puffer, and with shaky hands inhaled deeply. He squeezed his eyes shut and opened them again.

It was all gone.

Barely able to stand up straight, he stumbled into the next room, barely hearing the door behind him slam and lock shut.

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE COME HERE...

*

Was it that cake? No, it can't be. And how the HELL is there a freshly baked cake here? No. I can't focus on that now...I need to...do what I have to do. Then I'll leave.

*

Krane walked down the dusty hallway, wiping the cobwebs away as they caught in his face. Coming to the end of the hallway, he pushed the door open, not knowing what he would see.

The room was raining.

It was raining *inside*. The ceiling was pouring rain. There was no noise, and the water sunk into the ground the moment it touched the wooden floor.

Just like the blood.

He had to hurry. Pulling his hood over his head, he strode past the toys and drawings on the floor, noticing for the first time that this room was a child's room.

He walked over to the desk, his hands finding the two things he was looking for. The object, and the note.

He looked at the object, a slender talisman with a clouded jewel in the middle, the source of all this misery. He placed it in his pocket and then glanced at the note, the water splattering on the page and dripping to the floor, crying ink.

I had to do it. I didn't want to, but I did. No one understands what it's like having this power. She found out about it. I had no choice. I'm sorry. It had to be done, and I would do it again, again, again, again, just to make sure no one finds out. But I'm done now. Whoever you are, you can have it. It's twisted everything it touches beyond recognition and reality.

Don't try to find me. You won't. No one will. It has to be like this. That poor, poor little girl...why did she have to find out? This burden is mine to carry. But this one burden...her burden...it's too much. I'm getting out of here.

God forgive me.

James K-----

12th of June, 19—

4, Lamb Street, -----

Krane walked out of the house, out of the street, out of the town, with no one but the rain for company.



Sydney Lockout Laws

Lauren McCracken



Everyone loves a good moral panic, especially older upper-middle-class folk. When that panic is about a surge in alcohol-fuelled violence, and those wealthy old people live in areas with a thriving nightlife, you can expect there to be no shortage of hyperbolic headlines, rushed government policy and a wealth of misinformation.

If you've been following and swallowing the tabloid coverage of this issue, you might believe that tough-guy Barry O'Farrell's strict new laws are severe because of necessity. Violent assaults are rising exponentially, people are chasing their tequila with king hits and brawls spontaneously erupt in licensed venues as soon as the clock strikes 1:30 am.

Except, that's not what's happening at all. If you look at the statistics, you'll see a completely different image of Sydney's nightlife. Alcohol-related assaults have been in decline since 2008, as have hospitalisations due

to non-domestic interpersonal violence. Surprisingly, rates for both are at a 10-year low. In addition, only three of the state's 21 most violent venues lie within the new lockout zone. These numbers don't reflect a CBD plagued with drunken violence, so why is this the image being crammed down our throats?

The wealthy folk who live in the CBD, and the organisations that sell newspapers to them, have a much louder voice than the young people who patronise the affected venues. They've used that voice to convince us that the lockouts will keep us safe, when really, the only things that will benefit are inner-city property values, newspaper circulation numbers and O'Farrell's approval ratings. These laws won't bring us the peaceful late-night utopia we've been promised. Instead, we'll see frustrated people struggling to get home with no trains after lockout hours and taxi changeovers after last drinks. We'll see revellers roaming around the streets drunk and bored and their frustration giving way to aggression.

Worst of all, we'll see a "one-size-fits-all" approach to sentencing introduced to our justice system. Greg Smith, the NSW Attorney General and Minister for Justice, wrote a harsh critique of mandatory sentencing in the *Sydney Morning Herald* last November. He argued that mandatory sentencing does not reduce crime; it

only reduces the incentive to plead guilty. In addition, the punishment may not fit the crime if the circumstances of the offence are not accounted for. Simply put, mandatory sentencing does not deliver justice – a belief that most law experts share. Unfortunately, Mr Smith's arguments must have fallen on deaf ears in the party room, with mandatory sentencing now the jewel in the crown of his government's package of lockout laws.

If we want a bustling late-night economy without alcohol-related crime, we need to offer patrons something more than alcohol. We need to encourage a greater diversity of entertainment in our CBD. Think venues like Frankie's, where booze plays second fiddle to the amazing pizzas and bands, Good God with its incredible range of emerging live acts and DJs and Golden Age, where classic films are the big drawcard. We need more live music, great food, comedy, cabaret, film and art in the late-night mix. Alcohol shouldn't be the main attraction; merely the support act.

However, with alcohol subsidising the cost of this kind of entertainment, it wouldn't be a huge surprise if unique venues struggled in the wake of the new laws. And with an indefinite freeze on new liquor licenses, we probably won't be seeing anything new and exciting for quite a while.

Cheers, Barry!

One-punch Reform Fuelled by Emotion, Not Facts

Nicholas Gerovasilis



The dissemination of egregious events by the mass media can often have a galvanising effect on public opinion. This phenomenon is exemplified by the deaths of Thomas Kelly and Daniel Christie. The emotion these tragedies generated mobilised immense sentiment demanding reform to tackle alcohol-fuelled violence. It was endemic of the pervasiveness of

the outcry that an unlikely concord saw Premier Barry O'Farrell face sustained media pressure from the trifecta of *The Daily Telegraph*, the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the ABC. Even within parliament, an uncommon display of bipartisanship in support of major reform underscored the aligning of the stars which has manifested these laws.

The facts of this issue, however, shine a revealing light on the government's response. Over the past five years, crime statistics do not illustrate the cataclysm one might expect from the rhetorical hyperbole of an "epidemic" of violence. Rather, a decline in the number of assaults on licensed premises, both across the state and more specifically in the Kings Cross area, would appear to lend greater impetus to maintaining the status quo, as opposed to the need for sweeping reform.

Yet polling would suggest this is smart politics from O'Farrell – if not effective policy – with a vast majority of respondents affirming the "very important" need to tackle alcohol-related violence. In saying this, it is important that the emotional tidal wave, which inevitably follows tragedies, does not facilitate ineffectual populism as a result of the need to be seen as "doing something".

On the other hand, measures such as 1:30 am lockouts and 3:00 am last drinks are not without successful precedent. As close as Newcastle, this reform has been constructively implemented. Since the measures were enacted in 2008, drunken assaults have fallen more than 30 per cent, and the city has drastically reduced its presence on the state's most violent venues list. Nonetheless, the critical question remains whether this success can be transposed to a major city like Sydney. The failure of comparable restrictions in Melbourne would suggest this is unlikely. It is further telling that the incidents that incited reform in NSW would not have been prevented by early lockouts, considering Kelly and Christie received their fatal blows prior to midnight.

However, if the NSW government is intent on tackling drunken assaults, they should perhaps give greater consideration to the findings of the Australian Institute of Criminology's 2011 report on the issue. While acknowledging the link between alcohol-fuelled violence and the situational factors that the legislation targets, it also accentuated the crucial impact of societal attitudes and values. Thus, the government should not detract

focus from personal responsibility through blanket restrictions. Rather, it should place front and centre what these reforms regrettably overlook; that is, the proliferation of a pernicious culture that is permissive, even encouraging, of excessive drinking.

The other key element of the legislation – sentencing reform – has been likewise controversial. An eight-year minimum sentence will now apply for offenders found guilty of assault causing death while intoxicated. This has inevitably reinvigorated debate over mandatory sentencing and whether judges are disconnected from community expectations of justice. A key motivation for the reform was the perceived leniency in the six-year sentence given to Thomas Kelly's killer. The Premier echoed this sentiment, suggesting legislative intervention should serve as a "wake-up call" to members of the judiciary. Yet, one only has to look to the Northern Territory to comprehend that, notwithstanding the rhetoric, the facts suggest mandatory sentencing is not an optimum formula for deterrence. Admittedly, the data is more promising with WA's mandatory sentence for assault on a police officer, where the measures operate in relation to a specific crime and not generic three-strike policies. Nevertheless, NSW Supreme Court Chief Justice Tom Bathurst has cautioned against removing judicial discretion and homogenising offenders independent of individual circumstances. This should, therefore, stress to the Premier that such reform, while understandable in its genesis, is unlikely to effectively solve the supposed problem.

Cruisin' Through

Tia Singh

Ten nights. Six friends. Four islands. One ship.



“Whoa.”

I had just stepped out of the car, and it wasn't the sweltering heat that had caused my wide-eyed reaction. Rather, it was the 245 metre long, 11 decks high, pristine white jewel docked alongside White Bay Cruise Terminal that made me gasp. It was the end of January and we had waited almost three months for this day to arrive. The day we set sail. Literally.

A mixed group of six, we bid adieu to Sydney (and land...) and stepped aboard P&O's largest ship, Pacific Jewel, to squeal and clap and jump in excitement some more. “It's like living at The Star!” was one reaction to our temporary water home. “I don't want to go home, already!” was another.

The point of the above story was not to boast or recount our first encounter with a cruise ship; rather to show how, within a few moments of our journey beginning, we were already impressed. For six university students, all penny saving, hard-working young ones, our 10-night cruise was going to be the most relaxing, most luxurious and most affordable getaway.

What We Paid

Just over \$800 each for a 10-night Pacific Island cruise to discover New Caledonia and Vanuatu.

Twin share; all meals and entertainment included.

The Ship

We had five full sea days. Surrounded by nothing but water, a few of us feared that whale watching (or staring out at sea, really) would be our pastime. We were wrong.

The fact that we barely had time to look outside of a window says enough. The basic expectations were there – two pools, two hot tubs, a gym, massage/spa centre, open deck, cafes, etc. But these were surpassed by nine different bars, musical shows that could put Broadway to shame, comedians that had you ROTs (rolling off the ship, anyone?), dance classes where 70-something-year-old men had more energy than we did, cocktail-making classes, duty-free shopping, a casino, crew v passengers game shows, fancy-dress nights and did I mention flying-fox across the length of the boat and feeling like you're soaring across the ocean? I could go on!

What made the lengthy to-do list so special was experiencing it with friends. All as excited as you were! I'll be honest; I worried about being with the same group of people 24 hours a day, 10 days at sea, but by the end of it, I wished we had more time. Sitting in a dome-shaped booth at the fanciest bar on board – we

played Uno. And not one person looked at us strangely. Laughing, yelling and the occasional swear word damning the person who threw down a Draw Four and made you pick up were acceptable. You were on holiday. And you felt like it every minute.

Food

- A la carte
- Buffet

Why do I give so much importance to food, you may ask? A cruise is one of the few holidays where all meals are included in your fare (no need to stock up at the complimentary breakfast at the hotel). Additionally, if you are hungry, you will (I speak from experience) feel seasick. So food, glorious food, plays a big role in the enjoyment of your trip. Whether you're filing up for a day of jet-skiing at port, or relaxing after a day of doing nothing at sea with a fancy dinner – food brings the group together to plan ahead, to reflect on the day and to bond.

Our dinners were almost always a la carte, where, by the middle of the cruise, we were known by the waiters there as the “notorious six”. Our dinners lasted close to two hours almost every night – we lazily ate bread rolls with an array of butters and oils, ordered two of everything on the menu for each person, laughed loudly and attempted to be fancy by asking for lime slices for our water. Ambience aside, the food itself was exquisite. Almost every morsel we tasted was phenomenal. It was hard to believe this was “ship food” (nowhere near the notorious “plane food”). You name the cuisine and they had it – Italian, Indian, Thai, Chinese, Australian, English, Middle Eastern – I had bruschetta for the entree, butter chicken for the main and Australian berry pudding for dessert!

The Islands

Note: This section will depend on what islands you visit. But I truly believe that in order to get the most out of your island stops, research, plan and execute it yourself.

Ports of Call: Noumea and Mare in New Caledonia

and Port Vila and Champagne Bay in Vanuatu.

In Noumea, we did the touristy bus tour of the cosmopolitan, French-twist city, and then kayaked over dazzling coral to a secluded island just offshore the mainland. Mare saw us get massages on the beach of your stereotypical, tropical-island getaway, with the crystal-blue water kissing the pristine, white sand.

Port Vila was our adventure pit stop, with jet-skiing and trekking through a lush rainforest to come face-to-face with the island's Cascade Waterfall being on our hit list. And Champagne Bay? After managing to survive being pelted by hail the size of golf balls, we shopped for souvenirs at the huts by the beach, held huge, flapping turtles, pretended to kiss snakes and swam in the clear, warm water of the bay.

Had we explored the islands through the shore tour organised by the cruise liner, we would have forked out probably five times what we actually paid. Doing our own research, being confident in our bargaining abilities and knowing exactly what we wanted to do helped save us all a lot of cash (which we may have spent later on alcohol on board...!).

The Day-By-Day Dollar (Per Person)

- Noumea: \$35 for a bus tour, one hour kayak hire and ice cream (plus Wi-Fi from the cafe)
- Mare: \$15 for a 30-minute massage, \$20 on souvenirs
- Vanuatu: \$100 for full-day taxi hire, one hour with the jet ski, entry to the rainforest to visit the waterfall and souvenirs.
- Champagne Bay: \$15 on souvenirs.

Understandably, “whoa” was an expression repeated throughout the 10 days. From the food, to the islands, to the warmth of the crew on board, to our conversations with the captain, to being swayed by the six-metre swell at the nightclub, to the sunset over the front deck of the ship, to the elephant made out of towels left on our beds, to realising that the ten nights had flown by in a flash... setting sail for six students was exhilarating, rewarding and oh so worth it!





You May Not Like Her Singing, but Boy Can She Art

Catherine Knight

From November until February 23, the woman “who broke up The Beatles” delivered us her retrospective *War Is Over! (if you want it)* at the MCA. The exhibition shows Yoko Ono as a multifaceted talent whose work crosses sculpture, installation, painting, performance, sound, video, drawing, instructional painting and photomedia. Her work straddles both the experimental avant-garde scene of the 1960s “happenings” and the traditional art-world of fine craftsmanship.

Ono made her name as an artist in 1964 with her performance work *Cut Piece*, in which audience members were invited to cut away items of her clothing as she sat complacent and still. *Cut Piece* marks as one of the first performance pieces ever, taking place almost a full ten years before Marina Abramovic came into the picture. *War Is Over* shows a projection of the original work along side a 2003 performance, where we see the then 71-year-old badass in the same intense meditative zone.

Much of the exhibition has a white-on-white Eurovision costume look going on. Despite this minimalist aesthetic, however, Ono manages to inject the works with remarkable energy and vibrancy. The playfulness and whimsy she uses avoids the sterility of much conceptual art. For instance, the room arranged as if suspended by a giant magnet proves to be both wonderfully poetic and a hilarious sight gag.

A standout work is her self-portrait in silicon that invites the audience to touch her amputated likeness. And while the work grossly reminds one of the sticky bug toys of childhood, it makes a simple and eloquent statement about the nature and homogeneity of humans. This same “we all shit” theme runs through much of her art, and is explored in “We’re all Water”. This installation is a series of jars – labelled with the names of iconic figures in history – filled 60 per cent with water, mirroring the average amount of water in the human body.

The video works from the 1960s and 1970s are the most impressive for their times, using a highly experimental approach to a relatively new medium. Her Fluxus film entitled *No. 4* shows five and a half minutes of bare-naked butts moving up and down as the actors walk, their conversation muffled. The video is again a moment where Ono’s progressive vision for a freer society is conveyed with humour rather than indignation.

Whether it is mending a plate to mend the world, playing a winner-less game of chess or stamping “peace” on a map, Ono is asking us to perform rituals. Her art facilitates this in the hope that through ritual actions there can be a reflection on her rhetoric of peace. She treats her audience like one of the small puzzle pieces that makes up a sky we never see put together.

The works in *War Is Over* are simple and gently humorous, making loud statements in subdued tones. In her book of haikus, *Grapefruit*, Ono writes: “You may think I’m small, but I have a universe inside my mind.” We couldn’t agree more.



12 Years a Slave

Simon Anicich @simonanicich

Directed By: Steve McQueen
Starring: Chiwetel Ejiofor, Lupita Nyong’o, Michael Fassbender

The idea of a “must-see movie” gets thrown around a lot these days. You only have to spend five minutes on a Sydney bus to know what films most people think are worthwhile of making a trip to the local cinema for, only to shell out 50-odd bucks for a ticket and popcorn combo. “Man, you’ve gotta see this movie,” you hear one guy say. “[Insert name of attractive female actor here] goes full-frontal and it’s totally awesome!!” Cue round of obnoxious high fives.

But once every few years, a movie comes out that is actually worthy of this idea. A movie that you watch not for a perv (seriously, get a girlfriend), but to actually learn something about this crazy world of ours. *12 Years a Slave* is one of those movies.

Brutal, confronting and in some parts weirdly uplifting, the film is based on the titular memoir of Solomon Northup: A free man who was kidnapped in the mid-1800s and sold into slavery for, you guessed it, 12 years. Renamed by his captors and stripped of all remnants of his former life and human dignity, Northup was tossed around from owner to owner, all of whom subjected him to cruel and degrading acts of torture – clearly a life miles away from the one he had forged as a successful carpenter and musician.

The film is directed by Steve McQueen, a British director and visual artist who is perhaps best known for his previous films *Hunger* (2008) and *Shame* (2013), which are equally as shocking and eerily beautiful as his latest effort. *The New Yorker* has dubbed *12 Years a Slave*, “The greatest feature film ever made about American slavery” – a statement which is difficult to disagree with. McQueen certainly does not shy away from the harsh themes of the topic at hand, conjuring a story that is told with gut-wrenching honesty. It shines a light on what is arguably the most abhorrent practice of cruelty in American history.

For me, it is the performances that make this film the modern masterpiece it is. As Northup, Chiwetel Ejiofor is certainly put through his paces, playing the role with a level of raw emotion that is seldom seen on screen. To put it simply, this dude can act. But perhaps the real revelation is Lupita Nyong’o, who plays fellow slave Patsey. Nyong’o has been nominated for pretty much every major award for the role, so the fact that this is her American film debut is absolutely outstanding.

So if you are planning to make a trip to the movies in the next few weeks, I implore you to check out *12 Years a Slave*. Seriously, this film has absolutely no faults, except perhaps for a somewhat stilted, messianic cameo by producer Brad Pitt. And really, when has spending five minutes watching the uber-cool Brad bust out his acting chops ever been a bad thing?

Tony Abbott splits soul into seven horcruxes to be scattered across the land

Connor Mulholland



It is speculated that current Prime Minister Tony Abbott has successfully attained immortality. The north shore resident, budgie-smuggler aficionado and master of the Dark Arts has become only the second person in history (following former Young Liberal President Lord Voldemort) to split his soul into seven pieces.

A Horcrux is an object created through an act of terrible evil, in which, an individual hides a fragment of their soul, thus allowing them to return from the dead. *Tharunka* has provided the rundown on the potential location of Tony Abbott’s Horcruxes.

A blue tie

It is widely speculated that the first Horcrux can be found within Tony’s favourite blue tie. This tie not only contains one-seventh of Abbott’s soul, but also the entire Coalition policy. Said tie reputedly holds magical powers, including the ability to generate meaningful political slogans such as “Real Solutions” and “Stop the Boats”.

Red budgie smugglers

The second location of prime-overlord Abbott’s Horcrux is perhaps one of the most difficult to obtain – the garish red budgie smugglers he often dons. This infamous banana hammock is distinguishable from other Horcruxes due to the fact that it was not created by the usual act of evil required, but rather the truly horrific sight that is Mr Abbott in speedos.

Oxford Street

If you were to hide a Horcrux, where is one place no one would think to look? Perhaps only the one Sydney location you will never find Tony – Oxford Street. Tony himself has admitted that he feels homosexuality makes him “probably feel a bit threatened...as most people do”, and this, ladies and gentleman, is where we can marvel in the ingenuity of our Prime Minister. Do not fear, however – Clover “Hermione” Moore and Alex “Weasley” Greenwich are on the search, inspecting Arq, Stonewall and every gay pride flag in sight. Let’s just hope they get to it before Cory “Malfoy” Bernardi does.

Gina Rinehart

Just as Quirinus Quirrell served as a Horcrux for Lord Voldemort, so too does Gina “Dolores Umbridge” Rinehart. Abbott, displeased with the media monopoly of right-hand man Rupert Murdoch’s News Limited, has backed Rinehart’s bid to further increase her stakes in Fairfax Media. What more could a prime minister ask for with both major media outlets directing public opinion in your favour? Who needs an independent media anyway? Let’s just hope Mark Scott can stay strong.

The boats

Tharunka, on good authority, has ascertained that the refugee boats contain a Horcrux. This revelation certainly sheds some light on the constant bombardment by Scott Morrison and the Mad Monk on the need to prevent asylum seekers entering Australia and to “stop the boats”. Indeed, the illogical “boat buyback scheme” can only be considered a dastardly attempt to prevent anyone from endangering the Horcrux. This Horcrux is currently believed to be safe, now that Australia has been excised from our own migration zone.

Woman in the Cabinet

The final Horcrux is widely regarded as the most un-findable; a woman in the cabinet (given recent evidence suggesting that Julie Bishop is, in fact, Godzilla). Abbott likely feared that a woman posed a great risk of “destroying the joint” along with his Horcrux and his attempt to return Australia to the 1950s.



Benji by Sun Kil Moon

Kyle Redman

At first, this album strikes as a very long-winded, one-sided conversation – but this is the beauty of singer-songwriter Mark Kozelek's (aka Sun Kil Moon's) new album, *Benji*.

By sparing no minor description, regardless of how seemingly pointless, Kozelek paints incredibly detailed accounts of events in his life. Avoiding metaphors, hyperbole and analogies, it almost seems like Mark is only doing a fraction of the job that we expect from a singer-songwriter. Typically, we get a deconstruction of condensed emotional experiences via numerous literary devices that we can draw our own parallels to. Instead, with *Benji*, we get comprehensively literal, detailed accounts of events happening to Mark or those around him, from which we're forced to make something of ourselves. There are elements that seem not at all relevant, but they're there for better or worse. "Dogs" is a toe-curlingly candid description of his young sexual experiences, again, with no details spared for better or worse.

The blunt delivery of situations, such as those in "Carissa", "Micheline", "Truck Driver" and "Jim Wise", is painfully real. "Jim Wise" tells the story of his Dad's friend who mercy kills his bedridden wife and fails to do the job on himself. There is no judgement here. Mark describes Jim with neither condemnation nor sympathy; from beard to ankle bracelet as a man who has had to make tough decision in his life.

These stories are the most captivating features of *Benji*, a heartbreakingly depressive release in which a dozen family members die throughout the entirety of the album. "Carissa" is a tribute to his cousin who tragically died in the same way as her grandfather – Mark's uncle and the subject of "Truck Driver" – in freak exploding aerosol can accidents. "Carissa was thirty-five/you don't just raise two kids and take out your trash and die." The track "Micheline" joins three separate tragedies sharing the same crushing ending, of which the death of Mark's grandmother is the least impactful. This album isn't entirely a middle-aged, heel-dragging confrontation with mortality.

Although there is something relatable, comforting and compelling about Mark tearing pages from his middle-aged-man journal of tragedy, there are two touching tributes to his parents. The song about his mother is a gripping tale of a man who dreads her passing. His father's tribute, "I Love My Dad", is a musical portrayal of Mark's past with his father and the lessons he was taught, rather than how he feels now about his relationship.

The vocal delivery on this album is just shy of spoken word and, as a result, these stories are incredibly easy to listen to. Instrumentally, the pleasing sound of nylon strings backs all of the tracks, with fleetingly impressive sax on "Ben's My Friend", gentle folk rock stalwarts in the upright bass and backing vocals, booming drums on "Dogs" and slow melancholic electric piano on "Jim Wise". "I Love My Dad" is similar to recent Wilco, and the guitar closing "Richard Ramirez Died of Natural Causes Today" is stellar.

This album is sad yet relatable, regardless of how detached the experiences are for anyone other than Mark. There are moments where the lyrics could have been a little more comprehensible, and the closing elements of the final track, "Ben's My Friend", could have been more final. But this is a fantastic album that could be Mark's gateway album to the similar fame of Bill Callahan.



Keyboard Cat

Dylan Chalwell

True art takes us into the aleph of existence while sheltering us from its unbearable weight. Consider for a moment Cezanne's *Quarry Bibémus*, where the folding of the entire world into a single point of universal density is apprehended only by the edge of the painting itself. In this regard, the painter both universalises and localises the nature of our existence – we see through a keyhole the eternal collapse of all things.

It is alongside such works that I tentatively wish to place Charlie Schmidt's remarkable short film, *Keyboard Cat*. Here we find the infinite compressed to less than a minute as we find the endless cycles of activity superimposed onto an absurdist arrangement of everyday objects. This is, after all, the role of the artist: To present the ineffable by mediating through the familiar physicality of our surrounds.

Keyboard Cat is the marriage of Schmidt's iconic Spartan aesthetic with the grotesque physicality of our everyday lives. Here we find a potent indictment of our surrounds – as the eponymous feline completes her routine, we detect the patterns of our own existence and discover that our communion with the sublime is stymied by the gross materiality by which we medicate our own emptiness.

The temptation with such high-concept films is to assume that their merit lies only in their reconstruction of the tortured dialogue between art and artist. Indeed, some critics have dismissed *Keyboard Cat* a self-indulgent exercise in academic vanity.

What a lamentable evaluation! An "esoteric plaything of the intelligentsia", as one colleague of mine recently described it? I think not. This is a film's fingerprints will be found on its viewers for as long as they live.

Consider firstly the complex power-relationship between the cat and the world it inhabits. As foregrounded by the title, the cat finds definition only in relation to its owner. Rather than the cat's identity functioning as a reality-shaping force, the osmosis is cruelly reversed and relatively neutral objects – the piano is the most pertinent example – become sinister instruments of oppression.

Whilst I typically eschew the reductionist readings that my contemporaries seem so enamoured by, it seems to me that this is a poignant comment on the dehumanising mechanisms of the modern market system – and a lucid insight into the consequences of commodification.

To this end, two features of the film are crucial to the narrative superstructure: Firstly, the repetition of the tune, and then of the entire video; secondly, the look of fear that momentarily transforms the cat into an amalgam of our own conflicting desires for self-autonomy and endless comfort. Together, I see these features as nothing less than a depiction of the eternal oscillation between the banal and the terrifying in our own lives. Moments of ignorance are unremarkable; moments of lucidity are debilitating.

Why does this resonate so potently? Surely because the futility of life is not so often as faithfully captured as it is by this particular cat on this particular keyboard. Like we press the keys only to find that the tune we produce makes the silence ever more terrifying.



Potion Vapors by syrrup

Owen Briggs

I've got no idea who syrrup is. They've got two other albums up on Bandcamp – 33rpm and R+B. Syrrup's work is tagged as "hip hop, chillwave, slow jams, vaporwave, experimental, ambient, hip hop, homerecording, lofi", but who knows what that's supposed to mean. It doesn't mean anything. It doesn't matter, though, because this album is great.

Potion Vapors sounds just like you'd imagine: aural alchemy. Late-1990s R&B distilled and left to bake in the sun for the next million years. Far future rediscovery of primordial beats, reconstructed in accordance with the spiritual algorithms of the New Age. Cruising through subspace at lateral speeds and a trillion coastal sunsets all at once. Endless palm-lined boulevards. Interdimensional hip hop. The colour purple. Running water. Dreams.

The album feels half-remembered from the first moment you hear it. Most of the sounds that rise above the haze – crystalline chimes, guitar and piano – are like the strongest memories of a dream upon waking: Clearly grasped, but forgotten as quickly as the rest of it. Others take a stranglehold on you – dribs and drabs of meaningless phrases float to the front of your mind – "baby won't you...be my last time...the latest record...you'll be...thumbs up for them..."

Favourites include "butterflies", which is by far the clearest song on the album – a throwback to a hit that never happened – like Rihanna, Beyonce, Destiny's Child, dug up on an ancient glovebox cassette. Next is "games", for its plucked guitar and ethereal vocals, ambling around a kick-snare-kick-snare for two minutes before returning to the mists from whence it came. Lastly, the opening track "distortion", beginning with a tape reel clicking into place and drifting off into astral space. This track is the cruising through subspace I mentioned earlier, and you'll know within seconds of hearing it whether you want this album.

You can buy *Potion Vapors* online for \$2 – I hope you like it as much as I do.

illuminatedpaths.bandcamp.com/album/potion-vapors

ABBOTT & PYNE HANDS OFF OUR EDUCATION

NATIONAL RALLY FOR EDUCATION RIGHTS



WEDNESDAY
MARCH

26
1 PM

RALLY AT
UTS TOWER

Reverse the \$2.3 BILLION CUTS!

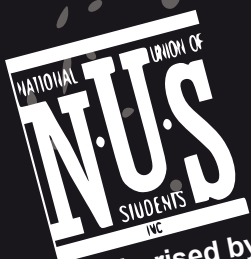
Hands off STUDENT WELFARE!

Reinstate STARTUP SCHOLARSHIPS

Defend ACADEMIC FREEDOM!

No HECS sell-off! FREE EDUCATION!

Don't scrap SSAF! DEFEND STUDENT UNIONS!



Authorised by
Deanna Taylor
NUS President

THE SRC ARE YOUR ELECTED STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES — YOUR VOICE ON CAMPUS!



SRC President

Joel Wilson

It was great to meet you all during O-Week and to see that so many of you were interested in getting involved in the Student Representative Council (SRC). I hope you all had as much fun as I did!

During the week I was often asked, "What does the SRC actually do?", so I thought this would be a good place to explain. The SRC's role is to represent and campaign for student interests within the University, to Government, as well as the community at large. In 2014 we want to ensure that you get the world-class education promised to you and that you have access to all the support services available. Throughout O-Week you would have seen us roll out a number of campaigns and events intended to make sure you get the best university experience possible.

Now first week back at university means finding time to buy textbooks. The SRC is fighting to make textbooks free and online but we understand that right now they can be really expensive. This is why we give out a \$500 interest free loan to students in need. So please contact the SRC so that you don't have to choose between food and textbooks.

I hope you are all prepared for a huge Session 1! Please get in touch or come and see me in the blockhouse whenever you require help. My email address is srcpresident@arc.unsw.edu.au and you can sign up to our collectives through our website and Facebook page!



Indigenous Officer

Rebekah Hatfield

Coming up this month the Indigenous Collective will be running various events on the 20th of March for "Close the Gap" Day. Close the Gap is a campaign run by Oxfam that aims to reduce the "gap" between Indigenous and non-Indigenous health outcomes. We invite everyone to come along and be involved in some of the cultural workshops- such as traditional painting and dancing- and join us afterward for a BBQ lunch. Event details will be released closer to the date. If you

would like any other information please contact me at indigenous@arc.unsw.edu.au. We all hope to see you there!



Education Officers

Billy Bruffey

The Education Collective has been building the foundations for a year of successful campaigns. Already we have achieved the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for the establishment of a 24/7 Afterhours Space on campus! We've been busy planning the UNSW National Day of Action Party Protest for 26 March, and have plastered the campus in posters and flyers advertising the Sydney rally and UNSW event. In O-Week we painted two huge banners for the NDA at our 'crafternoon', and welcomed the President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, Ged Kearney, who addressed us on the role of student unionism and grassroots activism in creating progressive change. But most importantly, our Collective has been undergoing a transformation in our engagement with students, as we work towards enlivening activism on this campus to fight for a better education together. To get involved, email education@arc.unsw.edu.au, or meet us at the Blockhouse 'Activist Space' every Thursday at 12 noon.



Womens Officer

Olga Lisinska

Come one, come all to our Make Your own Damn Sandwich picnic, brought to you in honor of International Women's Day. It's being held at 12-2pm on Thursday (6th March) so come along and enjoy mountains of random sandwich fillings.

On the 8th of March is the actual International Women's Day. We'll be meeting at 10:50 at Town Hall behind the UNSW Women's Collective banner, hearing from speakers from 11am at Town Hall, matching to Hyde Park for a mini festival.

Week 3 we'll be running a screen of the Sapphires in conjunction with Sydney Feminists. Great movie, great people, what's not to love?



Environment Officer

Nicholas Gurieff

It's been a busy start to the year in the SRC Environment Portfolio and we're ready to take on the challenges of 2014 with a strong team of volunteers.

The Renewable Energy Students' Society (RESOC) will be partnering with the SRC Environment Office on the Renew UNSW initiative to produce a report on energy opportunities for the university. We plan to show how UNSW could save money while gaining an international reputation for forward thinking management of energy use. Together we will present ourselves and our findings professionally, gaining useful experience for future careers.

Environment Collective meetings will be held at 10am Tuesdays in the Activist Space in the Blockhouse, so if like to get involved then feel free to drop in. We're also organising other social events for the semester, so jump on Facebook or the website to keep yourself informed.

unswenvironment.nationbuilder.com



Students with Disabilities Officer

Alexandra Little

Hey guys! I hope the start of semester is going smoothly for you. We are in the middle of O-Week at the moment and thoroughly enjoying everything that's going on around campus. The last few weeks have been busy for the disability portfolio. I attended the Save Our Medicare rally with other members of the SRC. I spoke on the expert panel at the SMART START orientation program which was heaps of fun. I think it was good for incoming first year students to get a student's perspective on university life. I have been in contact with people with a great deal of experience in disability in tertiary education, which has been very informative. I had my first consultation with the project officer working on the Disability Action Plan (DAP) for UNSW. This document has the potential to prompt much-needed improvements and changes for both students and staff with disabilities. I really hope that we are able

to put together and implement a substantive piece of policy that is lodged with the Human Rights Commission, rather than something symbolic that isn't worth the paper it's written on. In the next couple of weeks, I will be holding events for World Sleep Day on 14 March and the Purple Day for Epilepsy on 26 March. Disability and Welfare Collective meetings will start in the first week back and will be happening on Thursdays at 2pm in the Disability and Welfare Room in the Blockhouse and I'm looking forward to seeing you there. As always, get in touch with me at disabilities@arc.unsw.edu.au if you need anything.



Ethno-Cultural Officer

Rachel Lobo

It was great to meet all of you at O-week either at the stall, our Meet & Greet or our Intercultural and International Student Garden Gathering! During our Meet & Greet we gave away a brand spanking new copy of Americanah by bestselling author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. This title, listed as one of the New York Times BEST 10 Books of 2013 is the one we'll be cracking into for our FIRST EVER Movie & Book Club in March. Make sure you come and drop by our autonomous collective to chill out and get creative with campaign and event ideas. These times are every Tuesday 12:30-2PM and Wednesday 12-1:30PM up in the Activists Space, Level 1 of the Blockhouse. Also coming up is our Harmony Day Celebration which coincides with the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination! Although the official day is the 21st of March, we'll be celebrating in Week 4 so as to ensure as many of YOU get the chance to share in the festivities. Once again, if you'd like more information or you need support email rlobo@arc.unsw.edu.au!



Queer Officers

Dylan Lloyd & Cassandra Harris
Glitter. Rainbows. Bubbles. LOVE.

Mardi Gras was a fricken ball this year.

The Queer Officers worked tirelessly with students from UNSW and around the country to build our float, which was a massive success! HUGE thank you to every single person who helped us out; you are all wonderful, lovely people <3

Speaking of lovely people, we are still bedazzled from all the new faces at O-Week! It was great to meet so many new peeps, and catch up with all the old – whether it was one of our movie nights, games night, start of session party or even just our stalls at COFA or main campus, we really hope you'll stay and add your awesomeness to ours. If you haven't come along to say hi yet (or if you're kinda shy like Dylan was last year), give us a buzz at queer@arc.unsw.edu.au to find out more about the room-of-requirement-esque 24/7-access, free-tea-profusing Queer Space, as well as our Collective meetings :)

Much love,
Dylan and Cassie.



International Officer

Emily Yichen Liu

WELCOME TO THE WHOLE BRAND
NEW YEAR! This is the first shot of SRC International for Semester 1.

Are you guys ready for some of the awesome events of the year on campus? SRC international student office will be holding all sorts of fabulous events throughout the year, which includes: Safety Seminar, IELTS workshop, International Night Market and more!

During Orientation Week, SRC international office and Ethnic Affairs Office will together hold a Garden Gathering Event. You can not only get sweet treats but also meet awesome friends here!! It is definitely something you don't want to miss out and we are excited to see new faces coming along and saying hello!

Date: Thursday 27th Feb
Time: 3pm-5pm
Location:Globe Lawn

SRC international warmly welcome everyone to join us and hope to see you at our upcoming events! Stay updated with our email or simply like our Facebook page to get more information.

UNSW International Students' Collective
www.facebook.com/groups/unsw.isc



2014 Arc@UNSW BOARD ELECTIONS

NOMINATIONS

OPEN: MON 17 MAR 2014
CLOSE: 3PM THURS 27 MAR 2014

An election will be held to elect 3 Student Directors to the Arc @ UNSW Limited (Arc) Board. One position must be filled by a Postgraduate Student. The remaining positions are unrestricted. The term of office will be 2 years commencing June 2014.

Arc is the student organisation at the University of New South Wales (UNSW). It provides community and representational activities with a vision of "creating the best student experience" on both the Kensington and COFA campus. Arc's mission is to maximise the support, engagement and development of UNSW students. The 14 member Board is responsible for the overall performance and strategic direction of the organisation.

NOMINATIONS

Nominations open on Monday 17th March 2014 and close at 3.00 pm on Thursday 27th March 2014. Late nominations will not be accepted. The election roles will close with the closing of nominations.

For further details on Arc Board Elections and the nomination procedures please visit arc.unsw.edu/elections

DO YOU WANT TO MAKE A
DIFFERENCE ON CAMPUS?



CREATE THE BEST STUDENT EXPERIENCE 2014 Arc BOARD ELECTIONS

Further information may be obtained from the
Returning Officer, Nitasha Prasad on 02 9385 7711 or returning.officer@arc.unsw.edu.au

arc.unsw.edu.au/board

Roosters can boast, they are best Rugby League club in the world



Niko Pajarillo

2014 looks bright for the Sydney Roosters, with the “tricolours” picking up where they left off last season. In their first real hit-out since last year’s Grand Final victory, the Roosters got some solid pre-season practice in late February, participating in rugby league’s annual World Club Challenge – a pre-season clash between the champion team of the NRL and the champion team of the English Super League. In a clinical display, the Bondi boys outclassed English rivals Wigan 36-14, and can now officially boast the title of the best rugby league club on the planet.

Not bad for a team who, this time last year, was struggling to climb off thirteenth spot on the ladder.

While it hasn’t been done in over 15 years, the prospect of winning consecutive premierships isn’t so far-fetched for the Roosters.

The boys looked sharp. Their attack seemed polished and their understanding of each other’s games resulted in a smooth, cohesive performance. The fact that they’ve retained 16 – 17 members of their Grand Final-winning squad certainly helps in that area. But the fundamental deciding factor in the Roosters’ continuing success is their defence.

The Roosters were the best defensive team in the competition last year, conceding only 325 points throughout the entirety of the season. Their opposition in the World Club Challenge, well known for their attacking prowess and expansive style of play, seemed disjointed and

stressed, unable to execute any of their trademark decoy plays as they were continually smothered by the Roosters forward pack. Wigan were simply shut out of the game, prevented from creating any sort of momentum, as unrelenting mistakes were forced by the Roosters’ in-your-face defensive approach.

While “the Chooks” seem to be working together like a well-oiled machine this early in the season, the team’s wealth of individual talent also appears to be flourishing.

Team speedster Michael Jennings told Roosters TV after the match, “That was the game plan, to just keep building pressure and do what we do best.”

Jennings was certainly doing what he does best, with the explosive centre breaking the record for most tries in World Club Challenge history, with three to his name.

RLIF International Player of the Year Sonny Bill Williams was relatively quiet for his standards, but did provide some nice touches – his brilliant offload setting up winger Shaun Kenny-Dowall for the final try of the match.

Hooker and man of the match Jake Friend was at his aggressive best, setting up three tries and almost scoring one of his own. Gritty and tough-as-nails in defence, Friend now looks almost certain to claim his first ever Queensland jersey in this year’s State of Origin series.

On the topic of the State of Origin, NSW five-eighth James Maloney appears to be continuing his tough, hardy form into the 2014 season. His goalkicking was on song throughout the night, kicking a perfect 6/6, and looked dangerous every time he ran the ball.

Now, while the Roosters and NSW-supporting readers of *Tharunka* undoubtedly look forward to seeing

how all these individuals maintain their strong form this season, there remains one individual whose form is the most eagerly anticipated. The person whose form will to a significant extent determine the success of both his club AND state. I am writing, of course, about popular halfback Mitchell Pearce.

Young, keen and tasked with living up to the deeds of his famous father, Pearce remains one of the most hotly discussed players in the NRL. While highly talented, Pearce has in previous years been heavily maligned for his inability to remain composed in high-pressure situations and for his failure to dominantly control games and steer his team out of trouble.

Late last year, though, Pearce’s critics were silenced as the Roosters surged to first place on the NRL ladder and won the Grand Final. Some questioned whether this success was a result of the Roosters’ star-studded lineup, or if Pearce had finally mastered the role of halfback.

Watching him play in the World Club Challenge, it is quite clear to this writer that Pearce has finally got what it takes. Across the park, Pearce looked fit, fast and confident. In attacking situations, Pearce was dynamic and quick, yet mature and smart at the same time.

With their star players firing on all cylinders, our mates from down the road, the Sydney Roosters, aren’t showing any signs of slowing down – NSW’s prospects of finally reclaiming the State of Origin shield are looking stronger than ever. The oldest NRL club and the pride of Sydney’s eastern suburbs, the Sydney Roosters look to be in for their best year yet.

Say Sport? A social and political commentary in and around the playing field

Reylene Galloway

With many sporting events just around the corner, what new controversies, scandals, landmarks are we welcomed with? Here is your dose on the happenings concerning your favourite sports in 2014, unlike you know it.

It already seems that 2014 will be known as the year of "organised sports gone wrong". With the **22nd Winter Olympic Games** kicking off in Sochi and its televised ill-fated organisational skills, prospects are also unpleasant for **FIFA's 20th World Cup**, held in Brazil. Many of the problems to come out of Brazil are mirroring Sochi. There have been constant reports of security fears due to increasing violence and fan-based attacks of several domestic football clubs, slow development of facilities and employee mistreatment. Violent protests have also plagued preparation with Sky News reporting that "protesters jumped barriers at Central do Brasil Station singing "Fifa pay my fare!" and expressed outrage at the mounting public cost of hosting the World Cup."

Staying on international football news, the **empire of David Beckham** continues to expand even beyond the playing grave. Time reports that Beck's want to introduce "Major League Soccer to Miami, announcing...he wants to purchase an expansion team".

If news of Beckham's wealth annoys or bores you, it might interest you to know that recent developments have come out of **Malaysia's Football Association**. Al Jazeera has reported that 17 players from a Malaysian third-tier league team were found guilty of match fixing. This adds to the ongoing corruption of many South-East Asian football associations who are in the direct governance of FIFA.

Not to exclude our fellow UNSW American comrades, which sport provides much finesse and fan-fare? I'll give you another clue, which sporting event created the term, Nipplegate? Have you guessed? Yup, that's right, the **Superbowl**. This year's Superbowl was played at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey on February 2, 2014. The game featured the Denver Broncos and Seattle Seahawks, with the Seahawks winning 43-8. Although the Seahawks were victorious, most of the media commentary was focused on several things. To keep them short and simple:

1. Bruno Mars and the Red Hot Chili Peppers (RHCP) were given the duties of half-time entertainment. RHCP were criticised for air guitaring?
2. Ads. Ads. Ads. If I was (cue Mad Men) Donald Draper, I'd be questioning the relevance of James Franco, Tigers and Ford cars?

If the **Australian sporting scene** takes your fancy, many measures have been introduced just in time

for the 2014 season. **The AFL, NRL and ARU**, have introduced new laws into their framework to cover areas of professional conduct, corruption and drug-use. Many of these laws were introduced as a result of the tumultuous 2013 season with several NRL and AFL clubs being investigated by ASADA for the use of banned substances. This is exemplified through many of the new rules introduced by these governing bodies with the Fox Sports reporting that the "ARU includes coaches and their staff in new anti-drug policy" and both, the AFL and NRL have introduced the limitations and bans on phones on game day to minimize gambling and corruption.

With the NRL Auckland Nines kicking off on February 15, **the NRL** have lost one of their star players: Rabbitoh's forward prop, Sam Burgess. Just arriving to Australia in 2010, Burgess' absence in the NRL is contributed to the ongoing money struggle for the NRL to secure players as more salary is given playing union. This has led to exodus conversions by past NRL players to union: Israel Folau and Benjii Marshall.

The **A-League** has garnered much needed attention. The increasing interest and adoption of the league has been sparked by major marquee signings by clubs, free-to-air coverage and of news that EPL giants, Manchester City have bought an 80 per cent share of Melbourne heart. Hopefully, these developments contribute to its' increasing success.

Serena Williams & Indian Wells



Lawrence Leung

Since the start of the year, fans have been treated to monumental shifts in the tennis landscape. Stanislas Wawrinka beat the odds at the Australian Open by knocking out Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic to join the exclusive club of Grand Slam winners. Li Na became the first Asian player to win the Grand Slam of the Asia Pacific and accepted the trophy with a hilarious victory speech.

The storylines don't stop here. All the big players have turned their eyes to the BNP Paribas Open in Indian Wells, Calif., - one of the most prestigious tournaments after the Grand Slams.

And I mean ALL the big players. For the first time in 13 years, Serena Williams has joined the player entry list for the BNP Paribas Open.

There may never be another athlete as polarising or unpredictable as Serena Williams. On the court, she's one of the greatest players of all time. Off the court,

Williams has been criticised about everything from her weight to her lack of commitment to her comments and behaviour. For each of her 17 Grand Slam singles titles (as many as Roger Federer), she has a PR-disaster.

Love her or hate her, Serena's legacy is embedded firmly into women's tennis. By entering in at Indian Wells, Serena added to her illustrious legacy as she considered ending her controversial 13-year boycott of the tournament.

Serena and Venus Williams have not played the BNP Paribas Open since 2001 when a 19-year-old Serena was booed off the court despite winning the tournament. 15,000 tennis fans reportedly harassed the Williams family during the championship match by repeatedly calling them "n*****s" after Venus withdrew from her semi-final match against Serena. Then-tournament director, Charlie Pasarell, released an official statement neither confirming nor denying allegations. Instead, Pasarell passive-aggressively said, "Maybe they did [yell racial epithets], but...that's not Indian Wells people."

It was a blatant reminder that the ugliness of racism could permeate even a sport like tennis that prides itself on its decorum and etiquette.

In the years since the incident, the Williams sisters have been routinely criticised for not taking the high road and returning to Indian Wells. Numerous sports columnists from *Sports Illustrated*, ESPN and the *New York Times* have explicitly discounted the involvement of racism in the crowd's behaviour. These journalists have all found ways to use flowery language to say the same thing to Williamses: get over it.

But picture yourself in Serena's shoes. You're a young, black woman with boundless athletic potential. You are not even old enough to drink legally, but you are playing the finals of a world-class tennis tournament while being jeered by a predominantly white, upper-class crowd of 15,000 - most of whom are fellow Americans. They use racially charged language. They harass your father and your sister. Would you return?

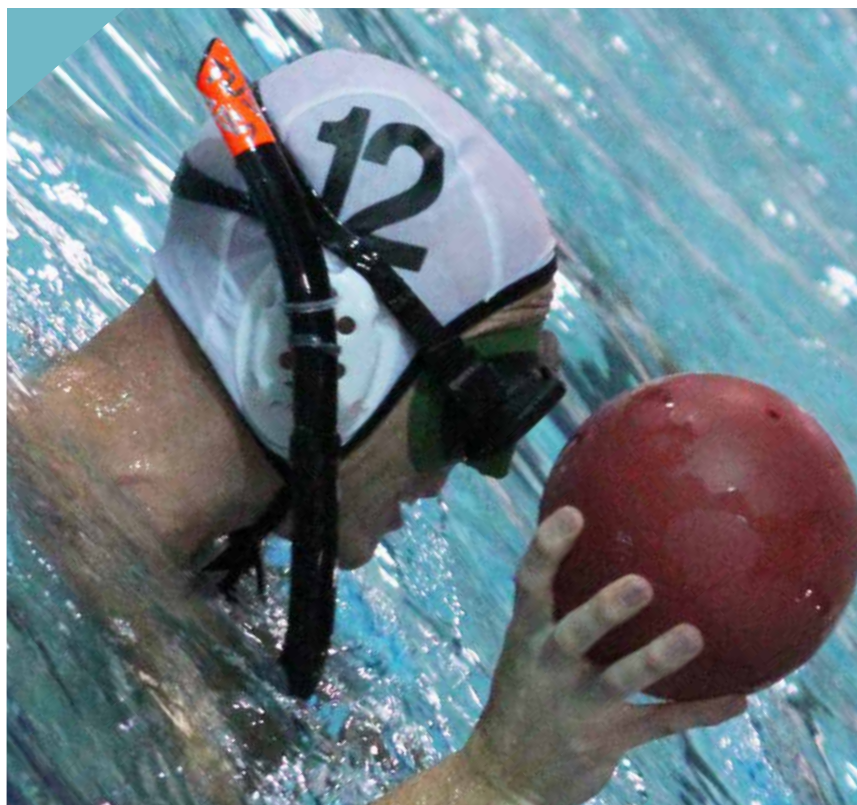
The fact that Serena considered a return to Indian Wells is a positive sign that her wounds have begun to heal. Indian Wells was a life-changing tournament for Serena; she should not be coerced into competing there until she feels she is ready. Whether or not Serena chooses to play, as fans it is *our* responsibility to "get over" the possibility of Serena not returning to Indian Wells.

Serena has always handled issues of race with dignity and grace. She has an opportunity to send a strong and positive message about forgiveness and resilience in the face of senseless racism and verbal abuse. Knowing Serena, we can rely on her to be unpredictable - she may pull out tomorrow. But one thing is for sure, if Serena decides to play, I feel sorry for any poor soul standing across the net, waiting to receive a 200-km/h bomb down the T.

UPDATE: Serena Williams has withdrawn from the 2014 BNP Paribas Open and the 2014 Qatar Open after "careful consideration", as reported by *USA Today*. Serena did not cite the injury that she picked up at the Australian Open as her reason for withdrawal. However, she did do so for the Qatar Open.

THARUNKA • SPORT

UNSW SPORTS PREVIEW



Sam Davies @spdavies1

Whether you're interested in getting fit, meeting new people, or just larking about, UNSW's sports clubs have students well covered. Having only recently come under the Arc umbrella, sport is now fully a part of the UNSW family. Here we take a look at two of the most exciting, and perhaps less well known, sports clubs the university has to offer. Maybe you could give them a go, and who knows, next year you could be *Tharunka's* 'one to watch'.

Underwater Rugby Club

Underwater rugby still is a relatively new sport, having been played in Australia since 2007. It combines the physical challenge of staying underwater for extended periods with the tactical battle of getting a negatively buoyant ball into the opposing team's underwater goal. The three-dimensional nature of UWR (players have to be aware of what is above and below them, as well as to their right and left) means it offers a freedom of movement unfound in almost any other sport – it is truly unique.

Despite UWR's infancy, the UNSW club is thriving. Last year the club helped to organise, and then competed in, Australia's first ever National Underwater Rugby tournament. They also competed in the Trans-Tasman Cup against New Zealand, helping Australia to a 1-0 win. Having split from the UNSW Underwater Club, the Underwater Rugby Club now offers students the chance to get involved in something they would perhaps never have the chance to elsewhere.

The club welcomes those of all abilities to give the sport a try. Training takes place every Wednesday at the UNSW pool from 8.15pm to 9.30pm. Novices can look forward to a six-week beginner's course starting on Wednesday 5th March, offering them a comprehensive introduction to the sport. If something fresh, exciting and unique is what you're looking for in your sporting life, look no further than the Underwater Rugby Club.

One to Watch: Thibault Tabarin

Post doctorate in Cellular Biology

Having originally thought the sport was a joke, Thibault has become one of UNSW's star Underwater Rugby players. From his first time playing UWR, Thibault was hooked. The calmness that being underwater provokes, juxtaposed with the fast-paced action of the game was a unique sensation for Thibault that has helped foster his love of the sport.

More than this, being introduced to underwater rugby has led Thibault to pursue all manner of other water-based sports. From a lover of all things outdoors, he has been transformed into a watersports junkie, regularly enjoying spearfishing and free diving to go along with his UWR exploits. As one of the club's star players, Thibault hopes to help UNSW to be even more successful in underwater rugby, and to help the sport grow nationwide.

UNSW's Underwater Rugby Club can be found at: uwrugby.wordpress.com
Or email uwrugby@underwaterclub.org
or oliverbarrand@gmail.com

Ultimate Frisbee

The beauty of ultimate Frisbee is its flexibility. It's easy to play, requires

hardly any equipment, and can be as competitive or light-hearted as you want it to be. It combines elements of American football, netball and basketball into an adrenalin pumping hybrid. The fact that it can also be great exercise means that the Ultimate Frisbee Club continues to be an extremely popular one for students.

UNSW's Ultimate Frisbee Club is proud to have had as members' no less than seven players who have since gone on to represent Australia at world tournaments. The real strength of the club, however, is that it welcomes anyone of any ability. It caters for beginners with skills training and one-on-one sessions explaining the basics of the sport and helping them to tweak their throwing technique. Training takes place every Thursday from 3-5pm on the Village Green and is open for anyone to come and give the sport a go. The club gives its members the opportunity to get fit, have a good laugh, and enjoy fantastic socials throughout the year.

Ultimate Frisbee keeps the social and fun aspects of just throwing a disc around with mates, and adds competition and structure that allows players to enjoy getting fit and being competitive. And with 2014 being the 'Year of Women' in for the sport, there is no better time for women to get involved with the Ultimate Frisbee Club!

One to Watch: Ali Zalums

Bachelor of Medical Science

Nineteen year-old Ali has only been playing Ultimate for a year or so, but she has already enjoyed remarkable success. Having begun playing as a means of going to the Unigames (it was a toss-up between Ultimate and lawn bowls) the variety, intensity and social aspect of the sport quickly got Ali hooked. "Every training session, tournament and game are different. You'll never have two points the same on the field", she says.

Since taking up the sport, Ali has not looked back. Winning the Nationals in Bendigo with the Sydney women's 'Wildcards' team in her first year playing, and subsequently going on to compete for Australia in the Under-23s World Ultimate Championships in Toronto in July 2013 are particular highlights.

Ali hopes to one day play for the open age Australian women's team, the 'Firetails'. But more generally she hopes the underrated sport can continue to grow. For UNSW students, the Ultimate Frisbee club offers the perfect environment to get involved in such an exciting sport. "The UNSW ultimate Frisbee club is such an easy club to feel comfortable in", says Ali, and few who join ever look back.

UNSW's Ultimate Frisbee Club can be found at: unswultimate.wordpress.com
Or email: unswultimate@gmail.com
or chowjjsa@gmail.com

