



LOT'S WIFE

EDITION 8, 2012



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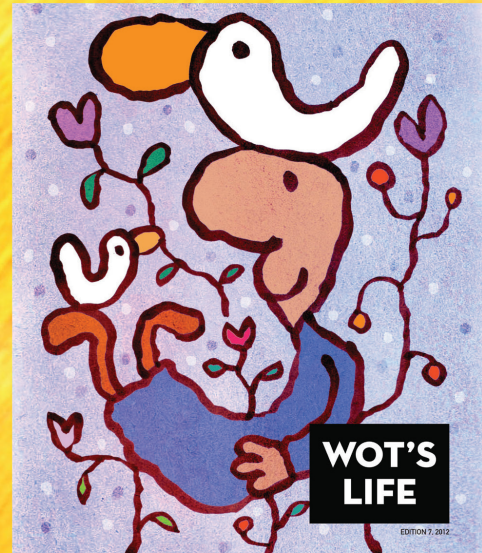
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We are also looking for designers and online editors. Your ideas could provide us with the template for Lot's Wife in 2013!

Expressions of interest from students from all levels of experience are welcomed.

Email lotswife2013@gmail.com.



THANKS

Thank you to everybody who contributed to Lot's Wife in 2012; the amount of involvement in the paper was unprecedented, and Lot's Wife certainly would not have been as successful without the efforts of everyone listed below. As Editors we are incredibly grateful and incredibly proud.

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Thanks

The Grease Megamix – the power you’re supplying is electrifying; Unchained Melody for old times’ sake; Jake Antmann for always being there, even when Bren didn’t want you to be; TiNA for the Newcastle fun-times; the MSA for keeping us ‘entertained’ throughout the year; the beautiful people featured on the front cover; all of our friends for supporting us, drinking beer with us, listening to us whinge, making us laugh, visiting us in the office and making Lot’s Wife much more than bound pages – you know who you are, there are too many of you to list individually; Matt and Flo for taking over the reins – congratulations, you will do a fabulous job.

No Thanks

TW – Serial Office Pest (P.S. we love you lots); sleep deprivation; delayed flights... there’s really not too much we can be ungrateful for – 2012 has been a winner!

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*Melinda Bladier**Bren Carruthers*

In my first editorial of this year I wrote; “It is a privilege to have the opportunity to edit this publication.” Having reached the end of the year, I can only emphasise this message. Throughout 2012 I have been struck by the energy and enthusiasm of so many people at Monash. At times when I have been listening to classic hits from the ‘80s on repeat for hours, exhausted and trapped in an internal battle about whether there should be a comma or a semi-colon in that sentence, you have kept me going. Thank you.

The vibrancy of the student community which I have witnessed this year is one of the best things about Monash, and needs to be protected. The University’s inadequate distribution of the SSAF has put many student services under threat, including this paper. It is a constant source of embarrassment that whilst other student papers around the country receive thousands of dollars in funding from their student associations or universities, *Lot’s Wife* is completely funded through self-generated advertising revenue. This needs to change.

2012 has ultimately been an incredibly satisfying, stressful and joyous year. I have learnt so much from this opportunity, and can only hope that students have enjoyed reading *Lot’s Wife* as much as I have enjoyed editing it. Good luck to Matthew and Florence next year - the editorial role is an honour; don’t look back.

This editorial will be the very last thing I write as an editor of *Lot’s Wife*. It’s a bittersweet feeling, I must admit. I have a handful of regrets to take from my tenure. I regret the moment Melinda thrust a copy of our publishing software at me and asked, “Do you know how to use this?” I regret that I haven’t gotten drunk enough – although to be fair, by the time this edition reaches your hands, I’ll be well on the way to remedying that issue. And I severely regret that I didn’t take the opportunity of a lifetime and hijack Derryn Hinch’s Twitter account; a failure that will haunt me to my dying days.

But those are superficial in comparison to my biggest regret – that my time in this role has just been too short. Despite stomping around in a zombie-like stupor for half a year, I’ve enjoyed being one of the co-editors of *Lot’s Wife* immensely. The challenge has been astounding; the learning curve has been steeper than the prices at the Royal Melbourne Show, yet unlike the Bertie Beetle showbag, the things I have taken away from *Lot’s Wife* have been incredibly valuable. I’ve learnt a lot about myself, and even more about others. The role has been a pleasure, a period of personal growth, and a reminder that you never need a reason to throw shit off a hotel roof.

To friends, family members, housemates, contributors, incumbent editors, office pests and peripheral acquaintances, whether Clayton, Caulfield, Clifton Hill or Copenhagen: even if I were given another entire edition of *Lot’s Wife* in which I could print it, I still would not be able to fully articulate my gratitude and warm wishes for every one of you. I suppose that only goes to prove that, even as an editor, sometimes it’s too difficult to find the right words. Thank you.

Now if you’ll excuse me, the next chapter of my life – and for you, the next edition of *Lot’s Wife* – awaits.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Dear Lot's Wife,

In response to 'Criminalising Pathology: Child Pornography And The Law', in Lot's Wife Edition 7, 2012.

The argument of this article is entirely flawed, and it disgusts me. To say that child pornography is "one of our society's biggest taboos" suggests to me that the author has never known a paedophile and doesn't actually understand the situation that is being written about. A man that I know very well is at last - thankfully - on the sex offenders register. As part of the charges that were laid against him he was forced to go to a psychiatrist and psychologist to help with his condition. Like many other offenders, he normalised his behaviour and still denies to himself and others the severity of his actions (much as Andy Muirhead, claiming that the photos were not sexually appealing to him, but that they provided "stress relief").

Children cannot defend or make decisions for themselves in the same way that adults can and pornography of children feeds the sexual needs of countless predators; that is why pornography of children should be treated differently to videos of "beheadings or violent assaults". If a paedophile wants help themselves, they can get counselling on their own accord, not after being caught looking at child porn. To suggest to the readers that looking at child porn shouldn't be treated as an offence is disgusting and careless. Would you feel the same if you knew that someone was sexually satisfying themselves to images and videos of your own children?

Hayden Micallef

Dear Hayden,

With respect, how I would feel in such a situation is irrelevant. If sentences were handed out according

to the wishes of victims' families, our courts would bear more resemblance to tribal retribution than a modern, progressive justice system. While a judge should certainly take into account victim impact in sentencing, his or her primary role is to view a case dispassionately and hand down a sentence that best addresses a) the need for wider society to be protected from harmful acts; b) adequate deterrent; and c) the welfare and eventual rehabilitation of the offender.

That principle can be applied beyond the criminal justice system. We need to have mechanisms in place for damaged people; particularly those at risk of damaging others. Paedophiles, I'm sure you'll agree, are no exception; and yet, the fact is that preventative counselling services that specialise in this field are quite rare. One such program — SafeCare, a Perth-based clinic that provided counselling to victims of sexual abuse as well as non-offending paedophiles

— recently had its funding slashed by a Liberal State Government looking for some cheap political points. Our society, I'm sorry to say, still has far to go on this topic.

Whatever your friend did to end up on the sex offenders register, it could have been prevented. His condition could have been managed, long before he found himself a convicted criminal with his and others' lives in pieces. This is why I wrote my article: not to minimise the phenomenon of child pornography, not to apologise for it, but to propose a better alternative; one that would not only treat paedophiles more humanely, but could significantly reduce the prevalence of child abuse. I'm sorry that it disgusted you, but I ask you to read it again with the above thoughts in mind. I hope you'll see what I'm getting at.

David Heslin

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(CON)VERGENCE?

Richard Plumridge

Another week, another “all-time low” in Australian political debate. Things, we are told, are worse than they’ve ever been before. It has become a matter of conventional wisdom that the policies of both the Labor and Liberal parties are so similar that they are the political equivalent of petrol stations selling the same products at virtually identical prices (except the 2-for-1 Freddos). This notion of party convergence has become so widely repeated in popular commentary that it is accepted with little scrutiny. Oddly, the charge of convergence is often accompanied by claims of obstructionist behaviour by the opposition. How our political parties can be both converging and actively opposing each other at the same time is a question that remains conveniently unanswered.

There seems to be no shortage of rehabilitated political has-beens eager to reinforce this received wisdom during their Monday night visits to #qandaland, bemoaning the current state of political debate with a laugh-engendering bon mot. Whether it’s Malcolm Fraser or Graham Richardson; John Hewson or Lindsay Tanner, everything was better back in their respective days. If these characters are to be believed, their eras were part of a golden age of enlightened political debate where ideas and ideology triumphed over simplicity and mediocrity. This terrible state of affairs is so terrible that you, dear reader, need no convincing that we are part of the worst period in history. Ever. Unfortunately for these political revisionists, a walk through political history can be a harsh mistress.

While voters still broadly identify the Liberal Party as a notionally centre-right party and the Labor Party as centre-left, there is an undeniable overlap between the two. A notable policy issue that has caused consternation in #qandaland, asylum seekers, has seen both the Labor and Liberal parties attempting to out-flank one another on the right. Similarly, economic liberalism has been embraced by both of the major parties, with Kevin07 advertising himself

as an “economic conservative”, or “John Howard-lite” during those interminable 2007 election ads. Furthermore, then-opposition leader John Howard complained during the Hawke years that the Labor Government was stealing all of his ideas for economic reform. So it seems there might be a grain of truth to this notion of convergence, at least in a couple of policy areas, but is any of this particularly new?

“How our political parties can be both converging and actively opposing each other at the same time is a question that remains conveniently unanswered.”

Political commentators complained about party convergence as long ago as the alleged “golden years” of the Whitlam Government. Even during the grand old era of Menzies, one historian argued at the time that “it was difficult to discern much practical difference between [the parties’] policies”. So much for hitting an all new low. The extent of party convergence can hardly be judged on a couple of isolated policy areas, as significant as they may be. Mandatory detention for asylum seekers was a policy of the Keating Government passed with bipartisan support in 1992. Similarly, both parties have shared a commitment to market liberalisation since at least 1975, arguably earlier. Convergence, to the extent that it may be occurring, can therefore hardly be judged to be a recent phenomenon.

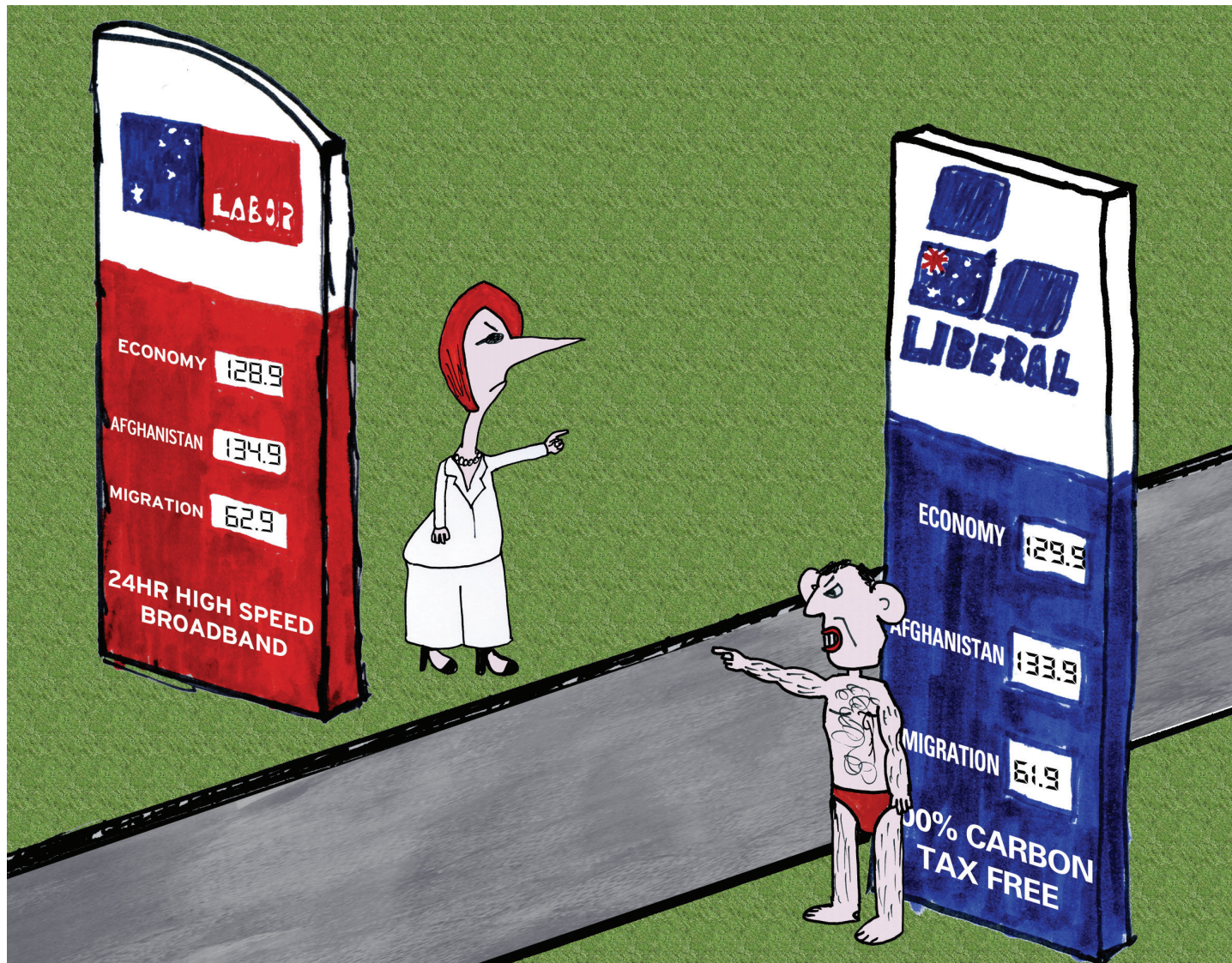
The fact is that Australian politics has rarely been the battle of ideas #qandaland bemoaners claim it was. Canberra never has been and probably never will be the birthplace of a great political and philosophical movement. The best Canberrans can hope for is another successful Floriade, or even another enjoyable international art exhibition at the National Gallery

of Australia. Oh, and the carillon. Carillons are awesome. But I digress; rather than ideological battles, politics in Australia is marked by a high level of pragmatism from both of the major parties.

While Labor leaders endlessly talk up “traditional Labor values” and Liberal leaders drone on about financial responsibility, neither party feels the need to be entirely bound to these vague “values” once in office. Whether it’s Labor, the notional party of the worker unilaterally slashing tariffs, or the “fiscally responsible” Liberal Party spending the most on welfare in a generation, pragmatism is the dominant political game. This is not to say, however, that Australian politics is pure electoral opportunism or pragmatism. Whatever #qandaland may believe, the major parties do hold distinct credos and apply these when developing policies.

For example, the market reforms of the Hawke and Keating years were accompanied by social policies that were undoubtedly reflective of Labor “values”: the Accord with the trade unions; improving Medicare; creating a comprehensive social safety net with unemployment benefits, pharmaceutical benefits and new aged care schemes. According to Keating adviser and speechwriter Don Watson, these social programmes were as much articles of faith for the Labor Government as the economic reforms. As a counterfactual, it’s difficult to imagine a 1980s Liberal government led by Andrew Peacock or pre-Workchoices John Howard signing a wage restraint accord with the unions; in fact Howard’s election in 1996 brought an abrupt end to wage fixing of any sort.

Contrary to #qanda audience belief, dogmatic ideology in Australian politics usually does not go down well in the electorate. Take Labor’s attempt in 1947 to nationalise the banks. Prime Minister Ben Chifley was rebuffed by the High Court and voters, leading Labor to 23 years in the opposition wilderness. Similarly, when the Howard Government, punch-drunk on a once-in-a-generation Senate majority, attempted to give employers unfettered power over



their workers, voters responded accordingly, sacking both Howard and his Government. Oh, and just ask the doyen of #qandaland, Paul Keating, about how well “big picture” politics turned out for him. Popular in #qandaland, not so popular in Queensland. What’s more is that these examples represent clear difference in both policies and attitudes between the parties during different political eras.

There are plenty of reasons not to like the level of contemporary political debate. Slogans substituting for complex and detailed policy is hardly an ideal situation, but again, this is not endemic to contemporary politics. From the Liberal Party’s classic 1949 election poster featuring the catchy message, “Your Child is a person to you. Under Mr. Chifley’s socialism she’ll be JUST A NUMBER. VOTE LIBERAL FOR LIBERTY,” to the granddaddy of Australian sloganeering 1972’s “It’s Time”, the reduction of complex themes to sometimes only slightly less complex slogans is nothing new. Neither is the seeming “all-new low” in leader popularity.

While only the most blindly committed partisan would suggest that either Julia Gillard or Tony Abbott are popular in the electorate, Paul Keating still holds the ignominious Newspoll record for the highest dissatisfaction rating at 75 per cent (3-5 September 1993). Interestingly, two golden era PMs, Hawke and Howard, rate equal third behind Gillard in the dissatisfaction stakes.

“Canberra never has been and probably never will be the birthplace of a great political and philosophical movement.”

Although our current leaders are clearly less than stellar (if one believes the polls), the constant deference to leaders past only serves to create an echo chamber of cynicism and alienation from

Image: Richard Plumridge

the processes and institutions of government. The revolving door of #qandaland has-beens bemoaning how bad things are and harkening back to a golden era that never existed is not particularly helpful. Surely it is better to improve political discourse from inside the party tent, rather than cutting the guy ropes and bringing it down from the outside.

There are a lot of reasons for #qandaland to be disappointed in the current climate of political debate, but let’s not get carried away. We don’t hit “all-new lows” every week and there are at least a handful of polties and public figures out there who harbour a genuine desire to make things better. Our major political parties, while agreeing on a number of policy issues, are hardly converging, or at least no more than has occurred in the past. Electoral pragmatism is still the order of the day for our parties. After all, a party can hardly effect change if it lacks executive power. Just don’t tell the Greens.

VICTORIAN TEACHER STRIKES

Elizabeth Boag describes how Victorian education has suffered a blow and teachers continue to see red in their strike for higher pay

An ongoing battle between the public sector and the State Government has seen Victorian teachers walk off the job twice in recent months. The industrial action has come in response to the Baillieu Government's offer of a 2.5 per cent pay rise, which unions claim equals a pay cut due to the increase in the cost of living. Victorian teachers are seeking a pay rise of 30 per cent over four years.

Talks between the State Government and the AEU (Australian Education Union) over wage disputes broke down when the Government refused to uphold its promise to make Victorian teachers the highest paid in the country. There have so far been two stop-works, with up to 40,000 Victorian teachers striking. Those walking off the job included teachers from state, independent and Catholic schools, causing the closure of 400 schools during the action.

Members of the AEU maintain that there is likely to be a great amount of continued support for further strikes. The Sub Branch Representative for Boneo Primary School's AEU branch, Sally Walsh, explains that, "the general view of the teachers is that Baillieu was elected on the grounds that he was going to make Victorian teachers the best paid in the country, and at the moment all he is offering is a pay cut."

Despite the recent strikes, there appears to be

no short-term solution, with both sides strongly upholding their position. Walsh states that "Among the teaching fraternity, I think there is going to be a huge amount of support for this project because it was an election promise that was made by Mr. Baillieu and he's reneged on it."

Rosebud Primary School Principal Tony Short believes that despite the wealth of support, it will not ultimately make a difference in achieving a pay rise for Victorian teachers. He suggests that the Government is too financially centred to care whether the teachers take industrial action; "I believe that they've got the right to strike, but I think in reality the Governments are so cold and focused on the dollars and cents, that they don't really care if people go on strike or not."

This refusal by the State Government to grant teachers higher pay coincides with other cuts to education, such as the recent TAFE cuts. These cuts have resulted in the closure of TAFE institutions statewide, such as Swinburne's Lilydale campus, in addition to the imminent sale of both its Prahran and Lilydale campus. Furthermore, Walsh says that Baillieu "...also said there will be two billion dollars worth of cuts to public education."

With education suffering blow after blow, questions must be asked about the agenda of the current Government. It is widely acknowledged that highly capable teachers are integral to successful learning outcomes, and yet the Government's actions are likely to turn prospective teachers, especially those who are highly gifted and can easily find work elsewhere, off the job. Changes have recently been made requiring higher marks for qualification

for a teaching degree, indicating that the Government does want better teachers. Without decent pay, however, high caliber students will look elsewhere. One must wonder how long it will be before the universities of Victoria suffer a similar fate.

A further problem is that quality staff members are being poached by other states who are willing to pay significantly more than Victoria for their expertise. Short says, "I know in fact one person who lives in Wangaratta who teachers in Albury. So for the cost of driving over the border each day, which is an hour drive, they're going to access \$12,000 a year more. Why wouldn't you do that? So for all those Victorian schools along the border region, I'd be really disappointed if I was a principal. And you'll lose the good ones."

The State Government is also threatening to bring in performance pay, whereby teachers get paid according to how well their students perform. For teachers that are lucky enough to get a class that is bright and performs well, they will get paid accordingly highly. However, for those with a class that underperforms, no matter how good the quality of teaching, the payment is less despite the workload being the same. Teachers argue that teaching is a collaborative profession and performance pay will undermine its collegial nature. According to Rosebud Primary School principal Tony Short, "...in some schools where those teachers deserve to have that increase [in pay], why would you not reward them? I don't think performance pay works in education. I think it's ridiculous."

For teachers, there looks to be no end in sight, with both parties refusing to back down and talks currently at a halt. The future of Victorian education appears bleak under the Baillieu State Government. If the Government wants educational outcomes that mark it as an industry leader and create opportunities for young people, they must adequately pay teachers. A pay increase of 2.5% is belittling, and will only further entrench already existing issues in education rather than resolve them.



Image: Socialist Alternative

THE LIMITS OF MULTICULTURALISM IN SYDNEY

Andrew Biskup

The protest in September by groups of Muslims in Sydney shows the limits of tolerant and liberal multiculturalism in Australia. Before an avid reader of Andrew Bolt becomes too excited, I warn the reader that what I am advocating is not a rejection of immigration and a promotion of cultural exclusivity. I argue instead that the recent demonstrations show that there are certain limits to multicultural tolerance, which allowed for an increase in the vilification of Muslims in both the media and in the wider society of Australia.

Most people in the Australian public tolerate different religious, cultural and ethnic groups – only as long as minority ethnic groups, such as Muslims, don't encroach on the personal space of the wider community too much. As long as such groups of people remain obedient and keep to their own communities, without 'harassing' or 'bothering' the wider national community (through a loud and energetic protest in a central park in Sydney for example).

In many countries around the world, Muslims refused to stand idle and have their prophet vilified through an obscure short film, *Innocence of Muslims*, which was posted on YouTube. This lack of acceptance was overwhelmingly portrayed by the media in most western countries as an act of violence; an act which 'over-stepped' the tolerable horizon of the liberal and multicultural order.

Within Australia, Muslims are mostly accepted by the wider society only in so far as they silently accept the particular situation in which they find themselves on a daily basis. Their particular situation in the West can be described as one in which they are regularly associated with acts of violence (such as terrorism) in the media or disavowed through the rejection of their dress or religious-cultural customs (such as proposals to ban the Burqa, which many but not all Muslims choose to wear, or through the rejection of Islamic places of worship).

When their religion is vilified, Muslims are not

meant to protest or 'fight back' against vilification, and if they do, they are ridiculed or labeled as violent fundamentalists. This is because they are not playing the role of the mere passive victim that they are designated within the dominant and tolerant multicultural order. Although liberals may concede that discrimination against Muslims does exist, and thus also promote the idea that all Australians should be more open to Islam, they still tend to argue that Muslims should not be 'violent' or vocal about their particular situation. Muslims are told that they should learn to direct their grievances through the proper legal channels instead.

The Muslim is not meant to appear on a liberal's television screen with placards demanding respect nor retribution. A liberal may enjoy a day tour of their local Mosque or a taste of the odd piece of Baklava from their friendly Turkish neighbour every now and then, but never would the dominant liberal order accept a demanding, protesting nor defiant political Muslim – political in the sense that they are not necessarily passive victims and are active in voicing their particular opinions.

Muslims at the protest in Sydney were treated as 'toxic' subjects who disturbed the peace. A toxic subject is that which lies outside the dominant and tolerant multicultural order. Such a subject is not meant to speak out against their discrimination, as it encroaches on the personal space of others, within the proximity of the other's cultural or ethnic 'community' and therefore 'toxic' Muslims are designated as subjects to be kept at somewhat of a distance from the mainstream, cultural order. Perhaps in a camp in Guantanamo bay for example.

An Islamic fundamentalist (not that the majority of the protestors in Sydney were from a fundamentalist background) is not tolerated as much as the Muslim in general is tolerated (the image of the friendly Turkish neighbour). Thus the fundamentalist is an example of the toxic subject which disturbs the peace of the liberal multicultural order. Unfortunately all of the Sydney protesters were treated by the media as Islamic fundamentalists; children, women and men alike.

This proved a challenge to the dominant ideology of multiculturalism in Australia, whereby the values of 'acceptance' and 'tolerance' associated with multiculturalism only exist in so far as cultural groups do not espouse radical political ideas or express political opinion through protests and civil disobedience. Multiculturalism is thus a form of 'tolerance' which only allows for the acceptance of one's neighbor, without its 'disturbing' or 'radical' *Otherness*. Designating all of the protesters in Sydney as 'fundamentalist' and thus as 'toxic subjects' meant that all Muslims at the protest were outside of the tolerant, multicultural order and were thus made the target of vilification in the Australian media.

'Toxic' protests in Sydney
Image: Jamie Kennedy



FAIRFAX, OR THE FAILURE OF COMMERCIAL JOURNALISM

David Heslin

It's hard to know what impact Fairfax's decline will have on the Australian media landscape. Despite at times incessant coverage of the company's staff cuts and boardroom wrangling (along with a simultaneous decrease in quality of newspaper content), the exact future of metropolitan broadsheets *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald* seems unclear. If ominous statements from influential

figures are to be believed, their fate could lie anywhere from reactionary tabloid to web-based gossip column. Whatever the case, most analysts are in agreement: the 'quality broadsheet' model represented by the two metropolitan publications is fast becoming commercially unsustainable.

This is not, by any means, a new problem. The Fairfax mastheads have always held an uneasy

position in the commercial mediasphere. One need merely glance at their circulation figures compared to those of tabloid rivals *The Herald Sun* and *The Daily Telegraph* to grasp that, at least in Australia, serious newspapers function as niche publications at best. While that status has, up until recently, been enough for the broadsheets to at least maintain their existence, it is a situation at odds with the imperatives of the market economy. If journalistic integrity, editorial independence and non-sensationalist reportage are barriers to revenue, why bother maintaining them? All it requires is the appointment of a few more pragmatic board members for a newspaper's standards to start slipping.

Such an eventuation in Fairfax's case would be, to put it mildly, concerning. This issue far transcends the fate of a single media company or publication; at its heart, it involves democracy itself. It is difficult to overstate exactly how much democracy depends on a functioning, critical media. While few contemporary news publications come close to resembling the ideals of the fourth estate, journalism remains by far the primary means of holding government accountable. Print, radio, television and internet media not only provide the bulk of information available to the public, they play a crucial role in critiquing the government of the day.

It's fair to say that Australia's commercial news media outlets aren't very good at this. News Limited tabloids often resemble celebrity magazines in content and match them in irrelevance. Reportage of world events is sidelined in favour of catwalk photographs; news of Hollywood break-ups and scandals lie scattered throughout; front pages are devoted to manufactured outrage campaigns. All of the above serve to divert attention from issues of national and international importance. What space is devoted to political coverage is reduced mostly to analyses of polls and Question Time stunts; tedious incidents in politicians'

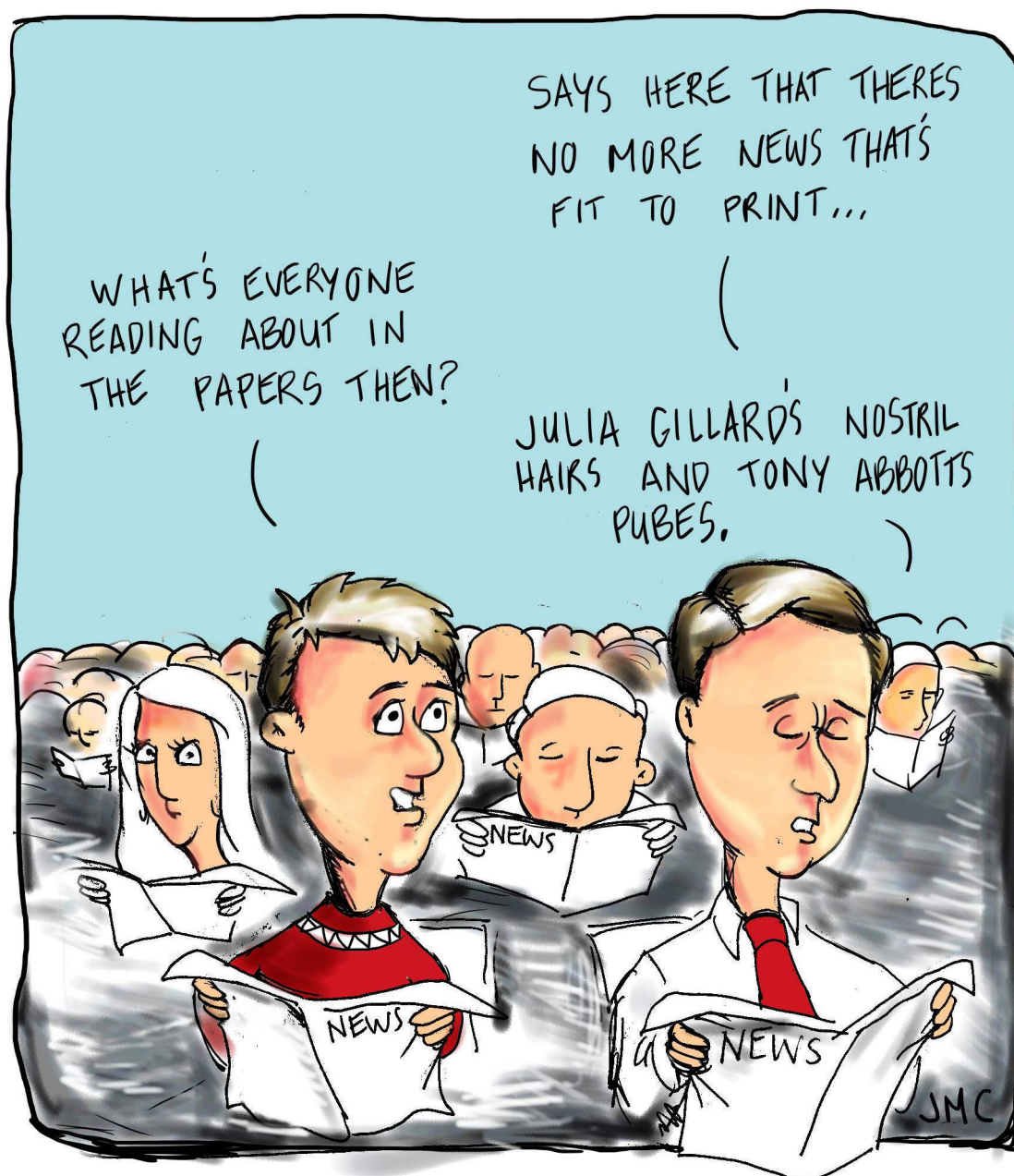


Image: Josh McCrimmon

private lives deemed more newsworthy than actual policies (the latter disposition as rife in the broadsheets as it is in the tabloids). The result is a highly superficial mainstream political discourse that is far more concerned with, say, Kevin Rudd's prospects in a leadership spill than the ALP Government's actual policy successes or failures.

The reasons for these phenomena are complex, but one factor seems constant: the role of the market. It's no coincidence that the most commercially successful media outlets also happen to be the least threatening. Advertising, by its very nature, thrives on instant gratification and a less critical environment. It is ideal, therefore, that the content of a profit-oriented publication be aesthetically attractive, avoid causing readers discomfort and, most importantly, seek to confirm their existing beliefs and prejudices. This is the world Fairfax finds itself in, desperately struggling to justify the maintenance of standards and ethics in a landscape in which neither are profitable. Events of the last six months indicate that this battle is being lost.

In some ways, this eventuation has been prepared

for. In 1929, the ABC was launched as a national government-funded broadcaster. It was a clear statement then, as now, that media in the free market couldn't be depended upon to adequately serve the democratic system; that the Government had to devote part of its own budget to rectify that problem. It remains, in some ways, a shockingly radical statement; an acknowledgement that unfettered free market economy is not capable of solving the world's ills (little wonder conservatives often take such a dim view of the ABC!).

"It is difficult to overstate exactly how much democracy depends on a functioning, critical media."

In the current climate, the ABC has become more valuable than ever. Its radio and TV stations are

still beacons of light in a dull landscape; its website a worthy successor to the dying giants of the print medium. While it might have been argued in the past that the network fills a niche that could just as easily be serviced by a commercial outlet, Fairfax's travails should put an end to any such conjecture. The market economy is not friendly to serious journalism. If the latter can exist at all in the commercial sphere, it must do so in a state of terminal uncertainty. Similarly, there remains an uncomfortable irony about a government-funded body being left to carry the torch of the fourth estate alone.

Democracy, we should never forget, is a fragile institution, easily manipulated by powerful individuals and interest groups — it cannot function without the existence of strong, critical media outlets. It's crucial that we do not allow the decline of Fairfax to herald the decline of Australian journalism as a whole; on the contrary, this may well be an opportunity for the development of a newer, fiercer, independent (online) mediasphere. It's not going to happen by itself — what say you, *Lot's Wife* reader?

THE BULLSHIT ATTITUDE TOWARDS WOMEN AND SEX

Anika Baset

Melbourne was grim at the end of September. On the morning of September 28, Victoria Police announced that the body of missing Brunswick woman, Jill Meagher, had been found and a man has been formally charged with her rape and murder. This story has resonated with women all over Australia because of the terrifying reality that it could have been any of us. Nearly every woman has taken a risk on a potentially unsafe situation—walked home alone in the dark or ignored an instinct that someone might be a bit dodgy. For most, the risk of harm never eventuates; we get home safely and breathe a sigh of relief. Tragically, Jill was not so lucky. The ordinariness of the circumstances she was in, and the fact that it happened in our city, has led to an unprecedented public outpouring of grief and a shiver down the collective spine of Melbourne.

Yet despite the fact that so many women can

relate to the situation Jill Meagher found herself in, the victim blaming in this case has been unrelenting. The real issue, according to many internet trolls and radio shock jocks, was that Jill was "drinking/staying out late/talking to strangers who weren't her husband/wearing suggestive clothing/walking while female/having a vagina," as put by writer Clementine Ford. This attitude is not new. From a sheikh likening women to 'uncovered pieces of meat' a few years ago, to the more recent statements by US Senator Todd Akins categorizing some incidences of rape as 'legitimate' and others as not, blaming women for sexual violence directed towards them is still infuriatingly prevalent.

The culture of victim blaming is based on the view that women are not sexually autonomous beings. Apparently, instead of actively choosing who to have sexual relations with, a woman's passive actions demonstrate her consent. You'd think that in the 21st

century, after two waves of feminism, there would be no question about the absurdity of that notion. But the fact that the rape and murder of a woman leads to any suggestion that it was her own fault shows that disturbing, misogynistic judgments still echo in the present day.

The judgment is not limited to sexual violence. Any aspect of a woman's sex life is fair game and definitive of her entire moral worth. Too few sexual partners, you're a frigid bitch. Too many and you're definitely a slut, whore or hoe. If you change your mind about someone after flirting with them, you're a cock tease. How dare you! How dare you think it's okay to sleep with as few or as many people as you like, to be able to assert control over who enters your personal space, without fear of judgment or reprimand.

Not allowed. You're a woman. Didn't you get the memo?

IN CONVERSATION WITH LOIS PEELER

Lois Peeler comes from a long line of strong Indigenous women. Daughter of Geraldine Briggs, a renowned Aboriginal activist and Yorta Yorta Elder, Peeler was surrounded from a young age by empowering women. Yet in a country where being a powerful woman continues to be problematic for many – women still receive lower salaries than men and are underrepresented in board rooms – the glass ceiling is not Peeler's only concern. As an Indigenous woman and Elder she plays a crucial leadership and developmental role in her community, and is also a proud activist for Indigenous rights.

We meet Lois Peeler in the administration building of Worowa College in Healesville, of which she is the Principal. Indigenous artworks adorn the walls and the building exudes a sense of welcoming. Worowa was founded by Peeler's sister, Hyllus Maris, 29 years ago. The school is unique in Australia; it provides educational opportunities exclusively for young Indigenous women from across the country, and focuses on the cultural, spiritual and physical needs of all students as well as the academic. Peeler says that her family has always been involved in Worowa, and that her sister's thirty year old vision of an Indigenous school, and the reasons for it, are still pertinent today.

The boarding school is located on a culturally significant site where the Coranderrk Mission once stood. The mission holds a special place in Australia's history as it the site from which William Barak fought a campaign for equal rights for Indigenous peoples. An underrepresented hero of Australian history, Barak fought for his people to hold onto the land that the mission occupied and would walk from Healesville into Melbourne to protest at Parliament House for fair wages and the right to practice Indigenous ceremonies. The school sits about one hundred metres from Barak's grave.

Years on from Barak's passing in 1903, Indigenous peoples are still severely disadvantaged in Australia. The life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and Tor-



res Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous people is 11.5 years for males and 9.7 years for females, according to 2005-2007 data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Indigenous peoples are also underrepresented in the work force, with unemployment rates more than three times that of non-Indigenous Australians. For those who live in remote communities, access to basic services is limited at best; health problems are endemic, housing is insufficient and educational opportunities are severely lacking.

Peeler attributes this contemporary disadvantage to the historical oppression of Indigenous people by British colonisers and Australian state officials. "I believe that many of our families are affected by intergenerational trauma that has been passed on from perhaps the time of dispossession of our lands and dislocation from our traditional lands... and then there's no economic base, so things sort of are in cycles. Sometimes a cycle of despair."

Education, Peeler believes, is a unique mechanism for improving the quality of life of Indigenous peoples. She is confident that educating girls is a way to create lasting changes in the communities

they come from. "Women are very much involved in Aboriginal community... and decision making. They have responsibility for family matters... if we do want to make changes in our society I firmly believe that it will be through women." She sees her role as "empowering young girls to make the right choices, make healthy transitions from adolescence to adulthood." This transition is much easier in the boarding school environment, she claims, as it removes children from situations in which they may have few opportunities to further their education and provides them with a stable, nurturing environment. "There are communities in which people have to leave home to have a secondary education, because otherwise they don't have one – so they don't have a choice."

Whilst Worowa was originally a co-educational school, it was changed to cater exclusively for girls because of an imbalance in the number of opportunities available for Indigenous boys and girls. Peeler explains that there are more educational opportunities for boys in the form of sporting scholarships, with many achieving notable success in AFL. No such equivalent exists for girls,

MELINDA BLADIER AND SHAWN ANDREWS SPEAK WITH THE YORTA YORTA ELDER AND INDIGENOUS LEADER

demonstrating the huge gender imbalance that exists in Australian sporting culture.

When we ask Peeler how she understands her role as a prominent Indigenous woman she is pragmatic; “You do what you do. My family were always involved in community development and creating change; it was just a normal thing for me to follow that.” She lists her primary role models as her mother, sisters and grandmother, adding that her family has always been particularly strong, “We know where we come from; we are a very strong unit.”

Peeler’s mother, Geraldine Briggs, was involved in the establishment of the Aborigines Advancement League and heavily involved in the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, which bolstered the civil rights movement. Briggs was also central to, amongst other things, the establishment of the Victorian Aboriginal Islander and Women’s Council, which led to the formation of a National Aboriginal and Islander Women’s Council. Briggs Hall at Monash Clayton Campus is named in her honour.

The importance which Peeler dedicates to family ties is significantly impacted by the devastation which many Indigenous families experienced during the Federal Government’s ongoing policy of child removal during the 20th century – what has come to be known as the “Stolen Generations”. Like most Australian Indigenous peoples, Peeler’s family was directly traumatised by these policies. Relatives were forcibly taken away from their families and placed in Cootamundra Girls Home, where they were “taught to be domestics or nannies and sent to work on stations for white land owners.” The deep seeded racism this policy represented was also reflected by the establishment of reserves where many other Indigenous people lived under the supervision of white, government appointed managers. “On those missions and reserves every aspect of the lives of Aboriginal people was ruled by policy.”

In 1939, almost 200 people walked off a Christian Mission station for Indigenous peoples on the banks of the Yarra River. The Cummeragunja Walk Off marked a new phase of Indigenous protest against their treatment at the hands of white missionaries

and government officials. “People got tired of the treatment – or mistreatment – and also the fact that children were being removed from families.” Peeler counts the protest as a key moment in her family’s past.

Despite the shameful legacy of Federal and State Government treatment of Indigenous peoples in Australia, Peeler is optimistic about the future. She believes that there are currently a lot of positive developments occurring, including the presence of more Indigenous people in professional roles. On the other hand, she says, there is still a long way to go.

“My thing is to create understanding and awareness. There’s no use getting upset; I’d be upset every day of my life if that was the case!”

The special nature of Indigenous culture, Peeler believes, is still insufficiently recognised in Australian society. “There’s a high level of ignorance out there. And it is ignorance. So there’s no knowledge of culture, of cultural differences and sometimes, unfortunately, there’s not a lot of respect.”

We ask Peeler if this is something that she finds personally upsetting, and her response is circumspect. “Look, it is what it is. My thing is to create understanding and awareness. There’s no use getting upset; I’d be upset every day of my life if that was the case!”

It is clear that Peeler’s focus is very much on positive development rather than harbouring on the many negatives usually evident in discourse on Indigenous issues. She regularly conducts cultural awareness programs, to which she frequently receives astonished responses – participants fail to understand why they haven’t previously been educated about Indigenous cultures and traditions. For Indigenous peoples, culture is a significant part of life and a connection to their history. Difficulties emerge when it becomes

apparent that this culture is not synonymous with a modern Australian way of life and there is a great need to educate Indigenous youth to be able to walk within the two worlds.

“Families want their children to be educated, to be able to walk in both worlds; to hold on to their culture and be proud of their identity, but still be able to function in the mainstream... that’s what you need to be able to do now.”

She suggests that change needs to come through the Government listening to the wants and needs of Indigenous communities, and working collaboratively with them. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission is an example of a body which currently gives Indigenous peoples a voice in the political sphere and identifies Indigenous priorities from an Indigenous perspective. This, Peeler stresses, is a priority.

Peeler describes her own educational experience as “more or less self-educated.” Her family moved around a lot, and when she was 17 she began a career as a model, one of the first Indigenous women to do so. Following on in a remarkable list of firsts, Peeler was part of the Indigenous girl band The Sapphires which toured Vietnam during the war. Peeler’s unfulfilled desire for a tertiary education perhaps partially fuels her energy for Worowa, in addition to a deep seated belief that, despite the ongoing problems Indigenous people are faced with, change is possible.

She says that positive results are already emerging from the school; “Most of the young people that have come through the school have had a strong desire to go back and work in their communities.” As an Elder, she states that she has a unique ability to connect with families, and understands the importance which is placed on the development of young people. For many Indigenous people western education is a rare opportunity to learn how to interact with the Australian sectors of government that control multiple aspects of Indigenous community life.

The central message at the school, as in Peeler’s family and broader community life, is one of empowerment. “What we do is talk about the possibilities. Because if they’re not empowered to say ‘Yes, I can make change,’ they won’t feel they can.”

A FIELD GUIDE TO CRAZY MILLIONAIRES

Rebecca Irvine

You'd think that in order to make it to the top, you need intelligence, talent, and entrepreneurship (or none of these and just a lucky inheritance – Paris Hilton anyone?). But more and more frequently, it seems like you need to be crazy as well! Take a look at the men behind the money - you'll find some really strange characters.



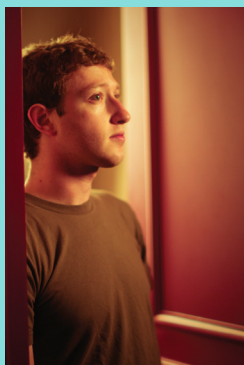
Dick Smith

Dick, founder of Dick Smith Electronics, Dick Smith Foods, and many other Dick enterprises has surprised everyone by morphing into a political activist in recent years. Aside from his altruism towards David Hicks, to ensure his fair trial, and Bob Brown, to save him from being bankrupted by hefty court fees, the most surprising of Dick's ventures is his campaign against overpopulation and an economic growth-oriented economy. He's put out a book and a documentary on the subject, yet, notably, the company which he founded and continues to bear his name produces electronics that feed a throwaway society. But don't get the wrong impression, we think Dick's a great guy, well deserving of his Australian of the Year award, even if a little eccentric.



Cecil Chao

Hong Kong entrepreneur Cecil Chao recently attracted some attention from a rather bemused media when he announced a \$65 million bounty for the man who could successfully convince his daughter to marry him. There's only one problem... she's a lesbian. Gigi Chao is reported to have married her long-term girlfriend recently in France. The fact that they've been together for seven years means you can probably eliminate the 'just a phase she's going through' excuse. But Mr Chao no doubt believes that the best way to shake his daughter out of her homosexuality is to present her with an entrepreneurial young man who only wants to marry her for the money. This sounds like a plot from a Korean or Japanese drama, not to mention embarrassing for the poor woman – let's try and be a bit more original, Mr Chao.



Mark Zuckerberg

The youngest ever person to top Vanity Fair's New Establishment List, a Harvard dropout and the CEO of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg is the kind of guy who likes to set challenges for himself. For example, he only eats the meat of goats, pigs and chickens that he kills himself, and he wore a tie every day during 2009 as a personal challenge. People who've seen the film *The Social Network* might think they know something about Zuckerberg's character, but he has disputed the characterisation the film gave him. Apparently he never used his computer skills to try and impress women, for example; and probably a good thing too! Although he is a successful and outrageously wealthy businessman, Zuckerberg is still a nerdy oddball underneath.



Gunther IV

Naturally, there must also be a dog on this list. Gunther IV, son of Gunther III, has about \$372 million in a trust fund in his name, making him the world's richest dog! The German Shepherd inherited his fortune from his father, who in turn inherited it from Karlotta Liebenstein, a German countess. Gunther has used his fortune perhaps not so wisely, buying a villa in Miami and a rare white truffle (I just don't think a dog could really appreciate the subtle flavour, let alone decide how to spend money). There is a surprisingly large number of dogs on the world's richest pet list – plenty of puppy elite for Gunther to fraternise with, and even the odd cat as well. This says more about the crazy millionaires willing to leave their fortune to a pet than the pets themselves, of course.

LET'S HASH IT OUT

Jordane Hyams explores the legal marijuana debate

“Come quick! We just got an ounce from our guy. It’s. So. Beautiful. I just want to hug it.” This was a call I received recently from a close friend. If you sit within the 15-25 year old age bracket, you no doubt share a strong, unmistakably fragrant bond with many; we all have friends who are stoners, or we are stoners ourselves. And with the buds of green increasingly easy to obtain, it seems that even our beloved Government is putting in their two cents on the marijuana debate. The big question is: should we do as the Dutch do and make weed legal? Or should we continue to shake our heads and keep it under the heading of ‘illicit substances’, forever to be snuck into festivals, house parties and Brunswick cafes in the pockets and handbags of our friends?

To date, marijuana has always been classified as ‘illicit’ in Australia, as with most of the world. In spite of this, it is the most widely used drug both in Australia and worldwide. According to a study by medical journal *The Lancet*, consumption in Australia is three times the global average, indicating that illegality does little to deter users. The Netherlands is a rare exception to global patterns of use. The country decriminalised the sale and possession of cannabis sativa over thirty years ago in a bid to prevent trafficking of the drug and reduce potential harms to users. Regulations are still in place on the amount of cannabis which can be possessed and sold.

The primary argument against legalising marijuana is that, at the end of the day, it’s a drug and has harmful consequences. Immediate effects can include delayed reaction times, anxiety, paranoia and increased heart rate and, more seriously, potential schizophrenia. It’s also addictive and has withdrawal effects, for example shakiness and nausea. The Government believes that by keeping cannabis illegal they are sending a strong message that it is harmful and not to be indulged in, even recreationally.

Although possession, cultivation and selling of cannabis are illegal in Australia, the ACT has decriminalised possession of buds and plants, as have South Australia and the Northern Territory. People who are found to have cannabis in these places won’t

go to jail, but can be fined up to \$100. It’s kind of like getting a tram fine. Except cheaper. The legal consequences of possession are weak at best, and certainly not adequate disincentive for the 35.4% of Australians aged over 12 who were found to have taken cannabis in their lifetime in a 2010 survey on household drug use by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. The same survey found that cannabis use increased from 9.1% of the population in 2007 to 10.3% in 2010, and that societal tolerance for the drug had increased.

In comparison, a 2009 report by the European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addiction found that only 5.4% of adults in the Netherlands used cannabis. The system in the Netherlands clearly works. The crime rate has dropped, use of marijuana amongst locals has decreased significantly and social services are under less pressure, as people are suffering fewer drug related health problems and dealers are not being prosecuted.

Advocates for legalisation argue that, in addition to the failings of the current system, there is a discrepancy between the regulation of cannabis and other harmful substances such as alcohol and cigarettes in Australia. The effects of marijuana aren’t significantly worse than alcohol or cigarettes, and deaths resulting from cannabis are rare; significantly more so than from legal toxins. According to National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre Professor Louisa Degenhardt, alcohol accounts for 0.8 per cent of deaths, whilst tobacco accounts for 11.7 per cent. Illicit drugs collectively account for only 1.3 per cent.

However, the argument that marijuana should entail the same freedom of access as

cigarettes is hindered by increasingly stringent regulations on the latter. As demonstrated by the recently passed Plain Packing law, the accessibility of cigarettes is being progressively limited due to a wide recognition of harms.

The distinction the Government currently makes between cannabis and smoking really focuses on the slippery slope into an increase of overall drug use. Cannabis is often seen as a ‘gateway drug’, in that users become disenchanted or bored with the effects and look to other, more dangerous drugs for different highs. Legalising cannabis could also encourage its consumption by people who haven’t previously taken it due to the legal disincentive, although the outcomes in the Netherlands speak against this. Tellingly, the decriminalisation of marijuana in the Netherlands has not opened the floodgates of hard drug use. The country boasts the lowest drug use and crime rates in the world for people between the ages of 18 and 25, and according to the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addictions, in 2010 only 94 people died in the Netherlands from drug related causes.

Taboo aside, there is little to suggest that marijuana should not be legalised. In the meantime, young people will continue to smuggle it into parties and the Government will continue to look like an overbearing parent who has lost touch with reality.



THE THREAT OF QUEBEC'S GOOD EXAMPLE: STUDENTS STRIKE AND DEFEAT FEE HIKE

James Grout reports on the recent successes of the student movement in the French Canadian province and considers lessons to be learned for Australian students

Students from Quebec (French Canada) have recently won a significant political victory. They have prevented the implementation of a proposed 82% hike in tertiary fees that would have seen the price of average full-time tuition increase to \$4,100 per student per year.

The Quebecois responded to the proposed fee hike by organising rolling student strikes and frequent public protests throughout the province, mobilising hundreds of thousands of people in the process. The political pressure generated ultimately resulted in the defeat of the Liberal Government at recent elections and at least a temporary freeze on tertiary fee increases.

Given Quebec's high levels of taxation with respect to Canada as a whole, and its history of student political activism, the province's tertiary education system is remarkably accessible. It boasts the highest proportion of middle-class students in law, engineering and medicine, the most number of students from remote areas and the most first generation students (approximately one-half of the entire 400,000 student population).

However, an increase in university fees, in

accordance with global governmental trends, would make university less affordable for poor and middle-income people by burdening them with unviable levels of personal debt. The "user-pays" model would therefore reinforce and extenuate existing socio-economic inequalities.

The second major argument against the fee hike concerns the nature of education itself. As explained by Pierre Martin, a political science professor at the University of Montreal, "An eighty-two per cent increase is not just a price change." At the base of the debate in Quebec, he says, is a choice or contrast between two philosophies of education.

"One is a philosophy that higher education is a public good, something that society organizes and buys itself, paying for the purpose of the social good. So it's a collective good that exists for the benefit of everyone." (Free tuition would fall in this category.)

The other philosophy, he says, "corresponds to a reality [that] higher education is also seen as an investment that an individual makes in order to achieve higher income and a larger income stream in the future." (Pay your own way falls in this category.)

One of the most important lessons to be learned from the Quebec students is their effective protest strategy of building and coordinating an unlimited general strike in defence of the former philosophy. 'General' in that it is a strike that extends across the province including the entire tertiary sector (as well as other industries), and 'unlimited' in the sense of indefinite or staged until negotiations with Government have reached an acceptable

outcome.

Throughout this year, hundreds of thousands of students have voted collectively to picket their classes and take to the streets with supporters, bringing unbearable economic strain on their provincial Government. (Quebec student strikes in 2005 were estimated to have cost the Government \$1million per day.) Confronted with the impossibility of postponing the university semester, the Liberal Government eventually decided to call an early election in September where they were narrowly defeated by the more moderate Parti Quebecois.

At the forefront of this strikingly (pardon the pun) effective strategy was the *Coalition Large de l'Association pour une Solidarité Syndicale Étudiante*, or CLASSE, the most radical of the three major federations of Quebec student associations/unions. CLASSE was formed especially to help coordinate the anti-fee campaign at a provincial-wide level and to facilitate negotiations with the Government.

As the more militant of the federations, the CLASSE organisers not only opposed the fee hikes but also called for the outright abolition of tertiary fees, making the influential argument that all education could and should be made free through public funding by a more rigorous taxation of Quebec's banks and wealthy elite.

Yet while organising members of CLASSE may have been at the radical ideological forefront of the protests, it is crucial to recognise the roots of the Quebec student movement in General Assemblies.

General Assemblies are public forums organised on a school/departamental or faculty level where all major decisions concerning the anti-fee-hike campaign goals and strategies were made. Any student can make a proposal to be voted upon. Motions or proposals are decided by majority vote and decisions are binding on the student association/union's executive.

As many participants and commentators have



emphasised, it was the general assembly based structure of the movement – enabling students to meet, discuss, debate and make decisions on a regular basis (during the striking period each local student association held weekly general assemblies) – that sustained the popular momentum behind the strikes and formed the basis of such politically effective mass action. As a spokesperson of CLASSE reflecting on the success of the movement, Gabrielle Nadeau Dubois emphasises, “What must be understood is that the capacity to mobilise students is directly linked to this democratic function [of general assemblies]...Because people feel involved in the decision-making, they are ready to mobilise.”

It is also important to recognise that Quebec has a history of student strikes going back to the 1970s and that recent events have not emerged entirely spontaneously. Indeed, many of the student strike organisers from this year are veterans from a less successful 2007 strike campaign against fee-hikes. However, the 2012 strikes have been the biggest and most effective to date, and the political awareness and energy generated has spread well beyond issues

of education. Moreover, it would be too simplistic to attribute the ultimate success of the movement to Quebec’s student political tradition alone.

“As Dubois reminds us, ‘the key principle of success in Quebec is exportable, because it’s our mode of organisation.’”

What is perhaps most exciting and compelling about the movement is how practically transferable the Quebec organising model and striking strategies are. As Dubois reminds us, “the key principle of success in Quebec is exportable, because it’s our mode of organisation.”

The privatisation of education is not limited to Quebec. The challenges of resisting the prevailing ‘neoliberal’ paradigm are as pertinent in Australia as they are across the globe. Although the tertiary sector in Australia compares favourably to North America

and many European countries (especially considering that Australians are taxed at the 5th lowest rate in OECD when tax revenue is measured as a percentage of GDP), the recently released Grattan Institute Report on tertiary funding outlines some concerning proposals. This report from the ‘independent’ institute (co-founded by Australian State and Federal Governments and BHP Billiton) recommends an increase in tertiary fees. Indeed the Liberal/Country Party Coalition has already stated that they are pursuing the idea of a 25% increase to university HECs fees.

Should this threat of increasing student debt and further privatisation of Australian education materialise, the student movement in Quebec should serve as a prime example of how we might effectively organise to assert our collective power and defend the principle of accessibility and the concomitant idea of free (publicly funded) education.

For more information about the Quebec student movement and CLASSE see: www.stopthehike.ca



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WE'RE GOING TO THE CHAPEL AND WE'RE GONNA GET COMMITTED

Jordane Hyams explains why Australia is stuck on Marriage Equality

According to the Australian Government, gay is to marriage as hairdryers are to bathtubs. They just don't mix.

This raises pertinent questions about how liberal and democratic our society is. Currently, 64% of the Australian community supports marriage equality, as demonstrated by a Galaxy poll conducted earlier this year. Over the past year a large number of rallies in support of marriage equality have achieved huge attendance, and on August 11 a National Day of Action was held. Large corporations have added their voices to the debate, with Telstra, QANTAS and the Commonwealth, Westpac and National Australia Banks giving open support for marriage equality.

Unfortunately, as indicated by the Government's failure to legislate equal marriage, those in support of equality have no authority over the issue. Parliamentarians are not listening to the voice of the people, and are consequently failing in their obligation to legislate representatively. When it becomes vastly apparent that we have a double standard of rights depending on whether an individual loves someone of the opposite gender or the same, the basis of liberalism in this country starts to be undermined. 'Fairness and Equality for Most' doesn't have a particularly nice ring to it.

In late September of this year, the Marriage Equality Bill was presented to the House of Representatives, backed by Labor frontbencher Anthony Albanese. The Bill, premised on the grounds that free speech should extend to equal marriage laws, was voted down by 98 MPs. Only 42 MPs supported the legislation.

Frustratingly, many ministers who voted against the Bill support marriage equality, but their parties do not. Allowing a conscience vote on this issue has been hotly debated for this reason. For example, Liberal MP Malcolm Turnbull has previously spoken in support of marriage equality. However, Tony Abbott prevented a conscience vote within his party, indicating that not only are major political parties failing to listen to members of the electorate, they are also failing to listen to members of their own caucuses.

A separate bill on the same issue was taken to the Senate on the 20th of September and also rejected. The private bill, this time supported by a two thirds of Labor backbenchers (who were allowed a conscience vote), was voted down 41 votes to 26. Despite expectations that a self-confessed atheist and unmarried woman would be more sympathetic to the demands of the LGBTI community, Julia Gillard was among those to vote against the bill. Equal Love convener Ali Hogg responded: "The voting down of this bill is an insult. It is an indictment of both major parties, neither of which has proven themselves allies of LGBTI people. We might expect nothing better from the Liberals...but the fact that the ALP has also failed to throw its weight behind equal rights, and has instead helped to maintain homophobic discrimination as law, is nothing less than shameful."

"'Fairness and Equality for Most' doesn't have a particularly nice ring to it."

The importance of legislating equal marriage cannot be understated: according to studies by the University of Minnesota, 28% of queer-identifying male youth said they had attempted suicide, compared with 4.2% of their heterosexual counterparts. Legislation would reduce discrimination between heterosexual and homosexual couples, and officially recognise the validity of homosexual relationships.

Many oppositional voices come from the religious right, their argument being that marriage between two individuals of the same sex is tainting the sanctity of marriage, and that homosexuality is 'unnatural' to begin with. However, Australia is a nominally secular state, and as such our Government should not base important social issues on theocratic ideals. Not all people in Australia are religious, many are religious and still believe in equal marriage (53%

of people who supported marriage equality in the aforementioned Galaxy poll stated their religion as Christian), and for those who do not believe in it, they retain the right not to engage in it.

Currently, gay marriage is legal in 11 countries - the first to make the decision was the Netherlands in 2001. The US is also making progress, with Massachusetts, Connecticut, Iowa, Vermont, New Hampshire and the state of New York all legalising marriage between same-sex couples.

So why oh why, Ms Gillard, have we still not taken the obvious leaps forward? Openly gay comedian Josh Thomas appeared on Q&A in June of this year to share his thoughts; "I think the reason why Julia Gillard... isn't giving us gay marriage is because she doesn't think it's a priority... This is not a controversial issue. 64% of people want to see this; 74% of the Labor party wants to see this. The stance at the moment empowers homophobia and it needs to change."

These comments were echoed a few months later by Labor Minister Penny Wong on the same program. After a question was posed to Joe Hockey as to why he considered his family more valuable than a 'non-traditional' family, Ms. Wong responded; "The first logical point is that marriage hasn't been the prerequisite for children. It's sad that families feel they have to justify who they are."

South Australia is currently spear-heading the next attempt at developing legislation in support of gay marriage. A Private Members Bill, supported by Labor Premier Jay Weatherill, will be presented to Parliament early next year.

Legislating gay marriage is an issue of basic rights. If passed, it will have minimal effect on those who do not give their support and life changing consequences for those who wish to marry their partners but are currently unable to due to a conservative and greatly unjust understanding of marriage.

For more information, or to find out how you can lend your support, head to:
www.australianmarriageequality.com

LOT'S WIFE ASKS:

"No, marriage inequality is archaic."

– Arts 2nd Year

"I think they should have passed it. Our legal system is still based on religion, so I'm not sure with so many religions and beliefs in this world... the right to marry who you love should outweigh that."

– Engineering/Law 1st Year

"I'm asexual - I'll never get married - yet I fail to see how denying the legitimacy of a relationship can be any less than nauseating."

– Arts 4th Year

"No. Marriage should be about who you love and committing the rest of your life to someone, not about what bits you have."

– Science 2nd Year

"I don't agree with the decision, but it's done now. Time to move on."

– Arts 2nd Year

"The Government should not legislate religious institutions. Marriage is a religious institution, therefore the Government shouldn't legislate marriage, only civil union, which should be available to all."

– Arts 4th Year

DO YOU THINK THAT PARLIAMENT WAS RIGHT TO REJECT THE MARRIAGE EQUALITY BILL?



"No, because it legitimises discrimination. But marriage is a problematic institution in itself that prioritises certain types of relationships over others and I question its importance over other issues within the queer community."

– Arts 3rd Year

"No. The reasons why marriage came about in the first place are now outdated (population growth) and the institution of marriage in the eyes of the government should change with society's views today. Love is love."

– Arts/Law 2nd Year

"No. I don't see a difference between a straight couple and a gay couple, and therefore I see no reason why you would recognise one couple and give rights to one couple and not the other."

– Science/Law 3rd Year

"Definitely not. I don't think that it was a good representation of public opinion, and I think that it was wrong of Tony Abbott not to allow the Coalition a conscience vote."

– Arts 2nd Year

"No. It's making a moral issue political and we shouldn't be allowing that in society."

– Arts 2nd Year

"I agree in some sense, but then I disagree in another sense. I do agree that everyone should be married, but I can also see how it can stabilise what marriage is. I agree with both sides."

– Engineering 1st Year

"I would have liked them to, but it would have caused too much controversy."

– Science 2nd Year

"It's too soon. We have to give society a chance to catch up."

– Arts 2nd Year

AN ENCOUNTER WITH A CREATIONIST

Joshua Reinders meets with Creation Research leader John Mackay

It's not every day one gets the chance to speak personally with a man who only a few years ago was arguing evolution in person with Richard Dawkins. So when I was given the opportunity to meet and talk with John Mackay, I wasn't about to let it pass me by. Head of an organisation known as Creation Research, Mr Mackay is an internationally active promoter of Young Earth Creationism, a religious belief that applies a literal reading to the Bible and concludes that the earth is less than 10,000 years old.

The evening before we meet, I attend a lecture Mackay is holding for a local congregation. He sets forth what is, as far as I can tell, a sound argument against cherry-picking the Bible and seeking to water down or avoid certain truths that can pose problems for contemporary attitudes. He explains that it is of fundamental importance that Christians conceive of the six days of creation mentioned in the Book of Genesis as being literal 24-hour days, since any attempt to reinterpret them as intervals of time lasting thousands or millions of years would essentially be an accommodation to the enormous spans of time required for evolution to have occurred, and he adds that evolution, since it implies the presence of death and suffering for as long as life has existed, contradicts the Biblical doctrine of the fall of man, whereby these phenomena could not have existed until after Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden.

Viewpoints like Mackay's do not receive a lot of

favourable mainstream attention; even when they do pop up on the media's radar, coverage usually seems to be downright scathing. Of course, this should not be surprising given that evolution has firmly entrenched itself into the Western mainstream ideology.

Despite this stigmatism, Mackay's form of address is fascinating. His white beard lends him a wizened air, and when he lectures, his hands grip the lectern with authority and his voice intones his truths with a steady, inexorable rhythm. He is definitely a talented speaker, one who knows how to capture and hold the interest of an audience. In fact, you get the impression that he would be able to hold his own even in front of a group made up solely of confirmed atheists.

When I speak with Mackay one-on-one, I recognise from the get-go that it would be pointless to try and argue with his views; if none of his opponents in public evolution debates have managed to sway him it would be fairly naïve of me to think that I could do any differently. I choose instead to focus on eliciting his explanations of how the world as we know it today could have come to be without evolution. I listen attentively, accepting his explanations whilst not pretending to be capable of embracing them.

I ask Mackay how he can account for the great diversity in mankind's physical appearance, languages, and cultures if, as he believes, everyone alive today is descended from Noah (who, for reference, is considered to have lived somewhere between 4,000

and 5,000 years ago). He responds by asserting that Noah's three sons, Ham, Shem and Japheth, each possessed different physical characteristics, Ham being dark-skinned, Japheth being light-skinned and Shem being somewhere between these. Apparently, each son and his wife set forth in the wake of the flood and went on to become the progenitors of what would formerly have been designated as different 'races'.

Even leaving aside the awkward implication that Ham, Shem, and Japheth's grandchildren would have all had to enter into incestuous marriages, I find it hard to believe that Noah himself could have fathered such a diverse series of children, especially if we are to presume that his (curiously nameless) wife was faithful to him.

We move to a discussion about the Young Earth Creationist claim that the world is less than 10,000 years old. Creationists arrive at this conclusion using chronological information present in the Bible, such as genealogies and references to historical events of the ancient world. Mackay draws specific attention to the fact that, since his time as a university student, science has on several occasions revised its estimates of the universe's age (typically by billions of years).

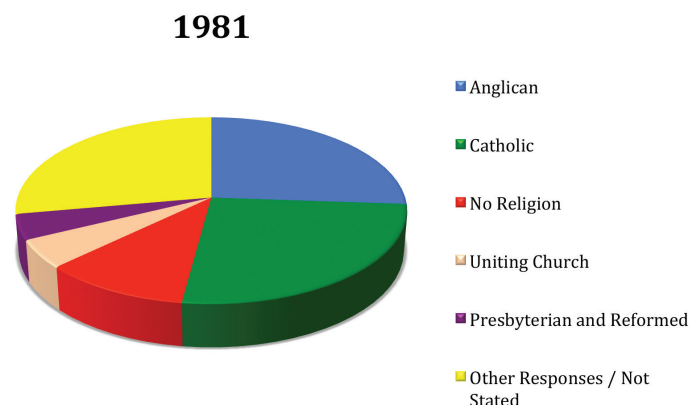
The pleased manner with which Mackay mentions this implies that he sees mainstream science's incomplete understanding of the universe as somehow a weakness, vis-à-vis creationism. This has some verity to it, at least in the eyes of people who feel themselves able to trust that the Bible holds the answers to everything – especially given that these answers are not in the habit of changing.

Young Earth Creationism is subscribed to by a surprisingly large number of people in this country and in the West more generally. John Mackay is a very public spokesman for their cause. He is committed to his faith despite the criticism it receives from the mainstream, and provides a stark reminder of the enduring plurality of views out there regarding mankind's origin and its place in the world.

To find out more about creationism, or even to ask John a question, visit askjohnmackay.com.

Religious Affiliation In Australia

Data Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics



PUSSY RIOT: THE STATE, RELIGION AND FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Sveta Tran

I was raised in a country where freedom of speech has become somewhat of a utopian dream. Anna Politkovskaya, Artyom Borovik, Natalia Estemirova, Mikhail Khodorkovsky, Yevgeny Fedotov; this is only a brief example of the tidal wave of people who have spoken out against the Russian State and faced consequences of the harshest kind. Traditionally, the Russian Government has no hesitation in dealing with those who propagate anti-Government rhetoric; prison and homicide have frequently been convenient solutions.

Earlier this year, three members of Russian punk band Pussy Riot were sentenced to two years jail following a political performance inside the Orthodox Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow. Two other members fled the country, and one of the detained has recently been granted parole. For many, Pussy Riot is a modern interpretation of the famed political activists of old; they are notorious for their anti-Putin songs and the garishly coloured balaclavas in which they perform.

Pussy Riot was founded in September last year, following Vladimir Putin's announcement that he would contest a third term as President. They first attracted the arm of the law in January, when they were briefly detained for singing "Putin Pissed Himself" in the Lobnoye Mesto, Red Square. The band's choice of location was provocative and not unusual; they had previously performed at the Detention Centre in Moscow and frequently claimed trolleybuses and metro stations as their stage.

Pussy Riot's February performance in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour was their most radical statement to date. The performance was loaded with hatred for, and anger at, Putin's Government, and included screams of "Mother of God, chase Putin away!" Band members were subsequently charged on the grounds of hooliganism aimed at inciting religious hatred, although they maintain that their actions were purely politically motivated.

The Cathedral of Christ the Saviour is a prominent site of religious worship in Russia, and many churchgoers and religious faithful throughout the country were offended by the band's actions. Whether

people support the political message of Pussy Riot or not, many believe they should not have been forced to confront it in a religious setting that people turn to for solace from their issues, many of which are informed by politics. Russia is a nominally secular state, and as such it is expected that politics is obliged to be separate from the church in the same way that the Church is expected to be separate from the State.

The Russian Government has been publicly condemned by the international community for the two year sentence, which is widely seen as extreme and a repression of free speech. Many international commentators have interpreted it as Putin becoming increasingly repressive of dissent, which they worry is indicative of a more broadly non-cooperative state.

The issue, however, is further complicated by the fact that despite, nominal secularism, the Russian Orthodox Church wields tremendous power and influence over the Government and broader society.

In reality, despite their anti-Putin rhetoric, Pussy Riot was not a particularly large threat to Putin, and had he been fervently opposed to them it is likely that their original sentencing would have been harsher. Look for comparison to multimillionaire Mikhail Khodorkovsky, who in 2003 was sentenced to seven years jail along with his lawyer. In 2010 this sentence was extended by six years. Unlike Pussy Riot's shock value, denoted by their bright balaclavas, aggressive lyrics and provocative name, Khodorkovsky represented a legitimate threat to the existing order. The 49 year old business man, head of a charitable fund and ex-owner of the top oil producing company Yukos, had money and significant political influence.

As such, many believe that the second sentencing of Pussy Riot was primarily dictated by the Church rather than the State. Given the offence caused



Pussy Riot. Image: Igor Mukhin

to religious leaders by the protest at their place of worship, it comes as no surprise that they would be instrumental in the sentencing of the protesters.

The Russian Government has no incentive to be more amenable to prosecuted members despite worldwide support for Pussy Riot. The outcome increases Putin's reputation as a firm leader and sends a message to other potential dissenters that their actions will not be tolerated. Putin has publicly justified the sentence by referring to Pussy Riot's past provocative actions such as having group sex in public and posting the video thereof on the internet. However, rather than demonstrating that the State is responsible for the prosecution, these statements merely suggest that Putin is happy to rule in accordance with the wishes of the Orthodox Church.

As such, the sentencing of Pussy Riot has exposed not only ongoing problems of free speech in Russia, but also a deep seated connection between the State and the Church. This perhaps validates the group's decision to protest at the Orthodox Cathedral, but has in turn damaged the meaning of, and ability to practice, religion for many Russian citizens. Free speech and freedom of religion should never come at the expense of one another, yet for this to be realised it is necessary that there be a clear distinction between the Church and the State.

AUSTRALIA'S MINING BOOM: BOON OR DOOM?

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS THREATEN UNIQUE TASMANIAN ECOLOGY

Christine Dietrich

Another of Australia's most pristine places is being threatened by the national mining boom. The World Heritage listed Tarkine, located in the north-west corner of Tasmania, is protected by neither Federal nor State legislation, rendering it vulnerable to economic exploitation likely to devastate local ecologies. Whilst current Federal Minister for the Environment Tony Burke sits on the fence, the Tasmanian State Government is favouring lucrative corporate mining contracts rather than protecting this culturally significant and ecologically sensitive location.

Tension has recently escalated over the issue as environmental activists are becoming increasingly critical of both the State and Federal Governments' negligence in protecting the area. Proposed developments of Pilbara-style open cut mines, known for their significant destructive impact not only at mine sites but also downstream due to mineral runoff, constitute the main issue raised by concerned environmentalists. The toxic waste runoff from such mining operations, known as Acid Mine Drainage, can damage river systems for decades.

The Tarkine National Coalition (TNC) is at the forefront of opposition to short-sighted industrial development of the region. Originally formed in 1994, TNC is a not-for-profit coalition of locals, environment groups and businesses based in North-West Tasmania. Their concerns are currently focussed on the possibility of ten new mines being established in the region over the next three to five years.

Shree Minerals, a multi-commodity exploration and development corporation, poses the most immediate threat, having submitted a proposal for an iron ore mine at Nelson Bay River. Another corporation, Venture Minerals, is also planning three initial open cut mines for tin, tungsten and iron ore in the rainforest at Mount Lindsay, Stanley River and Riley Creek.

Tasmania's State Government has recently granted 58 exploration licences over the Tarkine, with mining corporations driven by the seemingly indefinite Chi-

nese demand for minerals. Yet despite their exploratory nature, initial mining activities such as drilling, geophysical surveys and pit tests are well understood to frequently entail destruction of pristine native environments through clearing, bulldozing and site erosion. Furthermore, the introduction of foreign contaminants can also exacerbate disease conditions in native flora and fauna.

Akin to the case of Walmadan (James Price Point Gas Hub development reported on in the last edition of *Lot's*), the potential of mining developments in the Tarkine is particularly problematic because of the region's unique environmental diversity and sensitivity. A relic from the ancient super-continent, Gondwanaland, the Tarkine is an expansive 447,000 hectare wilderness area that contains Australia's largest tract of temperate rainforest, wild coastal environments, mountains, caves, heathlands and a large number of rivers that are in pristine or wilderness condition. It is home to more than sixty rare and threatened species, including the unique Giant Freshwater Lobster and the Tasmanian Wedge Tailed Eagle (Australia's largest eagle), as well as being the last remaining disease free stronghold for the Tasmanian Devil.

Moreover, the Tarkininer people and other Aboriginal groups frequented Tasmania's north-west coast for many tens of thousands of years before the arrival of Europeans, thriving off its rich natural resources. Accordingly, this coastal region has been described as one of the world's most important archaeological regions due to the richness and diversity of Aboriginal sites.

Although some mining does already occur within parts of the Tarkine – the most significant operation being the Savage River Iron Ore Mine, managed by the Grange Resources corporation – industrial scale development remains limited. This is largely due to the fact that the region was granted Emergency National Heritage listing in December 2009 by former Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett. However, this previous protective measure lapsed in Decem-

ber 2010 under the current Minister Tony Burke.

Despite the Australian Heritage Council (AHC) having already recommended a 433,000 hectare National Heritage Area, Minister Burke has instructed the AHC to reassess the area. Burke has also extended the reassessment deadline to December 2013, with no protection assured in the interim period. Even if the Tarkine is declared to be a National Park after 2013, current operations will not be restricted or shut down as their leases will be excluded from the Park proposal.

The TNC has launched a major public action campaign to ensure the Tarkine is afforded permanent National Park and World Heritage status. Such protection will ensure its survival for future generations while boosting Tasmania's tourism industry, adding to natural icons in other parts of the state, such as Cradle Mountain, the Gordon River and Freycinet.

A recent latent-demand economic analysis commissioned by the Cradle Coast Authority found that the right planning combined with appropriate public investment in the Tarkine region has the potential to deliver \$58.2 million in annual tourism revenue. It could also support over 1100 jobs in North-West Tasmania by 2017.

The protection of the Tarkine is of huge environmental significance, and has important implications for the future of Tasmania. It is imperative that the Tasmanian State Government and Environment Minister Tony Burke realise that engaging in mining projects that have short term financial benefits but spell long term environmental destruction is not the only, nor the best, option. If the Tarkine is suitably protected, revenue can be generated in conjunction with the magnificent region being preserved for future generations.

If you are interested in taking a stand to protect the Tarkine go to tarkine.org/ill-stand-for-the-tarkine. Regular updates on the TNC campaign are available on their Facebook page.

PHOTOS IN FOCUS WITH LAURA OWSIANKA



Laura Owsianka is a 21-year-old Bachelor of Fine Arts graduate from the Victorian College of the Arts and is not at all a serious lady. Awarded a genetic sense of humour, her inspiration often sprouts from things she finds herself laughing at, but can't figure out why. Her work is apparently naïve and absurdly simple: collecting information on people and strangeness.

Recurring themes in her recent work have included but are not limited to: washing machines, chairs, the color yellow, her family, people who resemble real life cartoon characters and things that she has seen in her ridiculous dreams.

Finding quirks in inanimate objects and people's behaviors often form her ignition. Photographs (but more recently sketches and videos) are her primary attempts to solidify the peculiar things that she experiences. Literal and light-hearted, she takes pieces from the banality of daily life, appropriating elements from her experience to create something reflecting the overlooked.

If it stops being fun, she'll probably stop too.

Laura was born and bred in Melbourne, but is currently twisting around Europe in a bid to see more of the planet and chase the sunshine.



CREATIVE WRITING

WHEN CHAPLIN CRIED

Md. Roysul Islam

A figure emerged from the colourless screen
A hat and a stick with distinct walking,
Torn to the bottom was his oversized pant,
Hanging from his belly with the mercy of a string.

The tramp shook my hand
As we took a morning stroll,
He showed me a path
Down towards the old and gold.

Afar, we saw a group of men:
Welles, Capra and Stone
Ray, Kubrick and Kurosawa
All were worried down to their artistic bones.

Sergei Einstein had sent a message for all to read
On how their beloved art had been abused by greed.
Freedom of expression and speech
Had taken a woeful turn, where ignorance became bliss.

The string that once played music for love and devotion
Now praises racism and oppression.
The camera that once captured our own deepest emotion,
Now advocates only war and destruction.
Why they asked, why they cried,

In many forms, questions came to mind:
How their beloved art got stolen,
By the hands of thieves and thugs.

One man just sat there all the time.
His face was hidden by his hands,
The mask was off,
And I saw those watery eyes.

The face behind the tramp was revealed,
As I slowly realised,
It was the time
When Chaplin cried.

MORTIS

Michelle Li

A hundred rosebuds
unfurling
in the apex
of my navel.

Tight and precise in their spiral,
they wind,
like my pliant desires
around the very thought of you,
the very afternoon of your presence—
hopes raised en-pointe and spinning,
anti-clockwise,
down the passage of time

till I sour
like cherries
left too long in the sun.

You grip me firm around my china collarbones,
like my mother grasped our mock-Ming plates,
bird-bones
on lacquer
on shattered fragments by the wall.

Summer. The first signs of mortis.

The first signs that I think of you
when receding from the grey:
the carriage lost in its to-and-fro
as it shudders north, the city lights
growing smaller
and dimmer
into memory.

The first signs that you occupy
the sinews of my limbs
the space between my thighs
and the ache between my ribs.

Let summer be eternal
as I search, a tragic Demeter,
in the warrens of my mind;

let me play Sophocles, and pen
the greatest modern tragedy—
that which I name, our love.

THE ASTRONOMER

Youlin Koh

Those feisty little points of light
that we all call the stars.
Some glow dim, some sparkle bright
Some are brilliant enigmas.
When I was young and on a pitch-black night,
They would be strewn across the sky.
But with things like telescopes and Einstein's might,
then only did I start to see why
they actually burnt with that certain red
or some other bluish hue.
Some even went all the way to black
holes that could swallow you.
On a sort of hungry mission
I embraced gravity.
I chewed on nuclear fission
and general relativity.
I kind of lost myself in
that dark abyss called space.

I used to dream that I could win
some fast-paced rocket race.
But no more, because now
I analyse grainy images.
And then I have to find out how
to explain them in the pages
of my latest publication.
There's not much time left for
growing my crazy imagination,
which leaves me a little sore.
I grapple with the mechanics
and solve some complex equations.
Working like some fanatic
bent on finding salvation.
The computer hums, a huge machine
of extensive calculating power.
Strings of data all heaving and lurching
In the background numbers hover.

I used to dream of purple planets
and deep seas of acid green.
But now as my work would have it,
there's only my computer screen.
I discuss object trajectories
and gravitational lensing of light.
Some boring yet exciting territory
but sometimes when I sleep at night
I cast off that technicality
and go back to when I was eight.
In retrofuturistic surreality
the Captain enters the stardate.
I anchor the craft and battle the wrath
of evil aliens cruel with strife.
I hope that before my human death
I'll have the cosmic ride of my life.

BO[R]N-APART(E) FOR COMMON GREATNESS

Paulina Fishman

If you are young and ambitious, whom can you idolise? Of course, Alexander the Great comes to mind. By his thirties he had conquered most of the world known to the ancient Macedonians. Such military feats seem incompatible with mortality. Thus the titular protagonist in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* incredulously asks, "Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion i' th' earth?"

The privileged few — who are born into opulence, placed under the tutelage of the finest teachers and quietly succeed to the throne — may well be daunted by the thought of Alexander. Yet he cannot intimidate the underprivileged many. It is not as if he began as a lowly artillery officer, rose through the ranks during a bloody revolution, overthrew the government in a coup d'état and installed himself as First Consul.

Napoleon Bonaparte is the idol of every commoner who aspires to become uncommon. Classical literature is teeming with his fictional devotees. Julien Sorel in Stendhal's *The Red and the Black* "was above all things ambitious" and always carried a portrait of Napoleon. Raskolnikov in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* explains his atrocious deeds, "I wanted to

make myself a Napoleon, and that is why I killed her ..." In Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* we learn that "Stephen, who had read of Napoleon's plain style of dress, chose to remain unadorned". Et cetera.

Vautrin sourly asserts in Balzac's *Father Goriot*, "... [T]o cut the Gordian Knot with a sword ... you have to be Alexander, or else you go to jail." No doubt this alludes to Napoleon's defeat at the Battle of Waterloo and subsequent confinement on the island of Saint Helena. Yet Napoleon's downfall is precisely what makes him so relatable. In Lermontov's *A Hero of Our Time*, an exhausted Pechorin collapses into bed and sleeps "like Napoleon after Waterloo." Who has not experienced such sleep?

The National Gallery of Victoria was home to Napoleon: Revolution to Empire from 2 June to 7 October. It showcased hundreds of objects from the 1770s to 1820s, including paintings, furniture and jewellery. But even if you missed the exhibition, don't dismiss Bonaparte. As the brilliant English poet John Clare wrote in *The Rural Muse*: "The heroes of the present & the past Were puny vague & nothingness

to thee Thou grasped a span almighty to the last & strained for glory when thy die was cast ..."



Napoleon at the Saint-Bernard Pass (1801)
Jacques-Louis David

THE MUSEUM OF OLD AND NEW ART

Anna Carrig

We're on the ferry to MONA and it feels a little like we're being taken to some secret, evil lair. As we reach the jetty, staff in stiff black coats usher us up over 100 stairs cut into beautiful faces of natural sandstone. We are given iPod touches and a quick tutorial on how to use the MONA 'O' app, then take a spiral staircase through a bed of rust- and sand-coloured stone to the basement level of the museum.

Since MONA opened in January 2011 it has received critical acclaim from around the world and become a drawcard for tourists in Australia. The museum is architecturally stunning, and full of works that are confronting, disturbing and sometimes breathtakingly beautiful. Tasmanian millionaire and gallery owner David Walsh has described MONA as a Disney Land for adults; it certainly includes all of the entailed thrills and stomach churning moments.

Nearly 400 artworks are displayed, each without text - a technique which encourages a plurality of readings of the works. Guests can utilise a GPS on the iPods to 'find' the works they are near and tune into interviews with the artists, and read short tweet-length 'ideas' about the works and theoretical essays listed in the category of 'art wank'. Basic details such as the name of the artist and where and when each work was created are also included.

There is a certain ambience generated by the partial darkness and exposed construction of the gallery space. Guests move about in their own bubbles

of consciousness as most have headsets on and are enjoying the freedom of feeling their way through the gallery at leisure. Drawcard works are the controversial *The Great Wall of Vagina* by Jamie McCartney and *Cloaca Professional* by Wim Delvoye. The reputation of these works precedes them; they are colloquially known, respectively, as *cunt wall* and *poo machine*. We have already heard about each from our taxi drivers.

Other pieces fulfil the promise of the title of the museum, combining 'old' and 'new'. Cabinets of old coins and subtle ceramics are lit in such a way that each artefact glows poetically in the dark. The presence of cutting edge contemporary art and ancient artefacts reinforce the juxtaposition of life and death confronting the spectator at every turn in the collection.

A standout work for me, a second-time visitor to MONA, is the sound work *The Two Sisters*, by Susan Philipsz. Maybe it is because I have come to Hobart with my twin sister, someone I don't see very often, but this work moves me greatly. Another reviewer described this work as "evocative and harrowing," which is fitting given that the inspiration is a morbid 1956 Scandinavian folk song *The Twa Sisters*, which tells the tale of a woman who remorselessly drowns her

younger sister in an act of sexual jealousy. Regardless of the backstory, this work is composed to emotively affect the listener. I stand between two tall speakers and close my eyes, and am immediately enveloped by the subtle beauty of strings arrangements composed as two channels of sound which are different but harmonious.

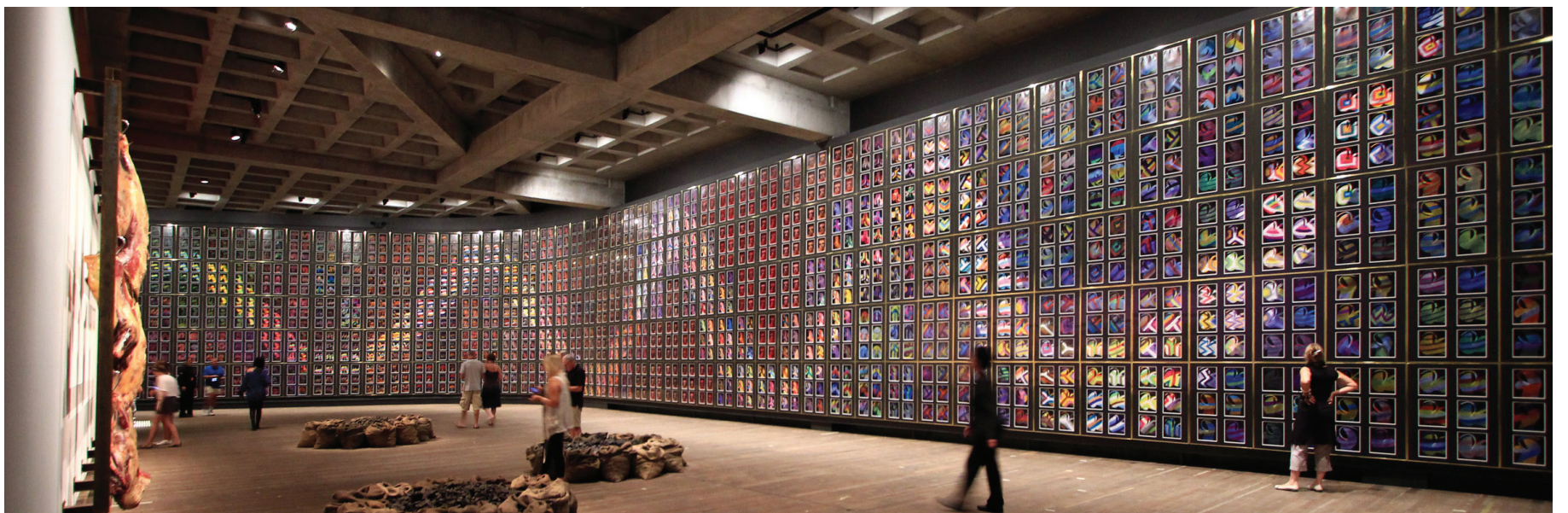
There is a huge amount to see as we travel up through rock and the three stages of the gallery. From *Bit.fall*, a clever combination of engineering, information technology and art by Julius Popp (pictured), to Jannis Kounellis' Arte Povera installation work *Untitled*, which references Picasso's *Guernica* and utilises everyday materials to evoke themes of resistance, MONA is bursting with works that make you think and respond. For some visitors that response is a feeling of nausea or disgust; for many the experience is an enlightening one.



Right: *Bit.fall*, Julius Popp.

Below: *Snake*, Sidney Nolan.

Credits: Anna Carrig & Jeff Owen.





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INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS (2009)

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY QUENTIN TARANTINO
STARRING BRAD PITT, CHRISTOPH WALTZ, MÉLANIE LAURENT, DIANE KRUGER

Duncan Wallace

“For me, a cup of espresso, and for the mademoiselle... a glass of milk.”

As he stares down at their inviting strudels, sitting awkwardly in a colourfully Parisian café, Colonel Hans Landa of the *Schutzstaffel* tells the petrified Shosanna to “wait for the cream.” When the icing on the cake promptly arrives, Landa scoffs down his dessert with a childlike enthusiasm that is normally hidden by a stern face and an intimidating, multi-lingual eloquence. It’s these beaming expressions of self-satisfaction that make Landa – commandingly brought to life by the virtuosic performance of Christoph Waltz – one of the scariest, freakiest, most awesome villains ever to grace the big screen. In fact, there couldn’t be a more apt expression than “grace the screen” to describe Landa’s intoxicating presence; his conversational skills, like his scheming plans, are poetically elegant. But there’s an even simpler reason why his deliberations deliver the instinctive O.M.G. reactions that even the most composed filmgoer would fail to suppress: *he knows everything*. With a cunningly multi-layered story about a World War II, Spaghetti Western-inspired revenge fantasy, Tarantino shows us that knowledge is power. In doing so, he gives us a handful of indelibly charismatic characters that are far from afraid to use it.

Tarantino’s ten-years-in-the-making screenplay is masterful. Alternating between four European languages, its characteristic phraseology is key to the director’s creation of larger-than-life characters and the development of long, drawn-out scenes in special locations. Landa’s introductory monologue in the opening frames, set in the humble home of French farmer Monsieur LaPadite, may just be the best scene that Tarantino has ever shot. A significant portion of this two-hour film is set only in a house, a café, an underground bar and – quite deliberately – a cinema. But this storytelling structure brilliantly manages to capture the sweeping plot’s focus on two intertwining

plans to assassinate Hitler. In an alternate WWII reality, the devastated but determined Shosanna (Mélanie Laurent) – a young woman whose family was calculatingly murdered in a Landa-directed SS operation – hatches a plan to burn the Führer and his propaganda chief Goebbels to the ground by taking advantage of a smitten German war hero, Fredrick Zoller.

The other, somewhat more haphazard design is carried out by Lieutenant Aldo Raine (Brad Pitt), a Jewish-American soldier who leads his team of ‘Basterds’ on a kamikaze Nazi-killing tour of Europe. Raine orders his crack team of Jewish-Americans to pay off their “debit” of “one hundred Nazi scalps” – an instruction the Basterds follow all too literally – while showering their targets with as many machine-gun bullets as possible. When they’re not firing mercilessly at the Nazis, the Basterds are cheering on an infamous colleague, the ‘Bear Jew’ (Eli Roth), while he sportingly belts them to a pulp with a baseball bat, or they’re admiring Raine’s ability to give their victims “a little something [they] can’t ever take off” (it’s a dagger-inflicted inscription of a swastika on their foreheads, in case you’re wondering) as a perpetual reminder of their service to the Third Reich. The Basterds’ brutality is as perfected and rehearsed as their leader’s acerbic wit. It’s violent, colourful and, dare I say, quirkily funny.

The Basterds are seemingly motivated by Raine’s unequivocal description of the Nazis as people who “ain’t got no humanity”. Their wild operations view the Nazis with the same kind of sub-humanity which the Nazis devastatingly cast over the Jews during their sweeping agenda of genocide. We come to learn, though, that Colonel Landa is something quite different from the usual product in the Basterds’ “Nazi-killin’ business”.

I could reel off excerpts from Tarantino’s dynamic script all day, but it would be remiss of me not to

mention that this film would be completely unworkable without the performances of a truly outstanding ensemble cast. Waltz was entirely deserving of the unanimous admiration and Oscar-winning success which rewarded his performance as Landa. Diane Kruger delivers another enticing performance as the Allied forces’ inside woman, Bridget von Hammersmark, and Michael Fassbender is quite brilliant as Lieutenant Archie Hicox, who makes a film-defining, and ultimately fatal, gesture when ordering three beers in an unforgettable bar scene. Mike Myers and Rod Taylor join in the fun with immeasurably cool cameos as General Ed Fenech and Winston Churchill respectively.

Tarantino has accurately self-evaluated his films as having an ability to make viewers laugh at things which, really, shouldn’t be funny at all. And with a film that concerns itself with the Holocaust, blood-thirsty revenge and calculated murder, he outdoes himself again. There are few films which manage to achieve a balance between comedy, macabre, drama and action. But there are even fewer that transcend the idea that these genres need to be ‘balanced’ at all. *Inglourious Basterds* is exactly this type of film; a kind of its own, which you would think utterly impossible to make. It, and Roberto Benigni’s uplifting *Life Is Beautiful* (1997), are perhaps the only Holocaust movies to extract genuine laughter and surreal feel-good moments from such an earth-shatteringly depressing subject matter. Aldo Raine’s final snide comment, “well that just might be my masterpiece”, spoken measuredly as he scrutineers the carving of a final victim, is another example of Tarantino’s fine self-assessment. *Inglourious Basterds* remains my favourite film of the twenty-first century and, for me, offers well-founded hope that Hollywood will continue to produce films which we can proudly call classics.

FILM REVIEW: LOOPER (2012)

Basil Curtis

I sit in the passenger seat on the way to the movies, a weird experience in itself - not the sitting in a passenger seat - I'm used to that - but the actually going to the movies thing. I ask, "Driver, what is this fi-lm about?" My driver says, "Stop calling me Driver, I'm your friend Tom and it's about time travel." I exhale. Fuck me. This isn't what I signed up for... I didn't sign up for anything! I heard "Joseph Gordon-Levitt and Bruce Willis" and I accepted an invitation to *môvié* - that's made-up French for "Watch a movie."

You see, time travel movies do my head in. The whole space-time continuum messes with my brain tank. It takes a hammer to my brain tank, smashes the glass, and my brain goldfishes named 'Understanding', 'Reason' and 'Sense' fall to the floor and flap about. Eventually they die, gasping for air, their eyes popping as wide as their mouths. Graphic right? I apologise; the space-time continuum made me do it.

Anyway, back to the blockbuster. Gordon-Levitt stars, but you mightn't recognise him unless you read his name on the movie poster. Why the confusion? Well, because he looks weird as fuck, but not

little-boy-weird as in *10 Things I Hate About You* or cancer-gross-weird as in *50-50*. He wears a prosthetic nosepiece throughout to make him look like his future-self in the movie, Bruce Willis. Future-what you say?

Premise: The movie posits that in the future time travel is possible but highly illegal. In 30 years' time, when the 'mob' wants to kill someone, they send that person back in time and a Looper 'disposes' of them, doing so with an awesome-but-sickening gun.

The Catch: When a Looper is 'retired' in the future, he is sent back to the past and the present Looper has to kill his future self. It's fucked up, I know. So when Gordon-Levitt's character has his loop closed, his future self (Bruce Willis) is sent back and essentially, he has to kill himself...well, his future self...it's a bit confusing.

The Twist: Bruce Willis' character has other plans and shit gets complicated.

Conclusion: It's graphic, it's violent, it's violently graphic, there are boobies, there's a little lovey-dovey and there's a fuck load of swearing. It's part-science fiction and part-action and that's partly the reason I liked it. The other part is Gordon-Levitt. He nailed his role, as is tradition. But then again, I could just have a man-crush.

Grade: 78 – Distinction.

Best Part: Blunderbuss – the badass weapon used in the film.

Worst Part: Bruce Willis crying.

Offspring: If *Inception* and *Children of Men* had a baby.

Moral of the story: It takes a lot of work to make Gordon-Levitt look like Bruce Willis, but it doesn't take anything to make Emily Blunt look like an absolute babe...probably because she is an absolute babe.

FILM REVIEW: RUBY SPARKS (2012)

Bren Carruthers

Writer's block is tough. Believe me, as a contributor and editor of *Lot's Wife* this year, I can attest to the horrific feeling of staring at a blank screen – it has been about 90% of my job. Not only is it frustrating, it's a somewhat lonely pursuit. So it only seems natural that a writer (Zoe Kazan) would extrapolate this self-imposed torture into a narrative that stretches to the very edge of feasibility.

Ruby Sparks, from the directors of *Little Miss Sunshine*, tells the story of Calvin Weir-Fields (Paul Dano). Writer of a highly-regarded 'Great American Novel' in his youth, ten years later he is suffering a sophomore slump and alienating himself from the rest of the world in a vain attempt to break his writer's block. Inspired by a romantic dream and a writing

assignment given to him by his psychiatrist (Elliot Gould), Calvin wills his character – Ruby Sparks (Kazan) – into existence.

Although quite reminiscent of *Stranger Than Fiction* (2006) and *Barton Fink* (1991), *Ruby Sparks* is classic Indiewood rom-com fare. Michael Cera or Zach Braff would not have been implausible in the role of Calvin, and it seems almost criminal that Zooey Deschanel *hasn't* been cast in the title role. Ruby is exactly the kind of 'hey-I'm-quirky-and-a-little-dumb-but-aren't-I-so-cute-and-indie-don't-you-just-want-me' character on which Deschanel has built her career and reputation.

Yet, I'm glad that these actors weren't cast. *Ruby Sparks* is more than just a light, lovey film, and it

requires more than just a cardboard cast. It navigates the full experience of relationships and human emotion. Yes, there's love and laughter, but also desperation and terror. The film is a depiction of the tortured soul of the artist, the un-ease of reality and knowledge and the allure of fantasy. It also reflects the unrealistic expectations that many people carry into romantic relationships. These issues are dealt with in a far better fashion than that normally exhibited in a saccharine Indiewood storyline; in truth, the only let down is the ending. In the interest of avoiding spoiling the film, I'll only describe it here as 'incorrect', yet I have no doubt that it will satisfy less prudent filmgoers than myself. Three and a half stars.

INTERVIEW

JEREMY NEALE OF VELOCIRAPTOR

Pia Salvatore

You've got to have a lot of energy to be in a band with 11 other people. Velociraptor's lead singer, Jeremy Neale, has that energy, even offering to speak 25 per cent faster to get the most out of twenty minute interview.

With its origins in Brisbane as a three-piece band with the boys from DZ Deathrays, Jeremy says that Velociraptor accumulated more members over "a combination of a lot of extremely long and drunken nights out."

The numbers grew and were finally capped at twelve, which, as Jeremy points out, is also the number of letters in the band's name. He admits that it "was just kind of out of control, so

twelve is the magic number."

The band is now ready to embark on a national tour, squashing on to stages, and spilling into a crowd near you.

With the need for space on stage for everyone and their instruments, mobility is key. "It's handy if the stage isn't too high, and then everybody can kind of come and go freely," Jeremy explains.

The comings and goings from stage suit the high energy that the band gives off in their performances. With twelve people belting it out on stage, it's hard to imagine that their sets wouldn't be full of gusto.

"Regardless of what happens in the style of music, having twelve people play in the band means that every set is going to be high energy," Jeremy says.

Yet Velociraptor's energy is almost detrimental. Trying to secure support slots has occasionally been difficult once the number of people in the band is revealed.

Nevertheless, in the first six months of their existence, Velociraptor have taken every opportunity that they could get. Now that they've garnered some support of their own, they have far more freedom.

As Jeremy explains, after six months of hard work "you can kind of reel it

back in; if people like your music then they'll start to come and see you and at that point you can put on your own shows, which is always nice."

That's not to say that Velociraptor are taking it easy on the back of their successes. Jeremy stresses that if it were left to him, his inability to say no would have them playing four times a week.

With a propensity to say yes, bundles of energy and a desire to create as much music as possible, it's no wonder the band is so big.

Velociraptor play at The Tote on Friday October 19.

GIG REVIEW

TIM HART

THE WORKERS CLUB, SEPT 7TH

Carlie O'Connell

Tim Hart is most commonly known as the drummer of the indie-folk band Boy & Bear, and is usually seen tucked away behind the drum set supplying the beat and back-up vocals. However, Hart has recently ventured into the world of solo projects, and on his newly released debut album *Milling the Wind* there isn't a drum set in sight.

A mild spring night at The Workers Club in Fitzroy provided an intimate setting for the Melbourne leg of Hart's EP tour, wonderfully supported by two opening acts. The softly spoken but enchanting Neda was followed by Stu Larsen, who, despite being a gypsy with no fixed address, has such a powerful

live voice that the Melbourne music scene can expect to see a lot more of him in the future.

Then Hart, the redheaded man himself appeared on stage, smiling cheekily as he exchanged banter with the audience. He opened with 'Cover of your Code' on the banjo, and it instantly became clear that playing the drums is not his only musical forté. Switching between the banjo and the guitar, his intricate fingerpicking skills were on display throughout the set, occasionally combined with the lingering sounds of a harmonica.

Each of Hart's songs is deeply lyrical, written about his personal trials and triumphs. At one point Hart apologised for the intensity of his songs, saying, "I'm sorry my music isn't terribly uplifting, but sometimes we need to talk

about the more serious things." There were certainly no complaints; with each song the audience was entranced, before erupting with applause as they finished. Given the soft melancholy nature of the music, Hart's bubbly personality and enthusiastic banter with the audience were a welcome contrast.

The highlight of the evening arrived when Neda and Larsen joined Hart on stage for a joint rendition of Larsen's song 'The Mile'. This combination of such strong voices accompanied only by an acoustic guitar was truly breathtaking.

Despite being incredibly comfortable alone on stage, Hart made it clear that he has no intention of giving up

Boy & Bear in favour of his solo career. "Although I love being able to explore solo projects, Boy & Bear always comes first. But there's no reason I can't do both!" he said.

Heading home after seeing Tim Hart, I was left with the feeling that I had just been to a mate's gig at a cosy local pub. Hart's welcoming stage presence and undisputed talent makes him a testament both to Boy & Bear and Australia's live music scene today.



TOP 5 SONGS

...ABOUT SUMMER

Pia Salvatore

Summer's great. Three months without uni, and not even a guilty feeling that you should be doing assignments. Of course, good weather is enough to put most people in a cheery mood.

The Beach Boys – Surfin' USA

Or any song by the Beach Boys will do. Back when they weren't breaking up on tour, they were giving us their well-renowned Californian beach sounds. It's almost like sunrays coming out of the speakers.

Best Coast – The Only Place

It might be a song about California, but it could just as easily be applied to our own sunny home, or wherever summer takes you.

The Drums – Let's Go Surfing

Despite your own surfing abilities (none here), this song still makes you want to jump in the car for an impromptu road trip with your friends and hit the beach, if not the waves. We mean a proper beach too, not one of those pretend ones in the bay.

Alice Cooper – School's Out

Too right! Soon the stress of uni and last minute dashes to finish essays and cramming for exams will all be over. Yes, we're all very responsible and time efficient students, but with summer just weeks away all that pent up stress can soon be released into belting this tune out.

Mungo Jerry – In The Summertime

If you can imagine riding through flower-filled fields, this would probably be the soundtrack. Sadly, the reality is that you'll probably be spending most of summer in a dark room trying to avoid the heat, but this is still a jolly tune. Be sure to avoid Shaggy's cover, or anything to do with Shaggy for that matter.

Image: Richard Masoner



GIG GUIDE

Pia Salvatore



Image: Leah McIntosh

THEEsatisfaction + Big Freedia & The Divas

The Hi-Fi
Thursday 18 October

Get your groove on and shake your booty for this extreme double headliner. With a mix of psychedelic, futuristic, jazz and funk, these acts will come to dance. You will have no hesitation in dancing with them.

Dress code: Hot pants for everyone!

Clare Bowditch

The Regal Ballroom
Thursday 25 October

A true storyteller through her songs, Clare Bowditch has got another series of fables to present to her loving fans. Heartfelt and as genuine as always, she'll have everyone swooning in unison.

Dress code: Bright and cheery.

Fraser A Gorman & Big Harvest

Northcote Social Club
Saturday 27 October

Continuing on from a year of success for the local group, they now have a single to launch. Go along and see the Northcote Social Club revert to a time of swing dancing in halls and awkwardly asking people to dance.

Dress code: 1950s is key.

Arrested Development

Prince Bandroom
Friday 2 November

Now in their 20th year, hip-hop group Arrested Development are celebrating by heading our way for a very special show. They'll be bringing their messages of equality and love with all the force of 1991.

Dress code: Forget the dress code, but bring an anniversary present.

ALBUM REVIEW

SUN

CAT POWER

Pia Salvatore

With lyrics like “I never knew pain like this / When everything dies,” Chan Marshall’s 9th album may not have the most optimistic start, but that doesn’t speak for the rest of the album’s tone. *Sun* is a definite look into Chan’s personal life and a homage to her journey, but it’s not all bleak. There’s the upbeat display with *Ruin* and a blatant homage to all the places her career has taken her, as well as the ten minute powerhouse of ‘Nothin’ But Time’. It’s honest, and the six-year gestation period of this record has been

well worth the wait.



ALBUM REVIEW

A IS FOR ALPINE

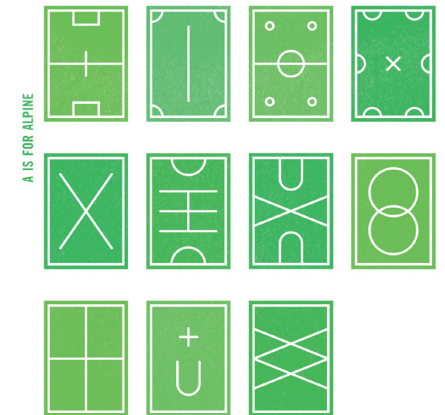
ALPINE

Bren Carruthers

After what seems like an eternity, local Melbourne band Alpine have finally released their debut album, *A Is For Alpine*. The band, led by the dual vocals of Lou James and Phoebe Baker, has been a promising gem on the outer edge of the Australian music scene for some time. Favourites ‘Too Safe’ and ‘Villages’ make a welcome repeat appearance from the *Zurich* EP, whilst ‘Gasoline’ is an infectious single that will inevitably be shuffled into many summer playlists.

Sadly, some tracks fall into the

milieu of apathetic B-Sides, but as a debut album, this is certainly a firm base from which to build a successful career. I’m looking forward to their next album: if *A Is For Alpine*, then perhaps *B Is For Breakthrough*?



IN PRAISE OF PBS

Phillip Damon

Now put a nickel in the jukebox, baby / and let's dance to the rock and ro-oh-oll...

When I woke up this morning, all foggy-headed in a foreign bed, I didn’t know that Gary Clark Jr. was being called “the saviour of the blues.” Indeed, I’d never heard of Gary Clark Jr., and I had no idea that the blues were even in need of saving. I learnt both of these things in the car on the drive home, but I also learnt something more important: that the blues are *worth* saving; that they are worthy of a saviour. Driving from Brighton to Footscray, I learnt the beauty of the blues.

PBS 106.7FM is one of several

community radio stations operating in Melbourne, dedicated to playing “little heard music,” as their slogan says. It is run by a small team of professional staff largely funded by roughly 7000 subscribers who pay a small membership fee – just a nickel in the jukebox, in the scheme of things – to support their radio station. Supplementing this team are around 200 volunteers, without whom PBS literally could not broadcast – 95 percent of the station’s current studio at Easey St in Collingwood was built in 2001 by volunteers donating their time and skills.

Volunteers also present the shows. PBS broadcasts twenty-four hours a

day, seven days a week, on the back of a team of broadcasters whose sole motivation for turning up every week is an irrepressible desire to share the music they love with the people of Melbourne. These announcers are insiders, intimately connected with their respective musical communities, and it is the knowledge and fervour of true insiders that they bring to their listeners, linking us with Melbourne musical subcultures that most of us probably never knew existed.

It was that infectious, irresistible passion for the music that was the key to awakening my newfound appreciation of the blues this morning.

The presenter’s evident and profound joy and love for his music was what made it so appealing to me, as listener and as enraptured pupil, to learn from him and share some of that love.

PBS plays a huge variety of music, and I know for certain that I don’t like all of it – it’s probably fair to say that very few people could. But listening to these presenters discuss it with such animation and depth of knowledge, it is impossible not to share some of their obvious gratitude for the music they love, and to feel a similar gratitude for the existence of a radio station that plays it.

BEATS IN THE HEAT: A GUIDE TO LESSER-KNOWN SUMMER FESTIVALS

Leah Phillips

Summer and music festivals go hand-in-hand. But if you would rather avoid the crowds, bogans and overpriced drinks, small niche music festivals are the way to go. Here's my pick of the finest music events over the summer.

Melbourne Music Week

MMW is a nine-day event featuring over 200 local and international electronic music artists. Events will be taking place all over this fine city, including a secret location called Where?House. This festival features the electronic duo Collarbones and pop quartet Crayon Fields amongst others. Also on the bill is America's ESKIMO, whose electronic beats have been described as "sophisticated post-Dilla hip-hop, funk" by bleep.com. I beg to differ, yet he's still worth checking out to experience his unique sound for yourself.

JamGrass

A little Bluegrass anyone? Inspired by the overseas bluegrass and 'new-grass' resurgence, JamGrass is a celebration of all things bluegrass, right here in Melbourne. This year the two-night festival is being held at The Thornbury Theatre's Velvet Room, and features a fantastic line-up of bands including local acts Mustered Courage, Immigrant Union, The Quarry Mountain Dead Rats and The Stillsons. Come October 19th, it's time to bust out the overalls, crack open the whiskey and get down to JamGrass for some unforgettable finger pickin' action.

Australian World Music Expo

Featuring the cream of the world music scene, and attracting huge international artists like Nigeria's Seun Kuti and Jamaica's The Abyssinians, AWME will be four days of roots packed goodness. Aussie artists include local legends The Bamboos, Saskwatch, Deep Street Soul, Watussi and Clare Bowditch. Melbourne based Kelitzmer-gypsy-jazz-folk-pop band FLAP! will also make an appearance at this year's Expo after a whirl-wind European tour.

All shows are separately ticketed, with some awesome free shows in the mix. My pick is Watussi, Madre Monte, East Journey, Kamerunga and Lee

'Sonnyboy' Morgan at the APRA stage at Curve Bar on November 18th; all completely free!

Wangaratta Jazz Festival

For lovers of Jazz and Blues, Wangaratta Jazz Festival is made for you. Taking place on the Melbourne Cup long weekend (2-5th November) WJF showcases a sublime array of Australian and International artists. French songstress Cyrille Amice, Gregory Porter and Australia's own jazz heavyweight Vince Jones will all make appearances. Staff from the Monash Jazz and Popular Studies program will also feature at the festival, including Head of Music Rob Burke and his band The Marc Hannaford Quartet, and Steve Magnusson with pianist Mike Nock.

Queenscliff Music Festival

Queenscliff turns sweet sixteen this year, and boy has it come of age in the music stakes! Featuring the likes of The Cat Empire, Missy Higgins, Something for Kate, British India, TZU, Emma Louise, Ngaiire, Kira Puru & the Bruise, Jackson Firebird, The Beards and Mia Dyson, this year's festival has something for everyone.

The 'QMF Soul and Funk Revue' is also back again this year, featuring the dapper Deep Street Soul, Clairry Browne & The Bangin' Rackettes and Cherry Bar's infamous 'soul in the basement' DJs Vince Peach and Pierre Baroni. Sweet times are guaranteed.

Riverboats Music Festival

Between the trees along the banks of the Murray at Echuca lies the single stage of Riverboats Music Festival. This laid back, family orientated festival has good food, wine and some great acts lined up for 2013. The Bombay Royale, Clairry Browne & the Bangin' Rackettes, Mia Dyson, Gossling, Tim Rodgers, Archie Roach, Pete Murray and Better than the Wizards will all be gracing the Riverboats stage in mid-February.

Inca Roads

Inca Roads Music Festival is the main event for the not-for-profit, social music club Inca Roads. The

festival is held in a secret location, an hour away from Melbourne, and is free for all club members (membership is \$80). Included in this year's line-up are Animaux, Poco la Pax, Albert Salt, I'lls and The McQueens. This is an awesome alternative for those who missed out on tickets for Falls Festival or Pyramid Rock, but hurry, because tickets are selling fast.

Tamworth Country Music Festival

The NSW town of Tamworth comes to life every February with the sounds of the ol' west. Broadbrim hats, leather boots and denim are a must. A feature of Tamworth is its coveted Golden Guitar Award, and The Telstra Road to Discovery Award final, which in the past has uncovered artists including Harry Hookey and Jessica Mauboy. This festival will bring out the line-dancing, toe-tapping part of your soul you never knew existed.

Port Fairy Folk Festival

Port Fairy Folk is four-day camping festival full of frivolity, good tunes, and relaxed vibes. 2012's festival was deliciously good, serving up acts like John Butler, Ben Sollee and Eagle and the Worm. Already announced for next year's menu is Eric Boggle and Arlo Guthrie, with the remaining acts due to be revealed very soon.

Images: Inca Roads Music Festival 2011



THEATRE REVIEW: PROMISES, PROMISES

Thomas Alomes

As the last show of The Production Company's 2012 season, *Promises, Promises* did not disappoint. Featuring the solid gold combination of Burt Bacharach's music and Hal David's lyrics, *Promises, Promises* is a delightfully sixties, camp, upbeat affair. As always, Orchestra Victoria (conducted by Guy Simpson) did every note of every song justice.

Matt Hetherington, with the appearance of Don Draper (thanks to costume design of Isaac Lummis) but the mannerisms of Frank Woodley, perfectly captured the role of sensitive young insurance executive Chuck Baxter, caught between climbing the corporate ladder and pursuing the girl of his dreams, co-worker Fran Kubelik (Marina Prior). For much of the show Hetherington was left alone on stage but never let's the energy dip.

In many ways Marina Prior is the Prophet Mohammed of the Australian musical theatre world. Not in so far as having divine powers (apart from the power to walk through walls which will be discussed later), but more in the respect that if a negative

statement is uttered about her, there's a strong possibility of violent backlash, rioting in the streets and forced exile for at least a few weeks/months/years for the hapless reviewer. It is with this in mind that I draw the line in the sand and say I was extraordinarily underwhelmed by Prior's performance (Salman Rushdie eat your heart out). Her rendition of the show's best known and most loved number 'I Say a Little Prayer' lacked any real substance and seemed to pass as a blip on the radar of Act One. In Prior's defence, this song is very difficult to take ownership of, largely due to the popularity of Dionne Warwick's iconic 1967 recording and the subsequent 1968 version by Aretha Franklin.

Also of glaring note was Prior's apparent complete disregard for the convention of miming walls or doors set up in the minimalist yet effective set (designed by Andrew Bellchambers). Her divine gift of walking through walls may be useful in other settings, but in *Promises, Promises* it ruined the illusion of the confines of Baxter's apartment, painstakingly created through mime by every other cast member.

Overall, Nadia Tass' direction held the show tight; Act One was kept restrained allowing Act Two to burst onto stage with the hilarious bar scene between the dejected Chuck and a rather intoxicated Marge, played with comedic aplomb by Chelsea Plumley. The ensemble also did an outstanding job of playing the inebriated barflies that add vigour and conviviality to the opening of Act Two. The momentum of this scene carried through to the remainder of the show, providing a comedic punch to re-engage the audience after the interval.

Another performance of note was Robert Grubb as the wearied but caring Dr Dreyfuss, with some great one-liners and recurring gags.

As mentioned, The Production Company is done for this season, but we'll keep you updated on plans for their 2013 season as they develop; it's sure to be another year of top quality musical theatre.

***Promises Promises* showed at The State Theatre from October 3 -7.**

THEATRE REVIEW: KISS THEM ALL SOUNDLY

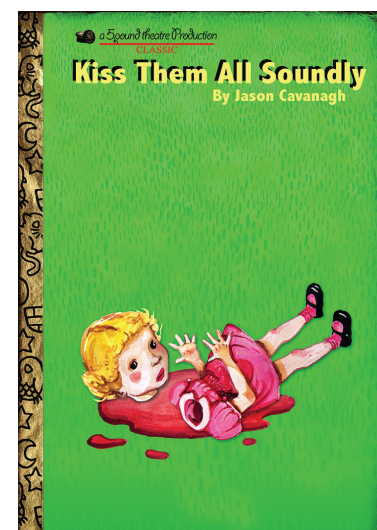
Carmel Wallis

The latest play from 5 Pound theatre is an odd but ultimately satisfying offering. *Kiss Them All Soundly*, which advertises itself as an exploration of narrative using fairy tales, definitely references fairy tales, but the story itself doesn't rely upon it as much as one might initially suppose.

The play begins with three separate scenarios; an interview for a marketing position, a creepy old man harassing a schoolgirl waiting for the bus, and a couple at home whose 'happiness' is being fractured. Some of these characters are immediately unlikeable, and part of the beauty of *Kiss Them All Soundly* is its ability to slowly make them endearing. The creepy old guy gradually becomes less alarming, and the arrogant interviewer's behaviour is revealed to be premised on tragedy rather than a mere sense of entitlement.

Simple Simon, Mary Had A Little Lamb and Georgie Porgie are the inspiration for the three stories, yet plot developments are by no means limited to a simple retelling of the originals. Complexity is added by the relationship between the three stories; they are slowly woven together throughout by virtue of obvious and more subtle narrative hints. At times the references to the fairy tales are clunky, but overall the allusions lend the play a strong grounding and allow for enhanced engagement with thematic developments.

The cast of *Kiss Them All Soundly* is relatively small, and the transition between characters is occasionally laboured. Whilst the man at the bus stop is clearly different to the man being interviewed, other characters suffer from similar accents and unclearly defined roles.



Kiss Them All Soundly ultimately merges the traditional and modern adroitly, providing a fabled context for modern affairs.

MELBOURNE FRINGE 2012 REVIEWS

TRUTH

As reviewed by Thomas Alomes and Basil Curtis over text message (yeah... it actually was.)

Thomas: Mell said you or I have to do a review on Fringe...

Basil: We could hold hands and write it together?

T: We're both writers.

B: Yeah we are, lock us up. We're writers you know, we tell stories.

T: "Put bulldog clips on my nipples, I'm a storyteller."

B: "Put Jumper leads on my testes, I'm a storyteller."

T: "Choke me with a dish cloth, I'm a storyteller."

B: "Play Carly Rae Jepsen on loop, I'm a storyteller"

T: One of the best jokes of Fringe.

B: From the best SHOW at Fringe!

T: Yeah no one is going to have any idea what we were talking about

B: Well it makes sense and is pretty damn funny if you've seen *Truth*.

T: Okay. Well let's tell the people why. You Start.

B: Slow Clap productions is Vachel Spirason and Stephanie Brothie. This Melbourne Fringe Festival they performed their second one man show, *Truth*. Loosely a follow on from their multi-many-numerous-several-various-award winning Melbourne International Comedy Festival show 'The Hermitude of Angus, Estatic', this show is an hour of ridiculous story telling and even more ridiculously ridiculous dancing.

T: Vachel as the sole man on stage (with some hidden backstage assistance from Stephanie) manages to cram in a host of colourful and crazy characters, which have a way of genuinely connecting

with the audience whilst keeping everyone in stitches. Of special note from the ensemble constructed by Vachel is the very intense Juan from Spain, an erotic back up dancer for Salt 'N' Peppa and loose form of Vachel himself serving as the central narrator.

B: Barack Obama and George Clooney did not attend the show that we viewed, much to one of the character's dismay.

T: But it was George and Barack that lost out because *Truth* was a crazy ride and proof that the home of high quality independent comedy is still Melbourne.

B: God you're a good story teller.

T: Punch me through a phonebook, I'm a storyteller.

B: I love you.

T: What?

B: I meant yes you are. Damn you autocorrect!

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS: A WEASEL'S TALE

Kevin Turner

These days, independent theatre is frequently charged with taking itself too seriously. Whilst occasionally independent productions are very successful, they just as often come across as trying too hard. Such criticisms could never be made of MUST's latest escapade *The Wind In The Willows: A Weasel's Tale* because it simply refuses to take itself seriously at all. Part of the program for the Kid's Fringe at the Melbourne Fringe Festival, *A Weasel's Tale* takes the well known Kenneth Grahame classic *The Wind in the Willows* and turns it on its head. The villains in the original story, the cunning and conniving Weasels, are suddenly catapulted into the spotlight and the classic children's tale is told from their point of view. The pack of older weasels, enjoyably portrayed by Elizabeth Thiessen, Tom Middleditch, Nathan

Burmeister and Lindsay Templeton, tell the story of their attempts to steal back Toad Hall from the evil Toad. The storytelling narrative is clarified with the inclusion of a younger weasel to whom they tell their hilarious story. This young weasel, adorably portrayed by Sophie Jevons, supplies a solid anchor for the story to be told and allows for constant referrals back to the fact that the weasels' account doesn't quite fit with the original tale of *The Wind in the Willows*. The soul of the performance however comes from the supporting characters Badger and Toad, portrayed masterfully by Jarryd Redwood and James Jackson, both of whom are so over the top that the audience cannot help but love them. Simply put, *The Wind In The Willows: A Weasel's Tale* is a wonderfully enjoyable romp through the dark and scary woods.

THE WELL

Jacob Thomas

"When the earth's magnetic poles flip and the planet falls out of orbit, life on the ground gets colder and crazier. Long extinct civilizations turn up in the drive-through, ex-girlfriends turn into crude oil and the end of the universe is a giant super-charged cloud of candy floss."

Robert Reid's latest production, *The Well*, performed in conjunction with MUST and La Mama Theatre, was a sight to behold. Never before have I

been so engrossed in a philosophical marvel. This piece tackled numerous bounds; time lapsing over itself, human bodies mutating, the government listening to your every breath, and the transcended falling back to earth. This world was created within the confines of a small black box theatre, whilst audiences were guided and held gently by a talented cast of Monash students. Not one actor was weak, not one line was lost, not one thought was unpro-

voked, particularly by a rather dapper gentleman in a Pink Panther ensemble. Words cannot describe my admiration for those who took on this task and turned what could have been a tangled mess into a breathtaking performance.

If you were unfortunate enough to miss out on attending this mind-blowing piece of theatre I can only hope, for your sake, that there is a repeat season somewhere in the near future.

TEST TUBES AND PANDA BURGERS: THE FUTURE OF MEAT?

Lewis Gurr

A smug, self-righteous vegan eating a panda bear steak. It's something we'd all like to see, and if anybody feels like hanging around until 2050 they might just get lucky. For the time being, though, the vegans and vegetarians are safely perched on the moral high ground (though that still won't save them from the global warming livestock contributes to) because of the myriad of problems with meat. Currently, the meat and dairy industries collectively dominate a significant proportion of the Earth's land area, with 26% of all land used for grazing alone. At the same time as people in Western countries selfishly and systematically ignore the environmental and animal welfare impacts of their high-meat diets, the UN expects world demand for meat to increase by 70% before 2050 as more and more people around the world can afford high meat diets. The consequences for the natural ecosystems that remain are both dire and easy to predict. It will probably take a miracle to avoid the earth being trashed for bacon and sausage rolls. There's no hope for us -- Hang on. Do I hear science coming to the rescue?



Funded by an anonymous millionaire donor, researcher Mark Post of the University of Maastricht (among others) has been developing lab-grown meat. The first proof of concept should be ready later this year, and it will be a hamburger. To make lab-grown beef, for example, stem cells are taken from a cow, which can be done while the cow is alive (although sadly, it is more efficient to slaughter the cow), and then induced to grow into muscle cells in a laboratory. Currently the growth medium used is derived from animal blood, but other researchers are developing plant- or algae-based growth media. Processed meat like sausages or burgers is much easier to manufacture since muscle and fat can be grown separately in tiny slivers a few centimeters long and millimeters thick, then mashed together at the end. A steak, on the other hand, requires many different tissue types working together to create a complex end product.

The first test tube hamburger will cost roughly £200,000, which for consumers represents less value than a traditional hamburger patty which can retail for as little as £2. Dr Post, as well as the New Harvest Foundation (a non-profit organisation set up to promote meat alternatives), believes that ten to fifteen years is an achievable timeframe to develop industrial scale production that will cost as little as field grown meat. Some animal rights groups are enthusiastic about the idea, since one slaughtered cow could potentially provide the stem cells required to make 100 million burgers. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) have offered a £630,000 reward for the first company to manufacture and sell artificial chicken on an industrial scale, for the same price as field meat and with an identical taste. They are placing their focus on a chicken alternative only because it is the meat produced in the largest quantities.

...And then what?

It would perhaps be practical and easy to genetically modify muscle cells to grow better in the lab, or have particular nutrient content. Such a process could engineer new kinds of 'food' that aren't exactly like anything found in nature. In practice, though, GM Test tube meat would probably be dubbed "Frankenfood" by a hysterical media, and it would perhaps be a bit too optimistic to expect everyday consumers (or, for that matter, anybody at all) to trust such a product.

On another note, there is no need to restrict ourselves to chickens and cows. After all, we didn't find those animals by scouring the planet for the most delicious beings, or at least not to my knowledge. Who knows which are the tastiest? Since the meat is grown from stem cells which can be taken from adult animals in a reasonably non-invasive way, and the technology to grow different species' muscle would probably be fairly similar across the board, we'd be fools *not* to try to eat everything. Bring on macaw, gorilla, dolphin, panda. Turn your beloved family pet into a meal the whole family can enjoy – without hurting your pet (finally...). Human burgers may not be too far away – in principle it is the same as growing an animal burger. It would be possible to use your own stem cells to grow your own flesh to eat. Surely that has got to be sustainability at its finest. In any case, it's possible to imagine a future where young people will ask each other, 'eugh, you eat *field* meat? Like grown on a *living animal*? Umm, like, *why* would you do that?' I don't know about everybody else, but I suspect that by 2030 I'll have eaten my last lentil and will be loving it.

*Disclaimer: The fact that eating meat might be ethical at some point in the future is not intended to provide some sort of defence for meat-eating **today**. That would be tantamount to a baby murderer claiming that since scientists will invent toy dolls in fifteen years, it's okay to continue to murder babies in the mean time. Eating meat is a mistake.*

CURIOUS AND CURIUSER: THE MOON AND MARS

Hilary Bowman

It must have been great to be Neil Armstrong. You would have been able to make as many bad jokes about the moon as you wanted, and when nobody laughed, you could just sigh and say ‘Well...I guess you just had to be there.’

We bid farewell to our first man on the moon about a month ago, and along with his passing we’ve begun to remember what once drove humanity to put him there. Once upon a time, we saw the universe beyond our little planet as the great ‘final frontier’, with families huddled around black and white TVs to watch the moon landing. For a while in more recent times, it seemed as though we had completely lost our fascination with space exploration. However, in the past few months, the moon, Mars and space aliens have firmly put themselves back into our cultural consciousness. Neil would no doubt be glad.

Luckily for Neil, he did manage to live just long enough to see another giant leap for mankind. In a bit of a departure from Neil’s famous words, however, it was not quite one small step for *man*, but rather the whirring of the wheels for the robotic Mars Rover, Curiosity.

Curiosity landed on Mars in early August. NASA is hoping to find out whether Mars could ever have

supported life and if there is evidence of water, and record other geological and climatic information. All of this will hopefully lead us to the day when I can buy my very own buggalo ranch on Mars. President Obama has even specifically instructed the NASA team, “If you make contact with Martians, please let me know right away.” Let’s keep our fingers crossed. Curiosity is about the size of a car, with a hardy set of wheels (no spinning rims, unfortunately) and numerous scientific instruments to record information, including 17 cameras.

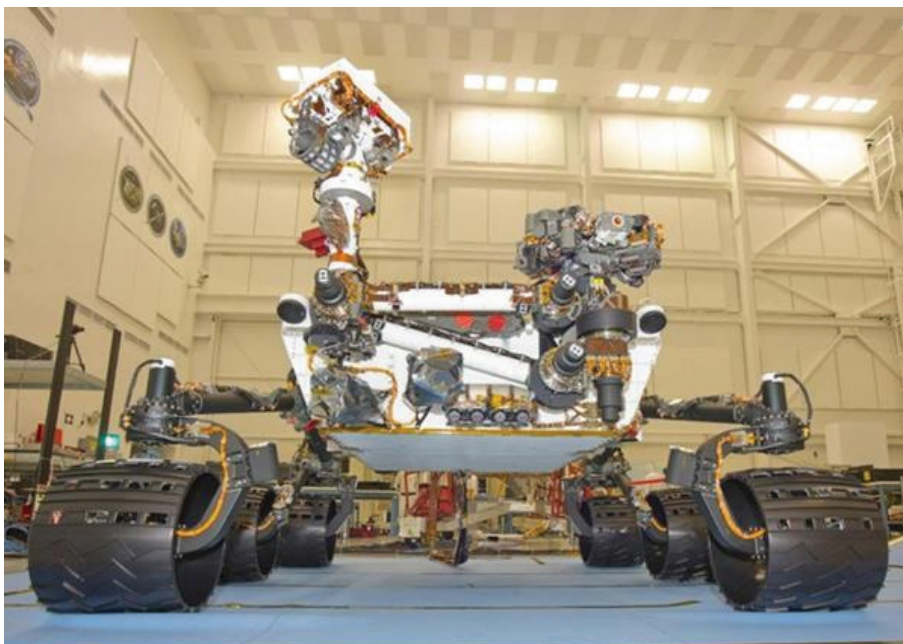
NASA has truly embraced the information age, setting up a much-loved twitter account for Curiosity (@MarsCuriosity, if you’re interested). Someone good is clearly behind it; with tweets like “A shout out to my 1 million+ followers: There may be a 14-minute communication delay btwn Mars & Earth, but you’re always in my <3”, I’m about ready to fly straight up to Mars and cuddle the life out of that robot. We love to anthropomorphise machines, and Curiosity is no exception - it’s even tweeted some selfie pics, just like in the MySpace days of yore. NASA is on the money with this one. People love a good character, and getting people to fall in love with the personality of their robot explorer is a great way to re-ignite the

passion we used to have for space travel.

It’s not just bad jokes that Curiosity is tweeting, though – it has also managed to take some of the most breathtaking HD photos of Mars ever seen. We can now see the stark red terrain of Mars like never before. When I first opened the pictures of barren landscapes with rocks and Olympus Mons in the background, my immediate reaction was, “it just looks like another desert, whatever.” Then it hit me. We can see PHOTOGRAPHS of another PLANET – high-res! Full detail! There’s no kid with an overpriced Canon SLR that can match that. Find them and look at them if you haven’t already - it will make your day. This sense of awe is what space exploration has always been about.

I’m very glad that people are beginning to fall in love with space again. Myki cost us \$1.5 billion; in comparison, Curiosity cost a total of only \$2.5 billion. Space travel is truly a worthy scientific frontier and deserves investment. Curiosity might not find life, but it will tell us so much more about our nearest neighbour. Who knows, maybe there’s a little kid out there, watching as the photos and the tweets stream in, who will one day be the first person to walk on Mars.

Image: Curiosity Rover, NASA



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MSA OFFICE BEARER REPORTS



President: Esther Hood

As this is my last Lot's Wife report ever, I want to take a moment to thank all the 2012 MSA Office Bearers, especially Freya Logan and Olga Lisinska. Our hard work has meant that the MSA has been able to expand services, increase membership and continue to be a watchdog for students. This year we have secured semester parking permits, lobbied successfully for an outdoor stage to be built, addressed lighting concerns, secured a student lounge, started a free breakfast program, reduced the cost of MSA membership cards and much, much more. I would also like to thank all MSA staff members, who do an amazing job providing services to students that too often go unnoticed. Lastly, I would like to thank everyone who has supported me this year; you know who you are, and I really can't begin to articulate how much it means. Most importantly, I want to take this chance to encourage people to get involved. Help us run campaigns and services, swing by our offices and say hi. The more people involved, the stronger we are.

Good luck to next year's MSA team; I know you are going to be amazing!



Treasurer: Olga Lisinska

Budget Budget Budget. So with 86

days left as Treasurer, I have to do a budget, which will take up the majority of my next three months. I'm slightly confused as to where the year went, but I'm glad that there is a committed team following us, including my successor, Sam Towler - congrats, you'll do a great job. Before I finish in my role I have to send out a budget pack, which is still in the process of being written, and wait for budget templates to be made up and then send them to departments so they can fill them in, in line with plans for next year. It'll be a long process and my last task as treasurer. I'm glad I've had the support of Esther and Freya this year, and would like to wish Freya good luck for next year.



Secretary: Freya Logan

Hi all. Since my last report I have been busy with several things. MUISS elections have been successfully completed; I aided these elections in my capacity as Deputy Returning Officer to the Returning Officer, Ben Zocco, as well as acting as a polling clerk and counting the ballot. It was really great to see so many students passionate about supporting International services. Other than my general duties of writing minutes and organising meetings, I have also attended several University committees as the student representative. We have also seen the introduction of MSA Member's Day which sees members of the MSA getting a different discount, deal or freebie once a week; in my opinion it has been a great success. Don't forget that we also hold MSA Breakfast Club on a weekly

basis to provide free breakfast foods from 8am onwards in front of the cellar rooms. Hope to see you there!



Education Public Affairs:

Hiba Marhfour and Liam McDonald

Like most other departments, Education Public Affairs is now moving into wrap-up and handover mode. We will, however, still be around until December, which should give us time for a couple of last BBQs on 'Hey Byrne, Let us Learn' and 'Back up on Parking'. Education Public affairs has also begun work on the Counter Faculty Handbook, the MSA's version of the University's handbooks. Review your units this semester and send it in to us so that we can include it in the Counter Faculty Handbook.

Of course, it would be remiss of us to end our last report without some thanks. Thanks to everyone who has helped out all year: volunteers, OBs and especially our office buddy Luke. Congrats to John and Sarah who will be Office Bearers next year; you have a lot to live up to. Keep it real Monash!



Education Academic Affairs:

Julia Ponte and Ali Majorah

Ali continued his efforts to ensure a more accountable MSA by making public various aspects of the MSA's relationship with TL Consult which he

considers to be questionable, including submitting a motion at the MSC on 23 August asking for an investigation. Building on the second-hand bookshop campaign, Ali is helping coordinate an open MSA sub-committee, which will work with the MSA Finance Department to develop a business plan for a second-hand bookshop. The aim is to negotiate the reopening of a second-hand bookshop ASAP. To join, please email Ali at ali.majokah@monash.edu.

Julia has been investigating the development of free online courses and changes being made to tertiary funding. She's been in contact with Education Officers in interstate unions to discuss and compare the changes being made nationwide. She is also continuing to help students with concerns about courses and/or teachers, and encourages students to contact her on 9905 1122 or julia.ponte@monash.edu.



Indigenous Officer: Shawn Andrews

Wow, another month down and the university year is coming to an end. Given that this is the last edition of *Lot's Wife* for 2012, I would like to take the opportunity to thank my wonderful committee and congratulate all of the MSA Office Bearers for a great year. It has been a long year with plenty of ups and downs, but I have thoroughly enjoyed it and look forward to the challenges next year brings. While I am dishing out some compliments, I would like to congratulate the Lots Wife editors. They have done a fantastic job with little funding and turned the magazine around. I would like to thank Esther Hood for her support and leadership during 2012; without it I

would certainly have been lost! To all the students still studying hard; good luck with exams. Have a great holiday and I'll see you next year.



Environment and Social Justice:
Laura Riccardi

Recently in Quebec, over 300,000 college students mobilized against attempts by the government to introduce an 82% tertiary fee hike. They picketed their classes, staged general assemblies and organised a student and staff strike to defeat a neo-liberal assault on tertiary education. Why do the actions of mutinous Francophone students matter to Monash? In Australia it's evident that a fight back is equally necessary: deregulation is rampant and students are barely surviving on Youth Allowance payments that sit 45% below the poverty line.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the enthusiastic people who have spent countless hours in the ESJ office trying to change the world this year. It is thanks to these students that the Department has campaigned around causes like equal marriage, refugee rights, climate change and Palestine in 2012. I'd also like to thank the anonymous author of a certain Vex News article and the people who flooded my Facebook inbox with "Die commie slut." It was Eminem or Winston Churchill (hopefully neither) who once said: "You've got enemies? Good. That means you stood up for something." I hope the continued existence of oppression and inequality challenges Monash students to join the same struggle that has seen a triumph in Quebec.



Welfare: Luke Nickbolds

The year is almost over! As exams are approaching it's important to remember not to let the stress get the better of you. If it is, or if you have other worries like money, work or life in general, then as always feel free to drop by my office and I'll try to find some way to help.

Let me finish this, my final report, by saying thanks. Thanks to all the Office Bearers; it's been great working with you this year – extra special shout out to Pauly for turning up to more FFMs than all other OBs combined. Thanks to all my awesome volunteers; Sarah Graves, Morgan Oatley, Sarah Strugnell, Ellen Grant and everybody else. Without them there's no way I could have run things like Free Food Mondays. And thanks to you, for actually reading this report.



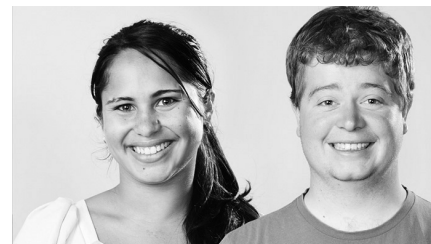
Male Queer: Wade Aulich

How time has flown by; it is hard to believe that a year has passed since I was elected as Queer Officer. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate a number of people. Firstly; Asher Cameron and Camilla Peter, who have been elected Queer Officers for 2013. I'm confident that both of you will carry out exemplary work. Congratulations also to Shawn Andrews, not only for being elected as next year's Indigenous Officer, but also for point-

ing out blatant truths in the electoral debate. I sincerely wish more people conducted themselves in a similar manner; a lot more could be achieved if that were so. I would like to thank my colleagues from this year. It was a pleasure to work with such passionate and motivated people. A special thank you to Elisabeth Griffiths and Greta Baumgartel; working alongside both of you was truly a pleasure. I wish all OBs the best of luck for next year. I will now bid you all out there in Monash a fond farewell; take care and best of luck for your futures. It has been an honour.

Female Queer: Elisabeth Griffiths

Hey everyone! Phew, how time has flown! I can't believe it's the end of the academic year already. It's been crazy busy in the Queer Department, so we've started planning to celebrate the end of exams with a party of our own – keep your eyes on the Monash Queer Department Facebook page for the unveiling of our surprise! It's been an absolute pleasure to be Female Queer Officer this year; I'd like to send a big thank you to everyone in the MSA, especially my co-office bearer Wade, and all MSA members. I'd also like to congratulate Camilla Peter and Asher Cameron for being elected unopposed as, respectively, next year's Female and Male Queer Officers. Wade and I will still be around a little next year, so hopefully we'll see you out and about, but you are in very capable hands with your next Queer Officers.



Activities:

Bernadette de Sousa & Paul Ireland
Activities recently held Oktoberfest, giving Monash a big hot German

cultural injection! After spending the day making 30kg of potato salad, the Activities chairs managed to find their inner wombat to keep them going throughout the night. There was a waterfall of beer, pretzels and German spirit. Congratulations to the lovely Oktoberfest Prinz und Prinzessin. Also a special thanks to the German Club for all of their input!

AXP is coming up and it is bound to be Fergalicious. At only \$12 for MSA card holders, you won't have to live on dahl for a week to afford this ticket! So get out your ballet shoes and dance the night away.

Paul and Bernie have really enjoyed all that was 2012 (even the annoying bits). We hope Amy has a successful year running Activities in 2013; we are pretty sure that there hasn't been only one Activities chair in over 30 years, so please help her as much as you can!!



Women's: Sally-Anne Jovic

It's finally nearing the end of semester! Activities in the Women's Department have more or less wound up for the year, but the Women's Room will be open through the rest of Semester for women wanting a place to chill out. Keep your eye on the Women's Department facebook group (facebook.com/groups/MSA.Womens.Department) for information about any goings on before exams and through the summer holidays. It's been a pleasure to coordinate the Department this Semester, and I'm looking forward to coming back again next year with Adria Castellucci! In the mean time, good luck for exams and I hope everyone has a lovely summer break!

STUDENT SERVICES AND AMENITIES FEE UPDATE

A funding agreement between Monash University and the Monash Student Association (MSA) is still unsigned following a protracted negotiation process throughout 2012. In lieu of an agreement having been signed, the MSA has this year operated off financial reserves.

The University is estimated to have received \$8 million revenue from the newly introduced Student Services and Amenities Fee this year. Next year revenue is expected to reach \$11 million as international students will also be charged. The distribution of the fee, designated for expenditure on student services, was contested earlier in the year as a result of the University's refusal to dedicate an adequate portion to the MSA. Despite the fact that

Clayton students are contributing an estimated \$4.05 million to the overall SSAF revenue, the MSA was initially projected to receive only \$1.66 million in funding from the University, an increase of only \$155,525 on pre-SSAF funding levels. The University subsequently offered the MSA an addition of approximately \$130,000, as well as a further \$50,000 from the Pro Vice Chancellor's discretionary fund.

Monash University was one of only three universities condemned by the National Union of Students (NUS) earlier in the year in a rating of universities based on their consultation with, and support for, student associations.

Whilst funding levels have now been agreed on by both parties, the exact wording of the Funding Agreement has received criticism due to the inclusion

of sentiment perceived as being anti-union. According to MSA President Esther Hood, the University is also pushing the MSA to have to seek permission to implement new services, which is in violation of the MSA's independence. No agreement will be signed until this has been altered.

President Hood last met with Pro Vice-Chancellor David Copolov on October 12 to discuss her concerns with the Agreement. She states that he seemed amenable to alterations, and is hopeful that a revised agreement can be taken to the next meeting of the Monash Student Council for consideration. The Funding Agreement is expected to be signed by the end of the year.

MSA NEWS

Sub-committee to Consider Changes to Election Regulations

At the last meeting of the Monash Student Council (MSC), a motion was passed to establish a sub-committee to consider changes to election regulations. The motion was raised following the recent Annual MSA Student General Elections, on the grounds that several issues with regulations became apparent during these elections and the by-election earlier in the year. The sub-committee will be open to all students, giving them a chance to voice concerns about the current election process and suggestions for improvements.

A meeting of the sub-committee will be convened before the next MSC on October 25, although an exact time and date is yet to be set. Should students wish to attend or submit a proposal, they should email MSA Secretary and President-elect Freya Logan at freya.logan@monash.edu.au.

No Closure on Wholefoods Dispute

The future of Wholefoods is still unclear following the failure of the MSA Executive and the Wholefoods Collective to negotiate a resolution over governance issues. As reported in earlier editions of Lot's Wife, there has been considerable tension between Executive and the Collective about the governance of the restaurant, resulting in an independent mediator being engaged. One of the proposals resulting from mediation, made by Executive, was that Wholefoods incorporate, thereby extricating itself from the MSA. According to the Collective, their preference is that Wholefoods become a Division of the MSA run by the Collective, which would ensure governmental autonomy. Any change will need to be voted on at a Student General Meeting; one was originally petitioned for by Friends of Wholefoods in Week 4 and scheduled for Week 11, but has been void as Executive and the Collective have failed to agree

on its exact terms. According to figures obtained by the Collective, under MSA Management this year Wholefoods is expected to make a \$100,000 loss, bringing the total loss over the past 6 years to approximately \$200,000.

Co-op Bookshop on Agenda Again

The MSC recently passed a motion to establish a sub-committee to consider recommendations and proposals to open a second hand bookstore on campus. There has not been a second hand bookstore at Monash Clayton since the Co-op closed due to excessive rent charged by the University and general mismanagement in 2011. A proposal outlining a possible service model was taken to at the last MSC, where upon it was decided that whilst a second hand bookstore is important to the student body, more research and financial planning is necessary before a final decision can be made to support it.

2012 MSA ELECTION RESULTS

The 2012 Student General Elections proved, as usual, to be a joyous affair, as campaigners in blue, green and yellow shirts descended upon the campus centre. The incumbent party, Go!, partially associated with Young Labor Left, will hold a majority in Student Council again next year. Go! won all contested Office Bearer positions with the exception of Environment & Social Justice and Activities, which will be held by members of Switch, the grass-roots left ticket. A number of positions were uncontested during elections, namely Secretary, Male Queer, Female Queer and Lot's Wife Editors. Whilst Secretary and Male Queer will be filled by members of Go!, Female Queer will be filled by an independent. The Lot's Wife Editors were elected on

the independent Student Media ticket.

Elections were incredibly close, with a margin of between 100 and 200 votes separating most positions. Activities was won by only 28 votes. Committee positions will be shared between members of Go!, Switch and Left Action, the broad left ticket, although Go! holds a majority.



2013 MSA OFFICE BEARERS

President

Freya Logan (Go!)

Secretary

Ben Zocco (Go!)

Treasurer

Samantha Towler (Go!)

Education (Academic Affairs) Officer

Benjamin Knight (Go!)

Education (Public Affairs) Officers

John Jordan (Go!)

Sarah Christie (Go!)

Women's Officers

Adria Oliver-Castellucci (Go!)

Sally-Anne Jovic (Go!)

Welfare Officer

Alexandra Bryant (Go!)

Environment & Social Justice Officers

Rory Knight (Switch)

Tamara Vekich (Switch)

Activities Officer

Amy Clyne (Switch)

Male Queer Officer

Asher Cameron (Go!)

Female Queer Officer

Cam Peter

Lot's Wife Editors

Florence Roney (Student Media)

Matthew Campbell (Student Media)

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Lauren Goldsmith (Switch)

Luke Nickholds (Go!)

Michael Butler (Switch)

Laura Riccardi (Go!)

Women's Affairs Committee

Katherine Hardy (Go!)

Michelle Gearon (Switch)

Sinead Colee (Go!)

Kathy Schoenjahn (Switch)

Ellen Grant (Go!)

Student Affairs Committee

Katherine Hardy (Go!)

Julian Pereira (Switch)

Ridab Hassan (Left Action)

Paul Harris (Go!)

Ben O'Leary (Switch)

Sinead Colee (Go!)

Amanda Nutall (Go!)

Rebecca Thompson (Go!)

Katherine Vandeloo (Go!)

Pauline Foster (Go!)

NUS Delegates

Ali Majokah (Switch)

Freya Logan (Go!)

James Grout (Switch)

Olga Lisinska (Go!)

Hiba Marhfour (Go!)

Frida Komesaroff (Switch)

Ben Zocco (Go!)

SOLO TRAVEL: A DEFINITELY EXCELLENT IDEA

Anika Baset

It's that time of the year again. Winter has finally pissed off, the sun has reappeared and the glorious summer holidays are on their way. Let the holiday planning begin!

Travel is on the cards for many, yet solo travel is often overlooked in favour of travelling with friends. Having a rocking good holiday with yourself sounds like a big risk. But, risk big, win big, baby! I, for one, am a passionate supporter of Team Solo-Travel-Is-Awesome.

Here are some of the reasons why:

Instant Street Cred

This is more of an added bonus than a bona fide reason. Doing things to sound cool is, in fact, lame. But tell someone you just spend a solid amount of time travelling by yourself and you'll just ooze self confidence and cool *without even trying*. They'll think 'Look at you, you self assured thing! Let's hang out, all the time'.

Self confidence

Travel is all about the experiences and they're not always pretty. But, face uncomfortable situations on your own and you'll develop a skin thicker than the White Pages. After you've dealt with looking for a hostel in monsoonal rain with everything you own on your back, or losing your last pair of shoes on a Thai

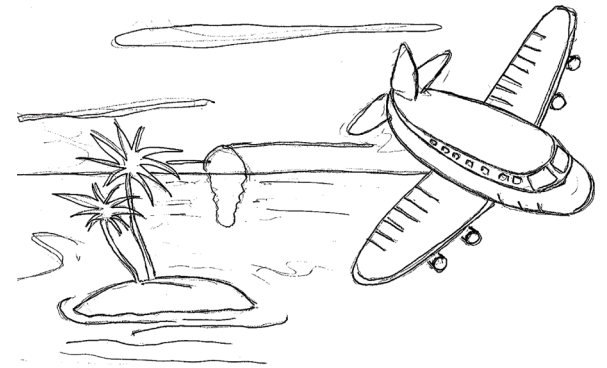
beach at 3.34am, and done so without completely flipping out or anybody holding your hand, your self confidence jumps approximately one gazillion points. Even more simply, you'll become a seasoned pro at spending time in your own company and hopefully get to the point where you realise that you're actually rather excellent.

Complete freedom

Being alone in a foreign place can be downright terrifying. What would happen if you were attacked by a mob of angry monkeys? Who would come to save you by luring those bastards away with ripe bananas?! The fear is genuine at the beginning. It subsides when you fully realise the incredible place you're in and, more importantly, that you can do whatever the hell you like. Nobody is going to stop you. Travelling with other people involves compromise and often we're dragged into doing things that are a little bit shitty. Solo travelling means you can be gloriously selfish. See what you want, do what you want, eat what you want, without anybody else getting in the way!

Interesting People

The truth about travelling alone is that you won't be alone at all. You will become the proverbial flame and many an exotic, travelling moth will bask in your fiery presence. Having no friends is an incentive to make new ones, so you'll make an effort with your new moth pals. Before you know it, you'll be sharing an alcoholic beverage or ten, shaking your tail feather on a dance floor and soon after, you'll be solid BFFs. The locals are also drawn to the much less intimidating solo traveller. A random Vietnamese woman once asked me to have lunch with her family. However, considering I hadn't properly



showered in a while when I met her, she may have just thought I was homeless.

Finding out who your friends are

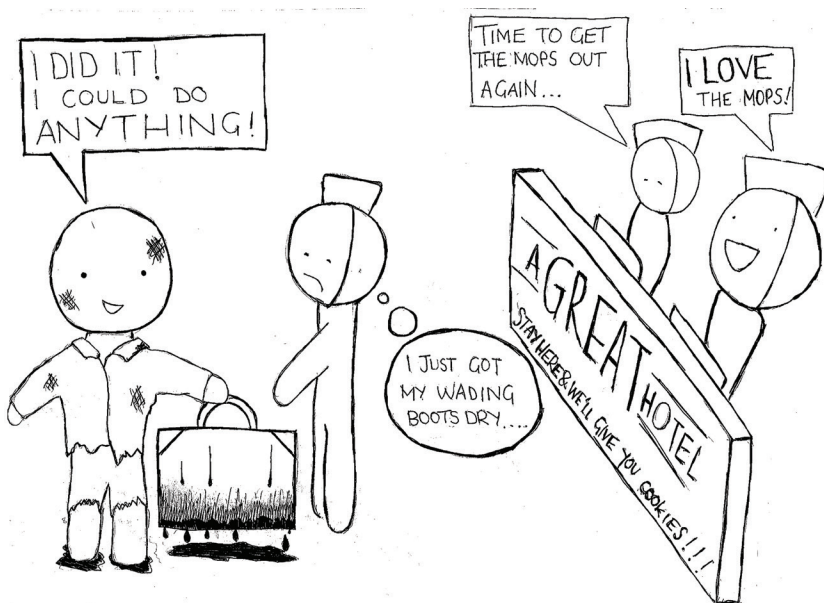
The word 'friend' is becoming increasingly devalued, especially considering some people have thousands of them on Facebook. When you're away from home on your own, you'll realise who your real friends are because they're the ones you'll *actually* miss. You'll also have concrete evidence that someone is important if you're willing to eat cheap street food at the risk of sudden, violent diarrhoea, just so you can spend a bit extra on the perfect souvenir for them.

Finding out who you are

So much of who we think we are is tied to the people in our lives and embedded within the place we live. In our every day lives, we assume multiple roles (Australian, Melbournian, Monash University student, General Bad Ass) and our identity becomes a merging of these. When you're moving from place to place, on your own, the characters you ordinarily play fade away. The only constant is you, and yet you feel more vibrantly alive. It becomes glaringly apparent that who you really are goes far beyond what you do, where you live, or who your family and friends are.

What's that I hear you say? Travelling alone sounds like a great idea? Correct! I expect a thank you letter and a tacky souvenir when you get back from having the time of your life.

Illustrations: Eleanor Murray



NOTHING TO CHANGE ABOUT STUDENT EXCHANGE

Liza Costello

Everyone had said to me, “You have to do it”. “A better place... a magical bubble”, they all agreed. My friends’ talk of ‘a life changing experience’ echoed around my head until finally, I did it. I gave in. I went on exchange. As the black sheep of my family, proud as punch of my individuality, this ‘compliance with the common’ felt like I’d failed. Therefore, it was only fitting that I chose the university furthest from Europe, where little to no English is spoken, in an attempt to revive my seditious side. And that is precisely how I ended up in Santiago Chile; Spanish speaking, wine drinking and salsa dancing the year away.

That all sounds smooth and sexy doesn’t it? But I assure you, a quick recount of my early days will have you lock up your thoughts of sophistication forever. My salsa style more closely resembled a toilet jig with wild waving moments, while my Spanish conversation moved at the pace of a talking sloth. In my first two weeks alone I could have filled the entire *Girlfriend* embarrassing moments section and given them material for the next two years. *The latest Liza moment* became a part of my friends’ vernacular as they tuned in daily to hear of my most recent culture clash and language blunder.

“They are so picky!” I would complain. “An O here, an E there... Whatever! It’s pretty much the same, right?” I quickly learnt that was not the case. The difference between *poco* and *pico* meant that I told the shopkeeper that I spoke dick, rather than a little Spanish, and told the hairdresser I wanted my horse (*caballo*) cut rather than my hair (*cabello*).

While I struggled to connect verbs to nouns, friendships on the other hand seemed to form effortlessly. The incessant smiles of the exchange student crowd initially had me questioning their mental state. But it wasn’t long before I too adopted this otherworldly friendliness, and stopped assuming people were a) crazy or b) trying to pick me up.

It seemed like every group of Jo, Dick and Fanny were just waiting for Bessie to join the gang. This wasn’t just an inebriated illusion either. On the

first day of Uni I heard more friendly conversation amongst strangers than I have heard in 10 years on public transport. Countries, courses, interests and numbers were swapped amongst students like cheat notes before a test. Everyone on exchange was the ‘new kid’ in school. But this time, there was no feigned phone checking or iPod listening because no one was standing about without someone to talk to.

It was refreshing to discover that the French weren’t the unfriendly frogs I had heard about, the Americans couldn’t be tricked about kangaroo pets and drop bears, and the Germans weren’t the rigid ones on the dance floor but the loosest of all! From the 550 exchange students at La Pontifical Universidad Católica de Chile, I made a diplomatic candy mix of friends from every continent of the world.

Indeed we were an eclectic bunch going out on the streets of Santiago, but to the locals we were all *gringos*. And being a *gringo* meant an overload of compliments, free club entry and prey to some of the worst pick up lines I have ever heard. For the year I played my dutiful role as a minor celebrity and became accustomed to the whistles and stares that followed me by.

Social gatherings were not limited to particular nights of the week. Days spent split between the pool and the classroom, dining with classmates (with 15 on campus food halls) and partying with friends saw my sense of reality slip away, along with the promise to skype home regularly and keep up-to-date with current affairs. My life switched from mundane to insane as I swapped my car for a bike and my parents for 26 housemates. Weekends were windows to ski the Andes, hike in Cajon de Maipo and surf at the

beaches of Pichilemu. Needless to say, my Spanish improved to understand my lectures, read novels and write essays.

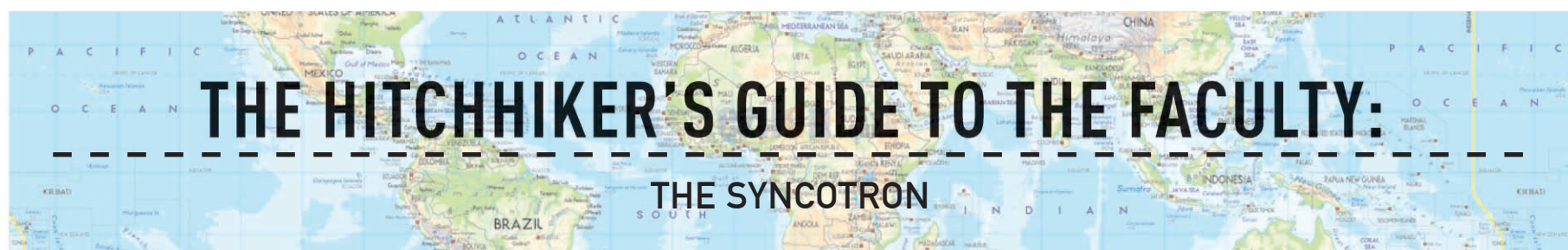
Now that I have come home and begun to adapt to Melbourne life, that world seems very far away. I am yet to bid my salsa goodbye and perfect the Melbourne shuffle, but I am trying to swap the greeting kisses for handshakes before anyone gets the wrong idea. Anyhow, after having learnt to dance to the beat of a different drum, I think I will always see things a little differently. As much as it would give me pride to go against the rest and uncover exchange to be an ‘over hyped experience’, I can’t. It is worth every gushy exclamation that comes its way... and more.

So how is this all possible? I hear you ask. Walter Mangold is your answer. The Walter Mangold Trust Fund is a charitable fund that offers grants between \$5,000 and \$20,000 to Australian tertiary students who study Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese or Spanish overseas for a period between three months and one year. That’s it! No catches, so jump to it! The opportunity to stash away your English for a semester of two, move beyond the *dollar deals* at Coles and experience a whole new world awaits...

www.mangoldtrust.org.au

Image courtesy of Liza Costello





Good evening, morning or mid-afternoon, ladies and lads. Welcome to the exciting finale to my travel adventures. Pull up a pew, makes your delightful selves at home, and we shall embark on a glorious journey... to the AUSTRALIAN SYNCHROTRON.

I board the tour bus departing from Alexander Theatre, receiving my name tag, a free canned beverage, a pencil and brochures written in some horrendous native tongue. My travelling companions promptly fall asleep. The tour guide is unscathed. She describes the view on the right side of the bus. A man leans over and asks blankly, "Is that woman going to talk the whole trip?" The tour guide, who has clearly heard, tugs up her white gloves, points to a hill on the left side of the bus and says, "A beautiful mountain can be seen on the left side of the bus." There are, however, brief pauses in the tour guide's

chatter for bathroom breaks and three mini-films about synchrotrons. From the films I learn about condenser tube leaks and turbine shaft vibration. Pie charts are used. Eventually we break for lunch, which, as promised, is free.

We arrive at the synchrotron, where we receive a pair of 3-D glasses. A large screen greets us as we enter through the main hall. A movie entitled 'A Flying Tour of the Australian Synchrotron' features a talking 3-D kangaroo and shots of the staff members engaging in some sort of ritual around the ring. It looks quite occult. I keep my glasses on for the tour, and pay rapt attention as we are taught how to get into a yellow anti-contamination suit.

Not twenty minutes have passed before an alarm is sounded, and several scientists begin exiting the main chamber in quite a hurry. Ignoring the panicking of my fellow travellers, I immediately sprint for the nearest anti-contamination suit. The

guide is clearly hysterical, shouting such madness as "Stop fooling around!" and "Stop trying to get into that suit!" I dismiss her insanity for the good of the group, and manage to fit my considerable girth into the suit.

What I see as I put on the helmet will stay with me for the rest of my life: an enormous creature, disguised as a fireman, attacking me! We grapple, but my legs give way. The next thing I know, I have been stripped of my suit and left lying on the grass outside the building. Police officers, who have rushed to the scene, offer me no assistance whatsoever, no matter how much detail I gave them of my attacker. I am most offended.

That is where my tale ends, my friends. I hope you will join us next time, for more exciting and wonderful tales of my most exciting life.

- T.C.S.N., *Phd. OBE. B.A.*

SEEKING SUMMER WORK THROUGH RECRUITMENT AGENCIES

Amy Tanner

With holidays approaching many students are looking for summer jobs. The break is a great opportunity to gain valuable internship experience or work in an industry which you are interested in pursuing professionally. The Employment and Careers Development Centre (ECD) at Monash recommends that students seeking summer employment register with a recruitment agency in order to increase their chances of employment. Recruitment agencies are often employed by businesses to recruit new staff, and as such are able to pass job applications to large numbers of clients. Furthermore, agencies often specialise in particular areas, meaning they are able to provide tailored advice on application strategies.

When applying to recruitment agencies it is important to select one which is suited to your level of experience and the type of work you are seeking;

agencies' clients can include small and large businesses and government departments and agencies. A comprehensive list of agencies can be found through the Recruitment and Consulting Services Association.

Once job seekers have selected an agency they will be able to view available opportunities on a job board. There may be two job boards, distinguishing between permanent and short term roles. Short term roles are frequently referred to as Labour Hire services and applicants, should they be successful, are paid directly by the agency rather than the business for which they will work.

ECD recommends that applicants should only apply for one job offered through a single agency at a time; however, if you are interested in further jobs alert the agency. It is possible that applicants will not receive a response from the company they apply to

work with, but they should always double check with the agency for feedback, even if unsuccessful. In the event that an interview is achieved, it is savvy to speak to the agency about this as they are often able to provide specialised knowledge about the company and their requirements. Monash also has a useful student job board at careergateway.monash.edu.au. ECD is open throughout the summer for students who have queries about career development.



STUDENT HEALTH

Cat Poiani-Cordella

I never quite understand why all major assignments are due in Week 12, when you're tired, unmotivated and freaking out about your dodgy exam timetable. Realistically, in order to study effectively, beat the stresses of this end of the Semester and save money – because you've bought a tall skinny flat white every day – you have to be organised. This edition I've provided a checklist to help you manage your psychological and physical health during the next couple of stressful weeks.

- Find out your exam timetable.
- Organise next month's shifts so that they fit around exams and don't leave yourself short of study time.
- Organize all your lecture notes, reading material and lab materials in one folder and flag any concepts that you are unsure of so that you can post on the discussion forum or talk to your tutor.

- Set up an area at home where you can study. Make sure there is plenty of natural sunlight and you have ample desk space to work on.
- SLEEP. SLEEP. SLEEP.
- Struggling to sleep? Too much buzzing around in your head? Try placing some drops of lavender oil on your pillow.
- Make sure you know your own rhythm. Do you work better in the morning or at night?
- Make sure you take some time off and catch up with friends or do something that you enjoy.
- Eat as much fresh health food as possible.
- Eaten too many sugary and fatty foods and now feel bloated? Peppermint tea has been shown to relax the muscles which allow for gas to pass.
- Hungry all the time? Green tea is a natural form of appetite suppressant and tastes great too.
- Exercise. It's great way to relieve stress and helps

circulate blood around the body for optimal efficiency.

- Drink chamomile tea. It has been shown to reduce anxiety symptoms.
- Wake up early on the day of your exam. If you have an exam at 9.30am at Caulfield don't wake up at 9am, you will freak! Make sure you give yourself double the time it usually takes to get ready as something unexpected always comes up.
- Have confidence in yourself. Before you walk into the exam remind yourself that you have studied hard and you will be fine.

Once assignments and exams are over it is time to celebrate and have a well-earned break for three months. Soak in the summer, chill with your friends and bring on the new year - I know I'll be making best friends with the beach. Enjoy!

EATING HEALTHY ON A STUDENT BUDGET

Amara Lindenmayer provides a healthy, cheap and easy recipe to get you through exams

Spicy Canellini Bean and Tuna Salad

You should always have beans and tuna in the cupboard. They are cheap, tasty, and can form the basis of a variety of meals. Even better, you can put them together and add salad ingredients and voila, you have a healthy, filling snack.

Need:

Canned beans, rinsed and drained (I usually use cannellini, but any beans will work)
Medium size can of tuna, half drained
1 cup rocket or other leaves
1 tomato, diced
1 tsp sambal oelek (chilli paste) or any chilli/sweet chilli sauce



Do:

Put in bowl. Eat.

Stats:

Health: This is a super healthy number. The beans are a good source of dietary fibre and the tuna is full of healthy omega 3 and 6 fatty acids, plus you are getting a massive four out of five (females) or six (males) recommended serves of veg and legumes for the day.

Cost: \$5 plus the sambal oelek (around \$3 from an Asian grocers)

Difficulty: Ready in 3 seconds!

Variations: Spicy not for you? Try with a splash of balsamic vinegar instead. Swap the tuna for fetta cheese for a vegetarian option.

For more recipes like this, check out hungryandpoor.tumblr.com



NOTES ON RELATIONSHIP BAGGAGE AND THE ART (ADDICTION) OF FACEBOOK STALKING



Danielle Pu

I have a secret. It's not something I'm proud of, nor is it something I ever planned on becoming, but I am a legitimate Facebook creeper.

My tendency to online stalk didn't really explode into a genuine addiction until I started dating. As soon as this happened, I embarked on a no-holds-barred trolling of various profiles and websites to ascertain exactly who it was that had been there, and essentially, *done that*, before me. From what I can gather, this is a completely normal and relatively harmless pastime in small doses. However, the validation I require from a relationship, added to the type of semi passive-aggressive personality I have, means that I manically comb through a guy's comprehensive relationship history until I can practically recite dates and facts. To put it simply, if there was a *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire – Relationship Edition*, I'd be rich.

It's not that I'm a crazy person. It's just that the existence of relationship baggage means that there are things I don't know about the old you, the you that did things before us. Things you did with her that you're now doing with me. When I think about this, I have an insane compulsion to know precisely what happened, why and how. And who she was to you. When Facebook offers me these things so much more succinctly than you do, can you really blame me for spending hours checking what she's doing now, how many mutual friends we have and whether she has suddenly become hideous?

My somewhat sick fascination with online lurking can be chiselled down to the fact that I'm emotionally vested. I have to prove that I'm better; that I was the right choice. Hearts can be bruised dammit!

My closest friends naturally make the necessary supportive comments and criticisms. "God yes,

she's ugly. Is that a moustache?!" The worst part of creeping, however, is coming to the realisation that this 'baggage' may in fact be a legitimately good person with laudable goals and achievements. That perhaps she's actually a pretty cool person who you could grab a coffee with.

At the end of the day, it is highly likely that most people I decide I'm interested in will have some kind of relationship baggage. Remnants of this will likely exist on Facebook, easily sought out by a dedicated stalker. However, I've learnt that baggage is something I have to accept and leave in the past. Carrying it around is exhausting and, as I've experienced, doesn't bring about any healthy habits.

So Baggage, while it's been good knowing you (not really), it's time we all moved on.

RADIO MONASH: MORE THAN JUST MUSIC

Harrison Morrow

I had my first contact with Radio Monash at the beginning of 2010, when I was looking to get experience as a radio announcer. This had been somewhat of a dream of mine for a long time growing up in Melbourne - a city recognized as having some of the best community radio in the world. I soon attended my first Radio Monash curated gig at the Tote where I got to see and meet some of Melbourne's leading bands. It was a wild night, and the sense of community amongst the members really impressed me.

In case you haven't casually gawked through the studio window before, Radio Monash is located at the heart of the Campus Centre and has been broadcasting in various forms since the mid-60s. Today, Radio Monash is the standard bearer of wholly student-run radio in Australia. In 2001, the abolition of temporary broadcasting licences meant that Radio

Monash and many other radio stations lost their radio frequencies. However, the student body refused to lie down and accept the abolition of Radio Monash, and so it became the first radio station in Australia to broadcast online. Since then, it has been at the forefront of the growing world of webcasting and podcasting.

There are plenty of old hacks around RadMon, as it is colloquially known, many of whom encouraged me to host my own show and gave me a radio training crash course to ensure I didn't cause too many on-air bumbles. Embarrassing moments avoided, I quickly developed my radio confidence and started hosting some pretty wicked shows. Bands started regularly playing on my show to promote their gigs, and before I knew it I was deep inside the Fitzroy music scene.

With Music Hipster Cred ticked off on my 'to achieve' list, I applied to become part of the Radio Monash committee. Unlike standard, dreary committees, RadMon is great! I've been able to organise gigs ranging from finding a DJ for AXP, to smaller events around town, to working with up-and-coming Melbourne artists such as Saskwatch and Courtney Barnett. I've worked across a huge range of genres, providing eclectic beats to the wonderfully eclectic people of Monash.

The people at RadMon are legendary too; my posse now includes other announcers and people with fiendishly good taste in music. Not just a Radio Station, RadMon is an important part of campus life that carries with it opportunities to seriously hit up the Melbourne music scene. They call it **RadMon** for a reason.



Secret Diary of a Melbourne Call Girl

Alexandra - a Monash student

I left the sex work industry a little while ago now. It was something which I enjoyed on the whole, and was a good life experience, but I couldn't do it any longer. Throughout this year I have written about how I got into sex work, the best moments, the worst moments, clients and the brothel experience. I'm going to finish with the reasons why I chose to leave it all behind.

My primary problem was that I was obliged to assume a transsexual identity. I have been an activist for trans rights for some time now, and as part of that I have thoroughly questioned my gender identity. I know I'm male, and I'm quite secure in my masculinity. Initially, although I felt somewhat guilty about using a transsexual identity for personal gain, I thought presenting as a female would be relatively unproblematic. This was true for a while, but eventually became hugely wearying. Over time the constant 'she's' and 'her's', the makeup and the dresses started to get to me. I couldn't reconcile spending so much time not being me.

I got a tiny taste of what life would be like if I was transsexual; of having people see and treat you as something which you simply are not. I only had to do this for a few hours at a time, and could go home and escape from it. For people who are transsexual it's not as easy to avoid the judgement and misunderstanding of people within the community. My work gave me a lot of respect for, and a better understanding of, transsexual people. At the end, however, I couldn't work under this identity. It isn't me.

Sex work is also an incredibly stressful job. From the moment you pull up to the curb outside the brothel, no aspect of it is relaxed. I constantly worried about someone seeing me go inside, and about

making sure I looked my absolute best, because if I didn't I may not have attracted clients. Long waits with no idea when or if the next client will arrive are extremely taxing. For me, introductions with clients always seemed like a job interview with an enormous fear of rejection; sometimes this pressure was so great that I quantified it with being physically hit. Once a client booked me, the pressure to perform was also extreme.

Being a sex worker creeps into the rest of your life too. There is always a fear of slipping up and saying the wrong thing; something that would reveal your profession to the wrong people.

“My experience as a sex worker is something that has changed me for ever. I have learnt so much about others and about myself, and my teacher's words are true; it will always be a part of me.”

Finally, in addition to the personal strain of sex work, even the financial incentive is not as good as many believe. \$140 an hour sounds really good but is, as always, too good to be true. I went into sex work because I was sick of being poor, and it seemed like a great way to earn money without taking too much time away from study. I quickly discovered it wasn't the golden ticket I had hoped for. It is possible to earn a lot of money in the sex industry – I know people who do – but it's not something that can be taken for granted. It is a very fickle industry.

At the best point of my sex work career I was averaging two clients a night and usually earning a little under \$200. Once I accounted for the amount of time I spent waiting in the brothel, however, and the money I had to put into personal upkeep I was getting paid a similar amount to retail wages. If you're only receiving retail wages, there are few convincing reasons to stay in sex work. And that's not even taking into account the stretches of time where you don't get selected by clients and get no pay at all.

To be successful as a male worker, I really needed to work independently, where I could set my own prices and working hours. I put a lot of thought into making this transition, but concluded that as I don't want sex work to become a long term career, it was not worth investing the effort of starting up my own business.

I don't regret deciding to go into sex work, but I am happier now that I am out of it. It paid my bills for a while and changed my perspective on a range of issues, but it certainly isn't for everyone. In retrospect, it isn't for me. It took me a while to accept this.

Sex work entails a special working environment that it takes a certain type of individual to thrive in. The woman who first taught me the industry ropes said to me; “from the moment you take your first client you'll always be a sex worker.”

My experience as a sex worker is something that has changed me for ever. I have learnt so much about others and about myself, and my teacher's words are true; it will always be a part of me.

I have really enjoyed writing this column throughout 2012, and hope that you have found it interesting and informative. Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to read it.

INTERESTING ETYMOLOGIES

Tilly Junker looks at how asylum seekers are represented through language

Engaging critically with the world as we tertiary students are inclined to do, we all know that nothing anyone says is without some kind of bias or agenda, however neutral it claims to be. But how does this stuff show itself in language? A spot of critical discourse analysis suggests it can be sneakier than you might first expect.

We'll start with an obvious one. With all the talk of offshore processing at the moment, let's take the term *queue jumper*. The late Michael Clyne, a brilliant linguist, pointed out that the term assumes there's actually a queue in the first place. Really? A queue at a refugee camp that's basically a quarter of a million people stuck in the desert? And whose idea is it anyway that no one should jump queues? That there should be a queue at all? These are Western ways of thinking, and by using a term like this, it's assumed on the part of the speaker/writer – and consequently

the listener/reader – that everything the term entails is true.

Nothing illuminating there, you might think. Let's talk about something a bit more under-the-surface then. Sticking with the immigration theme, two important words come to mind – *refugee* and *asylum seeker*. The word *refugee* would, to most ordinary folk, mean something like 'someone fleeing a terrible situation'. I reckon most boat people fit that description. An *asylum seeker*, on the other hand, is someone asking another country for protection. So, the *refugee* flees his or her land, comes to a new place, asks for protection and becomes an *asylum seeker*. Simple enough.

But somehow things have become twisted, and what we get in media and political discourse is exactly the opposite: *asylum seekers* arrive in Australia and aren't referred to as *refugees* until they've somehow

proved themselves. The term *offshore processing* is also interesting. It is applications that are being *processed*, not people; paperwork, and not living, breathing humans.

Keeping all of this in mind, a 'neutral' news article that reports, "asylum seekers are being sent to Nauru for processing," not only casts immediate doubt in the mind of the reader that these people had anything to flee in the first place (and denies them the chance to be seen by the public as what they are, *refugees*), but also dehumanises them, as they are to be *processed*, just like that Centrelink form you filled out last week.

We can all tell when someone has a strong opinion and uses language to support it. What we need to look at more carefully is discourse that seems 'natural' or 'neutral', and check below the surface to see what's really there.

Wiped Out?



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- Exclusion
- Discipline
- Grievance

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PARTICIPATING ARTISTS:

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JOYCE HINTERDING | DAVID JOLLY | JONATHAN JONES
ASH KEATING | ELIZABETH NEWMAN | ROSE NOLAN

The inaugural exhibition in a new series, *Artists' Proof #1* sees artists explore performative, media and event cultures, and the post-industrial architecture of the urban fringe, whilst others work with sound, light, sculpture, film, and painting in its diverse and expanded forms, offering a multi-sensory register of art and everyday life, from complex cultural perspectives.

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Ash Keating, *The West Park proposition* 2012,
courtesy of the artist
and Fehily Contemporary, Melbourne
Photo: Greta Costello

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