

LOT'S WIFE

EDITION 5, 2012





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Lot's Wife is produced by Monash Students, for Monash Students. If you're interested in writing, reviewing, cartooning or illustrating, then we're interested in you!

Come along to a weekly writers meeting. They're guaranteed to be lots of fun.

The best two articles of the edition each win a bottle of wine from our good friends at Sir John's Bar.

Submit articles to: msa-lotswife@monash.edu



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Thanks

Holidays! Roy Orbison, Ray Charles, Donna Summer and Whitney Houston – we will always love you. The mystery Lot's Wife Lounge cleaner, Melinda's sister for baking the amazing cake, our world-traversing contributors and Wade – we will always love you too.

No thanks

Burnt coffee, unromantic romantic propositions, heavy fevers that only ever fall on weekends, fire alarms that carry great promise of drama and deliver none, pictures of amazing cakes that make us amazingly hungry, awkward and unwarranted bursts of song, housemates with accordions, and Monash for locking Melinda's car in the multi-story car park.

Contents

- 6. Editorials
- 7. Letters to the Editor
- 9. Vigilantism
- 10. Cyber Warfare
- 14. Interview With Peter Singer
- 16. Politics
- 19. Creative Space
- 21. Theatre
- 23. Music
- 28. Film
- 32. Science
- 34. Monash News
- 46. Student Life
- 50. Melbourne

As you read this paper you are on Aboriginal land. We at Lot's Wife recognise the Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nations as the historical and rightful owners and custodians of the lands and waters on which this newspaper is produced. The land was stolen and sovereignty was never ceded.

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Melinda Bladier

Bren Carruthers

In this edition we see a lot of articles related to governance, and the way different bodies act in order to maintain power, or conversely, the mistakes they have made which have caused them to fall from power. In 2012 we face a climate where global power paradigms are in a state of flux; even locally, the stability of the Australian Government is questioned on a near daily basis by the media.

This change of political climate is mirrored by recent changes to the media industry; the landscape is changing. As with politicians, media organisations are having to find new ways to sell their messages, and prove that they are of significance at a time when Twitter updates are only a click away. Technology has fundamentally altered the media industry, and the end point of the changes is still unknown. Similarly, technology has affected the ways in which governments operate; it has enhanced communication enormously, but is also used more subversively, as explained in Jake Spicer's article on cyber warfare. This use of technology to obtain private information doesn't stop at a government level; that corporations gather our online data, and that facebook is increasingly encroaching on the boundary between personal social networking and losing your identity online, is old news.

However, just as we gain power through choosing to elect our Government, and can choose to buy or not to buy the products vended by corporations, we can also empower ourselves through use of technology. Technology makes it incredibly easy for us to access information by which we can judge our governments and, as with Wikileaks, provides a forum through which information which is contrary to Government interests can be disseminated as never before.

The media has traditionally acted as a check on powerful parties within our society. But with the traditions of media and political discourse in flux, it's important to realize that as individuals we too can use the platform at the heart of this flux. Consequently, we will have some power over its result.

Since the last edition of Lot's Wife, Fairfax and News Limited have combined to slash almost 3,000 jobs from the journalism sector. With that in mind, I was suitably flattered when I was approached with the possibility of taking up a co-editorship in what must be one of Australia's fastest shrinking industries.

Jamie Blaker, my predecessor, decided during the mid-year break to take his cue to leave Lot's Wife and pursue a number of great opportunities that have been presented to him – Mell and I wish him the very best. After an extensive hazing ritual, I was installed as his replacement, and after nearly a month of alternating between feverishly working and curling into the foetal position and crying, I'm very proud to be an integral part of the team that has made this edition possible.

On the wall in Lot's Wife office, there is a copy of a Lot's Wife cover from 1985, the year I was born. It has a small logo, with the motto, "Truth Before Dogma, Drunk Before Lunch". For me, it evokes the image of the classic journalist of the 20th Century; the kind of chain-smoking writer who hunches over his typewriter and fiercely stabs at it as if every letter matters, downs four pints in quick succession in lieu of an actual meal, then returns to the office in time to punch out another article for tomorrow's edition.

Those days are gone; replaced with regurgitated celebrity tweets and the kind of dribble that makes it difficult to differentiate the opinion section from hard news. My image of the classic journalist was a dirty, miserable misanthrope, but he was always in pursuit of truth, fairness and objectivity, with a diligence built on a far-fetched belief that each word he typed was changing the world. It's a level of integrity and passion that I strive to achieve in both writing and life.

The state of the contemporary media industry demands that the journalist be the gatekeeper and purveyor of truth more than ever, as media structures begin to dissolve and vested interests take a stranglehold of the news. As I now embark on a wild ride of ridiculously late nights and microwavable food as we assemble the final few editions of Lot's this year, I hope that I can somehow emulate that classic journalistic ethos – even though Lot's Wife is 'just' a student newspaper. At the very least, I will attempt to emulate that classic journalistic pint consumption.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

To sing out praises, or air you complaints about Lot's Wife and all things Monash, email msa-lotswife@monash.edu.

Dear Lot's Wife,

Did you know how much there is to do on campus? It's enough to drive you nuts. There's a newspaper to write, draw, take photos for and more, obviously, as well as a radio station where you can have a show, find work and training as a DJ, get music to write reviews, rent out recording space and party like crazy. There's a student theatre with productions from two companies, one of which specialises in Shakespeare; that includes two separate showcase weeks, smorgasbords of various people's work. Then there are clubs and societies, catering for what seems like every possible taste under the sun, from creative writing to anime fandom to cultural and spiritual clubs to fencing to science fiction and way way beyond.

The MSA has numerous way to get involved in its departments and a Volunteering program which offers awesome opportunities and rewards hard work. There's a short courses centre which offers training for qualification and loads of hobbies and skills, while Monash Sports has a plethora of activites available at a discounted rate for students. A lot of students might not realise that there's a cinema inside the campus centre, which also contains a medical clinic, and is metres away from health and wellbeing services to support students (itself upstairs from Employment and Career Development, which helps students looking for jobs now and to prepare for their future).

The Red Cross Blood Service has a mobile collection centre that frequents campus to collect

Dear Lot's Wife,

I send this letter with haste, as I believe I may not have long let to live.

I have inadvertantly stumbled into something called "The Menzies". Specifically, I seem to be stuck inside one of the many revolving doors of this building. I pray that you send help, or at the very least, feed my cat Mittens as I continue my stay in this glass purgatory.

Jane Wallace

.....

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DEATH OF A SALESMAN

According to Richard Plumridge, online retail is the way of the future

Australians love engaging in debates so fraught with misinformation they make Today Tonight look like a peer-reviewed journal. Vested political and economic interests are so ingrained in ‘independent’ reportage that it’s difficult to tell where lobby group spin ends and journalism begins – if indeed it does.

So goes the ‘debate’ around retailing in Australia. Retailers are struggling, or so we’re told, with online shopping apparently destroying “local jobs”. Unless the government steps in to “do something”, battling retail workers will not only lose their jobs, but be hit with great big new taxes that will cause fewer sunny days, undermine the sanctity of the family and destroy Australian competitiveness once and for all.

The retailers’ scare campaign centres around the Low Value Threshold which allows overseas purchases under \$1,000 to be imported tax free. Local retailers see this as an unfair tax loophole. A report commissioned by the National Retail Association states “118,000 retail jobs” will be lost if the LVT is not abolished. Really? Impose a 10 per cent tax on a tiny fraction of all retail sales and save “118,000 retail jobs”? Can it truly be that easy?

Deep breath. Some facts: Online retailing is estimated to represent only 6 per cent of total Australian retail sales, or about \$12.6 billion. Big money to a struggling arts student; peanuts to the overall economy. Even more revealing is that overseas online sales are worth only 2 per cent of Australian retail sales.

While these figures will increase over the coming years, it is difficult to imagine how taxing a fraction of sales will save 118,000 jobs. Besides, most online sales are already subject to the GST as they are domestic purchases. As anyone with a credit card and a Book Depository account knows, the disparity in Australian retail pricing and online pricing is usually greater than 10 per cent.

The Government has repeatedly refused to abolish the LVT because, they argue, it would raise less revenue than it would cost to implement the change. Many more parcels entering Australia would have to be examined – either X-rayed or hand inspected

– requiring thousands more staff while obstructing international postage.

Harvey Norman’s Gerry Harvey claims he wants the threshold abolished to save local jobs. Rubbish. Harvey showed no concern for “local jobs” in the 1990s when his new megastores helped kill his competition. Nor was he concerned about local employment in 2007 when he argued for the creation of a “two-tier” wage system to employ foreign labour at a cheaper rate. Local jobs? Crocodile tears, Gerry.

Harvey, like other retailers, is facing the reality of lower margins after enjoying years of price gouging. They’ve had it too good for too long. Instead of suffering under the tyranny of distance, Australian consumers now have comparable buying power to those in the US and Europe. Myer can no longer sell a pair of jeans for double or triple international prices and still expect customers through the door.



So, why the high prices? One link that is usually overlooked in the retail chain is the local distributor. The distributor imports a product and then on-sells it to local retailers. While the retailer ultimately decides the selling price of a product, it is the local distributor that sets the cost price retailers must pay for the goods.

International distributors routinely discrimi-

nate between regions on price, usually for the exact same product. This concept is ridiculous in an age when we are apparently part of a ‘global’ economy. One example: I purchased a Blu-ray from the UK only to find the disc had classification markings for both the UK and Australia printed on its face. These identical disks – in a different case – at JB HI-FI sell for 250 per cent more than in the UK. They’re obviously shipped First Class via British Airways, sipping Bollinger the entire flight.

This discrimination is more farcical when it is applied to online content. Australians end up paying more for the same bits and bytes downloaded from the same offshore data servers because we pay using an Australian credit card. Additionally, no physical item shipped through the post means no customs check and no GST. Any abolition of the LVT would become less than useless on digital goods.

There are few solutions to this problem that will preserve the status quo. Old-style retailers have failed to adjust to fundamental changes. They see no fault with their business models, blaming everyone from government to their customers for their woes.

Retailers are instead lobbying for increased “flexibility”, meaning already lowly-paid retail staff will get paid less and lose penalty rates. Retailers also want “flexibility” with store opening hours, believing the ability to purchase overpriced perfumes at 3am will bring customers back into stores.

Ultimately, none will save old-style retailers who have failed to adjust to a brave new commercial world. Their existing business models built upon consumer ignorance and high margins are evaporating. Their argument to customers is basically “pay 200 per cent more or kiss local jobs good-bye”. But little of their argument holds true. It is not up to government to save traditional retail - they simply can’t – but a new generation of retailers will see that they are forever consigned to the bargain bin of history.

Disclosure: The author is a casual employee of a large retail company and has worked in the offices of others, but bears no love for any of them.

VIGILANTISM AND THE TYRANNY OF THE INDIVIDUAL

David Heslin

Vigilantism has long been glamorised in popular entertainment. In Hollywood films, superhero comics and television series, the concept of the heroic figure protecting or avenging the innocent — usually in the face of an inept or corrupt justice system — has consistently proved an attractive and marketable narrative premise. The logic behind this is clear: legal process, by its very nature, is often slow and bureaucratic, and the principle of presumption of innocence ensures that at least some crimes go unpunished. In contrast, vigilante retribution is presented as a swift, satisfying and violent alternative.

Although legal and political authorities take a dim view of real-world vigilante behaviour, such acts are often praised as heroic by popular media outlets. The tabloid press is no stranger to the concept of citizen justice: one need merely conduct a cursory survey of *Herald Sun* editions to discover a front-page mug shot accompanied by a plea to “catch this monster”. It is probably no coincidence that these publications tend to be the most outspoken when it comes to (supposedly) lenient sentencing.

We are, it seems, culturally conditioned to feel at least somewhat sympathetic to vigilantism as a concept. Up until recent times, the fear of personal injury and prospect of legal retribution have been sufficient to ensure that vigilante justice is usually confined to fantasy. In the age of the Internet, that is no longer entirely the case.

While a few governments have managed to curtail the freedoms offered by the Internet, technological advances (combined with the absence of national borders in cyberspace) have enabled some organisations and individuals to operate in a sort of legal limbo. One of the more notable beneficiaries of this situation has been publisher/whistleblower Wikileaks, which — despite the presumptions of many supporters as well as detractors — has consistently adhered to the laws of the countries

in which its servers happen to be located, despite engaging in activity that may be considered illegal in other jurisdictions (such as the publication of confidential diplomatic communications and military reports). For ‘hacktivist’ cabal (and staunch ally) Anonymous, however, the story is very different. A loose collective of highly competent web hackers devoted to righting perceived imbalances of power, the group has garnered a considerable amount of publicity and notoriety. In contrast to Wikileaks, Anonymous acts destructively — for instance, vandalising or forcing down websites — and makes no attempt to defend its actions as lawful. Rather, by operating as a nebulous, decentralised entity, it remains resistant to legal sanctions.

“Heroes battle evildoers; miscreants terrorise the innocent; violence is presented as being both necessary and justified”

Although Anonymous has received plaudits from people of diverse political persuasions, the group’s lack of accountability remains deeply problematic. No matter the perceived worthiness of the cause, any act committed in defiance of law must implicitly constitute an appeal to a higher moral authority; essentially, the specific beliefs of an individual or group. Clearly, there are scenarios in which such actions are warranted — many laws and legal systems over the course of human history have enshrined oppression, if not blatant persecution — but it is, nonetheless, dangerous territory. What Anders Breivik considered a necessary goal and just methodology may have differed radically from, say, Nelson Mandela in Apartheid-era South Africa, but the fact remains

that neither considered their actions answerable to the societies in which they lived. This, after all, is the essence of a legal code: an agreed-upon contract between members of society.

That may be a somewhat idealised view — it is, of course, often the case that this contract favours the wealthy and powerful — nevertheless, it remains the best structure that we have at our disposal. In a country such as Australia, at least, we are given the freedom to shape these statutes through peaceful activism and the democratic process. To willfully break that code prioritises the views of an individual or group above those of the wider society to which they belong.

In its defence, Anonymous’ brand of anarchism at least constitutes a form of political dissent. The vigilantism sold to us by popular culture, on the other hand, tends to carry a far more troubling air of misanthropy. There, heroes battle evildoers; miscreants terrorise the innocent; violence is presented as being both necessary and justified. It is hard to know what effect half a century or more of this content has had on the Western cultural psyche, but it seems significant that today’s news providers make such a point of constructing villains.

Nevertheless, in our part of the world, due process carries on: criminal suspects are granted a fair trial, presumption of innocence and, if convicted, the opportunity for rehabilitation. These conventions only make sense so long as the majority agrees with the humanist principles underlying them. If that ceases to be the case, we might one day see what a true vigilante philosophy looks like in action: mob justice; aggression embraced over reason; a tyranny of righteousness hummed to the tune of an absolute moral framework. For the time being, at least, the Internet has granted us a taste of what a society unregulated by law might look like. It is important that we choose our stance wisely.

THE CYBER ARMS RACE

JAKE SPICER EXPLORES THE RISE OF CYBER WARFARE

“Should we shut this thing down?” President Obama asked, after the worm now known as Stuxnet escaped onto the web, according to an excerpt from David E Sanger’s recently published book ‘Confront and Conceal: Obama’s Secret Wars and Surprising Use of American Power’. Mr Sanger is the Chief Washington Correspondent for The New York Times, and has detailed how the Bush and Obama administrations created the cyber weapon Stuxnet, designed to spy on and subvert Iranian organisations, as well as Flame - malware with the specific purpose of targeted cyber espionage. The United States Government only recently acknowledged developing cyber weapons, and it has never admitted using them. However, Stuxnet and Flame, as well as potentially many more not known to the public, were developed under the umbrella of the US Government’s project Olympic Games, and are evidence that the US is increasingly turning to cyber warfare in lieu of traditional military means.

Dating back to 2006 under the Bush administration, Olympic Games was created as a response to Iran continuing to enrich uranium at an underground site at Natanz. President Bush saw few options for dealing with Iran; America’s European allies were anxious about the effect imposing sanctions on Iran would have on their own economies, as well as Bush himself having little public credibility after falsely accusing Saddam Hussein of having Weapons of Mass Destruction. For the first time, the US would use cyber warfare for military purposes. The National Security Agency worked together with a secret Israeli team known as Unit 8200 to develop a cyber weapon to slow down Iran’s ability to develop nuclear weapons. The US wanted to work with Israel not only for their respected cyber skills, but also to dissuade them

from potential pre-emptive military strikes against Iran. Out of this project came Stuxnet, a worm whose purpose was to infiltrate the systems at Natanz, and wreak havoc.

This piece of malware was not just a one off attack. Stuxnet was designed to hide dormant for weeks, collecting normal data, and then speed up the centrifuges (vital for separating the volatile parts of uranium), causing them to explode, all while sending normal looking data back to monitoring systems. The intention was to make the Iranians feel paranoid and stupid.

Recently, another piece of seemingly state-sponsored malware, Flame, has been described by the Budapest University of Technology and Economics as “arguably ... the most complex malware ever found”; it “may have been active for as long as five to eight years”. Flame is designed to obtain information. It can record audio, webcam and keyboard activity, take screenshots, and additionally monitor network traffic.

“Russia, Israel, North Korea, Iran and potentially many others all have sophisticated cyber-armies”

While Kaspersky Lab, the world’s largest private computer security company, originally believed that Flame bears no resemblance to Stuxnet, after further study they discovered that Flame contains substantial amounts of code used in Stuxnet to infect computers through USB drives. Kaspersky’s chief malware expert has stated that there is “no doubt about it being a nation-state that sponsored the research that went

into it.”

The complexity of the attacks that can be launched by Flame is another interesting aspect of the malware. Flame was able to successfully obtain a Microsoft certificate in order to fraudulently claim authenticity through a previously unknown technique.

The US has officially denied responsibility for the malware; however the sophistication, geography of the targets, as well as the links to Stuxnet, suggest otherwise.



The US is certainly not the only nation state participating in cyber warfare. Earlier this year, a US Department of Defense report warned that China is one of “the world’s most active and persistent perpetrators of economic espionage”. Russia, Israel, North Korea, Iran and potentially many others all have sophisticated cyber-armies.

Guy-Philippe Goldstein, in a TED talk from Paris 2010, discussed some of the problems this atmosphere can generate for world peace. A potential enemy announces that they are building a cyber

defence unit, purely to protect their country and their citizens. However, how can one distinguish between a defensive and offensive unit? In fact, even if their motives are simply for defense, as Professor Robert Jervis of Columbia University in New York explains in his journal article ‘Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma’, “In international politics [...] one state’s gain in security often inadvertently threatens others.” If you do not know if the potential enemy is preparing for defence or attack, and weapons give an advantage in attack, the resultant atmosphere can easily spark

a conflict. These ideas echo through the writings of Machiavelli and Sun Tzu.

Cyber weapons have begun to create this political atmosphere. It is far easier to design a piece of malware that can take advantage of one security vulnerability than to have a completely concrete defence.

The use of cyber warfare is bound to increase. The Obama administration toes a fine line. Due to the success of previous cyber attacks, some officials within the administration must be urging for more, against North Korea or China. Overuse could be disastrous.

Lot’s Wife asks:

WHAT IS THE WORST BREACH OF PRIVACY YOU HAVE EVER SUFFERED?



“When someone reads my journal.” (Arts 3)

“My parents going through my phone and trying to find my girlfriend’s number so they could call her and tell her to dump me.” (IT 2)

“I signed up to facebook.” (Arts/Science 2)

“Being outed by a high school teacher.” (Arts 3)

“People freely discussing my private life (specifically my love life) with anyone they chose to, even resulting in them bringing it up in conversations out of the blue for a laugh. The information is often used as a weapon by friends which makes it harder to stop since you don’t always know where to draw the line.” (Science 5)

“My friend had his girlfriend create a blog about thier sex life titled “Failure to launch” about how he couldnt get it up.” (Business 3)

“Probably when my boss told my colleagues and cafe customers she was firing me. Before she fired me.” (Arts 5)

“I can give lots of them! An ex-boyfriend read my fan-fiction once.” (Arts 3)

“I don’t think I’ve had any breaches of privacy.” (Postgrad Med)

“I repress these horrible memories! Friends getting drunk and telling my secrets to other friends.” (Arts 3)

“Someone once wore my lucky underwear... and even read the writing on the inside.” (Science 2)

“When I was in year 6 I wrote all these sappy poems for a girl I liked, and they were anonymous. A friend then told her and everybody else. I was mortified.” (Arts/Science 3)

A FIELD GUIDE TO MEDIA MASTERMINDS

Bren Carruthers



The Bloke - Kerry Packer

Despite his tendency for megalomania and thirst for control, Kerry Packer was the kind of guy that you’d like to meet down at the pub... and he’d be more than happy to pick up the tab. A womaniser, heavy smoker and chronic gambler who once reputedly offered to flip a coin in a wager for a Texas oil baron’s entire fortune, Kerry helped build his media empire through the Nine Network and his development of World Series Cricket; the subject of the upcoming TV miniseries “Howzat!”. After Kerry’s death in 2005, the Packer Media Empire was passed to his son James, who clearly has none of the cavalier attitude or business sense of his late father, with the Nine Network now wallowing in severe debt.



The Nightmare: Rupert Murdoch

Kerry Packer’s media nemesis throughout the latter half of last century was the Melbourne-born mogul who created one of the largest media conglomerates in the world. From inheriting one ailing newspaper, the Adelaide News, in 1952, Rupert Murdoch went on to create an empire which reputedly prints more than 40 million papers per week, and the assets of his company as a whole reportedly “exceed the gross domestic product of the majority of African countries”. He eventually stripped the Adelaide News of resources, and sold it off. It closed five years later, proving that there’s no room for sentimentality in Murdoch’s Empire. Rupert is now better known for his manipulation of US politics through Fox News, and his denial of any knowledge of the underhanded dealings at the now-defunct News Of The World.



The Wanna-be: Gina Rinehart

Inheriting the fortune of her father, Lang Hancock, then falling arse-first into a massive mining boom, Gina Rinehart has never really found life too difficult. When you have \$30 Billion dollars to spare, life can get a little boring... so why not plan a hostile takeover of Fairfax? Gina’s attempt to gain seats on the Fairfax board and sway the direction of the massive media outlet recently failed after she refused to adhere to Fairfax’s charter of editorial independence, but she has promised to be back at a later date, when no doubt she plans to take a stranglehold on the Australian media industry. She is already well on her way to qualifying herself as a writer; her remarkable polemic “Our Future”, which lashes out at Government for not supporting the mining industry, is inscribed on a 30-tonne iron ore boulder at a shopping centre in Perth. No doubt as nature intended.



The Faceless Men: The Australian Government

No doubt this entry will confuse you a little, but consider this: no organisation does more to manipulate media-hungry Australians. The Australian Government is the primary source of funding for both the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and the Special Broadcasting Service, with the ABC charter clearly stating that the networks’ core reason for existence is to broadcast “programs that contribute to a sense of national identity and inform and entertain, and reflect the cultural diversity of, the Australian community”. The question remains; do these broadcasters accurately reflect our national identity and cultural diversity, or do they instead perpetuate an unrealistic, almost propagandist ideal? It’s a subject that will be debated by free marketeers and cultural advocates until the death of time, but there is almost no doubt that this cultural regurgitation has some effect on the way Australians perceive the world.

IN CONVERSATION WITH PETER SINGER

DUNCAN WALLACE AND JAMIE BLAKER SPEAK WITH
THE RENOWNED PHILOSOPHER, ETHICIST AND ACADEMIC

Best known for his works *Animal Liberation* and *Practical Ethics*, Peter Singer is one the greatest products of Australian Academia. Singer recently became a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) for services to philosophy and bioethics, currently serves as the Ira W. DeCamp Professor of Bioethics at Princeton University, is a Laureate Professor at the Centre for Applied Philosophy and Public Ethics at the University of Melbourne, has previously served as the chair of philosophy at Monash University and is the founder the Monash University Centre for Human Bioethics. Duncan and Jamie stroked their chins and had a chat with the great ethicist.

Jamie Blaker (JB): *As a philosopher, is it hard to keep conviction in your own ideas, particularly in an academic setting where so many reasonable minds disagree?*

When you realise that very, very sharp people who have thought deeply about the same issues as you take a different view, I guess it does produce a certain kind of humility. But philosophy is about trying to defend your views, trying to argue for your views, so I guess that's what you do. You put up the best arguments for them and see how those arguments go, and if other people find good rejections then you won't be believed. And it's fair enough – that's the way it works.

Duncan Wallace (DW): *I've got two questions about the public understanding of academic philosophy, both of which relate to a recently published article justifying 'after-birth abortion' in the Journal of Medical Ethics. Firstly, is public outrage over controversial philosophical arguments unfairly damaging to their ideas and authors? Secondly, does the media tend to simplify and misrepresent philosophical ideas?*

I know the article you're referring to and I know its authors as well, and I wasn't surprised that it provoked some outrage. I've had reactions like that myself when I've published things in the same general area. When you write an article like that for an academic journal,

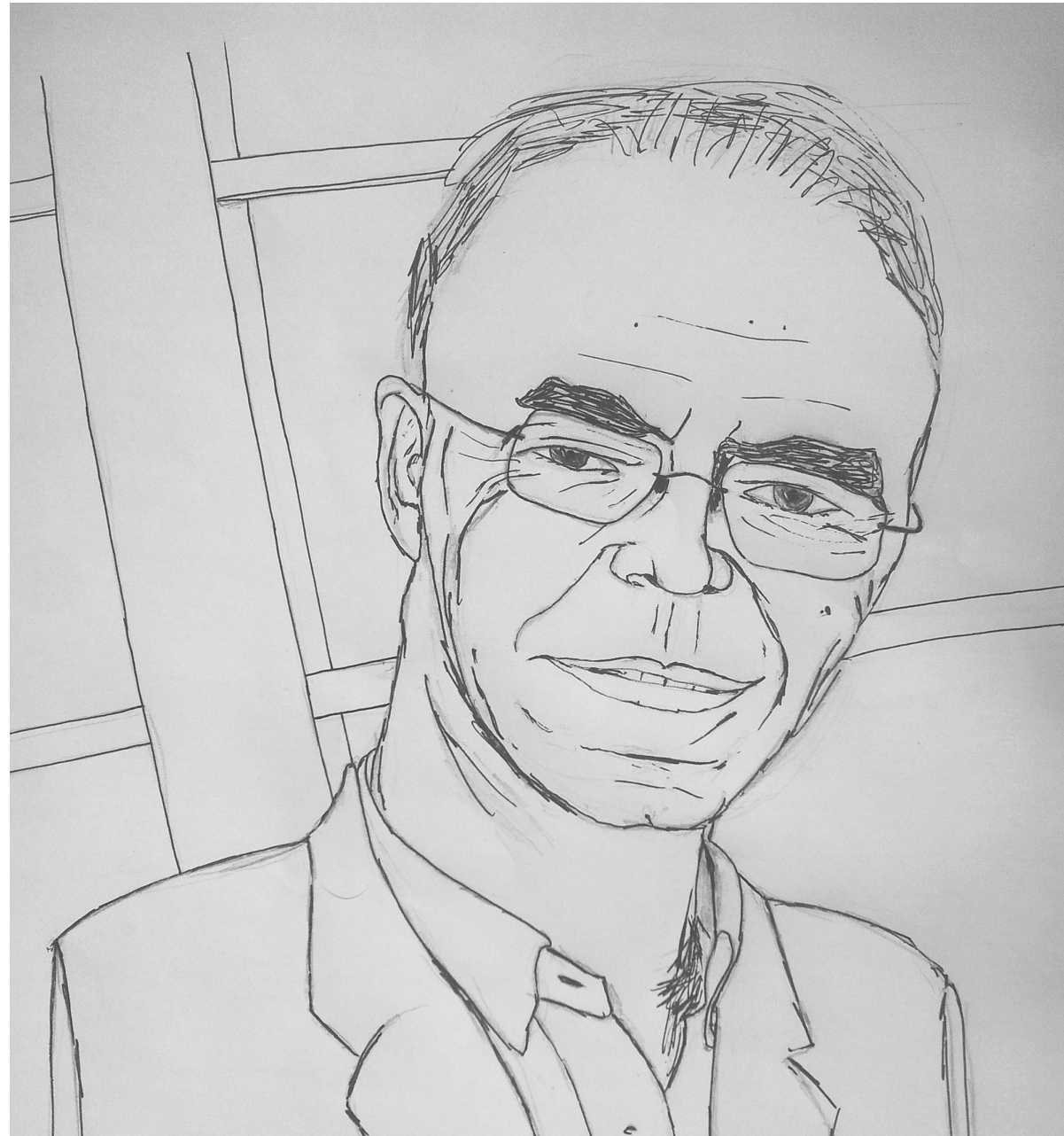


Image: Eleanor Murray

you're writing mainly for the readers of that journal and your colleagues. But at the same time you have to appreciate that it is likely to be picked up by the outside media, and you have to develop a reasonably thick skin. It's likely that these sorts of articles won't just get coverage in mainstream media, but they'll be picked up by pro-life, evangelical Christian websites that will run shock-horror stories and that's obviously going to distort your message to some extent. And I think for the authors who were relatively new to this, it was a big shock – and certainly when you get death threats for expressing ideas, I think that's an awful

thing. I think people ought to believe in freedom of speech and, if you believe in freedom of speech, you don't threaten to kill people whose views you don't agree with. So I think that's a fairly lamentable aspect of it. But criticism in the media is part of the game if you're in applied ethics, and at least you're getting coverage outside academia.

In terms of the other question you asked about over-simplification – yes, often views will be over-

simplified. But what you have to hope is that when an article like this gets picked up by the media around the world – and even if its message is distorted – a small percentage of people will actually read the article and understand its argument properly, and that will dramatically increase the number of people who will have seen your work compared to if its coverage was limited to an academic journal and it never got mentioned anywhere else.

JB: *The striking thing about your theories for me is that they're very formulaic – and nonetheless convincing – but when ethics are determined through utilitarian calculations, is the integrity of that determination deteriorated when it is met by popular disagreement?*

Presumably people are disagreeing with whether we should be deciding these issues on a utilitarian basis, although some people will have different views as to what produces the best consequences. Obviously it's perfectly legitimate for people to say that we shouldn't decide these issues purely on a utilitarian basis – it's a very old question going back to the foundations of utilitarianism – so it's fine to have those discussions. But I think it's important to show that there is a clear and consistent utilitarian answer to lots of diverse issues, and then people can disagree if they don't like it.

JB: *Does the utilitarian conceptualisation of ethics remove it from its more human, emotional and intuitive source?*

It removes doing ethics from its intuitive source – and that's the whole issue. It offers an alternative to looking at things and saying 'Oh, yuck' or 'Oh, great' – if you want to do ethics that way, really all you're saying is that you'll go along with what your culture or what your biological nature has taught you to think is good or bad, and you're not really reflecting on it and using your capacities to reason about these things. I think that's a very poor way of doing ethics – I don't think it's likely to lead us to better answers and given that the world has developed in ways completely different from the circumstances in which our ancestors

evolved, it's very likely that we'll have some pretty poor reactions to things like climate change, which historically was never a problem. We have no instinctive 'yuck' response to putting more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. On the other hand, maybe we will have instinctive responses to things which we really shouldn't respond to instinctively, like rejecting people who don't look like us. I think it's a disastrous way of doing ethics and a strong point of utilitarianism is that it doesn't do ethics that way.

JB: *I wanted to ask a question about the arbitrariness of the idea of ethics. I'm wondering if ethics can be conceived as a pre-modern concept, and how the idea of ethics and its universalist connotations are relevant in a modernity in which there is inevitable value fragmentation, particularly given the decline of religion.*

I think your use of the term 'modernity' really just pays lip service to a pretty loose and not clearly thought-out view of the world, which takes this idea that somehow everything changed at some particular point. There have always been people with different values – I don't think there is anything particularly modern about that – maybe cultures with different values are in closer contact with each other than they were previously, but that's only partially true. You can go back to Herodotus and he talks about the different values between the Greeks and the Indians, so there's nothing new about that really.

Also, I don't think ethics has a strong foundation in religion at all. There are some cultures in which ethics has been closely associated with religion, but there are many cultures that aren't particularly religious and still have strong ethical codes – you just have to look at China and Confucian traditions of ethics, you just have to read Greek ethics which generally has very few significant references to religion, and you can look at people like David Hume, and that goes on to the utilitarian tradition. I think humans have always been asking questions about what we ought to do, whether they were religious or not. It's a distinctively Western perspective that poses the question whether,

if religion collapses, will ethics collapse with it? I think if you had grown up in China, you wouldn't ask that question.

JB: *Well, I promised before the interview that I would get out of my depth, and I just did.*

Hmph

JB: **Looks to Duncan**

DW: *Is there a conscious attempt among academic philosophers to separate ethics from religion as a discrete alternative? The publication of AC Grayling's 'The Good Book: A Secular Bible' late last year might suggest that academic philosophy is to some extent concerned with translating otherwise religious values into secular, humanist perspectives.*

No, I don't think so. Well, firstly there isn't a single academia of ethics – there are a lot of academics in ethics, some of whom are religious, but some of them aren't at all. I suppose that academics are typically less religious than non-academics, just because there is an inverse correlation between the amount of education people receive and how religious they are. So yes, there is generally a somewhat more secular atmosphere that prevails in universities than in the community as a whole, but there is plenty of room for religious philosophers and bioethicists to put forward their views, so I don't think there's any particular conscious movement by academia to exclude religious views.

JB: *What's next for Peter Singer? What are you working on at the moment?*

I'm working on a book that's about the foundations of ethics. It's not an applied topic; it's more about how we can defend objectivity in ethics. It links to some of your points given that a lot of people think that objectivity in ethics is linked to religion. So it will look back to one of the major figures in the history of utilitarian ethics, Henry Sidgwick, and will look forwards at some of the current debates in ethics.

A REVIVAL OF THE LEFT?

Liyan Gao comments on the ascendancy of France's newly elected left-wing president

On the 6th of May, Francois Hollande was elected as the President of the 5th Republic of France, making him the second left-wing candidate to achieve office. Hollande led the Parti-Socialiste into victory with 53% of the votes, defeating incumbent President Sarkozy of UMP (Union of Popular Movement).

Parti-Socialiste's historic victory was welcomed by hour long celebrations of tens and thousands of French citizens who "stormed" the Bastille, tapping into the legacy of revolutionary France: this was an astonishing sight of passion for an election that was deemed un-inspirational only a few weeks prior the vote. Commentators claimed that the high 80% turnout rate for both rounds of voting, which is non-compulsory in France, was out of a sense of civic duty, not the prospect of radical change. Major French media consistently reported a mixture of cynicism among Hollande's supporters. His supporters do not expect a leftist revolution; rather, they wanted right-wing Sarkozy out of power. Sarkozy is perceived by many as having failed France and Europe with his conservative and pro-austere politics.

During the election campaign, the contrast between the public images of Hollande and Sarkozy provided the backdrop for all major issues, from immigration to the future of Europe. Hollande has publicised himself as 'Mr Normal', whereas Sarkozy is referred by the French Media as 'Mr Bling Bling' because of his luxurious lifestyle. The 'Mr Normal' image aims to emphasise Hollande's commitment to addressing the interests of ordinary French citizens, in particular in regards to social economic justice, a concern heightened since the Euro Crisis started.

Hollande has developed policies such as the fat cat tax whereby every dollar earned over 1,000,000 EU p.a will be taxed at 75%. Sarkozy proposed different tactics for reducing France's national debt; he promised to reduce immigration (blaming immigrants for France's economic woes) and lower public spending. Some French citizens believe that these are the most pragmatic tactics, and are sceptical of Hollande's inexperience (he has never held a

Ministry position). However, the majority were tired of Sarkozy's repeated failures to improve France's economic situation during his five year presidency. Hollande's approach to policy makes economic inequalities and unemployment problems moral and classist issues. This made Hollande a real alternative to Sarkozy; however for some voters Hollande and Parti-Socialiste is not radical enough.

"...the contrast between the public images of Hollande and Sarkozy provided the backdrop for all major issues, from immigration to the future of Europe"

In the French election, smaller parties were influential in determining the final results, especially the two more radical parties. Philosophy graduate Jean-luc Mélenchon, the radical left candidate for Front De Gauche, argues that neo-liberalism is morally and economically flawed. Mélenchon's most controversial policy is capping salaries at €360,000. When asked if this policy would drive entrepreneurs overseas, he simply replied "good riddance". This was predicted to destroy Mélenchon's campaign, but instead his vote grew from 5 % to 11% of the final vote. His growth in popularity indicates that France wants to shift away from economic and political reforms which favour the rich. At the height of his popularity Mélenchon was gaining 16% of the votes, and Hollande was pressured to assure his supporters that he has clear left-wing policies which benefit the poor, the working class, females and minority ethnic groups.

The radical right National Front has been on the rise since 2002. In this year's election, their candidate, Marine Le Pen, won 17% of the vote. Although Le Pen and Sarkozy share anti-immigration policies which are Islamophobic, Le Pen holds a stronger appeal for the working class who suffer from

unemployment and feel neglected by mainstream political parties. National Front has in the past been perceived as a marginal and racist party. They have rebranded themselves by appealing to rural workers and proposing a complete from the EU; because they compromise national sovereignty. Le Pen represents the complexity of French elections. On one hand she conflicts with the rising left but her popularity adheres to new focus on economic justice and the failings of the current system.

In his election victory speech, Hollande thanked his voters for trusting him to create a new, brighter future for France. He both respects and recognises that France needs to evolve in an increasingly global world by welcoming immigration and celebrating the diverse backgrounds of France. Hollande's newly picked cabinet reflects this new vision of France; the positions are filled by Ministers with a range of ethnic backgrounds, half of whom are female (compared to the 26% average of Europe). Hollande has already reversed Sarkozy's pension law which increased the retirement age, and capped all executive pay of state controlled companies to €450,000. Most importantly, he has won an absolute majority in the Parliamentary Elections, giving Parti-Socialiste the power to implement their election promises.

Despite this encouraging start, Hollande's biggest battle remains curbing rising unemployment and negotiating a viable future for the EU. Since the election victory there has been much speculation about the prospect of an overall political shift to the left in Europe. This has been reinforced by the backlash against austerity measures in the recent Greek elections, and the fact that Hollande will not resume Sarkozy's partnership with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in promoting austere reforms. During this volatile time in European politics, it remains uncertain if he will be able to spark a new left and anti-neoliberalism trend in Europe. Regardless, Hollande's victory through appealing to increased economic justice and more socialist policies demonstrates that there is both a hunger and potential for real change.

TRAGEDIES HIGHLIGHT IMPORTANCE OF ACTIVISM

Laura Steel and Dean Vincent

Regrettably, this year marks 20 years since the introduction of mandatory detention in Australia. 20 years of mandatory detention is simply 20 years too long. That is why on Sunday the 17th of June, in commemoration of World Refugee Day, the Monash Refugee Action Collective (MRAC) joined more than 1200 people from over 50 advocacy groups to bang our feet on the ground and send a message to the Australian Government that it is time to put an end to the mandatory detention of refugees and asylum seekers. Pre-march speakers included Godfrey Yoganath, from the Tamil Youth Organisation, and Australian Greens Senator Sarah Hanson-Young. The march opened with a run-through banner to symbolise the breaking down of detention centre fences. Despite light rain, spirits were high as we proudly raised our signs and our voices in welcome of refugees.

Currently, there are over 4,400 refugees locked up in detention centres across Australia, more than 500 of whom are children. This blatantly violates the Convention on the Rights of the Child, under which a child should only be detained as a last resort and for the shortest time frame possibly. It is a completely indefensible act.

It is also important to remember the refugees and asylum seekers who are locked up in these prisons are people who have committed no crime, are fleeing from terror and oppression in their home countries, and yet are subjected to the horrible conditions of mandatory detention. Major depression has been diagnosed in more than 60% of asylum seekers with a group of Australian psychiatrists recently identifying a new type of insanity specific to the torment that asylum seekers experience after arriving in Australia and being detained.

The refugee determination process in Australia puts such a strain on refugees that even those who are granted asylum have been known to experience post-traumatic stress disorders and insomnia. At the Broadmeadows Detention Centre (euphemistically

referred to by the government by the Orwellian title Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation), up to 70 per cent of detainees are being supplied with anti-depressants, anti-anxiety medication or sleeping pills. In Darwin, on average, five asylum seekers are brought to the emergency department every day as the result of suicide attempts; since the year 2000 more than 35 people have died in mandatory detention. The way Australia processes refugees is shameful and needs to change immediately.

"The fact is there is nothing humanitarian about the policies of both our major parties"

Then there is ASIO, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation. They are responsible for holding 60 refugees in detention indefinitely, six of whom are children, because they have been deemed an 'adverse security threat', meaning they are too dangerous to be released into the community but cannot be sent back to their country of origin as they have been granted refugee status. ASIO holds this power to detain refugees indefinitely without needing to allow the refugees to see the evidence against them or to know the criteria that is used to make this assessment.

And then we have the most recent tragedies. Within two weeks of hitting the streets for World Refugee Day, up to a hundred asylum seekers in two separate incidents were killed when their boats sunk enroute to Australia. In response, our politicians espoused to be 'humanitarians', looking for a 'solution' to this 'problem' faced by our nation. The media shamefully followed their regressive rhetoric.

But detention, offshore or onshore, has proven to be a hideous, discriminatory policy, founded on racism and xenophobia. It is an utterly abhorrent way to treat desperate, vulnerable people who have

turned to Australia for help, looking to escape horrendous circumstances. To describe this as a solution is disgusting.

Furthermore, it is the policies of the Australian government, both past and present, that have been murderous. Through their scuttling of asylum seeker boats upon arrival, through their active participation in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and through their support of oppressive regimes such as in Sri Lanka, the Australian government has forced people to get on these shoddy, leaky boats and is ultimately responsible for their deaths in Australian seas.

The fact is there is nothing humanitarian about the policies of both our major parties. Humanitarianism is not locking up innocent men, women and children, whether in Malaysia, Nauru, Christmas Island or Broadmeadows. Humanitarianism is not painting asylum seekers and refugees simply as 'problems' that need to be 'solved'. And humanitarianism is certainly not deterring the boats or towing them back. Humanitarianism is helping others. Humanitarianism is letting the boats land.

Sadly, the two weeks following World Refugee Day highlight exactly how important such an event is, and how vital it is that a movement exists within Australia that continues to fight and campaign for the rights of refugees and asylum seekers. Such a movement is something that MRAC wants to help create and sustain. MRAC is here to fight the continual demonizing of refugees and asylum seekers by our governments; we are here to act as a political voice opposed to regression and racism; and we are here to ensure that when innocent asylum seekers are politically persecuted by the Australian government, they are not alone in their struggle. Why not join us in our fight?

To find out more about MRAC or to get involved, contact MSA Environment & Social Justice Office Bearer Laura Riccardi on 0401315387 or at lmric4@student.monash.edu.

EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE – WHY WE MUST DO MORE

Jacqueline Duong

The prevalence of educational disadvantage in our country is well documented. Such is the disparity in Australian education outcomes that an analysis of recent NAPLAN results showed the average performance of year five students in wealthy areas to be better than that of year nine students in poorer ones. This problem isn't breaking news, but it's worsening and is something that we must address.

According to the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), Australia has one of the highest quality education systems in the world, but it is also one of the most inequitable, lagging far behind other countries in the OECD. On average, geographically isolated, Indigenous and socioeconomically disadvantaged students perform much worse than their 'more fortunate' counterparts. This education outcome gap means that these students are about three years behind their peers, and sees them failing to meet expected international proficiency standards.

Overseas, Finland has one of the most successful education systems, both for its results and equitable outcomes. It has developed a decentralised system where the national curriculum is only used as a guide, and testing is de-emphasised. Finland's teaching framework is also well supported by its government. University graduates are encouraged to enter the teaching profession through fully funded grad-school, and also receive stipends while they continue their education and training. It's a system where resources are allocated to those who need them the most, where teaching is a respected career which requires three years of grad-school training, and where education is continuously evaluated to further the development of students and teachers.

In Australia, the Federal Higher Education Department's 2012 statistics on university offers to year 12 students show that teaching is not a popular career for high achievers, with just five per cent of students who scored above 90 in their ATAR entering the field. Almost 22 per cent of tertiary teaching course offers were made to students with an ATAR

below 60. This is a trend that has increased over the past decade, highlighting the decline in popularity of teaching among high achievers and a broader loss of respect for the profession, which is often branded as the job 'anyone can do'.

In May 2012, the Federal Government released its report on Australia's school workforce through the Productivity Commission, and found that low salaries drive high achievers away from teaching. The report suggested that the comparatively low pay for such demanding working conditions is an important influence. Moreover, the report found that there is significant difficulty associated with finding ongoing teaching positions, particularly with fixed term contracts. The consequent lack of job security became a major factor in high attrition rates amongst teachers.

“Bridging the educational inequality gap in Australia is crucial”

We need to look at how we attract high performing graduates to teaching. Real change must start at the core of the problem. The status of the profession needs to improve, and this begins when education policy stops being a game of political football. Perhaps Ted Baillieu following through on his pre-election promise to make Victorian teachers the highest paid in the state would have gone some way towards reaching this goal. Greater respect for the teaching industry will attract higher quality teachers into the field. Prestige could also be increased through raising the selection criteria for tertiary education courses. In countries such as Singapore and Finland, where entry requirements are rigorous, educational outcomes and the quality of teachers are excellent.

There are also initiatives which aim to bridge gaps in equality, such as Teach For Australia (TFA), a highly selective grad-program which fast tracks

outstanding graduates through a post-grad teaching degree and places them into disadvantaged schools. Graduates teach through an apprenticeship model while they continue to study, and receive support from colleagues and mentors.

While TFA is a program that has received some criticism, its principles are based on successful international models such as Teach First in the UK, which in 2010 was the fourth largest graduate recruiter behind PwC, Deloitte and the Army. Although the Australian program is still only three years old, initial results of an independent review by the Australian Centre for Education Research suggest it could grow to be part of the solution.

TFA teachers have made a significant difference to some of our most disadvantaged schools. In some cases, students have achieved outstanding VCE results and improved their literary standards by two years in the space of one.

But when it comes to teaching and impact, there's an additional factor that isn't as tangible and easily measured as test results and outcomes: inspiration. Many of our most disadvantaged students come from families where no one is in paid work and education is not valued. The result of this is that the cycle of poverty is further entrenched. More than ever, the industry is in need of high quality teachers who can not only improve results, but also inspire students to want to learn and extend themselves.

Bridging the educational inequality gap in Australia is crucial. This process must start with the improvement of the status of the teaching profession, and be maintained through government support for the industry. The end result will be better teachers, ensuring higher standards of education across schools and better outcomes for all, especially the most vulnerable.

*Jacqui is a Teach For Australia campus ambassador. www.teachforaustralia.org
Applications close August 19th 2012.*

PHOTOS IN FOCUS WITH LEAH MCINTOSH



For the last year I have been working in film. The world is rapidly filling with so many pictures, so many voices, that I feel every photograph I take should be worthy, should be important. For me, digital cameras hark the end of moderation, the end of a single concerted effort at perfection. Film is, in a sense, more freeing because of the constraints: you are forced to be patient, steady, deliberate. Mostly I use my mother's old 'om-1', a relic from the seventies. It's steady and reliable, and looking at the world through its lens forces me to see.

CREATIVE WRITING

BEFORE THE CONDUCTOR SAYS GOODNIGHT

Jarryd Redwood

Sepia-tone lamplight
frames a misery
giant banana-leaf hammocks
strewn around the
urban billabong

A sardine can pulled along
a steel-girder current
by the golden sprites of Proserpine

nine 19
nine 19
nine 19
nine 20

finally!

but now nine 20
nine 20
nine 20

distraction!
an alley cat sits beside me
a jackal howls in midnight blew
and silent lilies of every shade
waver at the movement of
the fibre-glass slug

‘Murrumbeena’
a raven emerges
escaping metal joors
is wallowed by the night

Grrrr-umh Grr-umh grrr-umh gr-umh
gr-um gr-um
a rumbling in my feet!
a mumbling in my seat
a grumbling

nine 35
nine 35
nine 36

Abstraction on a sheep’s
hides a stained glass mosaic
of muck (and other things)

Cicadas hide in the glass roof
humming sickly white whales
the eagle eyes me wearily
in red

An abyss of similie
stares back
as lightning strikes
the eyes of infants

Lovers
share a strawberry
blood sinks into gums
and jack russels tear at bitter-sweet flesh

Stormy skies stare deeply
each determined
not to give solace to
the good ship
bountiful

‘Pathos’
croaks the white rabbit
staring at the doomsday clock
waiting for it
to
strike

Horns entangled
lovers drag the other into
a BP water-hole
drowning seals in sugar-cane and leaving
a sour taste in all our mouths

THEY ARE THE NEW YOUNG LOVERS

Anonymous

She looks like an actress
in her tapered red dress.
And the sex, is it worth it
being caught in this mess?

Slumped across his wooden desk,
sultry, smoking, silent
worms crawl from her open mouth;
Her pretty smile violent.

Her brave grip on her empty cup
his stomach set a-spin;
if only she were as dead outside
as she was within?

“Darling, darling...
giving up so young?”
Her eyes flick towards him
Only smoke rolls off her tongue.

They are the new young lovers,
with tobacco-filled lungs;
with sugared hair and blood to spare and twisted
kinds of fun.

He has drained her, he has trained her,
lord he’s even tamed her,
but still he’s so afraid of her-!

And skilled though he may be,
the wise are not all winners -
it still can’t heat the cold red wine
that shakes between his fingers.

VULTURES

Matthew Campbell

Up above they circle in the glare of the midday sun,
the vultures
Awaiting my collapse in the unrelenting heat,
These weather-cracks to show

A thousand long years wandered through this desert
Last living monument to a bottomless sea
Sand changes shape and form and colour
But the pylons remain the same

And they sit atop, mocking with last-laugh
immortality
Fiercely aware of their conquest
With no more hapless loners to compete
The best of them a long time gone, removed, silent
The rest crying into twisted submission

THEATRE REVIEW: THE PRODUCERS

Melinda Bladier

With Melbourne still in the depths of winter, The Production Company’s season opener, *The Producers*, proved brief respite from the chilly outdoors. The Arts Centre played host to the musical, and was transformed to scenes of springtime in Germany, where swastikas became fashionable accessories and the resurgence of Hitler was accompanied by a chorus of leggy showgirls. *The Producers*, created by Mel Brooks, is a classic. Centred on the travails of a failing Broadway Producer, it follows his efforts to become filthy rich by creating the worst Broadway musical ever. The musical, against all odds and efforts, is a smash hit.

The Production Company’s interpretation of the musical was high energy, with characters behaving as devastatingly satirical caricatures of themselves. Christie Whelan as Swedish bombshell Ulla was a standout; the unlikely relationship between her and accountant-turned-Producer Leopold Bloom was synonymous with the theme of unlikely success that is central to the musical. Wayne Scott Kermond as Max Bialystock was similarly excellent, successfully parodying Broadway stereotypes.

The set design for the piece was impeccable; the set was unashamedly high voltage, literally so near the conclusion when a huge swastika was illuminated on the backdrop. Costumes were similarly vibrant, and it was clear that the directors, Andrew Hallsworth and Dean Bryant, wanted to create an aesthetic as irreverent as the storyline.

The Producers dabbles in dangerous territory with its tongue-in-cheek celebration of Nazi Germany and caricatures of homosexuals. Often, in today’s stiflingly politically correct climate, black comedy such as this is resigned to the ‘too offensive’ basket. There is a case to be made for politically incorrect jokes causing offence and normalizing important issues. However, exploring delicate issues through comedy can also create dialogue and lead to social progress, or in the case of Nazi Germany, reconciliation with the past.

The Producers sets out with a simple goal: to entertain through parodying one

of the largest sectors of the entertainment industry. It is loud, camp and politically insensitive. It is also hilarious. Through virtue of the fact that *The Producers* elicited near non-stop laughs from the audience it is arguable that, through comic exploration of social issues, it managed to navigate the minefield of political correctness and remind us that, sometimes, we need to be able to laugh at ourselves.

Image Credit: Jeff Busby



WE HOPE, WE DREAD, WE DANCE

Jarryd Redwood

“Provocative. Insightful. Moving.”

These were the three words used by choreographer and artistic director Kate Brennan to describe her up and coming Monash University Student Theatre production, *Of Hope and Dread*. The new dance piece will utilise a postmodern style, which asserts that any and all movement can be considered dance (Google ‘Steve Paxton’), in order to explore the two polar yet inextricable themes of the piece; hope and dread.

“When I was trying to work out a title for the piece I stumbled across a PhD thesis entitled ‘Existence as an Inseparable Accursed Bond of Hope and Dread’,” explains Kate. “I was intrigued by this idea that humans cannot live without both hope and dread. Where one is the other is too.”

The piece, set to hit the MUST stage from the 31st of July until the 4th of August, will feature a series of episodic dance scenes portraying different imagery. This imagery explores individual and universal experiences of hope and dread as well as the

science and belief systems behind both concepts. The creation of the piece has so far relied upon a devising process shared by the dancers and Kate and largely utilises personal experiences of the themes.

“We’ve done a lot of work using our own experiences as stimulus as well as images and various writings on hope and dread,” says Kate. “By taking these writings and applying music or lighting we can come up with entirely new images and then devise around these new concepts.”

Kate has made clear that the piece will not be focused on a series of “pretty movements” or “being technically ‘correct’”. It will instead feature a combination of standard contemporary dance and more abstract ideas of dance in order to break down communication barriers and open dialogue on the topics explored.

The group has recently reached the end of the devising period, meaning Kate will soon take on a more directorial role to choreograph the devised work into a routine. As a choreographer, she hopes to create a

performance that evokes a connection between audience members and the stimulus material.

‘I think the important thing to remember is that we are exploring concepts that are at the essence of being human. We as humans experience hope and dread in a way that only human beings can.’

Of Hope and Dread will be showing at the MUST Space from 31st July – 4th August.



ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD

Loretta Crouch

Vibrant costuming, an enthusiastic cast and a large dose of enquiry were the highlights of the recent MUST presentation of Tom Stoppard’s existentialist tragicomedy *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*. The play is a hilarious exploration of a land where questions come before answers, and nobody ever knows exactly what is going on. This inversion of question and answer is indicative of the absurdist nature of Stoppard’s work, and the more serious existential questions which underlie the bumbling misadventures and loss of identity that Rosencratz and Guildenstern endure.

Centred on the story of two minor characters from Shakespeare’s Hamlet, much of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* involves scenes of existential inquiry between the dim-witted Rosencrantz, played by Nigel Langley, and the clear-headed Guildenstern, played by Liz Thiessen. Sharp casting of Langley and Thiessen by directors Tom Lawton and Jonathon

Powell saw strong portrayals of these key characters; despite this, the synchronicity required of these contrasting characters in order to fully realise the themes of the piece was sometimes lacking. Extended dialogue scenes occasionally leant towards blandness.

The likeability of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, however, proved to be a strength in more eventful scenes, particularly those involving multiple characters. During the madness which was created, audiences were given a window into the absurdist confusion experienced by the two characters. The directors were effective in creating clearly outlined characters that were able to express contained chaos. Consistency of change was also a key performance aspect.

Minimalist set design and props were both an asset and a downfall for the piece. This minimalism acted as an effective balance to the more chaotic absurdist elements of the piece, but sometimes tended to leave performers with insufficient physical aid to

adeptly construct the world of the play. Conversely, vivid use of makeup and costuming amongst members of the theatre troupe created a visual representation of the obscene, and astutely painted the players as macabre, wandering outliers. The energy of the troupe was uplifting and a highlight of the performance, in particular the comic irreverence of the lead player, performed by Hannah Bullen.

This interpretation of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* was successful in engaging the audience in the misadventure of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and exploring their inner thought processes. Absurdism was neatly elicited through character performance and the alternation between moments of high energy and pauses. Consequently, audiences were led to reflect on highly philosophical questions about the nature and purpose of life in the irreverent way which Stoppard intended.

INTERVIEW

INTERVIEW WITH FATHER JOHN MISTY

Pia Salvatore

Josh Tillman doesn’t shy away from stepping out of his comfort zone. The former Fleet Foxes drummer has been releasing solo material since 2006, but it is only now that he is really coming into his own artistic world, following the release of his album *Fear Fun* earlier this year.

Adopting the moniker Father John Misty, he has moved away from the name J Tillman, which he used for previous material. “In some way, it was like J Tillman, that name, described someone that I didn’t really relate to anymore.” This doesn’t mean that Tillman necessarily sees the name Father John Misty as more representative of him as a person or an artist, “I just kind of enjoy the arbitrary nature of names. The album’s obviously and explicitly about me as a person, so it doesn’t matter what you call it.”

Unsurprisingly, Tillman also has a philosophical approach to the name of his album. “There’s a total thread of continuity between those two words,

because we only have fun because we’re all terrified of death. “What I like about those two words is that superficially they’re polar opposites, kind of in the same way as sex and death. Sex and death are kind of intrinsically intertwined, and *Fear Fun* is maybe the more like, novelty shop version of sex and death.”

With *Fear Fun*, Tillman has, for the first time, realised through his music a deeply personal narrative voice. Tillman speaks of an “explicit honesty” that has always attracted his attention both artistically and personally, but it is something he hasn’t been able to tap into with his music, at least not until now. “This part of me that has always been missing from my music, because I think I was afraid of being that vulnerable when I was younger, was all of a sudden was there in full measure,” he says.

Tapping into that side of his creativity required a little help though. By Tillman’s own account, he got into a

van and took a heap of mushrooms. It was only then, after having hit a block of sorts and being faced with the need to rebuild, that Tillman was able to find his narrative voice. Embracing this, Tillman was able to mature as a songwriter, moving beyond the idea that there was an idealised kind of writing that he should have been producing.

Before getting back into music, Tillman wrote a novel, which has since been published on two broadsheet pieces of paper in tiny writing and packaged with his album. This novel opened up an artistic world he hadn’t ventured into before. Tillman had “a lot of fun writing that book”, largely because he had no self worth wrapped up in it. “Fun kind of became this barometric reading for whether or not what I was doing was any good.” He applied the same measure when creating his

new album; “I had a lot of fun writing these songs”.

Tillman treats every aspect of his music as another layer of meaning to reach other people. His music videos don’t miss out on that treatment either. The massive benders, sex, bondage, and drugs shown in his own videos give him the opportunity to “create a context for the song”, delving into the further meaning that he wants to discover in his life.

Josh Tillman is obviously all about the frank nature of life, and the finding some deeper meaning. He’s on a quest to explore and experience this “explicit honesty” which intrigues him so much, and *Fear Fun* is an open and sincere reflection of this.

Father John Misty plays at The Corner Hotel on Saturday 28 July for his Splendour sideshow.

ALBUM REVIEW

THE TEMPER TRAP

Pia Salvatore

It feels like we’re trapped in an album of mediocrity, and tempers are fraying. Sorry about that, it’s just that the follow up album to The Temper Trap’s *Conditions*, which made them commercial superstars in 2009, is full of anthem-styled bores of songs. The attempts at actual seriousness get lost in the wa-whoaing of the vocals, which invite images of billowing hair and energetic gestures, while standing on a cliff looking out into the vastness. From The Clash-esque ‘London’s Burning’ to

the choir like harmonies of ‘Everybody Leaves In The End’, *The Temper Trap* has all the elements of a soft rock pop album, but it’s nothing groundbreaking. Yawn.



GIG REVIEW

THE VASCO ERA

Corner Hotel, 22nd June
Matthew Campbell

When I'm invited to see a band that I've never heard of before, I avoid listening to their music beforehand so that my so that my first impressions aren't clouded by expectations. I wasn't sure of what to expect from The Vasco Era; what I didn't expect was to leave The Corner Hotel with was a bruised upper right eye and aching ribs. Front man Sid O'Neil appeared on stage first, and there was nothing in his gentle strumming to foreshadow the mosh that soon erupted. I had started the night at a weekly Cascade marketing event and filled up on free beer for two hours, so I may have been surprised by this chaotic change of mood, but I was certainly ready. The three-piece from Melbourne burst at the seams with

thunderous rock energy throughout the set, providing a perfect backdrop for thrashing about with reckless abandon and shoving hopeless drunks out of one's way. The set leaned on something a bit harder at times but turned away at the right moments, giving exhausted moshers and cranky hipsters short respite. This was The Vasco Era's final show before going on hiatus for a variety of reasons ; a bestial but heartfelt send-off that was felt by all.



GIG REVIEW

KIM CHURCHILL

Northcote Social Hall, 12th May
Matthew Campbell

For any first-time listener of Kim Churchill walking into the NSC band room, it would have been easy to mistake the 21 year old for a three-piece outfit. In one square metre of explosive energy, Churchill strangled his guitar like an unruly snake with his grungy folk-rock. This was accompanied by haunting vocals about adolescence and travel-wisdom, and a harmonica sound that seemed to reverberate off some nearby cave. All this reached a climax with the frenzied stomping of a 24-inch bass drum, invariably effectuating dance.

Having won the Byron Bay Bluesfest busking competition a few years ago, Churchill has held a spot at the festival for the past two years and is now touring in support of his new album, *Detail of Distance*. Mumford and Sons, Neil Young and Led Zeppelin come to mind upon listening, but such comparisons fail to convey the sheer live spectacle of Churchill's performances.



GIG REVIEW

DEE DEE BRIDGEWATER SINGS

MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL
Melbourne Town Hall, June 10th
Benny Dimas

In an age where the art of jazz singing is often sadly reduced to formulaic clichés, the searing originality and smoldering vocal talents of Dee Dee Bridgewater are not only refreshing, they are electrifying. While Bridgewater spent some time in the shadows of other jazz singers – her tribute albums to Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holiday won her two Grammys – she stated in a 2011 interview that it was time for her own identity to shine through: “So now people are saying, ‘You’ve got to do Sarah! You’ve got to do Carmen! You’ve got to do Nina! You’ve got to do –’ you know; and I’m just, I’m gonna do Dee Dee! What’s wrong with Dee Dee!” In her first ever Melbourne appearance, Bridgewater fluidly sashayed her way through titillating temptress, sultry diva, energetic powerhouse and tempestuous goddess, but the voice

was unmistakably consistent within its endless stylistic variations. Just like jazz itself, really. And the enormous audience joyously received the manna this American queen bestowed. In the seemingly constant search for heirs to the great singers who we’ve lost in the last two decades (Fitzgerald, Vaughan, Carmen McRae, Nina Simone, Betty Carter, and Abbey Lincoln among them), Bridgewater holds her own and it is wonderful to see her relishing her time in the sun.



GIG REVIEW

BOB DYLAN TRIBUTE NIGHT

The Palais, June 6th
Amy Tanner

Bob Dylan is an icon of his times, and his songs are an exquisite exploration of the human condition. Hope, heartbreak, rebellion and a craving for change are lucidly explored, and at the Palais were vibrantly brought to life by five young Australian musicians who were just children when Dylan first made his mark on the musical world. Josh Pike, Holly Throsby, Patience Hodgson, Kevin Mitchell and Kav

Temperley grooved their way through a tribute to the great man; the ability of each of these diverse artists to tap into and often beautifully interpret Dylan's work was evidence that, although Dylan was a one man phenomenon, his songs are ultimately about relationships between people. Whilst political sentiment has changed since Dylan's prime, his lyrics and sound are enduringly popular and, perhaps, a reminder of what music and social consciousness should be.

TOP 5 SONGS

TO WARM YOU UP ON A WINTERS NIGHT

Pia Salvatore

We get it, winter is dull. You'd much rather stay home and avoid the constant rain we've been having for over a month now. We understand the logic behind staying in, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't get as warm as if you'd gone out to gyrate on a sweaty dance floor and have drinks spilt on you. Stay in, dance and be merry, and keep your clothes alcohol free!

ABBA - Dancing Queen

It's your house, so why not? Don't let the shame deter you. Let ABBA shine, let your dance moves bloom. Without strangers grinding against you, there's so much room to move and be your own dancing queen!

OutKast - Hey Ya!

Just because it's fun, and you know that when it gets played it's the cue to jump up and dance, no matter how you're feeling.

Scissor Sisters - I Don't Feel Like Dancin'

Not only because the lyrics might be representative of your desire to curl up and watch late night TV infomercials instead of dancing, but also because, despite the lyrics, it's fun to dance to. Who woulda thunk it?

Underworld - Born Slippy

You know it – that song that was in the film *Trainspotting*, with all the disjointed lyrics. It doesn't make any sense, and it is just the ramblings of a drunken man, but it's awesome fun to dance to in your lounge room with all the room you need to build up in time with the song.

TISM - He'll Never Be An Old Man River

Now that we know what this song is about, having heard it for the first time as innocent children, we can appreciate all those drugged up celebrity references. Plus, it is seriously good to get going to. “Where'll I get my next drug action? Odds on it'll be Michael Jackson.” Dance goodness that would make any fortuneteller proud.



GIG GUIDE



Pia Salvatore

Lana Del Ray

Palace Theatre
July 23,24
See those lips up close for yourself, and let us know if she can actually sing. Given the hype and meteoric rise this singer has experienced, why not go along and see the result? *Dress code: Sparkling evening gowns all round.*

Jack White

Festival Hall
July 25
Jack White has been behind some of the biggest groups in recent years, and now he's coming to Melbourne to do his own thing. Get along and see Jack White, supported by Lanie Lane. *Dress code: Black suits, maybe with a splash of red.*

Mudhoney

Corner Hotel
July 27
Coming from the roots of the grunge explosion in Seattle in the 90s, Mudhoney proved at Meredith last year that they're not worn out yet. *Dress code: A flannie and some Doc Martens.*

Father John Misty

Corner Hotel
July 28
Forging a name for himself since leaving his drummer role at Fleet Foxes, Father John Misty will surely charm you with a healthy dosage of gloom and hope, all at the same time. *Dress code: As disheveled as possible.*

The Hello Morning & Immigrant Union

Northcote Social Hall
August 3
The Hello Morning are launching their debut album, and will be joined for a double headline show by Immigrant Union, who have just released their own album. *Dress code: Waist coats and cowboy boots.*

Lanie Lane

Caravan Music Club
August 12
Lanie is travelling across Australia getting to places she missed the first time around, but this time sans band. Be charmed by her songs of love and heartbreak. *Dress code: Rockabilly.*

STORMY WEATHER: THE LENA HORNE STORY

Benny Dimas

Lena Horne, although she is now slowly fading from the status of household name, was one of the first African American goddesses of the entertainment world, pioneering the way for many of the celebrities of the 20th and 21st century across the fields of cinema, theatre, cabaret, musical and the media. On an international leg of their touring show, James Gavin (New York Times arts journalist, music intellectual *par excellence* and author of the definitive Lena Horne biography *Stormy Weather: The Lena Horne Story*) and songstress Mary Wilson (a founding member of Motown supergroup The Supremes) brought the house down at the Duncan Playhouse during the Adelaide Cabaret Festival. *Stormy Weather: The Lena Horne Project* proved to be a unique and memorable tribute combining biographical readings from Gavin with glorious music from Wilson, backed by her exquisite jazz trio.

In this interview Benny Dimas and James Gavin discuss the great Lena Horne, the show, Mary Wilson, and James' works.

Part of your motivation to bring Lena Horne's story to the stage, and to a greater audience, came from your experience of meeting her at a later stage in her life and career. Could you elaborate on the circumstances of that meeting?

In 1994, Lena Horne decided, with much trepidation, to return to performing, on a limited basis, after several years of semi-seclusion. Singing had always been her life. She surely missed it. But she was 77, and far less physically hardy than the Lena everyone remembered from her one-woman Broadway show in 1981-1982. Still, much excitement surrounded her re-emergence. I was as excited as anyone, for Lena had fascinated me since I was in my early teens. I had recently begun writing



Lena Horne biographer James Gavin (right) with Benny Dimas

features for the Arts & Leisure section of the New York Times, and I got the OK to do one on Lena. Of course she agreed, because she needed to publicize her new CD and appearances, and the New York Times is the New York Times. First I was invited to attend one of the recording sessions for her CD, and there I had a brief exchange with Lena, who was shy, self-effacing, and charming. Thereafter, I met her and her manager Sherman Sneed, whom she had known since the '50s,

in the lobby of a New York hotel where Lena liked to do her professional business. Sherman left me alone with her, we rode the elevator to her suite – a ride that felt endless, as my heart pounded nervously – and we settled down to talk. We were together for two hours and fifteen minutes. I was incredibly moved by her candor, her openness, her pain, her regret, all the conflicting feelings that this iconic woman felt about a career and a life that had affected the lives of millions.

During the show, your insightful biographical readings combine with audiovisual material from Horne's performances and from her speeches at Civil Rights rallies. In both the book and the show you emphasise Horne's involvements in the sociopolitical struggles of the 20th century. She was much more than just the star of stage and screen that many perceived her to be, wasn't she?

Lena was raised with a fierce sense of social consciousness and pride in her race and in her history. But as she once said, Lena's struggles and her response to them were all very personal. When someone hurt her, made her feel excluded or less-than, she struck back. It just so happened that her personal evolution corresponded with the evolution of civil rights in this country, and that Lena, as a star to whom many paid close attention, was living a life that resonated powerfully with the lives of millions of other marginalized people. And so her struggles took on enormous resonance and symbolism. She knew it. She knew what was expected of her, as the "chosen one" among black performers. She lived with a degree of pressure that the rest of us could never begin to feel. She handled the role beautifully, but the emotional toll was profound.

It is also a sad truth that Horne's life and work within both the Civil Rights movement and the entertainment industry were problematised by her position as a light-skinned African American woman. Her choice to perform 'It's Not Easy Being Green' and imbue it with layers of identity politics highlights her singing as an act of social and political commentary, not just as an act of entertainment. The choice of including that number in the song list for Mary Wilson to perform during Stormy Weather evoked more than a few tears from the audience, myself included. How did the rest of the songs fall into place, and how did the show come together?

First of all, thank you for those very flattering words. Because this is a narrative piece, every song had to represent a piece of the story, while suiting the talents of Mary Wilson, a singer from a different field, with a voice unlike Lena's, but still a descendent of Lena's in many ways. We needed a certain number of fast songs and a certain number of slow ones, some light ones and some heavy ones. I went through every Lena

Horne recording I had and put together a master list, and whittled it down to ten (aside from those songs Lena sings in the videos) that would give a sweeping panorama of her career. What makes Lena such a fun subject is that she dragged her baggage with her onstage every time she sang. She couldn't not sing autobiographically. That's the kind of singer I like the most.

Mary Wilson, one of the founding members of legendary Motown group The Supremes, gave a magnificent performance of some of Lena Horne's standards without direct imitation. It was a tribute I feel Horne would have approved of. How did Mary become involved with the show? How does it feel to work with a living legend?

I met Mary completely by chance, when I was on a tour to promote the paperback edition of my book in 2010. I was in Palm Springs, California, and met Mary at a book-launch event for Kaye Ballard, the great singing comedienne, now about 86. Mary was in town as guest star of a long-running show called "Palm Springs Follies." A local radio-show host who knows Mary took me over to meet her (I had begged him). I found Mary to be instantly approachable and warm. She asked me how she could get in touch with Lena. I said, "Oh, Mary, I'm afraid it's too late." Lena was frail and had been reclusive for ten years. The very next day, she died. But I had recently done a few performances of the Stormy Weather show with other singers. I called the managers who had taken an interest in my show, and who now book it, and told them that I had an idea. They got in touch with Mary's manager. She immediately agreed to do the show. You know the rest.

As for the second part of your question, Mary is an anti-diva. She says in the show that she learned graciousness from Lena Horne; no doubt she also learned it by never wanting to emulate the less gracious behavior of Miss Ross. Mary is a road warrior, remarkably flexible, a great sport, unfailingly lovely to her fans, and in all, a privilege to work with. She has suffered many blows and many insults, but you saw and heard (in the show) how well she's weathered them.

Lastly, can you give us any clues as to what you might be working on for your next projects? Stormy

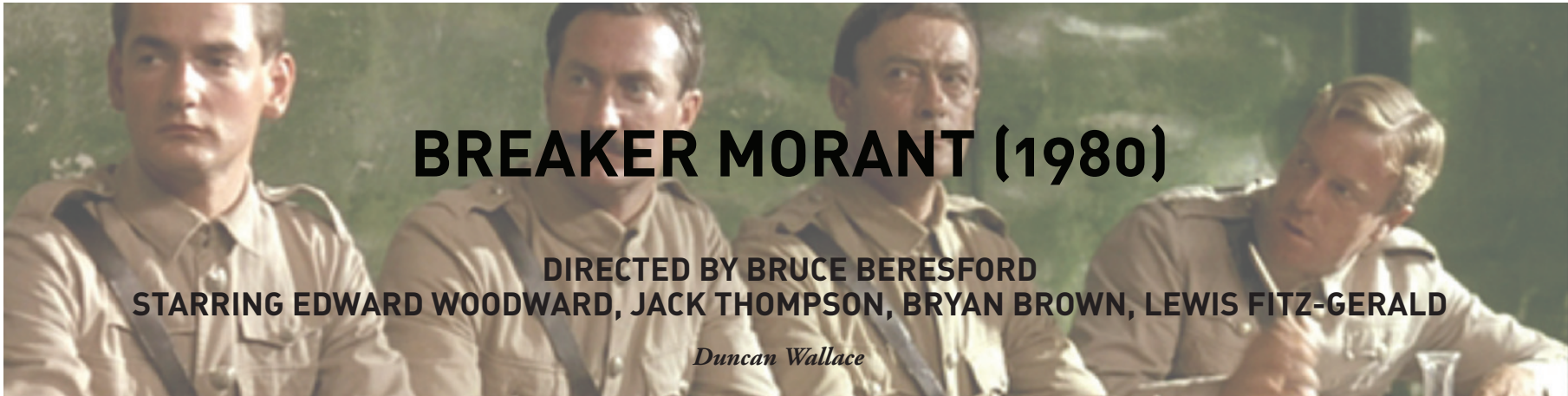
Weather will continue to tour in the U.S.A. in November, but is there anything else exciting on the horizon?

I am midway through a Peggy Lee biography for Simon & Schuster. Now there's a wacky story, with schizophrenic emotional extremes and, of course, profound music-making. Peggy is another of my greatest fascinations. I'm having a ball writing this book. Otherwise, Benny, I'm a hard-working freelance writer doing my best to pay the rent. And having an amazing life.

James Gavin, thank you so very much for your time, and for the truly marvelous show you created in tribute to a great legend of the 20th century.



Lena Horne in 1964



BREAKER MORANT (1980)

DIRECTED BY BRUCE BERESFORD
STARRING EDWARD WOODWARD, JACK THOMPSON, BRYAN BROWN, LEWIS FITZ-GERALD

Duncan Wallace

“The barbarities of war are seldom committed by abnormal men.”

In an outstanding feat of Australian cinema, *Breaker Morant* chronicles the confused morality of a wartime court-martial. The trial’s arranged verdict is condemned for playing a small part in a political game, rather than serving the ends of individual justice. The legal question concerns the liability of three Australian lieutenants – one of whom, Harry Morant (Edward Woodward), is a British expatriate – for a spate of alleged murders during the near-finished Boer War. The film, however, poses no difficult questions about the soldiers’ factual guilt. Instead, it laments the legal blameworthiness of their behaviour in a hazy hierarchy of command responsibility. *Breaker Morant* was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay, won Jack Thompson the award for Best Supporting Actor at Cannes, and launched the Hollywood career of director Bruce Beresford. However, any critical appraisal of *Breaker Morant* ought to consider its perpetuation of the alluring Anzac myth which arguably overpowers the story’s harsh reality of criminal complicity.

Even before the trial begins, the signs of distorted justice are plain for all to see. The soldiers’ Australian lawyer, Major Thomas (Thompson), is given only one day to prepare the defence case despite his inexperience with military trials. Importantly, as we are told in no uncertain terms, British commander Lord Kitchener tactically ordered the trial to bring the war to a swift conclusion. He hopes to convict the men as a show of good faith and orderly conduct to act as a disincentive to German intervention on the side of the Boers. But this pretext should not be seen as removing the responsibility of the soldiers as a relevant question; there is little doubt that the men killed the Boers. The defence’s argument is instead that the soldiers were specifically ordered to carry out

assassinations by their superiors. In a classic speech on the tragedies of war, Major Thomas argues that it is problematic to convict soldiers subject to a chain of command and fancifully “hold them up as murderers for obeying orders”. Nonetheless, all three are eventually found guilty. Morant and Hancock are executed promptly by gunfire, while Witton is sentenced to life imprisonment. It was only three years after the events in this film that the real-life Witton was released due to public pressure and published his famous work, *Scapegoats of the Empire*, detailing the experience.

The confinement of humanitarian morality to a trial facilitates Beresford’s honest critique of military justice. The film uses flashbacks to recount the soldiers’ conduct and deliberately puts these events in a narrative subservient to the courtroom. It’s no secret that a guilty verdict is on the cards, and not even Major Thomas’ most scintillating soliloquys can reverse it. Beresford’s use of camera angles in the courtroom is particularly brilliant. High-angle shots give us this gloomy appearance of a room which is divided by large wooden beams, separating the judges from the lawyers and soldiers. The film does an excellent job at showing us the divided interests which come to define the whole messy process. But its emphasis on the courtroom ultimately, and perhaps purposefully, provides a limited view of war and camaraderie. The Boers are given little consideration and portrayed conveniently as one-dimensional enemies, while there is virtually no role for women apart from a Boer who plays part of a diversionary strategy in battle. Although it is revealed that revenge motivated the soldiers’ desperate conduct, we are told this conveniently with the careful language that their friend was “mutilated” by Boers. The film is comfortable in telling us about the harsh realities for Australian soldiers, but

largely silent about those for their opponents. And so while the film offers some excellent observations on the very feasibility of a court martial and the idea that we can judge wartime operatives by peacetime standards, its use of the Anzac myth to legitimise this narrative lacks scrutiny. The film is a deliberate ode to anti-imperialism and deplores the self-destructive exploitation of colonial powers, but there are parallels between the Boers and Australians which are left undeveloped and unexplored.

Nonetheless, the film triumphs in decrying the criminal inevitabilities of war. The film shows us that the ability to act fairly and judiciously in the heat of the moment, in the face of vaguely defined orders, is inconceivably difficult. Too difficult, importantly, to attract the scrutiny of legal standards removed from wartime pressures and provocations. It’s remarkably easy to be taken in by Major Thomas’ argument. But even if, like me, you’re suspicious about the influence of ‘Australian values’, you will unquestionably sympathise with these men. Their final, macabre command to the executing squadron, “shoot straight, you bastards”, delivered calmly as they sit back against the sunset, invites an understanding of the Lieutenants as unfortunate men rather than merciless assassins. The dark comedic image of Hancock’s corpse proving too big to fit into his coffin offers a concluding assessment about a deeply imperfect process. The real strength of the plot is the scope of its relevance: it’s far more than an Australian story – its universality demands application to the My Lai massacre in Vietnam, for example. However, at the same time, *Breaker Morant* gives us a portrait – perhaps unintentionally – of the shaky foundations of the Anzac spirit, the traction of which remains reliant on the uncompromising power of myth.

FILM REVIEWS

THE CABIN IN THE WOODS

Joshua Reinders

Listen up, all you Joss Whedon and/or slasher film fans: the fertile minds behind such series as Buffy, Angel, and Firefly have begotten a new flick, baptised *The Cabin in the Woods*, and if you ask me it’s a masterwork short on neither cheese nor gore.

Ostensibly, the plot rests on a setup which horror movie writers have been flogging since the days when your parents used to go on dates at the drive-in: a handful of holidaying young interlopers unwittingly find themselves on some serial killer’s/Nazi zombies’/cannibalistic mountain men’s territory or hit list, with said monster(s) wasting no time in knocking them off during the night one by one (beginning with

any and all sexually active characters, of course!).

However, there’s more to this particular film than meets the eye, and in the interest of not spoiling it for you I’ll merely mention the presence of a frame narrative that’ll blow your mind. Prospective viewers should keep an eye out for random screenings of it at art-house cinemas like Carlton’s Cinema Nova or St Kilda’s The Astor Theatre. *Five stars*.



TED

Bren Carruthers

Family Guy and *American Dad!* creator Seth MacFarlane throws himself into his first feature film with *Ted*, a film exploring the relationship between a 35-year-old man (Mark Wahlberg), his anthropomorphic childhood teddy bear, and his increasingly frustrated girlfriend (Mila Kunis).

With MacFarlane writing, directing, producing, and providing both the voice and motion capture acting for his eponymous stuffed bear, his influence is smeared across the screen like a helicopter parent smears sunscreen on their redheaded child. The result is the same: it’s sad to look at, and you feel a little embarrassed on the film’s behalf.

Take for example *Ted*’s Boston set-

ting, which is completely irrelevant to the story except to allow MacFarlane to selfishly revel in pride of his native New England. The result is spending two hours watching Mark Wahlberg spout a horrible exaggeration to his natural Bostonian accent that makes you wonder if he might have something stuck up his nose.

To add further insult, the humour just isn’t supplied with anywhere near the frequency or the potency of an episode of *Family Guy*, resulting in a disappointingly pedestrian affair.

Ted is a vehicle for Seth MacFarlane, as both comedic celebrity and egotist, and nothing more. For ardent fans of his work only. *Two stars*.

THE ASTOR THEATRE: AN ICON UNDER THREAT?

Joshua Reinders

For those who have yet to experience its pleasures and wonders, the Astor Theatre may seem like nothing more than an ancient single screen cinema located at the top of Chapel Street in St Kilda, a relic from the past that has inexplicably resisted cultural obsolescence in the face of modern multiplex cinemas. But for all those who call themselves regular visitors within its hallowed halls, the Astor Theatre is nothing less than a place, or perhaps even a temple, where adepts of the cinematic cult can congregate to celebrate their favourite classic movies of yesteryear.

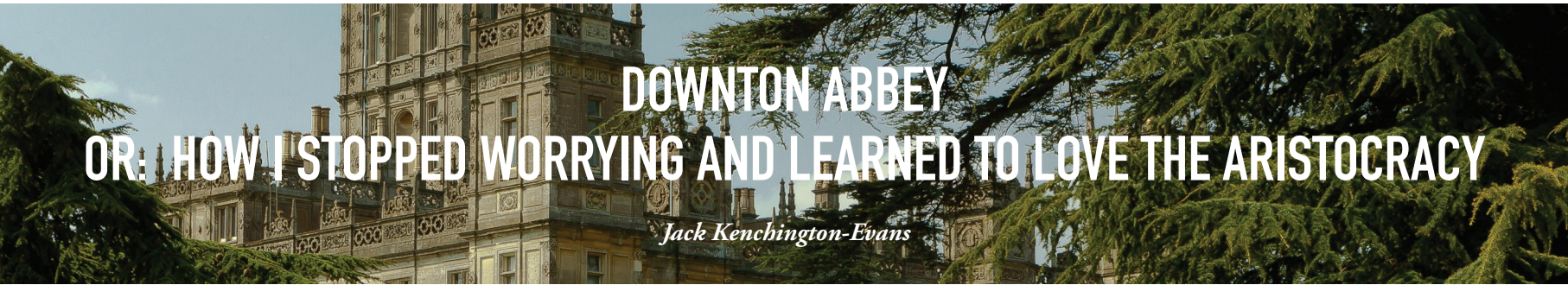
Thus its survival should actually come as little surprise. After all, where else in Melbourne is it possible to catch a double feature most nights of the week for fifteen dollars or less? Add to that its cornucopia of well-preserved Art Deco design flourishes (which no doubt helped earn the building its inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register), a friendly resident cat named Marzipan that enjoys frolicking through the auditorium during screenings, plus some of the most delicious and generously sized choc tops around (which are made on-site), and it may become a little easier to understand why people adore the Astor so much.

However, not all is kittens and lol-

lipops in the Astor camp of late. The reason for this is that the business that trades under the name The Astor Theatre does not actually own the premises that it operates out of. Instead, The Astor Theatre leases the building from its owner, St Michael’s Grammar School (located just down the road from the theatre). The lease is set to expire in 2015, with the landlords suggesting the possibility of its not even being renewed. In fact, proposals have been put forward by St Michael’s regarding a future development of the venue which would entail its renovation into a multipurpose performance venue. Naturally, this is a less than desirable prospect in the eyes of anyone wishing to see

the current state of affairs continue. The idea of Melbourne losing its last picture palace ought to be of concern to Melbournians everywhere who are interested in supporting the ongoing vitality of our cultural landscape.

With this in mind, a group named The Friends of the Astor Association has been formed, whose aim is to ensure that 2015 doesn’t bring with it the closure of this local icon. Readers are encouraged to sign the association’s on-line petition over at change.org/astor to demonstrate support for the survival of the Astor in its current form.



In case you were confused as to the interests and attitudes of the early 20th century British landed gentry, they were a benevolent feudal hangover, protecting those under their power with grace and empathy, and, in general, stiff-upper-lipping themselves into modernity. Noblesse oblige, whereby the rich and powerful assist the poor and marginalised to be content in their inequality, was practised by those ‘upstairs’ and uncritically accepted by those ‘downstairs’. Such are the historical pretensions (or rather, Tory wet dreams) maintained in *Downton Abbey*, a drama series regarding the inhabitants of the Abbey.

Although *Downton* is free of class conflict, it still touches upon the Big Issues of the time. Irish Revolutions, Spanish flus, Cockney union-thuggery, women’s rights and war all disturb the central characters’ tranquility. However, instead of meaningfully engaging with these social upheavals, *Downton* presents the artistic equivalent of public relations endorsed sound bites: the Spanish Flu comes and goes in a single episode, and the brief portrayal of the union movement depicts a truckload of drunk brawlers disrupting a local election. *Downton* rations these scenes amongst lingering shots of the estates immaculate lawns and the minutiae of interpersonal drama between characters. The resulting effect is to make suppliant some of the century’s most significant events before the twin altars of aesthetics and individualism.

Political discourse fares little better. The only Communist amongst the staff marries a daughter of the ruling Grantham family (the family’s outrage lasts, again, for a single episode), and fails to make any ideological impression on the rest of the staff. The arrival of a mischievous aunt brings a liberal reformist streak to the Abbey, but she is persistently marginalised by staff and family alike, and, at the conclusion of season two, is shuttled off to France by the relieved Grantham women, sick of her feminism and sense of civic duty. In conversation, whatever

snippets of political commentary *Downton’s* denizens provide are invariably brief, and are bookended by a stern glare from the butler or the conservative witticisms of the Grantham matriarch. Cue the advertisement break, and the thought-crisis is averted. Phew.

More than any Big Issue, though, it is the scheming of two of the Abbey’s staff - Sarah and Thomas - that endangers the characters’ happy state of affairs. The shaky ethical ground of the Abbey aristocracy - which is quite content in the fact that its Lords and Ladies are thousands of times richer than their employees due only to the luck of being born into the right family - appears positively consecrated in light of Sarah and Thomas’ not-quite-irredeemable evil. That the only unlikeable characters are servants reinforces the series’ conservative slant, and directs the audience’s attention away from society’s structural ‘evils’ and prejudices, which arbitrarily allocates wealth, virtue and titles to the smallest minority of citizens. In *Downton*, the dastardly Sarah and Thomas are more of a threat than the Kaiser, the Communist, or the corpulence of their masters’ lifestyle.

It might be said that this criticism, in and of itself, carries with it only the weight of an aesthetic preference: social realism above parlour romanticism. After all, it is no crime that *Downton* overplays its Austen and underplays its Dickens. Rather, the umbrage that I take with *Downton* is not so much that it fails to engage with the politics of the era, but that when it does offer commentary on these issue its ideological slant consistently endorses arch-conservatism or a tepid form of liberalism. I have little patience for a text that propagates these unappetising views.

The Grantham’s are portrayed as saintly for their occasional soup-kitchen volunteerism, whilst their endless cycle of spending on themselves is unaddressed. Their self-reflective moral capacity extends to critiquing how they behaved at dinner, not whether they should be having umpteen-course

dinneres whilst others starve. *Downton* never invites the audience to look upon this conservative state of affairs as noxious, and, by choosing not to do so, commends this situation to the audience as acceptable.

Where the aristocracy is cuffed for its conservatism - in its ideas about the role of women, and of marrying for money over love - the politics offered in opposition to the reactionary upper class mindset invariably disappoint. Despite being set in an age of radically progressive ethical systems - think of Catholic Action (a mix of Catholic and socialist activism), Communism, Anarchism, and the continuing impact of the last century’s republicanism and humanism - the progressive ‘voice’ is timid and short-sighted. The Grantham daughters’ feminism offers the pedestrian insight that rich women can and should do the hard labour - as farmhand or nurse - that poor women had been doing for millennia. A more mature feminist text would question why there is a division of family and labour responsibilities on gender lines at all. Similarly, the marriage of a Grantham daughter to her former chauffeur is a triumph of liberal Chivalric love over conservative financial prudence; but *Downton* fails to engage with the communalist ethos of the era’s progressive politics, which often criticised the institute of marriage as both an economic and social irrelevancy.

There is a contradiction then at the heart of *Downton*. It consciously eschews radical politics and presents itself as a depoliticised soap opera, however, it consistently endorses the beneficence of the upper class, and the merits of an unambitious, platitudinous liberalism. In doing so, *Downton*, ironically, is a political text. More embarrassingly though, it is a 21st century political text endorsing outmoded 19th century views. Were Downton’s narrative to be transplanted to modern Australia, it would be singing the virtues of John Howard and Clive Palmer, and ignoring the politics of the Occupy and Arab Spring movements.

A BRIEF GUIDE TO MIFF 2012

David Heslin analyses the ‘must see’ films of this year’s Melbourne International Film Festival

For Melburnian cinephiles, the 21st century has been a time of convenience and frustration. Granted an unprecedented catalogue of films through DVD distribution and the advent of peer-to-peer file sharing, we have been simultaneously faced with the steady decline of local independent and arthouse cinemas. The variety of good new films screening at any given time is, therefore, severely constrained.

The exception, happily, is the annual Melbourne International Film Festival: a two-and-a-half week course of the previous year’s award-winners, auteur pieces and obscurities from around the globe. While at least some of the films shown at MIFF are likely to receive limited distribution over the next 12 months, there are many that will never shadow a Melbourne screen again; as such, it may be wise to check out some of the more obscure titles in the schedule. With that in mind, Lot’s Wife has compiled a list of five films to watch at the 2012 Melbourne International Film Festival.



Almayer’s Folly

Revered in academic circles, Chantal Akerman has rarely received much in the way of mainstream recognition. It’s understandable, perhaps, given her commitment to challenging film conventions; still, it seems a shame that her work is not more widely seen. Her early films, such as three-hour-long minimalist epic *Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles* and experimental personal odyssey *Je, Tu, Il, Elle*, are rightly regarded as masterpieces of feminist cinema: films that drastically subverted both the visual language and appearance of the (then, as now) male-dominated art-form. *Almayer’s Folly*, her first fictional feature in close to a decade, takes a Joseph Conrad novel as its source, and, presumably, tool for reinvention.



Amour

One of the world’s greatest active filmmakers, Michael Haneke has often addressed discomforting subject matter: in *Funny Games*, he called upon a home invasion narrative to deconstruct Hollywood movie violence; in *The White Ribbon*, he showed the destruction wrought upon society by patriarchal cruelty. *Amour*, in contrast, seems a gentler work; an intimate study of the effects of old age on the lives of a married couple. Sentimentality, doubtless, shall be thoroughly absent — Haneke has never been anything but rigorous — all the same, there appears to be no irony in the film’s title. *Amour* already has a sizeable reputation to live up to, what with its Palme d’Or victory at Cannes and near-universal critical acclaim, but it looks every bit as good as hoped.



Dark Horse

It may seem paradoxical, but it’s pertinent to note that the black comedies of Todd Solondz — filled, always, by the most fucked-up characters imaginable — contain a note of humanism that few American filmmakers care to reach; his parades of sociopaths, paedophiles and social incompetents both a tableau of human frailty and a cry of outrage against the cruelty society inflicts upon its outsiders. *Dark Horse*, Solondz’s latest production, promises to be yet another piece of excruciating feel-bad cinema —

not enjoyable, by any means, but at the very least deliciously cynical.



Into the Abyss

It seems like a project made in heaven: Werner Herzog and capital punishment! Not that we think Herzog deserves a stint in the electric chair; more, that the probing, eccentric nature of his style as a documentarian seems perfectly suited to the subject of the death penalty. Here, the veteran German filmmaker takes an American case-study as a starting point and uses it to construct a complex analysis of a divisive topic. It can’t possibly be anything less than fascinating.



Pink Ribbons, Inc.

Charity, we learned in the fall-out over *The Chaser’s War on Everything’s* ‘Make-a-Realistic-Wish Foundation’ sketch, is not a topic that many of us are comfortable seeing mocked. Neither, it seems, do we like to see it treated sceptically; a tendency that, as this documentary demonstrates, corporations are more than willing to exploit. A searing exploration into the breast cancer industry, *Pink Ribbons, Inc.* is a badly-needed bucket of cold, pink-lidded Mount Franklin water.

MIFF runs from Aug 2 - Aug 19. Purchase tickets at the Forum box office or at www.miff.com.au.

SAYING MASS WITH THE HIGGS BOSON

Hilary Bowman

With the recent breakthrough in the search for the mysterious Higgs Boson, the ‘God particle’, thousands of news articles have attempted to digest the extremely complex physics involved and turn it into something resembling readable English. Unfortunately, that’s quite difficult, and very few have been successful. I’ll be honest here – I don’t really understand it, and unless you’re Peter Higgs on a good day, you probably don’t either.

However, I do know enough to understand some bad jokes about it. My favourite? ‘The Higgs Boson walks into a Catholic church. The priest says, ‘What are you doing here?’ and good old Higgs Boson replies, ‘Well – you can’t have mass without me!’

Fortunately for all of us who are not theoretical physicists, that joke actually explains the basic idea of the Higgs Boson quite well. We generally take it for granted that everything has substance, but, as always, when you get down to the subatomic level, things get fucking weird. Why do I weigh something rather than nothing at all? (Probably because I am not a supermodel, for starters). To explain this conundrum, in the 1960s English physicist Peter Higgs proposed the addition of a special subatomic particle to the Standard Model (yes, capitalisation necessary) of

particle physics. Until now, the Higgs Boson was the last missing cornerstone of the Standard Model. If the Higgs Boson particle were to exist, as the theory goes, it would be the simplest way to explain why elementary particles such as electrons actually have mass. Without mass, they would just fly around the cosmos at the speed of light. So, subatomic particles gain mass through interacting with the Higgs field, and voilà, atoms form, molecules join together, and the world exists.

Given the theory’s importance to physics, a lot of time and money has been invested in the search for this elusive particle. The Large Hadron Collider (LHC) in Switzerland was built with an aim to find the Higgs Boson – it’s the biggest particle accelerator in the world, and is the most amazing, complex thing ever built for scientific research. It works by spinning particles around its 27km-length track really fast – like a tiny, tiny Formula 1 (but infinitely more useful and interesting). Before the LHC, the Higgs Boson would have been impossible to find, because the particle decays almost immediately after it has formed. Only a high-energy particle accelerator like the LHC has even the hope of observing evidence of its existence.

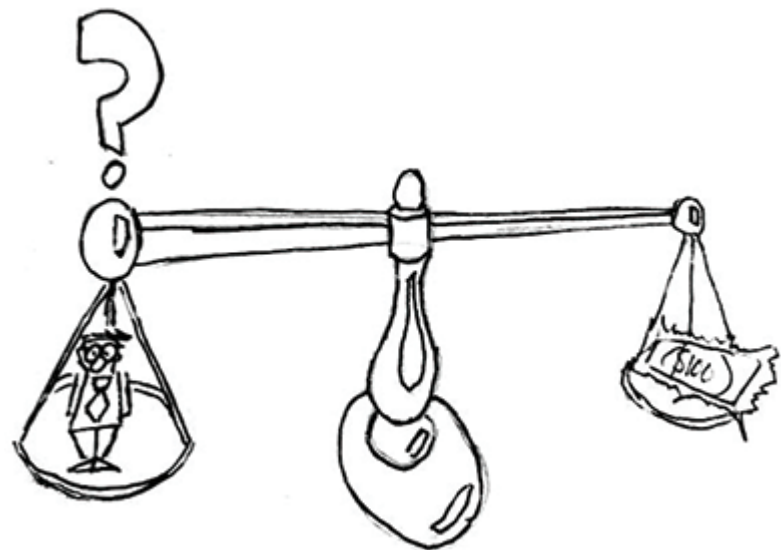
This latest discovery suggests that all the investment into the LHC is beginning to pay off. On July 4th, researchers and scientists made the announcement that they had found a ‘Higgs Boson-like particle’. True to the scientific method, they’re being a bit vague and not making any definitive statements about it yet. The Director General of CERN has stated “As a layman, I think we have it”, but others are being a little more hesitant. Presumably also true to the scientific method, the PowerPoint presentation of the official announcement was all in Comic Sans. Why they chose to use the most universally

reviled font in the world is beyond me, but I assume they were hoping to reach the coveted kindergarten and Sunday school demographic. (‘How can it be hard for them to understand now? Look how fun it looks! Pass me that floppy disk!’)

However, whatever language (or font) the researchers use, they’re making it pretty clear that we’re on the right track. It’s almost certain that Peter Higgs is going to be winning a Nobel Prize. The sticky question is, who else will share it with him? One Nobel Prize can only be awarded to a maximum of three people. But, with 50 years of work and countless contributors, it’s almost impossible to say definitively who ‘deserves’ those two extra spots. Five other contributors came up with similar theories and published papers almost simultaneously to Higgs back in the 60s; while Higgs has given the particle his name, many others have produced incredibly important research for the project. One prominent researcher, Robert Brout, sadly passed away last year; there are still dozens, if not more, of intelligent and deserving scientists vying for the Nobel Prize.

Not all scientists have won from this discovery, however. The famed Stephen Hawking had a \$100 bet going with fellow physicist Gordon Kane that the Higgs Boson wouldn’t be found. He has gracefully accepted that he has lost, which is a pretty good indicator of how important this discovery is. Fortunately with the US economy being completely fucked, the exchange rate won’t actually cost him very much. That’s probably why he’s happily stated that he doesn’t mind he’s lost the bet at all – even he reckons that the discovery is Nobel Prize material, no question.

It’s not entirely clear what the discovery means for future research yet. When scientists like Franklin and Galvani discovered electricity, they had no idea how fundamentally it would come to change our world. The discovery of the Higgs Boson hasn’t affected your day-to-day life in any practical way yet – but, give it 100 years, and we might look back on these weeks as the time that the world changed forever.



JUST QUICKLY

Lewis Gurr delivers some quirky scientific facts

Scientists are looking at two of Saturn’s moons, Titan and Enceladus. Icy Enceladus has liquid water, organic carbon and ammonia – all key ingredients for earth-like life to develop. Titan is covered in ice, but NASA’s Cassini probe has been measuring gravity fluctuations on Titan since 2004 and scientists reported last month that these ‘tides’ would provide enough energy to melt a sub-surface ocean, which could contain life. It is possible that NASA could launch a probe that will land on Titan to take measurements of the surface.

Old people actually smell better than young people. While most people describe the smell of old people as distinct and negative, participants in a blind smell study identified the smells of old people as the least intense and least offensive compared with the young and the middle aged. One of the researchers involved speculated that the dislike for old person smell is due to the context, such as nursing homes or stuffy houses, and likened the situation to parmesan cheese which many participants mistake for the smell of vomit in blind tests. So the next time you walk past an elderly person, make sure you have a good long sniff.

Researchers have developed a brain implant that generates electricity from the brain’s own electrical activity. The device could theoretically be implanted into a brain and not need to be replaced for several decades. The project leader said that “we envision [the fuel cells] powering brain-machine interfaces for paralysis in the medium-term, or in the longer-term, those for blindness or deep-brain disorders.”

In English, the future lies ahead of us and the past behind. Think about going back in time, thinking back to last week, looking forward to tomorrow, I put the event behind me. But the Aymara tribe, in

South America, gesture in front of them when they are referring to the past, because the past is known, and stretches before them. The future, however, is unknown, behind. The Yupno people, in Papua New Guinea, rather than gesturing forward or backward towards the past, gesture uphill when talking about the future and downhill when talking about the past. It’s worth bearing in mind that they do live in a valley, and perhaps such a system wouldn’t be so viable in the Netherlands or on a boat.

Non-recreational-drug-use injections could soon be a thing of the past, as new products are being developed which push a liquid drug right through the skin, and now scientists are working on a powdered version. Being able to deliver drugs as powder would make transporting medicines easier, and the delivery method could reduce the risk of disease transmission.

With thanks to *Science* and *New Scientist* magazines.



Young & Gay

A free six week workshop for young men to get together and talk about sexuality, sex and sexual health.

Contact **9865 6700**

youthproject@vicaids.asn.au
www.facebook.com/youngandgay
www.vicaids.asn.au/young-and-gay

 Victorian AIDS Council /
Gay Men's Health Centre
vicaids.asn.au

MSA OFFICE BEARER REPORTS



President: Esther Hood

Esther Hood failed to submit a report for this edition of Lot's Wife.



Treasurer: Olga Lisinska

It's a cold, wintery time in the land of the MSA treasury. I recently attended the National Union of Students Education Conference in Sydney. I became well informed about the various issues that affect students in Australia, and had a fantastic time.

I recently organized the National Organization of Women Students Australia (NOWSA) conference, best wishes to all those who attended. I hope it was interesting and informative experience for all of you.

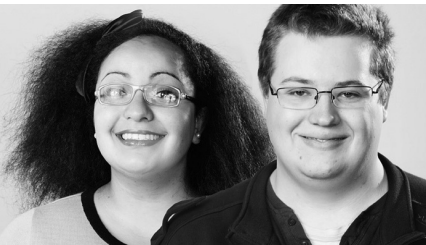
I have chaired some meetings of the Monash Student Council, written minutes in others, and attended several in my general capacity as a member. I have also been attending Office Bearer and Staff meetings within the MSA.

I wish to congratulate Wholefoods and Sir John's Bar for their showing at the recent Monash Food Awards, especially Wholefoods, which came first in Green Award and was runner up in the Best Value Food on Campus category.



Secretary: Freya Logan

Hi all, I hope that the break has treated you well and you arrive back well relaxed and ready for the Semester ahead! While you have all been relaxing and posting pictures of your overseas holidays on Facebook (for the express purpose of making me jealous I am sure!) I have been busy co-coordinating Re-ODay on July 24th (first Tuesday back at Uni), at which you will get the chance to join plenty of clubs, eat a lot of Spanish donuts and pick up an MSA membership if you haven't already! I am also in the process of organising MSA Breakfast Club and co-coordinating that, so don't forget that the MSA serves free breakfast to students one day a week!



Education Public Affairs: Hiba Marhfour and Liam McDonald

Once again we've been very busy. We have continued with the Student Representative Network (SRN), which aims to educate and train students to help represent students. Several students involved in SRN recently took the opportunity to attend the National Union of Students (NUS) Education Conference in Sydney, which was hosted by both the University of Technology of Sydney and the University of Sydney.

This was a wonderful opportunity which brought together students activists to talk, exchange ideas and befriend each other.

We also helped collect submissions for the NUS Quality Survey, which assesses the quality of university education; we collected at least 500!

Recently we launched the first MSA Education Quality week. The week focused on students' concerns about their studies and how the MSA can help them. The NUS Value our Education and Fund our Future campaign, which is focused on getting the government to better fund tertiary education, was part of this.



Education Academic Affairs: Julia Ponte and Ali Majorah

After a by-election on 24 May, Ali Majokah replaced Thomas Whiteside as co-Office Bearer with Julia Ponte who is currently overseas. Since the 24th, Ali has met with many of the university's key decision-makers, including the Vice-Chancellor regarding the campaign to bring back a second-bookshop. This led to the creation of some unexpected allies. Ali has started talking with clubs and societies regarding the idea of campaigning for the reintroduction of a universal lunch hour, and has raised awareness about the issue of the need for 24-hour labs on-campus at various university committees. Of course to make change happen requires action, and there'll be events and activities happening next semester around each of the above issues. If

you're interested in finding out more or becoming involved, on ali.majokah@monash.edu or 0411 025 358. Julia and Ali have also been helping students address breaches of Swot Vac and other day-to-day academic issues.



Indigenous Officer: Shawn Andrews

Another exciting semester is upon us! This semester will see some dramatic changes in the Indigenous Department as we aim to increase the awareness of Indigenous people at Monash and start making some positive changes. Our main aim is to find out where the Indigenous funding is going and how much of it is directly impacting Indigenous students. Our second aim is to create a student based Indigenous celebration that shows the wonderful aspects of our culture. I hope you all have a successful semester and look forward to seeing you around!



Environment and Social Justice: Laura Riccardi

Semester One culminated in World Refugee Day, which saw over a thousand people on a streets of Melbourne advocating for refugee rights. The importance of this campaign, which the

Monash Refugee Action Collective has worked tirelessly this year to promote, has been validated by the tragedy of 90 lives lost at sea as a result of Labor's racist tirade against asylum seekers. I urge all students to reject the bipartisan support for "border security" and get involved in a grassroots movement prepared to fight for an end to offshore processing and mandatory detention. MRAC and the ESJ department will be hosting Senator Sarah Hanson-Young at a special forum on August 2 at 1pm. For more information, contact 0401 315 387 or lauram.riccardi@gmail.com



Welfare: Luke Nickholds

I feel like Seinfeld whenever I say this, but what's the deal with textbooks? They are soooo expensive. You spend a hundred odd dollars, read it for a week during exams, and then it languishes in your attic for the rest of time. Wouldn't it be great if there was some way to spend less money on your textbooks? Wouldn't it be neat if there was a way to sell your old textbooks? There is!

At the MSA Second-Hand Book Fair you'll be able to put your old textbooks up for sale and buy other people's used textbooks. It's good for you, good for other students and good for the environment.

The Book Fair will be held in late Week 1 and early Week 2 of Semester 2, in Short Courses 9 near the Campus Centre and Bikery. Come along and have a browse, and if you have any books you want to put up for sale swing by the MSA Reception Desk.



Male Queer: Wade Aulich

Welcome to semester two everyone! I sincerely hope you are prepared for the academic trials and parties ahead; I'm certainly more looking forward to the latter than the former. Over the winter holidays I was lucky enough to attend Queer Collaborations (QC) in the quaint little hamlet of Adelaide. This year marks the 21st consecutive year that QC has been held; its purpose is to inform national delegates about the diversity of the Queer community. I attended workshops related to Asexuality, the safe use of sex toys and the Jewish perspective on Queer rights, just to name a few. The delegates also discussed the accessibility of support services to Queer youth, diversity policies in relation to educational institutions, and issues concerning the equality of any individuals that identify as either Queer or non hetero-normative. I found that attending this conference broadened my perception of what Queer is, and helped me to better understand the diversity of the people who identify as part of that community. I would highly encourage any person who identifies as non hetero-normative to attend QC, as it was one of the most enlightening experiences I have had.

I would also like to inform you all that the 'It Gets Better Monash Project' will be launching at 2:30pm on Friday the 17th of August. This video explores the stories of people who have experienced any form of bullying, and navigates the experiences of those who have perhaps considered self harm or suicide. The aim of this project is to

open a dialogue to let people who may have experienced, or are experiencing, a difficult period in their lives know that it does get better.

Female Queer: Elisabeth Griffiths

Hey everyone! I hope that the prospect of coming back to uni hasn't been too daunting, and that you're all ready for yet another undoubtedly chaotic semester. Over the break the Queer Officers and a bunch of queer friends from Monash headed off to Adelaide to participate in Queer Collaborations, the annual national queer student conference; I think it's safe to say we all had an amazing time – eye opening and hectic, and a great opportunity to meet other folk from around the country. Now that uni has returned Newbies Queer Tea will be back from 11.30am – 1.30 pm every Wednesday, and Wade and I will be around if you ever need to find a friendly face. It'd be great to see some new folks joining the fabulous community that is the Queer Department, and all queers and straight allies should keep your eyes peeled for the release of the list of Queer Week events in the upcoming month.



Activities: Bernadette de Sousa and Paul Ireland

The Activities department is thrilled with how well AXP went, and we're excited about the launch of Winter Sabbatical: The Conception in Week 2 of semester. It will be a week of fun, shenanigans and lots of activities! Make sure you come and check it out! We have also been planning the first ever

Activities Night, a night of great live music and cheap drinks. It will be held on August 23rd and the headline acts will be Stonefield and Owl Eyes. Tickets will be \$25 for MSA card holders and \$30 for non-MSA card holders. MSA Unearthed will also be running on Wednesdays 1pm-2pm in the Airport Lounge during Semester 2. So if you are in a band, or a solo act, and want to play, make sure you contact us at msa-activities@monash.edu.

Women's Department

The Women's Departments is currently in the process of organising Blue Stockings Week, which will be held from the 6th to the 10th of August. Blue Stockings Week was originally a protest movement by middle class women in the UK, who were denied the opportunity to attend university due to their gender. These women started forming literary societies to educate themselves, and fought for women's access to higher education. Today, Blue Stockings Week is used to campaign for more women in academia, and to rebel against the way society pigeonholes women according to their, class, race, sexuality and/or culture.

Events planned for the week are: Tuesday- a barbeque on the Menzies Lawn; Wednesday - a picnic with a visual representation of the difference between men and women in higher education, and Thursday - a talk by a Monash academic. Blue Stockings Week is being run in conjunction with the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) with help from the National Union of Students (NUS).

Kate James has resigned from her position as Women's Officer. A new Officer is due to be appointed as this edition goes to print.

SSAF NEGOTIATIONS REACH AN END

Melinda Bladier

A funding agreement between the University and the Monash Student Association (MSA) has still not been reached following the introduction of the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) at the beginning of this year. The SSAF, an amendment to the Higher Education Support Act which was passed by the Senate in late 2011, allows universities to charge students a fee of up to \$263 for the provision of student services. All domestic students at Monash will be charged this year, and the MSA has been in negotiations with the University since December about how the revenue will be distributed. Eight months down the track students are still unsure of

where their money is going, which begs the question: why hasn't this issue been resolved yet? Esther Hood, President of the MSA, says that the MSA is currently happy with the negotiation process with the University, stating that the parties have agreed on "a clear set of things that we have accepted". This set includes an increase in funding to the MSA, and the provision of further funds for projects such as renovating MSA spaces and shared staffing ventures. The specific details of the proposal are still confidential, but according to President Hood will be made publicly available soon.

For the majority of the year to date, there has been contention as to the amount of funding that the MSA would receive from the SSAF, with the MSA maintaining that the University's funding proposal was inadequate and damaging to the vitality of the MSA and the student services it provides. President Hood says that the nature of the negotiations has now changed, with discussions centering on the wording and the sentiment of the funding agreement drafted by the University rather than on financial objectives.

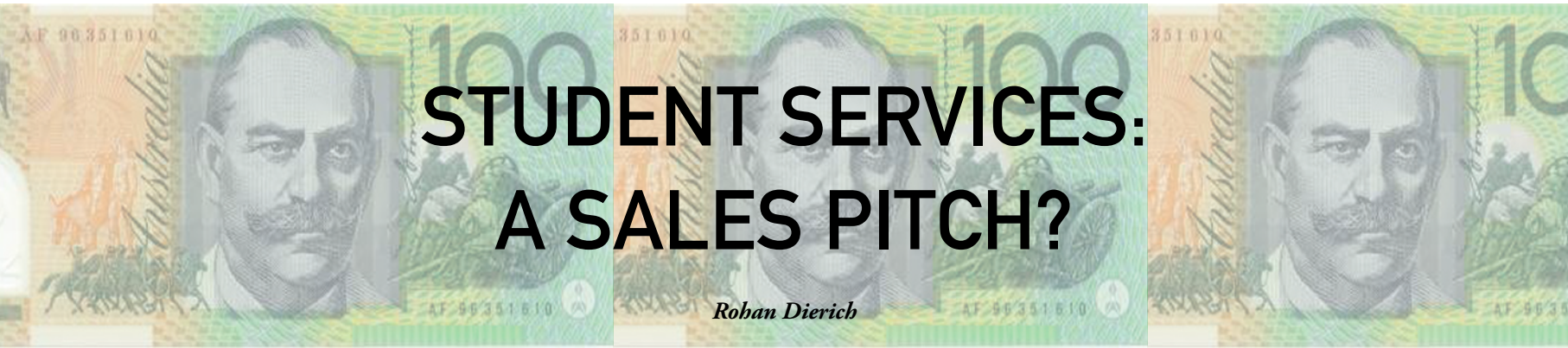
According to President Hood, a Supplementary Interim Funding Agreement recently proposed by the University contained sentiment which "didn't meet the sentiments of council [Monash Student Council]... it didn't have a pro union approach to funding, and seemed like an attempt to silence us as opposed to work with us into the future." The Agreement was rejected by the Monash Student Council (MSC) on these grounds, as well as the Agreement's failure to include CPI increases. A new agreement has been proposed by the University, but due to the inclusion of sentiment similar to that of the rejected agreement it is unlikely to be accepted.

Whilst negotiations continue as to the wording and sentiment of the agreement, the campaign

for further funding looks to have reached an end. "Council has democratically voted to accept the proposal," says President Hood, and whilst she admits that the levels of funding achieved through negotiations and the SSAF campaign run earlier in the year is "not a huge win", she is "satisfied in that I can look at the University, and the University feels that they haven't achieved as much as they want in the same way I don't believe we've achieved as much as we wanted". She adds that in her opinion the MSA "did everything we could," and that the magnitude of the MSA's achievement is still large considering the duration of the campaign and the actions taken. The University refused to comment on the negotiations.

The extenuated SSAF campaign saw an advertisement lobbying against the University placed in the mX newspaper, and a number of speak-outs held on campus. Despite the MSA having successfully gained additional funding through these tactics, there are some who believe that the action taken was not enough. A number of members of the Monash Student Council have persistently argued that the MSA's tactics to secure funding should have been bolder, and that more could have been achieved from the campaign had it been better organised with clear, well publicized objectives from the start.

There remains a lot of confusion amongst the student body about what the SSAF is and how it will benefit students. Had more students been aware of and engaged in the campaign it is likely that further pressure could have been put on the University, potentially achieving a different outcome. That one of the biggest funding issues of our times remains largely misunderstood is a sad indication of the struggles of the Student Association to engage students and prove its relevance to the community it sets out to serve.



The Microsoft Tech lounge, the first of its kind in Victoria, opened its doors on July 18 in time for the start of second semester at Monash University. Located downstairs in the Campus Centre facing the lemon scented lawns, the Tech Lounge is the fourth in series of such lounges rolled out by Microsoft on Australian university campuses.

The agreement between the software giant and Monash is a joint partnership between the University - who will provide the space and pay operational and staffing costs - and Microsoft, who have provided funding of \$150,000 to renovate the space and a further \$50,000 worth of their own products. The Monash Student Association (MSA), the student body usually tasked with the provision of student services, has been reduced to a passive bystander, meekly applauding the corporate partnership and reaffirming their own impotence.

A motion opposing the creation of the corporate-sponsored student lounge was put forward at a Monash Student Council meeting held on 29 June, but was voted down by the current MSA administration, dominated by the political grouping Go! This is surprising given that the MSA's 'Monash WTF' campaign had as its central focus the opposition of university-run student services, highlighting that fact that nobody can provide better services to students than students themselves. Ignoring your own campaign is surely the fast-lane to irrelevance. Who is going to have confidence in you if you don't?

Members of the University administration showed pride at having secured the perceived beneficence of the software mogul. "Monash is very fortunate to get the Tech Lounge for Victoria," while also unofficially acknowledging the venture as "a new way of marketing for Microsoft." It's student services with a profit

motive; relax and be subtly marketed to.

The lounge is a veritable feast of technology, a diverse palette of devices giving users an immersive Microsoft experience. The lucky lounge can interact with any of the seventeen laptops and three desktop computers running Microsoft's Windows 7, experience the web with Microsoft Internet Explorer, or "Kinect "© Microsoft with their friends, who are standing right next to them, using two wall-mounted XBOX 360s. There are even mobile phones, boast-

***"So what's next?
PriceWaterHouseCooper's School of Business?
McWholefoods (already underway) or your
Westpac Second Semester©?"***

ing the world's fifth most popular mobile phone operating system, Windows Mobile, to play with. Could such a lounge provide the open student forum that such a space should be?

Many will think along the lines of 'well I think it looks good, there's lots of cool stuff and it's better to have it than not.' But where does this corporate alliance end? While higher education has traditionally been a largely publicly funded venture, phenomena such as the 'Freehills Law Library' at the Universities of NSW and Sydney tell a different story. Universities are the new infomercials; their buildings are becoming banner ads and their student services show great product exposure potential. Students at Macquarie University in NSW automatically get Commonwealth Bank accounts linked to their student cards, while ANZ has secured the patronage of our peers at University of Sydney, who also got the Tech Lounge last

year. So what's next? PriceWaterHouseCooper's School of Business? McWholefoods (already underway) or your Westpac Second Semester©? A little student lounge may seem trivial, but one edge of the wedge must be small and seemingly irrelevant to get in under the door. I don't know about you, but I don't want to be one of the proud AAMI Graduates* of 2014.

A student space is a great initiative that paints the picture of an informal environment where students can come together in a relaxing atmosphere, free of subliminal hints and subconscious emotional programming. Such a space could host meetings and discussions on a wide range of student, social or political issues or could be used to host events as needed or deemed necessary by the student body. Something we can all take ownership of, and have a say in. What better way to spend some of the SSAF - which we all have to pay - than on a space which has an agenda of student well-being and empowerment, as opposed to the 'every word implied but never said' marketing motive of a corporate alliance.



VICTORY FOR ACTIVISM ON CAMPUS

Constantinos Karavias

Activists created the Monash Student Association; for all student unions including the MSA to be strong and vibrant, activism must continue to play a vital role. Unfortunately, the MSA Executive, along with a couple of their supporters, recently mounted an attack on activism at Monash, attempting to shut down the Activist Space. They were opposed by several honourable student representatives, including the Environmental and Social Justice Officer, the Male Queer Officer, and the office-bearers for Education (Academic Affairs), Activities and Welfare.

Located on the second floor of the Campus Centre, the Activist Space is used by a plethora of social justice and environment-based groups at Monash, including the Monash Refugee Action Collective, Students for Palestine, Left Action and Socialist Alternative. It is open to all students at all hours of the day, and remains a hub of progressive discussion and organisation in what can often be a rather right wing environment.

That elements within Go!, the student ticket dominated by Labor students, wanted it shut down is unsurprising. Their non-participation in on-campus activism is unrivalled. None of them, for instance, attended World Refugee Day, a march a thousand strong through the city for refugee rights – and this at a time when the inhumane policies of the Labor Party have resulted in the deaths of hundreds of refugees at sea and a resurgence of refugee rights to the forefront of public consciousness.

These are rights that can only be fought for by campaigning, by enlisting likeminded people who will struggle for social justice. This is tough if the student union is unwilling to allow these people even one room in which to meet, organize and discuss.

However, the activist space was secured, won in an 11-4 vote after hours of argument during Monash Student Council. Its defence was headed not only by Monash's sole progressive ticket Left Action in collaboration with the recently elected Education (Academic Affairs) officer; members of the Go! caucus voting in support of the survival of the Activist Space led to the relative isolation of the MSA Executive and the defeat of the motion.

Student run student services are continually restricted by a university bureaucracy focussed on turning our education into a machine for profit. The justification for getting rid of the Activist Space was that it would be subsumed in the restructuring of offices to make space for a student counsellor. This ignores the fact that such space could easily be found if the University and those heading the union were willing. The arguments in the defence of the Activist Space were never against the union expanding the outreach of its student services – Left Action has time and again called for student run student services in the face of students' money for SSAF being appropriated by the bureaucracy for the bureaucracy, and recently staged a protest outside a luncheon hosted by the Vice-Chancellor. An increase in counselling services at the University does not necessitate an attack on the existence of social justice activities and facilities on campus. Furthermore, any increase in student run student services would be undermined by undercutting students' abilities to organise and discuss, which is exactly what those who attacked the Activist Space attempted to do.

The fight for the Activist Space was won, but, as student elections approach, the battle for student representatives willing to fight for a progressive student body and grass-roots activism at Monash remains in its infancy. Attempting to shut the Activist Space coincides with the University's agenda of stifling student activism, and with the Government and University administration continuing to squeeze money out of students and inhibit activism, we need to band together to fight for what we have. While we follow the growing calls for revolution in Greece and Spain and the uprisings against dictators waged throughout the Middle-East, it is worth remembering that for months now in Quebec, hundreds of thousands have been mobilising daily, sparked by student protests against fee increases. Activism made the MSA, and with the Activist Space intact, it can salvage it.

Those interested in a more left-wing student union should contact the Environmental and Social Justice Officer, Laura Riccardi: 0401315387. Constantinos Karavias is a member of MRAC, Socialist Alternative and Left Action.



Ridah Hassan and Yasemin Shamsili from Left Action

AN EMPTY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Shawn Andrews, the MSA's Indigenous Officer, explores the tokenistic nature of the acknowledgement of country

When I first arrived at Monash University I was overwhelmed by the sheer size of the Clayton campus. Walking into my first class was a daunting prospect; the tension in the air, the anticipation, the blank looks on people's faces - it was exciting and overwhelming. I know that first week of semester isn't that scary; in my experience it is generally pointless as most of the lecture time is spent looking over the unit guide, and the tutorials are full of stupid questions surrounding exams and assessments. Personally, the most daunting aspect of my first ever university class was the acknowledgment of country. Since entering university I have often witnessed lecturers hastily read Acknowledgements of Country and pay tribute to ancestors that most of them have probably never thought of. It is a tokenistic approach to dealing with real Indigenous issues, and something that really grinds my gears.

During my first week of University I was part of several conversations that revolved around the Acknowledgement of Country and paying respect to elders. My new found friends saw it as a waste of time and didn't understand its meaning. Now used as a form of political correctness, the Acknowledgement of Country is often misunderstood and taken out of context. It is not said to make Indigenous people feel welcome at Uni, nor is it meant to make non-Indigenous people feel welcome on Indigenous lands; it is only said because institutions feel that it is the polite thing to do. Although it is a respectful notion, very few people I have spoken with seem to understand what an acknowledgment represents or where it comes from.

Historically you could not enter another Indigenous person's country without being welcomed by the traditional owners of that country. For the people from my country, the process would begin with lighting a fire on the edge of the country that you wanted to enter. Once a fire was lit you would wait for a group of people from that country to come and visit.

There would be a process of negotiation, respects would be exchanged and the traditional owners of that land would give you a skin name. Once you had a skin name you were free to travel across their country without fear of being killed or having bad spirits. This particular process of being welcomed into a country was how my people did it and could be different for other Indigenous people.

Another major issue with the Acknowledgement of Country is the sheer number of Indigenous countries that exist in Australia. Last time I checked, there were over two hundred Indigenous countries with their own dialects and laws. Most Australians I know are unaware of this, and are shocked when they realise just how many countries there are. Because of the number of Indigenous countries, and the access we have to efficient transport, it is impossible to be welcomed into each country we travel through. A simple drive from Frankston to Geelong would involve three welcomes as the trip would cross over three Indigenous countries.

“As an initiated Indigenous man, Acknowledgement of Country means nothing if the people who hear it have no idea what it means or who it represents”

So why do we need an Acknowledgment of Country at the start of every Monash University unit? Because it's the nice thing to do, it acknowledges the traditional owners, and makes everyone feel like they are making changes for a better world; it's a bit like holding someone's hand and walking over a bridge for reconciliation. What a load of crap. As an initiated Indigenous man, Acknowledgement of Country means nothing if the people who hear

it have no idea what it means or who it represents. What adds to the frustration is how little people actually know about us. Firstly, Indigenous people are everywhere in Australia; there is a large number of proud Indigenous people who live throughout Melbourne. Secondly, we aren't all black with wide noses and curly black hair; there is a reason for this and it is called the white Australia policy. Thirdly, we are a culture of people, not a race of people; we are family orientated and highly social.

The thing that really upsets me is when people think that an Acknowledgement of Country suggests that things are heading in the right direction for Indigenous people. If you think things are being fixed, consider my story. I am one of eight children, sixty cousins and nine sets of aunts and uncles. I am the only person in my family, with exception of my younger brother, to make it past year nine. Most of my aunts and uncles and several of my cousins are dead. Twelve of my cousins are in jail. My life expectancy is twenty years less than for non-Indigenous people. The day of reconciliation march, while the media was showing how happy everyone was, I was at the funeral of a four year old Indigenous girl who had died because her mother didn't trust the doctors. It's ok though, I am lucky. I am at uni, and compared to most people in my family I am wealthy.

The problem with the Acknowledgement of Country at University is that most people there know very little about Indigenous people and culture. The acknowledgement means well, but it fails to educate non-Indigenous people on the real issues that face my people. Tokenistic gestures are one of these issues, as they create a false perception that institutions really care or understand my people. So next time you hear an Acknowledgement of Country you can rest easy thinking that everything is better now, or you can challenge the person giving the acknowledgement to do something real.



I found Wholefoods in my second year at Monash in 2007, and immediately fell in love. With the people, the atmosphere, the low-cost food, the couches that used to be on the balcony, and with the idea that a restaurant could be student-run, volunteer-based and collectively organized, even in this corporate day and age.

The previous year I'd spent most of my free time between classes sitting alone in a little aerie on the fifth floor of the Menzies Building, taciturn and isolated. One year later at Wholefoods I was constantly surrounded by friends and always meeting new people. I've made so many enduring friendships at Wholefoods that I can hardly imagine what my life would be like without it.

Yet the possibility of Monash without Wholefoods looms ominously on the horizon.

Over the last six years the Monash Student Association (MSA) executives – all from the student political group Go! – have progressively stripped the Wholefoods Collective of all decision-making power to the point where they have none remaining. Yet according to the Wholefoods and MSA constitutions, the Collective is meant to be a part of all decisions involving the restaurant.

The Wholefoods Collective is the nucleus that holds the Wholefoods community together, and an empowered and autonomous Collective is necessary to safeguard the principle that Wholefoods should cater to student interests, rather than those of the profit-obsessed MSA and Monash University administrations.

Volunteers are equally as essential, not only because they keep food prices down by reducing the need for paid workers, but because students are much more likely to eat and spend time at Wholefoods if they feel like a part of the restaurant and an active ingredient in what makes it so special. However, at the start of this year, Monash Student Council dissolved the Wholefoods volunteer program for reasons with no discernable logic.

Every decision the MSA Executives have made over the objections of the Wholefoods Collective seem to negatively impact the viability of Wholefoods as a business, threaten its ethos, and alienate its customer base. As a result, Wholefoods has made a greater and greater loss each year since 2007. And yet the MSA executives have the gall to blame the Collective for declining profits.

“The Wholefoods Collective is the nucleus that holds the Wholefoods community together”

In the second edition of Lot's Wife 2012, the MSA President informed us that she is negotiating for \$200,000 to 'redevelop' Wholefoods. This idea makes me fall into a deep dark whirlpool of sorrow. But it also makes me angry enough to do something about it. And I know there are lots of you out there who feel the same way.

A group has already formed calling themselves Friends of Wholefoods, dedicated to saving Wholefoods and reasserting its core values. They will be distributing a zine entitled *The Whole Story*, which contains a detailed recent history of Wholefoods restaurant, and maintaining a blog at savewholefoods.com (as well as many other activities), all in an effort to get enough signatures for a petition to hold a Student General Meeting about

this issue.

All of us who care about Wholefoods must get involved or what we care about will wither and die. A Student General Meeting has the power to direct Monash Student Council to reinstate the Wholefoods Collective with operational and administrative control of Wholefoods.

This has happened before. In 1997-98, Monash Student Council abolished the Wholefoods Collective and volunteer system, and re-wrote the constitution. But then, as now, a group called Friends of Wholefoods rose up. They organised a Student General Meeting to make the student body heard, and the spirit of Wholefoods was saved.

We can do this. History is on our side.



MSA: FAILING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS?

Ali Majokab

In 2010, about 21% of students enrolled at Monash's Clayton campus were international students. International students are one of the most vulnerable student groups on campus, and are understandably in need of a substantial amount of support to adjust to a new cultural, social and academic environment. International students face many challenges associated with moving to a new country, including adapting to new learning styles and environments as well as the requirement to use English as the primary language of academic communication. Studies have shown that 'personal loneliness, both routine and profound, are often endemic to the international student experience' due to cultural isolation and difficulty in adjusting to new surroundings. Social isolation has the potential to 'shape the possibilities and limits of academic learning' as well as affecting the safety and well-being of international students. (1).

Given this, it would be fair to expect that the Monash Student Association (MSA) would be doing its utmost to ensure that international students are adequately supported. The MSA's Student Rights Office is often visited by international students seeking support. Furthermore, the number of international students facing disciplinary action by the University (for not meeting their study requirements) is disproportionately higher than for their local counterparts. Unfortunately, recent decisions by the MSA administration seem to indicate that the pressing need for international student services is not being met.

Monash University International Students Service (MUISS) is a division of the MSA that exists to provide support to and protect the rights of international students. When MUISS first became part of the MSA in 1995, a full-time staff member was employed to work as the Divisional Support Officer (DSO). The DSO's role was to assist the work of the annually elected MUISS Committee and to generally provide support for activities and events as well as for any issues that international students may be facing.

In 2008 May Garcia, after having served for over half a decade as DSO, stopped working at MUISS and the position was reduced to three days a week. Vincent Goh was appointed as the DSO for MUISS in 2009, and remained in the position until his resignation in March this year. Since March, no new staff member has been appointed to work exclusively for MUISS. Instead, the MSA's Office Administrator (who is already employed full-time to do administration work) has been given the additional responsibility of supporting MUISS.

It is unclear who made the decision to put MUISS-support as an add-on to the responsibilities of a staff member who is already full-time, or what the rationale behind it was. The Monash Student Council (MSC), which is supposed to be the managing body of the MSA, had no input into the decision and was not even informed of the decision as per minutes of MSC meetings this year, nor was any approval or endorsement sought from the MUISS Committee.

Having a staff member is particularly critical to MUISS' work, as all members of the MUISS committee are international students. As such, they are not permitted to decrease their study load to part-time even if they become elected student representatives. MUISS committee members are not paid for their time by the MSA, have work restrictions due to their visa-type (and so find it difficult to get sufficient paid work externally), and pay an exorbitant amount of money in fees. These restrictions make it hugely difficult for international students to find large amounts of time to dedicate to extra-curricular and non-work related activities. As such, the existence of a dedicated MUISS staff member is important to ensure the vitality of MUISS and uphold high standards of support.

Arriving in a new country where you know nobody, have no family or friends, find the local language difficult to speak, suffer financial difficulty and are faced with a culture and society vastly differ-

ent to the one you grew up in can be a difficult and, without the right support, traumatic experience. Add to this the responsibility of becoming an elected student representative and being expected to look after the welfare and rights of other international students, and it is possible to begin to understand the pressures MUISS committee members face. Committee members are additionally expected to organise events, activities and information sessions while studying full time. Being expected to do this without payment and, most importantly, without significant staff support, places a burden on the shoulders of students who are already negotiating a huge array of challenges.

In comparison to international students, local students involved with the MSA and its committees do not need to pay any fees upfront, have no special work restrictions and have the right to study part-time or even go on intermission after being elected. Most local students elected as Office Bearers of the MSA do reduce their study load or take intermission in order to devote the necessary time to their duties as student representatives. In addition, Office Bearers are paid an honorarium by the MSA to help cover their living expenses.

Why a designated MUISS staff member is no longer employed by the MSA is unclear. What is clear is that if the MSA endeavours to hold true to its obligations to support students, it is essential that the MSA ensures that the framework exists for students to be supported. Until a MUISS staff member is re-employed, the negative effects on international students, already burdened by an exploitative system, will go unabated.

Ali Majokab is the Education (Academic Affairs) Officer at the MSA

(1) Sawir et al., 'Loneliness and International Students', *Journal of Studies in International Education*, Vol. XX, No. X, 2007, pp. 2-3.

THE SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES, CULTURES AND LINGUISTICS: WHY THE CHANGES?

Olivia Tolich

Ni hao! Ogenki desuka? Oui, ça va, ça va. Come ti chiami? The school of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics (LCL) is one of the cornerstones of the Faculty of Arts at Monash Clayton. Thousands of students across all faculties choose to study in LCL, which encompasses units on 11 languages, linguistics, cultural studies and translation, and employs over 60 fulltime staff. Therefore, any changes made to the school affect a significant number of people, students and staff alike. In the last year many changes have been made that have gone largely unexplained by the school; many students have found themselves asking questions such as: Where have all my culture electives gone? Why is my culture component now worth 50% of my mark? Why have my assessments changed? What the hell has happened here?!

According to Rita Wilson, the head of the LCL school, LCL has enacted changes in hope of becoming “the best language school in the country” and improving the output of its students and enhancing their employability. Changes include the introduction of the Common European Frame of Reference (CFR), an internationally recognised system that ensures that courses match the outcomes stipulated by course guides. It is believed that these changes will make it easier for employers to identify whether potential employees have the requisite capabilities, and will place Monash at the international benchmark for language education.

The CRF has been contextualized for Australians, and will ideally guarantee that, for example, French Studies Advanced 4 students reach the requirement of “advanced knowledge and understanding of modern and contemporary France and its culture” as detailed in the course guide. Certain areas of assessment have been altered to ensure that these outcomes are met. Culture components in many language units are now worth 50% of the final mark and the courses are “less passive” and “less information driven now”, with increased emphasis on skills and concepts. Students

can also expect a heavier focus on technology in the classroom, with the introduction of e-seminars with other universities which allow language students across Australia and the world to interact and learn together. From 2013, students will be able to enroll in new ‘Connecting Communities’ units which aim to make courses more interactive using free and accessible tools. This is known as the international at-home experience, and is designed for those who are unable or unwilling to go on exchange. The overall desired effect is a “richer offering” for students.

Evidently, many changes to LCL have been implemented very quickly. Surprisingly, despite the haste with which the school made the changes, students’ reactions have been considered. Every unit evaluation submitted by LCL students in 2011 was read by the school, and this is a process that they intend to continue in 2013. However, given that many students do not understand the reasons behind the changes to the department, many have been confused and angered by the sudden transformations.

Dr. Wilson openly admits that the school has not been as forthcoming with information to students as it perhaps needed to be, and asserts that being explicit with students is one of the many “teething problems” of the changes that requires ironing out. Whilst the department understands why the changes are occurring, they “cannot make assumptions as to what students know” and aim to create more visibility. Even LCL staff have had difficulties with the adjustments, with many finding the rapidity tough and anxiety inducing. Despite the issues, Dr. Wilson affirms that the department is “pretty happy” with the rollout thus far, and anticipates further success with the alterations.

According to the LCL website, the study of second



or even third or fourth languages is important because “knowing other languages is a way of respecting other peoples and cultures and being a good citizen of our many-cultured world”.

Dr Wilson asserts that the school treats any student under their umbrella as a possible major student, and attempts to engage every individual from the beginning. She states that the new framework of the LCL school is designed to reiterate the “employability benefits of sticking with a language to the end”, to give Monash students a competitive edge in the global marketplace. Essentially, in the race for the decreasing number of jobs for university graduates, having a second or third language at a professional level can increase chances of employment. Although the end-game is not their only focus, the new CFR-aligned courses aim to tell students exactly what they can do with the language level they achieve.

As a student who has been directly affected by the chaos in LCL I am still a little unsure of the changes. However, it is comforting to know some of the rationale behind them, and that the changes are not as haphazard and impulsive as they initially appeared. It will be interesting to see how the university conveys this information to students, and whether the changes will produce the desired outcomes.

LECTURER PROFILE

PAUL THOMAS

Position:

Coordinator of the Indonesian Program in the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics

Credentials:

PhD – enrolled – Translation Studies, Monash University
Master of Arts, Applied Linguistics, Melbourne University
Bachelor of Education, Adelaide University
Associate Diploma Applied Science, University of South Australia
NAATI Professional Level Translator (Indonesian-English)

How long have you been at Monash and what brought you here?

Ooh, that’s embarrassing! I think 1993 would have been around the first year that I came here. I was teaching with the Australian Defence Forces and I was offered the opportunity to teach this broader range of students, and also the opportunity to do research. Before my work with the Defence Forces I was with the University of South Australia; a lot of the work I was doing there was in curriculum design and acquisition of language. Before that I worked in Singapore where I designed and taught language programs... before that Indonesia.

What is your PhD focused on?

My PhD is really a series of papers on the history of communication between Australia and Indonesia and the Malay world. It starts from the 18th century and goes through to the 21st. At the centre of that, is that I’m looking at it from a translation perspective.

You have particular research interests in the cultural and political role of translation in journalism. Could you talk a little about this?
Do we listen to Indonesian songs, do we watch In-



doneasian films? No and no. So where is our point of contact with Indonesia? It’s through journalism and learning Indonesian in schools. We can get Indonesian views through journalism, but it’s going to have to be translated if we really want to get those views. We can do it, Indonesians can do it, but with every step away from the source that news can get distorted. We need to look at what’s happening in that news; the press relationship with Indonesia is fascinating. We need journalists who are multilingual.

Is there something in particular that draws you to languages?

It’s the adventure of another culture, and that there are these parallel universes – that’s how I see it. I wasn’t that intrigued by the linguistic aspects [of languages]; I was interested in communication and the history between cultures, and the way cultures interact with each other.

Whether you learn a language or not is a strange question for Australians. It’s quite unique here, because it’s not something that is questioned anywhere else in the world. For some reason here in Australia we feel that we have to make the decision whether we need to study languages or not – it’s a cultural trait which all Australians seem to have. It’s an important attribute that people should have because it’s the only way that we can communicate with the cultures around us.

Are there particular benefits to be gained from studying Indonesian?

I think in Australia, it helps us define who we are. We can only define ourselves from who we aren’t,

and the waters that surround us are important in that way. There’s a huge benefit then. Without that language we’re locked out. We can only speak to relatively wealthy, educated city Indonesians, urban Indonesians [who speak English]. And that’s a bit of a problem.

Could language proficiency have further ramifications for diplomatic relations?

When we learn a language we learn about that culture and that nation. And Australians, whether they want to or not, have to make decisions about our relationship with Indonesia. We have to make political decisions. If we remain ignorant about this country, which we have a very complex relationship with, we’re not ready to make those decisions.

What has been the highlight of your academic career so far?

I think part of it was the design of the Indonesian curriculum; I’d never done such a complete course, going over 3 years at a university level. Integrating new technology into that curriculum... that would be the highlight from the teaching point of view. In terms of research, probably just recently getting this series of papers on the history of communication published– I just completed a publication on an interpreter who worked in Australia in the 19th century. We don’t think of Australia as a multilingual during this period of time; he was a Malay interpreter and this was the first attempt Australia made to interact with Indonesians or Malay as we call them. I liked those personal stories and being able to tell those stories, and a lot of people wanted to know about them.

MONASH DEBATERS CONTINUE DOMINANCE

Jacqueline Duong

The Monash Association of Debaters (MAD) has continued its dominant run of intervarsity success, taking out the Australasian Intersvarsity Debating Championships (affectionately known as Australs) over the semester break. The win at Australs, which was this year held in Wellington, New Zealand, has cemented MAD’s status as the best debating society in the Southern Hemisphere following the club’s triumph at the World Universities Debating Championships (WUDC) earlier in the year.

Monash made history at Australs, becoming the first institution to send two teams into the grand final. Monash 1, consisting of Kiran Iyer, Madeline Schultz and Chris Bisset, defeated Monash 2, Gemma Buckley, James Beavis and Colette Mintz, arguing on the topic “That we should introduce good Samaritan laws.” The debate was an incredibly tightly contested affair, and the five-four split amongst the nine-person adjudication panel was indicative of this.

Individual achievements sweetened MAD’s success with Chris Bisset being crowned best speaker of the competition and taking home the Martin Sorenson

Trophy. Kiran Iyer was awarded the Jock Faneslow Trophy for best speaker in the grand final.

This victory continues a proud history of success at the club. MAD has made the Australs grand final fourteen times, and won the competition nine times.



Monash 1: Kiran Iyer, Madeline Schultz and Chris Bisset
Photo credit: Allan Quanchi

It is also the reigning back-to-back WUDC Champion of 2011 and 2012

Australs is the second largest international debating competition behind WUDC. More than 300 students from countries as diverse as Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Australia and New Zealand participated in this year’s competition. Teams competed in eight preliminary rounds, debating topics including international peace and security, ethics, economics and social policy before the top 16 teams went through to the finals competition.

MAD sent six teams to the competition, all of whom finished inside the top 30. Four of MAD’s adjudicators also qualified to judge the finals series, making 2012 an incredibly successful Australs campaign.

Former MAD president and current Australasian and World champion Kiran Iyer said he was incredibly proud of the contingent. “To have the grand-final contested solely by Monash debaters is a remarkable achievement.”

Industry related experience is vital regardless of which sector graduates wish to work in. International Aid and Development work is available in Government, NGO, commercial and academic and research sectors, and skills are often transferrable. Each sector offers exciting opportunities, and it is key that students adequately research these in order to create targeted job applications.

ECD offers a range of materials for those wishing to investigate the field, as well as information on finding professional jobs outside of Australia. Whilst pursuing overseas employment, particularly in high pressure fields such as International Aid and Development, can be daunting, rewards can be high. The Department stresses that research and preparing documentation early are essential for those wishing to relocate. Ensuring adequate related experience through volunteering, internships or research can also substantially ease the relocation process.

autonomy. Proficiency in a second language is another asset which many employers look for. For many aid and development roles language proficiency is essential for integration into local communities.

The Department also recommends engaging in volunteer work, which they say provides people with an opportunity to demonstrate practical skills. Volunteering can occur on a local level or internationally. The requirements for volunteer positions can vary hugely from organisation to organisation, with some requiring nothing more than enthusiasm and basic education certificates, and others stipulating that candidates must have obtained tertiary degrees and have other role-specific qualifications. Internships are another highly popular source of experience in the field; organisations such as the United Nations and Oxfam have regular internship opportunities, as do Government bodies such as the Department of Foreign Affairs.

I WANT TO WORK IN INTERNATIONAL AID AND DEVELOPMENT. NOW WHAT?

Amy Tanner

Working in International Aid and Development is something that many people aspire to. You need only look to the number of students studying international relations at an undergraduate level at Monash to recognise that the field is hugely popular. Work in the sector often entails travel, experiencing different cultures and working in high pressure environments to navigate quickly developing situations. Jobs in international relations are highly sought after, and consequently the application process is highly competitive.

The Employment and Careers Department (ECD) at Monash offers a range of advice for students serious about pursuing the field. They advise that employers often look for not only outstanding academic results, but also extracurricular activities which demonstrate genuine interest in the sector. Independent travel, for example, is something that many students enjoy and also demonstrates an individual’s adaptability and

IT IS RIGHT TO REBEL

James Grout reviews this insiders’ account of student activism

“We assert that it is right to rebel, that it is right to struggle for a better society; for a socialist society.”

It is Right to Rebel tells the stories of student political struggles at Monash University in the 1960s and early 1970s. Published in 1972, *Rebel*’s precise authorship is not clear, although it would be reasonable to assume that its makers were, like the student and chief editor Michael Hyde, actively involved in the more radical revolutionary-socialist aspect of the first student political movement(s) considered in the book.

Rebel can be read as a history of the development of student politics at Monash, particularly the Maoist (Marxist-Leninist) trend adopted by the infamous Monash Labour Club and its radicalising influence over the early student movement more broadly. In many ways the book offers unique ‘insider’ perspectives on the mass student unrest, dissent and uprisings that characterised Monash in its formative decades. More specifically, *Rebel* presents accounts from the more prominent organisers and participants in those student protests and demonstrations, namely the radical Labour Club activists – those who the mainstream press and other authority figures of the day referred to as the ‘ratbags’, ‘idiotic vandals’, ‘nuts’, ‘pack-raping bikies’, ‘rabble’, ‘bastards’, ‘bums’, ‘wasters of taxpayer’s money’, and ‘communist lunatics.’

The main theme of *Rebel*, as the title suggests, is rebellion. It is a book about how and why students organised themselves, argued, debated, mobilised and exercised their united power against the authorities of their age (namely the government and University Administration) in the 1960s and early 1970s. As such, the description and analysis focuses on the circumstantial issues of the American and Australian War in Vietnam (conscription), University disciplinary policies (excluding and expelling students for off-campus political activity) and the anti-Apartheid campaign (the South African Rugby team tour). *Rebel* represents the growth of students’ anti-authoritarianism, from publicly questioning those in power – challenging

the merit of administrators’ arguments and demanding more reasonable and democratic tertiary policies – to actively demonstrating against the authorities, disobeying their rules, statutes, laws and orders, obstructing conventional university practices and attempting to subvert unreasonable and repressive political conditions imposed upon the student body. It considers development in political activist strategies from attempting verbal negotiation to ‘direct action’.

Primarily, it was the Monash University Administration and Australian governments at both State and Federal levels which earned the ire of the student masses during this period. Those authorities bore the brunt of that ire in the form of critical pamphlets and broadsheets, news media satire, protest placards, marches, picket lines, “sit-ins” and occupations.

However, the established student governing body at Monash in the 1960s, the Student Representative Council, also came under intense pressure from students and its authority was decisively dissolved in 1968 when it was replaced with the more democratic participatory model of the Monash Association of Students.

Undoubtedly the Labour Club and other more radical student activists played no small role in bringing about this structural transformation of the student union. Indeed, the Labor Club, with its radical political ideas and activities is described (tongue in cheek) in the book’s glossary as:

“A band of anarchistic agitators (‘Herald’), communistic in their sympathies, many alien in their origins, depriving good Australians of their rightful place in University (‘Gippsland Times’). This group of ‘long-haired, uncouth, unwashed, uncultured, rat-bags’ (State Parliament) forms the local cell of the International-Bolshevik-Zionist-Flouridisationist-Conspiracy, dedicated to fighting against Truth, Justice and the American Way.”

In any case, class and the notion of the student-worker predicament plays a fundamental role in the historical analysis presented in *Rebel* as it draws directly from Marxist-Leninist ideas and employs plenty of socialist rhetoric in relating events. For the authors of *Rebel*, the Labor Club featured as a kind of ‘revolutionary vanguard’, and with its increasingly radical Maoist political agenda worked most effectively to radicalise the student body, raise political consciousness and generally inspire and facilitate rebellion with a view to the eventual overthrowing of the state capitalist system and realisation of a new socialist society.

One of the more memorable examples of student rebellion related in *Rebel* concerns an occupation or “sit-in” of the Monash University Administration buildings in protest against the Administration’s disciplinary policies, which had resulted in the expulsion of several students. This particular occupation prompted a senior administrator’s miscalculated attempt to dilute the radical nature of the student demands by cancelling all lectures, leading to a mass meeting of 5000 to 7000 students mostly sympathetic to and supportive of the “sit-in” cause!

No matter where you place yourself on the political spectrum, *Rebel* constitutes a stimulating read. Whether you consider yourself a dedicated ‘leftist-revolutionary’, a less avid ‘progressive socialist’, a fence hopping ‘liberal’, a cheerfully sceptical ‘conservative’, an asocial ‘neo-liberal’, or an un-categorisable, apolitical, chai latte sipping ‘anti-hipster’, *Rebel* represents an important treasure trove of student ideological heritage.

If you are interested in better understanding the present malaise of student politics and imagining a viable alternative to such a degenerate situation, or if you are simply after tantalising tales of our ‘revolting’ student predecessors, then reading *Rebel* will be worth your while.



It is a widely accepted fact that 98.74% of real life relationships do not play out the same way as those portrayed in romantic comedies, mainly because they happen in real life. When you’re travelling though, real life ceases to exist. Reality becomes a magical dream land where every day is filled with adventure, drinking alcohol before noon is entirely appropriate, and if you’re somewhere tropical, ridiculously good looking people are wearing ridiculously little. This is the perfect climate to dabble in a casual romantic pursuit or two. But don’t let the word casual fool you! These affairs often become bona fide Hollywood romances, complete with we-literally-just-met-but-I-think-I-love-you sequences, dramatic kisses in the middle of the warm ocean at 3am and glorious, bed breaking sex.

There are a couple of reasons a casual holiday fling can become such an intense affair. Time, or lack thereof, plays a critical role. You have to operate on a completely different time frame, as a matter of urgency. If you don’t, the opportunity will

“You must kiss/bed them right now or you will beat yourself up about it forever”

vanish right before your eyes. Normally wait three weeks before you sleep with someone? Make that three hours on holidays. THIS SHIT IS URGENT, GODDAMIT! The gorgeous, European creature you just met is about to disappear from your life! You must kiss/bed them right now or you will beat yourself up about it forever. And really, is there any better aphrodisiac than knowing that the other person must have you this very second, or they will live to regret it for the rest of their lives? I think not.

We can afford to act with such unbridled passion because while travelling, we become completely new people. Gone is the old, highly strung, obsessive you. You’re a citizen of the world now! A free spirit, roaming the earth, sharing the love! Gone too are the

constraints of real life. Can’t take anyone home in Melbourne because the idea of your parents finding you with a naked person in your bed makes you feel nauseous? Not an issue on holidays! Just take them back to your hotel room! Anything is possible in this magical dream land!

But the real reason holiday romances are the closest one can ever get to on-screen love is because they end before real life shit (busy schedules, third parties, flatulence problems) can get in the way. No complications, no hard feelings, you just both have to move on to your next destination. The drama doesn’t have to end here though. In your head, you can believe that the only thing keeping you apart is distance. One day, you will be miraculously reunited and it will be the greatest love story of all time, worthy of a Nicholas Sparks novel better than *The Notebook*.

You never know, it could happen. But at the very least, it’ll give you something to daydream about in the entire semester of classes that lie ahead of you.

Reality sucks.

misgivings. For now, the café is mostly undiscovered, and has only seen the quieter times of exam and holiday periods. Once semester starts, I suspect there will be queues filling the foyer of the Menzies, which is terrible news if you’re planning on nipping down for your strong ¾ soy latte in-between classes.

We can only wait and hope!

CAFE REVIEW: TASTE BAGUETTE

Rebecca Irvine

Exciting news, fellow caffeine compatriots! There’s a new café in the Menzies building, and it’s everything we’ve all been dreaming of. No longer do we need to fight crowds in the campus centre for our daily caffeination. Gone are the days of waiting half an hour for your coffee at Artichoke, or stumbling about in foreign parts of campus in search of Cinque Lire! In fact, lucky Arts students can arrive in the bus loop and grab a coffee

on the way to classes in the Menzies almost without breaking stride.

The new café, Taste Baguette, serves absolutely fantastic coffee which can be accompanied by an assortment of delicious pastries, brownies, macarons, as well as an impressive menu of baguettes. Soymilk connoisseurs will be pleased to learn that they also serve Bonsoy.

However, do not let your joy come without some

THE HITCHHIKER’S GUIDE TO THE FACULTY:

THE JOCK MARSHALL RESERVE, OR THAT PLACE WITH ALL THE TREES

Greetings, and welcome again to the exciting world of cross-campus travel. This month, we shall put on our explorer’s hats and leather boots (and copious amounts of insect repellent) and head off into the tumultuous jungle that lies to the north: The Jock Marshall Reserve.

This wet and wondrous place is little known outside the notoriously secretive field of Biology, and is likely passed unnoticed by the hundreds who flock to Clayton each morning. It is a place unlike any other, covered in scrubland, exotic grass swards, native trees, and was formerly filled with the most dangerous creatures known to man: *Thylogale Billardierii*. A thick fence surrounds the reserve, keeping these

vicious beasts (some call them “pademelons”) away from civilisation.

As I hoist myself over this mighty barrier, I am struck by the tranquility of the land. Birdsong filters through the mist, as the trees rustle and trucks scream by on the adjacent highway. After falling gracefully into the underbrush, I pull my machete from my belt and begin my dangerous exploration of the wild land. Many swings of my blade later, I find myself at the edge of an enormous lake, the size of which can only be compared to that of a midsize car park. Ducks paddle their way across its surface, quacking their worries away. I wish to join them.

Alas, I cannot accompany those mighty ducks, as night is quickly approaching. I set up my camp by the

lakeside, which as usual consisted of a prefabricated cabin, airlifted in. I spend a little time exploring my surrounding as the sun sets, but my little expedition is brought to a halt by the sudden appearance of a *Billardierii*. I quickly retreat to my shelter, losing my equipment in the underbrush.

I send this message via my trusty carrier pigeon in the hopes that other shall follow in my path. Hopefully bringing food. And water. And more insect repellent.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Captain Timothy Christopher Samuel Newport, Lord of All the Beasts of the Earth.

STUDENT HEALTH

Cat Poiani-Cordella provides an exercise regime for fitness beginners

Ever since I got my qualification as a gym instructor (almost a personal trainer!) friends have constantly asked me what they should do to get in shape. “Cat, how do I tone my bum?”, “How do I tighten my abs?”, “How do I get legs like Miranda Kerr?” To the latter I reply: genes! But to most other questions the answer is always eat well and exercise daily. For the most part you don’t need a gym membership to get fit, tone up and lose some extra kilos. Accidental exercise such as leaving the car in free parking and walking up to campus, getting off the bus a few stations before your usual stop or taking the stairs instead of the lift are a few great ways to supplement an exercise regime.

The best exercise regime is circuit training. It provides quick bursts of energy targeting multiple large muscles groups through a series of exercises, increasing both cardiovascular endurance and hypertrophy

(a fancy term for saying muscle growth). I’ve designed below a short 5-7 minute circuit for any fitness level. It targets your biceps, pectoralis, gluteus maximus, quadriceps, hamstrings and abdominals (the target areas many beginners want to tone) as well as increasing cardiovascular endurance.

- 2 min skipping:* you don’t necessarily have to do it with a rope if you don’t have one.
- 10 push ups:* Keep your head, chest and hips in alignment.
- 10 body weight squats:* Stick your bum out like you’re sitting on a chair and keep your chest lifted.
- 1 min stair run:* Run as quickly as you can up some stairs.
- 30 sec mountain climber:* Get into a plank position on your hands and bring your knee

towards the opposite elbow, alternating legs as quickly as possible without lifting your bum.

Repeat 3-5 times.
One set equals all 5 exercises.

If you are a beginner, take a 1-2 minute break in between each set. You should see results quite quickly if exercise is done in conjunction with a balanced diet. If you are more advanced, take a 30sec break between sets and use the circuit as part of your cardiovascular workout adjacent to a prescribed weights routine.

What I love about exercise is that not only is it a great way to get that gorgeously sculpted body, but it’s also a fantastic way of reducing stress. And who isn’t somewhat stressed in life with rent, work, uni and bills? Enjoy.



There are quite a number of things that comes to mind when you think about being a hooker. Most of these things are negative, with the obvious exception of the money you're earning. People think about being violated, about all the hookers with drug addictions, about rape and about being murdered and left in a gutter on the side of the street. All valid concerns, although all far, far less common than Hollywood and other media would have us believe. What I'd like to talk about this edition is the ways in which being a hooker has been surprisingly good for me. Since starting in the industry I have benefited from things I never expected to get out of being a hooker.

The first is the avenue for self exploration. I consider myself to be relatively disinterested in sex - to be fairly vanilla about it. But despite not wanting to have casual hook-ups with guys on Grindr, brothel work has taught me a lot about myself and allowed me to explore my feelings. As I mentioned earlier in the year, I've had threesomes and foursomes, I've experimented with BDSM and generally done some other weird things. It's incredibly unlikely that I would have had the confidence to try any of these things within the context of a relationship, so these are experiences I value for enriching my understanding of sex, and of myself. As a child my parents always used the same line whenever I didn't want to eat a new food, "How do you know you don't like it if you never try it?" Unlike new foods which you can pick up at the supermarket, or maybe a delicatessen or Asian grocery if you're feeling adventurous, sexual experiences aren't always easy to come by. And I can't think of any other environment that offers the variety of experience that brothel work can.

Possibly the most surprising upside of hookerdom is the effect it has had on my self esteem. With the perception of sex work as being a humiliating and degrading profession, I expected to find sex work incredibly taxing, particularly in light of my history of poor mental health. But instead I have found that it has given me the opportunity to work through a number of my insecurities, particularly those I held in relation to my body. Clients have no reason to lie to you. In fact, they have every reason to be incredibly judgmental, and in many cases they are (it's not unusual for clients who have decided not to book anyone to make comments to the managers along the lines of "God you've got an ugly lot on tonight").

"Alexandra is a tough bitch who isn't afraid of anything, but she shares my body and it's my body that she's undressing in front of John's hungry eyes"

When one of my friends or someone in the 'real world' pays me a compliment I find it very difficult to fully accept it. And I don't think this is a phenomenon in any way limited to me; I think it's quite a universal condition. But when a client tells me I'm beautiful or amazing I tend to question the compliment a lot less. Self esteem goes beyond simple compliments though; many clients are not that generous. The simple act of someone booking you is a huge confidence boost, especially when you do the

maths on how much they're spending simply for the privilege of your company. I've had a couple of clients pay near a grand in a single night. That's terrifying, but, let me tell you, it feels good.

Finally, being with a client forces you to develop confidence, and to develop the strength to be vulnerable in front of a complete stranger. Sure, you always have the protection of your sex worker persona, but that can only protect you so far. Alexandra is a tough bitch who isn't afraid of anything, but she shares my body and it's my body that she's undressing in front of John's hungry eyes. I used to be the kind of person who liked to wear a t-shirt while swimming and wouldn't wear shorts for fear of people seeing my legs. After a few clients, vulnerability just doesn't faze you anymore. The body that I used to be ashamed to let people see I've learnt to make men worship it. The tough assertive side of my personality that I have always kept hidden in most aspects of my life - I've learnt to let it loose and enjoy the ride. The sexual techniques I was too afraid to try - I have tied men up and whipped them until they came. Gosh that was a fun night.

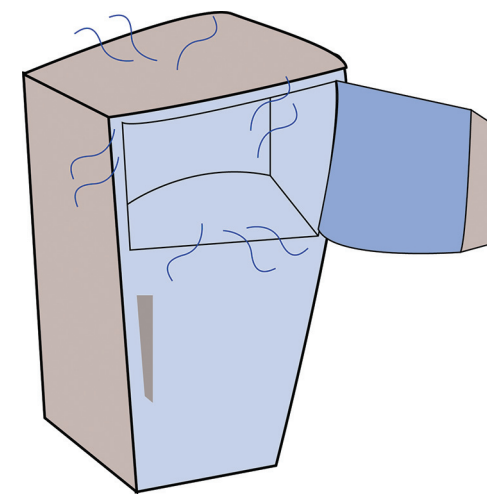
When I went in to sex work I went into it for the money; maybe a little bit because I thought it was badass, but mostly for the money. And yet I've grown so much as a person in the short time I've been working in the sex industry, in ways I could never have predicted. People say that God works in mysterious ways, but apparently the ungodly areas of our society are just as strange. And just because society sees prostitution as the bottom of the barrel doesn't mean there aren't some great things that can come from it.

Alexandra, a Monash student.

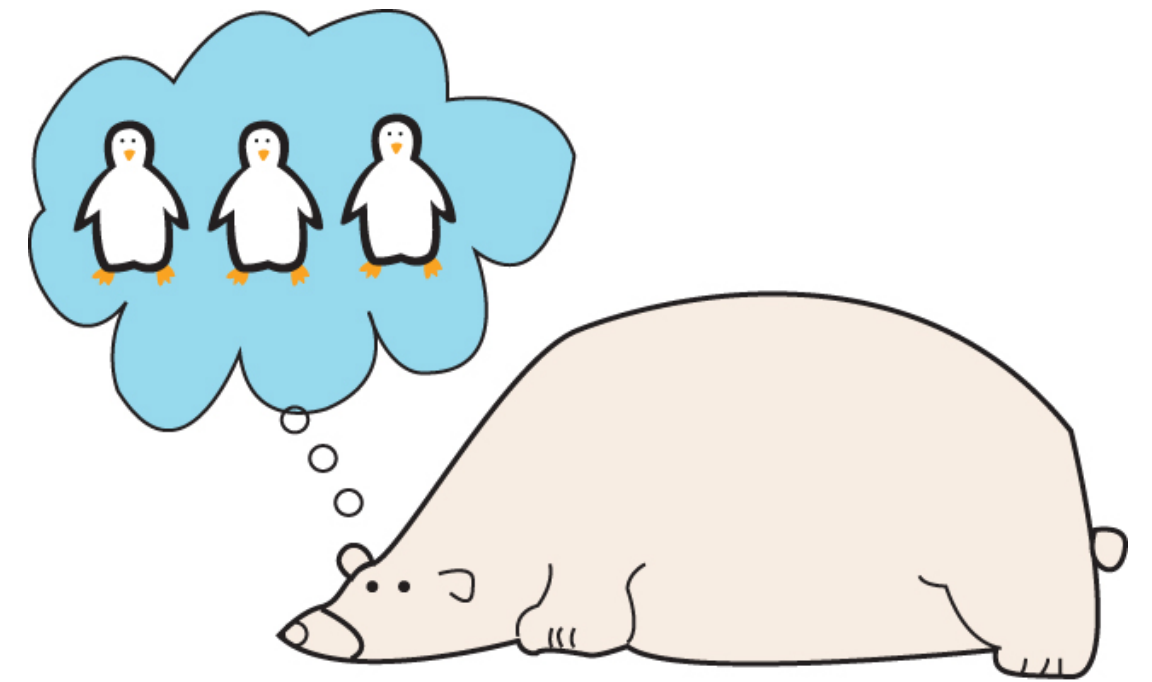
WINTER WARMERS

Eleanor Taylor

Winter is here, and as temperatures drop it's becoming increasingly hard to find ways to stay warm without spending a fortune on gas bills. Here is a selection of ways to heat up without any expense:



1 . Conditioning. Not the air kind, which is obviously not free, but the Bear Grylls, stamina kind. Make at least one journey a day to a nearby supermarket. Spend long periods of time in the freezer section, gradually extending the period of time you wait there, while decreasing your amount of protective clothing (within reason). Compared to the sub zero temperatures of the ice cream freezer, your home will feel warm.



2. Cease all hair removal. And stop going to the gym. How many arctic animals are toned and fuzz free? Think like a penguin. Become the polar bear.

3. Abduct warm, furry animals. Not other people's pets - that's probably frowned upon in most neighbourhoods. Go for wild, yet safe and fuzzy animals, like brush tailed possums or the leader of your local bikie gang. Abduction means you don't have to pay for their food and care, but you can still cuddle them for an afternoon - then return them to the wild.

4. Share a bed. Similar reasoning to above - two sets of body heat? Much better than one.

5. Know someone with a dog? Offer to groom it. Over an extended period of time, you can accumulate enough fur to make yourself a sweater - for free. Yes, pet fur sweaters are a real thing - Google it.



MELBOURNE'S PIRATE TREASURES

FIVE OFF-THE-TRACK PLACES WHERE YOU CAN GET THE BEST

Jordane Hyams

1. The Best Hangover Brunch: The Green Refectory

Sydney Road (stop thinking about Savers) is home to an absolute gem known as The Green Refectory. When you emerge from a night which you entered thinking, ‘oh, I’m not going to drink much’, and left by passing out on a beanbag, The Green Refectory offers love and hangover nursing meals. The menu states ‘we understand and sympathize that your brain feels like jelly and your soul hates you’ and offers delicious breakfasts, hot drinks and cakes ready to be a band-aid to your burden. If the ‘Breakfast Stack’ (mushrooms, egg, mashed potato and spinach) isn’t enough, or the UFO sized pancakes don’t tickle your fancy (or soak up the alcohol), then surely the price tags will - this place is cheap, with most menu items going for only \$10.

You can find The Green Refectory at 115 Sydney Rd, Brunswick

2. The Best Chai Latte - Dukes

Sometimes, you just don’t feel like a coffee. Being a mature 20-something, you can’t face the judgmental face of the barista as you order a hot chocolate (best to leave it until you can make a Milo at home). So a chai latte does the trick.

I have been searching for a chai that wins my heart and finally, I found my prince - in the form of a duke. Dukes, in Chapel, is well known for its coffee. However their chai latte takes the cake, in my humble opinion. Made with chai tea leaves and brewed milk, it goes down very nicely indeed served with just the right amount of honey. A royal treat.

Dukes Coffee is at 169 Chapel St, Windsor.

3. The Best Jeans - Dejour Jeans

Now here’s something you don’t see every day. Down Sydney Road, you will find yourself standing outside a seedy looking late eighties styled shop shouting Dejour Jeans: Factory Direct in an (ironically) denim blue type. It’s no surprise that the shop appears dated, as owner Nam opened the store in 1989 after moving from Ho Chi Minh City.

The drabby exterior turns into jeans heaven inside. Every single pair of jeans you could ever want await you - low-cut, cords, skinny-leg, high-rise - in every colour. For \$40. And they’re tailored to you. As you wait. For no extra cost. And that’s not even the best part. Their motto? “Good Jeans. \$40. We make them fit. For free. You go on hot date.” Yeah you do.

Venture to 542 Sydney Rd, Brunswick, for your hot date with Nam.



4. The Best Bar - Bar Nothing

No, take a breath, it’s not Cherry Bar. Deep within Carlton (no cab drivers have ever managed to find it without our help as of yet) lies gorgeous little Bar

Nothing. The humble name is very fitting once you are greeted by the low lighting and slouchy garage sale couches filling the inside. With only one small bar at the back, first impressions lead you to believe someone has just opened up their living room for a few drinks. But you are oh so wrong.

Now, I know it keep banging on about places that are cheap, but let’s be honest here. Being students means that we’re in a constant state of being broke. How many times have you rocked up at a club only to find out it’s \$20 entry and then slunk away to Lucky Coq because you know you can get in free? I thought so. That’s why Bar Nothing makes all its patrons smile. They offer a range of fifteen different cocktails, for \$4.50 each, or five for \$20. Take that, club entry.

Drink to your heart’s content (responsibly of course) at 16 Pigdon St, North Carlton

5. The Best Vintage - Lost and Found Market

“Now, don’t get excited. Don’t lose your head, Augustus. We don’t want anybody to lose that.” Truer words have never been spoken than these by Willy Wonka, and they express exactly the advice you’ll need when stepping into the Lost and Found Market. It seems as if every vintage clothing hunter in the world has pooled the best from their collection and delivered it directly to your eager little paws here. There is a seemingly infinite number of clothes and accessories for men, women, and children too. Not only can you create a wardrobe for life in this single store, you can also furnish an entire house. It’s as if the Chapel Street Bizarre and Shag had a love child together.

A small warning: It is a little overwhelming. You will get lost. But it’s worth it for what you’ll find.

Get lost at 1-5 Perry St Collingwood (just off Smith St)

SMELLS LIKE A EUPHEMISM

Jonathan Schlossberg

If you’ve ever used the Flinders St toilets then you’d know that calling the odour emitted from thousands of caffeine-loaded commuters’ ablutions an “unpleasant aroma” is putting it lightly. Lightly and politely. Such an expression would once have been utterly contradictory, as aroma once meant “a sweet odour” in Latin, which itself was ultimately descended from Greek when it meant “spice, seasoning”. It’s not just aroma whose sweet meaning has soured. Think of the words you might use to describe any unpleasant olfactory observation: stink, stench, smell. These words were once 100% neutral. In Old English, the phrase swote stincan, “sweet stink (i.e. smell)” is attested but it sounds ridiculously oxymoronic to our modern ears.

In fact, think of all the words for different types of smells that you know and order them in your head. Your list probably looks something like this: stench, stink, smell, odour, aroma, scent, perfume, fragrance. Your ordering may differ slightly from mine, but the fact is that you have roughly ordered these words according to the time since they have entered the

English language. Stink and stench have been in the English language as far back as is traceable, and were actually originally the same word (compare with drink and drench). All the words from odour onwards were borrowed into English from French or Latin after the 13th century, with fragrance being the most recent in the mid 17th century.

What has caused the connotations of these formerly fine words to deteriorate and decay? Well, it turns out that a bad smell is not an appropriate conversational topic, so we must cover the concept with a polite word or expression, a sort of linguistic deodorant that makes it palatable for our listeners. These “linguistic deodorisers” (so dubbed by Monash’s resident linguistics professor, Kate Burridge) are called euphemisms, and we spray them liberally on our language to cover up taboo topics. However, after a while the deodorant stops fooling anyone, and we must find a new expression to fill the euphemism-can, and so new words are borrowed or old words with more pleasant meanings are co-opted to take its place. This constant rate of euphemism replacement



has been called the “euphemism treadmill” by linguist Steven Pinker. The sad fact is that after running a while on the euphemism treadmill, any word is going to start to stink.

// CALENDAR //

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
LOT’S WRITERS MEETING EVERY MONDAY 1:00PM IN THE LOT’S WIFE LOUNGE	MSA TUESDAYS EVERY TUESDAY FROM 12PM ON THE MENZIES LAWN	MSA UNEARTHED EVERY WEDNESDAY FROM 12:30PM IN THE AIRPORT LOUNGE
FREE FOOD MONDAYS EVERY MONDAY 7:30PM IN THE AIRPORT LOUNGE		MSA BREAKFAST EVERY WEDNESDAY FROM 8:00 - 10:30 IN THE CELLAR ROOMS, CAMPUS CENTRE
SAVE THE DATE		
EXCEPT WEEKEND JULY 25 - AUGUST 1	THURSDAY AUGUST 2	THURSDAY AUGUST 13-17
MSA SECOND HAND BOOK FAIR	MRAC PRESENTS SARAH HANSON-YOUNG	BLUE STOCKINGS WEEK

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