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# woroni

The Australian National University Student Newspaper | 1948 - 2008

13 - 26 March 2008

# It's Gough

**Whitlam demands health centralisation and lambasts the University for conferring an honorary degree on Singaporean autocrat Lee Kuan Yew.**

**Tully Fletcher**  
Editor

Former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam used the Commencement Speech at Bruce Hall last Friday to reiterate his concern over the conferring of an honorary Doctorate of Laws on former Singaporean autocrat Lee Kuan Yew and call for a complete federal take-over of the Australian health system.

"Since Chifley's 1946 referendum the National Parliament has had the power to provide 'pharmaceutical, sickness and hospital benefits, medical and dental services' Mr Whitlam said.

"It is clear that the National Parliament has the power and can accept the responsibility to provide all health services"

In March last year, amid uproar from the College of Law and protests from students, the University Council conferred an honorary Doctorate of Laws on Lee, who was Prime Minister of Singapore from 1959 until 1990



**Mr and Mrs Whitlam dine at the High Table at the Bruce Hall Commencement** Heather Webster

and is accused of transforming the former British colony into an effective dictatorship. Lee continues to be a member of cabinet in the role of 'Minister Mentor'. His son Lee Hsien Loong is the current Prime Minister.

Mr Whitlam told Bruce Hall residents and guests that that he

had 'mixed feelings' about the conferral and recalled a conversation that he had with Lee at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in 1973. He noted that Lee had made a unique contribution to political science and governance.

"You are the first political lead-

er to use the Westminster system to create a one-party State out of a democracy" Mr Whitlam said at the time, to a cold reception.

Many at the University felt that the conferral was an unprincipled move designed to boost relations between the Singaporean government and the ANU.

## Death of DC++

**David McGill**  
Halls and Colleges

At midnight on the 6th of March a collective groan could be heard across the ANU campus as traffic on the student file-sharing network ceased. The inter-college broadband network which the University's Division of Information (DOI) have referred to as the 'student entertainment network' has operated on campus in various forms for several years.

Following enquiries from a number of organisations the University's legal department has ordered the network commonly referred to by students as "DC" to be disbanded. Sources close to the network's administrators have told *Woroni* that DOI may have been aware of the network for some time and has only been prompted into action following recent enquiries from outside the University.

Allan Williams, Head of DOI Systems and Desktop Services told residential communities that DOI "have received notification from the Music Industry Piracy Investigation organisation (MIPI) ... ANU takes the issue of copyright infringement seriously and has begun an investigation into the concerns raised."

## Canberra could be more accommodating

**Robert Wiblin**  
Editor

The accommodation crisis continues to be the issue of greatest concern to people across campus, with many students struggling to find an affordable place

to sleep.

Many international students arrived in Australia with nowhere to live and spent their first few weeks house-hunting at the International Education Office. The office, while not officially an accommodation service, has been finding students temporary

accommodation at the YHA and elsewhere, providing internet kiosks for house-hunting, and ran an accommodation workshop for around 50 students, including writing reference letters for those who needed them. According to ANUSA International Officer Junde Li most students

have now found a place to live, although prices have often been above expectations. Some international students have required encouragement to consider living in shared houses, a foreign notion to students from some nations. One international

**Continued Page 2**



woroni

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# Canberra could be more accommodating

**From Page 1**  
student interviewed by *Woroni* suggested that she would be cautious about recommending ANU to others back home given the financial costs she is now facing. Some international students struggle to make ends meet on the legal limit of 20 hours of work a week and most are taken aback by the cost of living in Canberra on arrival. A student counselor suggested that cost of living leads to academic problems for a number of international students although physical and mental health and homesickness remain the biggest concerns.

*Woroni* has learned that many ethnic Malay students resorted to finding accommodation through a network of former students working at the Malaysian embassy. The Malaysian Students Organisation itself has been pursued by many students seeking accommodation but has only been in a position to redirect students to University Accommodation Services (UAS).

A number of students, both local and international, have approached ANUSA President Jamila Rizvi to complain that they were disappointed when their Undergraduate Accommodation Guarantee amounted only to accommodation at UniLodge rather than a real Hall or College. Some said they would be unable to afford UniLodge, but have been advised not to give up their positions there unless they can lock in another room.

*Woroni* questioned UAS Director Marie Wensing about the arbitrary nature of the January 17th cut-off for the Guarantee which has resulted in some students receiving later round of-



The even pricier 'Student Residence 2' Robert Wiblin

fers being excluded. Ms Wensing said that the University would ideally like to extend the guarantee to all first year students, including postgraduates, but given the trouble it currently faces fulfilling it for just a portion of stu-

in Dickson for around \$180 per week. *Woroni* pointed out that this is above market rate to which Ms Wensing observed that these houses are fully furnished and gardened.

Due to their exemption from

**“It is the ongoing high cost that deters postgraduates from continued study at the ANU and challenges its plan to retain world-class researchers”**

dents there was no question of expanding it. She did not see it as feasible to ration the guarantee according to need rather than application date but assured us that there was also no discussion of scrapping it in light of the extraordinary lengths required to meet it this year.

As previously reported, to fulfill its guarantee the University has been offering fully furnished share houses on annual leases

the accommodation guarantee it is postgraduates - often juggling marriages, children and low wages - who arguably have the hardest job finding appropriate housing. The Postgraduate and Research Student Association (PARSA) pointed out that while availability is regularly a crisis at the beginning of the year, once the dust has settled it is the ongoing high cost that deters postgraduates from continued study

at the ANU and challenges its plan to retain world-class researchers. PARSA suggested that the key issue for postgraduates is the inability of Australian Postgraduate Awards to cover rising living expenses rather than accommodation itself.

Meanwhile, construction work continues on the 500-plus bed Student Residence 2 (SR2), part of the new ANU Exchange development between campus and Civic, slated to open in February next year. Its substantial cost (somewhat higher than UniLodge) and its more independent living style make postgraduates its target group. While it will help expand available housing for that group, PARSA is quick to point out that SR2 is “expensive and not suitable to the personal and family circumstances of all postgraduate students.”

Ms Wensing was not willing to speculate as to whether UAS would build an undergraduate Hall after completion of SR2. She said that it was very hard to predict accommodation demand into the future and that the University was reluctant to build multitudinous rooms to meet current pressures only to find them unoccupied in the long term.

Ms Wensing justified the involvement of the Royal Bank of Scotland Group in ANU Exchange constructions by noting that the University has limited capital and any movement of funds towards accommodation would necessarily detract from its research oriented ventures.

*Additional research and reporting by Tully Fletcher, Kevin Kim, Tom Stayner and Shane Svoboda*

# UAS policy hangover

**Tim Mayfield**  
News

Relations are once again strained between University Accommodation Services (UAS) and the constituent Halls and Colleges of the University, following the publication and implementation of a 'draft' policy by UAS entitled *Liquor in ANU Halls of Residence*. The major point of contention has proved to be a clause within the proposed policy that places a complete ban on any liquor related sponsorship on the grounds that this actively encourages the consumption of liquor. In a submission formulated

in conjunction with ANUSA, the various residents' associations have contested both the rationale and process that has led to the new liquor policy on a number of grounds.

Traditionally, the Halls and Colleges of the University have received a significant portion of their yearly budget through sponsorship from various Civic nightclubs and bars. Sponsorship amounts have ranged from \$5000 - \$25,000, which after compulsory resident fees has served as the second-greatest contribution to resident association coffers.

The ANUSA submission, which was created in consulta-

tion with the Hall and College Presidents, outlines a variety of objections to the proposed ban on liquor based sponsorship. It argues that its implications are broad and will extend to the maintenance of a vibrant campus community, and could even impact the safety of residents. Whilst the two affiliated ANU colleges St John XXIII and Burgmann will not be directly affected by the policy, it has been argued that traditional events such as Inter-Hall Ball and the annual band night will be affected as the ANU-run halls struggle to match their previous financial contributions to these events. Other aspects of residential life that have

previously been funded by liquor sponsorship include sporting fixtures such as team uniforms and equipment, O-Week and a host of more general social events.

The University's guidelines for policy development stress the importance of consulting staff and students in the creation of new policies that may affect them. Many residents of the ANU campus feel that a more acceptable outcome could have been achieved if UAS had honoured these guidelines.

UAS Director Marie Wensing refused to discuss this matter with *Woroni* and said that the consultation process was ongoing.



# Mathew Kenneally – ANU's funniest Law graduate

Annabelle Craft  
News

Comedian Mat Kenneally's performance on the Friday of O-week showed us one of the better uses for an ANU law degree – becoming a comedian and performing wickedly funny comedy with a healthy dose of satire. From Rudd's 2020 summit through to Britney's meltdown; with Kenneally, nothing is sacred. Performing to a packed crowd in Union Court, he provided half an hour of political satire that proved to be both an excellent warm up for comedian Will Anderson's later performance and hilarious in its own right. With his new show coming up at the Canberra Theatre in early March, Kenneally spoke to Woroni about his time at ANU and life as a comedian.

Graduating in 2004 from the ANU with a Bachelor of Arts/ Bachelor of Laws, Kenneally has quickly emerged as one of Australia's most promising new talents. His degree choice, he comments sarcastically, was "very original" for ANU. The main upside, he says, was being able to spend as long as possible at university before facing the "supposed real world." Luckily, law school proved to supply an endless source of jokes. This suited him fine, having wanted to pursue a career in stand-up since his teens. Like many young students



Kenneally managed to entertain the O-Week crowd despite the heat Tully Fletcher

fresh out of high school, the idea that university was the only respectable pathway led him to the ANU. When asked how his parents felt about him giving up six years of law school for a comedy career, Kenneally replies, "Well, Dad still calls for legal advice on things in the vain hope that I might actually be a lawyer."

He used his time at the ANU to get involved in all sorts of extracurricular activities, such as the ANU Debating Society where, he says, "I brought in a culture of drinking and having fun rather than elitism and, well, success."

He was involved in the ANU Law Revue every year, including directing it in 2002. He even wrote for *Woroni's* satire page, confessing that he regularly trod a fine line, being threatened with defamation multiple times. His involvement in ANU politics saw him win 15% of the 2004 ANUSA election vote on his (joke) ticket "Terrorism Yeah!" Although he insists that he drank more than he studied, his self-confessed geekiness means law students today still profess to use his old summaries. Toby Halligan, past *Woroni* Editor and friend of Ken-

neally, insists that Kenneally's summaries (complete with footnotes) are still in use three years after he graduated. He admits to never quite fitting a certain ANU mould, referring in his O-week stand-up performance to leaving "that jock college" after a year to "become a refugee" at Fenner Hall.

Starting his comedy career in 2005, Kenneally refers to his first gig in Melbourne which involved "performing in front of seven drunk people." It's all gone better since then, with Kenneally performing in The Comedy

Zone in 2006 at the Melbourne International Comedy Festival. His 2007 sell-out show, Mathew Kenneally for Parliament, was awarded 'Most Outstanding Comedy of the Festival' at the Melbourne Fringe. Since then, Kenneally has had to face the defeat of John Howard in the last election meaning, he says "I've had to drop some of my best material." Saying that, his new show follows the Kenneally tradition of leaving nothing as sacred. Showing at the Canberra Theatre Centre between the 11-15 March, the show largely focuses on his lack of invitation to Rudd's 2020 summit. So he's decided to hold his own, in the form of his new stand-up performance, Mathew Kenneally's Ill Thought Through Plan for the World, and we are all invited. If his O-week performance is anything to go by, Kenneally's new show will do more than solve all the worlds problems, it will provide an excellent night of comedy from ANU School of Law's most entertaining graduate.

Mathew Kenneally's *Ill Thought Through Plan for the World* is playing at the Courtyard Studio, Canberra Theatre Centre at 7:30pm Tuesday the 11th through to Saturday the 15th March. Full \$20, Concession \$16. Canberra Ticketing phone (02) 6275 2700 ([www.canberraticketting.org.au](http://www.canberraticketting.org.au)). For more information visit [www.kenneally.com.au](http://www.kenneally.com.au).

## Cheeky cheques, but Combined Representative Council generally cordial

Maiy Azize  
ANUSA Correspondent

The first Combined Representative Council (CRC) meeting was held last Monday evening, featuring the ANUSA Executive team, General Representatives, Faculty Representatives, the *Woroni* Editors and Department Officers. The meeting was generally cordial, though there were moments of tension.

Education Officer Anya Aidman outlined her plans for the upcoming National Day of Action, to be held on March 19, themed "Fund Our Education". Aidman hopes to change the direction of education campaigns in the hope they can be more positive, and was more or less embraced by the meeting. Aidman did generate some controversy by allocating a portion of the Education Department's budget to affiliating ANUSA to the National Union of Students, Australia's peak student body, for 2007. Some have expressed con-

cern that this may be seen to be going against the wishes of a legitimate ANUSA General Meeting held last year, though others characterise last year's decision as financial and not an in principle objection.

Another contentious issue was the presentation of the *Woroni* budget. The Editors caused a stir after a smaller than desired figure was offered to the Student's Association as 'profit'. A compromise was reached last year between ANUSA - who wanted a \$10,000 profit from *Woroni* - and the Editors, who hoped the ANUSA team could help the newspaper gain new funds from the University for a revamped website.

An agreement was eventually brokered whereby *Woroni* would allocate \$5,000 to the Association provided the University could provide \$5,000 for website redevelopment. After the University only allocated *Woroni* \$2,000 for a website, the editors decided to budget a \$2,000 'profit' accordingly. The CRC passed

the *Woroni* budget as it was presented, despite the concerns of Treasurer Alex Rafalowicz.

The Editors said later that "while we support the Treasurer's efforts to find new revenue, it is inappropriate for him to regard our conventionally independent student newspaper as a cash-cow. *Woroni* has never been asked to forecast a profit before and we must be vigilant against such overt interference in *Woroni's* affairs."

Following the delivery of the Treasurer's Report, Treasurer Alex Rafalowicz was asked whether there was any truth to the rumour that he signed cheques before he and General Secretary Mark Smyth left Australia to participate in the Washington Exchange Internship over the summer. He confirmed this, but pointed out that they were for emergency use only, and that those used were largely spent on settling unpaid invoices left by the previous administration.

ANUSA President Jamila Rizvi went on to assure the meet-

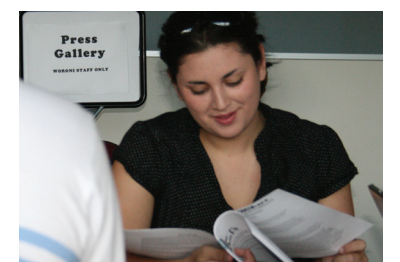
ing that the cheques were left in a locked safe that she did not have access to, and that Rafalowicz and Smyth were consulted before their use. She also added that the Executive investigated a temporary change of trusteeship, but this did not seem possible under the ANUSA Constitution. The Constitution names the President, Treasurer and General Secretary as trustees. Two of the three trustees are required to act as signatories to access ANUSA funds.

General Representative Tim Caddey, who raised the issue in the meeting, is unhappy with the situation. "The ANU should be alarmed that ANUSA is bypassing the controls that assure the correct spending of money it gives to the association. The fact that no harm has resulted in this instance only makes this a more tempting possibility for future trustees."

Though the presigned cheques have upset some, the 2008 Executive is not the first to make use of them. *Woroni* was re-

cently told that recent previous Executives have also presigned cheques, though as far as *Woroni* is aware these were not used. The saga highlights what seems to be an ongoing problem with the ANUSA constitution in relation to trusteeship, given that students are likely to be away over summer.

The 2007 Executive flagged trusteeship as an issue. Alex Rafalowicz has told *Woroni* that he is looking at the Constitution, which refers to a cheque or order, as it may be the case that this could encompass internet transactions. If so, this would make the job future executives considerably easier over the summer period.



President Jamila Rizvi at CRC



# EDITORIAL

# Proper education



For too long, the Education Collective and the position of Education Officer have been used in a petty political game that has detracted from the real work of the Association: student

Students should support this move towards greater organisational integrity for our Students' Association and the SRC.

## Liner of residence

A myriad of stylish function rooms and first class suites would make the QE2 an ideal addition to our residential commu-

At this stage the asking price is a steep \$100,000,000 – but perhaps with the new money the Vice-Chancellor has asked the government to reallocate from the University of Canberra and ACU...

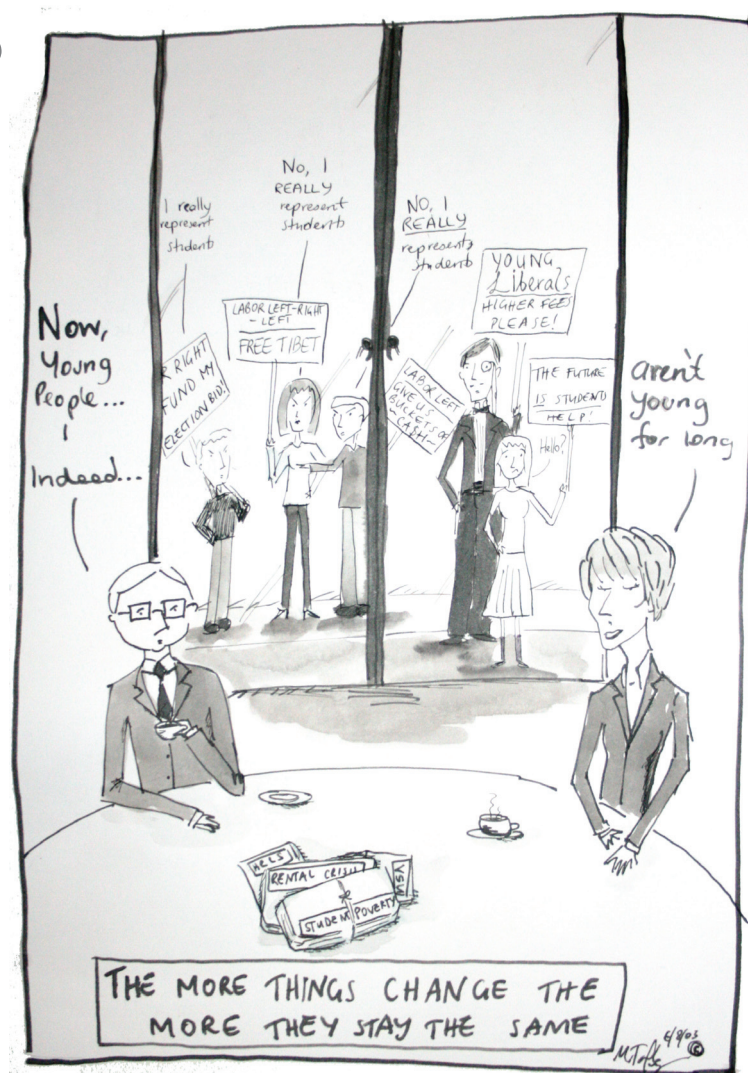


## OE2 on the lake: the solution to all our accomodation worries

## LETTERS

Dear Sirs,

It is quite true we had a pre-toga party, but it wasn't the quoted 'exclusive' party for only girls of this group and guys from the DARTS. Whist we are certainly friends with many of the individuals from the DARTS, and those friends happened to attend the small gathering, there were also a number of people who weren't associated with either group present. The 'brotherhood' is yet another tongue-in-cheek expression that was used out of context by the author... whether intentionally or not.



Yours, Sarah Vann-Sander;  
ANUSA Environment Officer

*(Eds - We stand by our story. Several 'Sisterhood' members brought their concerns to Woron and we investigated further and reported accurately and appropriately. We once again note that the Sisterhood continue to aggressively pursue the sources of the leaks, belying the correspondent's dismissive attitude to this affair. And if the 'Sistas' hadn't run away from our photographer, we wouldn't have had that shot to publish! There's spin here, but not from this newspaper)*

### Shared rooms on Daley Road

Dear Sirs,

Your editorial on the ANU's current accomodation crisis ("Accommodation Crisis", *Issue 1*) was of particular interest to me, as I'm one of the University's new residents who have been installed into a shared room in "one Daley Road Hall". On one hand, I'm reluctant to criticise the arrangement. Demand is high, and it's entirely possible I wouldn't have been offered a room at all if the sharing hadn't been introduced. The Hall informed me that I might have to share a room before I arrived, and I don't re-

gret coming.

That said, I'd like to share a few concerns, for other students and the ANU. It has been made clear to me, and others in my position, that the share rooms are only a temporary arrangement, a stop-gap before residents move on in Semester 2. If that were not the case, I'd be out of here like a shot. The greatest problem with the share rooms is the complete lack of privacy. We have nowhere to go to be alone, to do what we want. The room doesn't become a home, a personal space. It's just somewhere I sleep. Also, as *Woroni* mentioned, living in such close quarters with another person doesn't exactly encourage friendship. I'm fortunate enough to be sharing with someone I can get along with (I can't imagine what a nightmare it would be otherwise), but in the end, the best you can do is stay out of each other's way.

There is no tradition of this kind of living in Australia, as there is in the USA. I find it hard to believe that there are many who want it to become traditional, myself and everyone else sharing rooms at the Hall included. If the ANU and the Halls are considering making this experiment an institution, particularly on a longer-term basis, I urge them to think again. I'm grateful for my place here, but that only holds for so long.

(Name and address supplied)

**Send your (short) letters to  
*woroni@anu.edu.au*  
by Wednesday 19th March.**



# Another new era for universities

Alessandro Antonello

With the election of the Rudd Government, Australian universities are entering a new stage in their development. Hopefully this development will be positive and genuinely improve Australia's universities. Kevin Rudd has already committed his government to stemming the 'unfolding state of crisis' among universities left over from the Howard Government. We all must work to ensure that the coming reforms will bring more effective funding for research excellence and the credibility of Australian universities internationally.

I am cynically disposed to expect that recent public pronouncements about Australian universities have eluded most students, and even more of the public. On 20 February, our own Vice-Chancellor, Ian Chubb, delivered an address that outlined his views on the future of Australia's universities.

Chubb's speech reminded us that Australia cannot expect to have all 38 of its universities well-

ranked internationally. He stated quite explicitly that funding on the basis of 'potential' was unproductive, deflecting resources from better performing institutions. In the end, this retards research quality in all instances. Not every university, Chubb remarked, could have its place in the sun. To catch up with world-wide universities, and respond to the ever-increasing pressure of globalisation, funding had to be directed to the already proven research capabilities of the top universities.

Importantly, Chubb's speech emphasised the possibilities of Labor's funding compacts, and the necessity of giving them a real chance to succeed. He admitted that universities could not reasonably ask for unlimited money from governments. They must commit to greater effectiveness and efficiencies for the government to be responsive.

Students also came in for comment, with Chubb recognising a strong student base as a tenet of world-class universities. Chubb has always supported students, and most ANU students would be grateful to him for that - I

certainly am. One of his admissions was stark: "I think most of us Vice-Chancellors should hang our heads in shame with the way we have supinely adjusted to the fact that student supports systems over the last decade have been eroded, and eroded, and eroded, in the way they have." I

**"All students must concern themselves in these debates ... not merely because their educations depend on it, but because a successful Australian future depends on it"**

think Chubb is too hard on himself and his colleagues given the missionary zeal of the previous government.

Though there have been very constructive responses to Chubb's speech, particularly from the V-C of the University of Canberra, some have been knee-jerk and glib. The most prominent of these responses came from the Australian Catholic University's V-C, Greg Craven, who labelled Chubb the 'Sol Trujillo' of Australian universities. Craven accused Chubb of wanting to monopolise public fund-

ing for the ANU to the detriment of all others in the sector. While Craven asserted that established and newer universities each had a valuable contribution to make in maximising Australia's intellectual potential, he epitomises the attitude that Chubb decries: equalisation of all the actors in

from this, we should all go away and learn something more about the sector, specifically the idea of funding compacts, which will be central to coming debates. If the modern undergraduate has been notoriously apathetic about campus life and academic work, they are more apathetic about the intricacies of university sector policies. All students must concern themselves in these debates, and add their ideas, not merely because their educations depend on it, but because a successful Australian future depends on it.

In the end, the problems associated with creating a world-class and well-functioning university sector are just like many modern problems: complex and difficult to solve. However, this point should not restrain our energy in understanding and dealing with them. I must agree with the sentiments in the Canberra Times that, while Labor's 'education revolution' is alluring, the Government will face a significant battle if it fails to extend the revolution to universities.

*Alessandro Antonello is an ANU University Medallist*

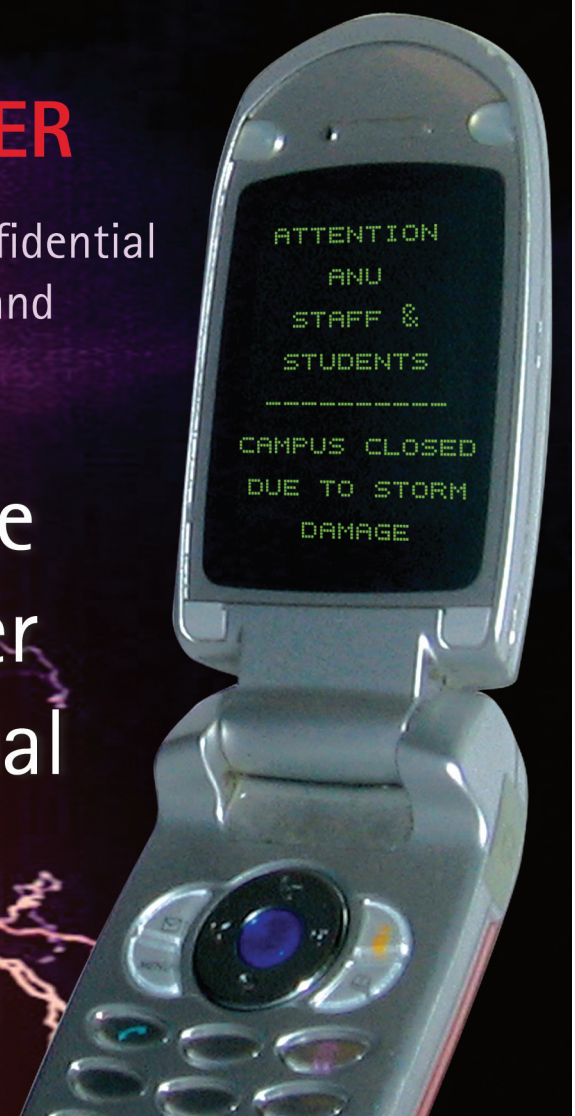
HELP US CONTACT YOU IN AN

# EMERGENCY

REGISTER YOUR MOBILE PHONE NUMBER

In addition to existing emergency communication strategies, a confidential Campus Emergencies Database has been established to alert staff and students via SMS text message should a campus emergency arise.

Register and update  
your mobile number  
through the Personal  
Details section of  
**ANUBIS or ISIS**





# State of the Association: harmonious

Jamila Rizvi  
ANUSA President

Contemporary Australia seems fraught with unnecessary language. In fact we have a whole host of new idioms for things that have always existed but that we never felt it necessary to label before. We fear ‘terrorist threats’ from ‘Islamic extremism’ but stay ‘alert not alarmed’ because we know that ‘values’ like ‘mateship’ will prevail and ensure the continuation of our ‘Australian way of life’. And, on the incredibly rare occasion that some sections of the community appear to be neglecting our ‘values’ - well - when in doubt hold an ‘emergency summit’ to initiate ‘inter-faith dialogue’ or refuse citizenship for those who don’t know what the national flower is.

The 11th of September radically changed the global political climate and no doubt influenced every Australian. The horrific images of that day, blasted in full colour and sound onto every television set in the country will stay with us for the rest of our lives. However in addition to the

lives lost and families torn apart, the added tragic outcome of September 11 was the renewed focus on difference between religions and cultures. In Australia we began taking steps backwards from those we had made since the period of Pauline Hanson’s strength - we began rethinking whether having this ‘multicultural society’ was such a great thing.

Universities are special because they are one of the few places where difference of opinion and open mindedness are truly welcomed. There is a sense that religious or cultural diversity are not things to be scared of but simply another avenue for learning. At the ANU, students and staff alike speak of the opportunity to embrace new ideas, to debate issues of morality and to question established norms, when it comes to culture and religion. And on the whole, I believe that ANU students are pretty tolerant.

However I would question whether mere tolerance is something to be proud of. As students lucky enough to be studying at this special place called a university, surely we have a duty to

do more than just tolerate difference? And at the ANU, I speak not only of Australian students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds but also of our substantial international student population.

Last week I attended the odd lecture, in amongst my time at the bar, the coffee shop and the Students’ Association. And I noticed something which has been ever-present during my time at university: international students sit next to and speak with other international students and Australian students sit next to and speak with other Australian students. Also, it’s not just in lectures but at the bar, the coffee shop, the library and the ovals - it’s always the same. Now I don’t think this separation was ever a deliberate decision on the part of Australian or international students; it’s just a matter of doing what is comfortable and easy, particularly when language presents an additional cultural barrier.

However I want to set a challenge to students, that from now on we move beyond tolerance and truly embrace the cultural diversity of the ANU. To domestic

students, you never know what you’ll learn by making the effort to speak with someone who’s English may not be proficient as yours but has had the experience of growing up and living in an environment entirely foreign to your own. To international students, coming to Australia shouldn’t just be about meeting other students from your own country; take a chance and make the effort to meet Australian students, because I have no doubt they’d like to meet you.

And that is the theme for ANUSA’s 2008 Harmony Day celebrations: *ANU, embracing our diversity*. Harmony Day is a chance to celebrate the multicultural fabric of Australia and to learn more about other cultures, countries and faiths. On Thursday 20th of March, ANUSA and its hard-working International Students’ Department will be holding a ‘mini’ multicultural festival in Union Court between 11am and 3pm. There will be banner painting, free food provided by the national societies of the ANU, an interfaith BBQ hosted by our religious clubs, live music and performances as well as an international beer fes-

tival in the ANU bar.

Please come along and join in the fun and as always take the chance to grab some free stuff. And while you’re eating and enjoying the free entertainment, make the effort to speak with someone who might believe in a different God, come from another country or have grown up with different cultural experiences to you. As students, we may not be able to do much more than rant and rave about the idiocy of governments when it comes to statements about ‘values’ and terrorism hotline fridge magnets but we can make a small difference within our own community.

Harmony Day marks the tragic, government authorised, police killing of 69 people who were peacefully protesting against segregation laws in South Africa in 1960. Harmony Day is about having a voice and standing up for what you believe in. So next week at uni use that voice to speak with someone new, someone you may not have made the effort to speak to before: you never know what you might learn.

*Harmony Day celebrations are in Union Court on 20th March*

# Have your say: the future of education advocacy

Mark Smyth  
ANUSA General Secretary

At the first Ordinary General Meeting of ANUSA just a few weeks away on the 20th of March, students will have the opportunity to consider proposed amendments to the Education Officer and Education Collective.

As some of you will be aware, there has long been a need to reform the way the education department and ANUSA Executive operate; a need which culminated in the proposals put by last year’s Executive to OGM 3. The proposal students will consider on March 20 seeks to cure the problems with the current arrangements whilst taking account of some of the legitimate concerns voiced at last year’s OGM, especially in relation to a lack of consultation and time.

The effect of the proposed constitutional amendments is two fold:

1. They elevate the Education Officer to the Executive; and
  2. Replace the Education Collective with an Education Committee under the auspices of the Student Representative Council.
- Given the critique presented in the previous edition of *Woroni*

‘ANUSA Executive moves to reform Education Collective, again’, this article focuses primarily on the need and benefits of change. I’ve prepared a discussion paper which highlights some of the concerns as well, and is available from me on request at [sa.gensec@anu.edu.au](mailto:sa.gensec@anu.edu.au).

### Education Officer

With the addition of the Education Officer, the ANUSA Executive will be expanded from five representatives to six. This will result in collaboration on, and responsibility for, education advocacy being shared between the President, the Vice-President and the Education Officer. This will alleviate concerns over workload on the VP during 2006 & 2007. It will enable the Ed Officer to be involved in weekly Executive meetings and so constantly up-to-date with the activities of the Association and educational developments within the ANU. As a corollary, it means the Education Committee’s concerns and proposals will be brought more speedily to the attention of the Executive and consequently to various stakeholders within and external to the university.

By incorporating the Education Officer into the Executive they will be more responsible and accountable for their ac-

tions in that they will be bound by Executive votes as any other Executive member. As a result, ANUSA will be able to have a more coordinated, focused and effective message on education which, because of the more democratic nature of the Executive, SRC, FRC and CRC, will hopefully be more representative of student opinion.

Finally, as a voting member of the Executive, the Education Officer will make significant contributions to all areas of ANUSA.

### Education Department

The proposed amendments remove the Education Department from the Constitution and replace it with an Education Committee chaired by the Education Officer. As noted when the 2007 Executive proposed the abolition of the Education Department, there has long been a very unclear division of responsibility for educational matters between the Executive and the Education Department; this proposal seeks to centralize responsibility for educational issues and subject all decision-making to vital accountability mechanisms including SRC/CRC oversight. At the same time, it provides an avenue for grass-roots activism and ‘ordinary’ student involvement via the committee.

### Effects of the Changes

- This proposal removes the responsibility of the Education Department for its own budget and finances; the Department will no longer have the ability to sign its own cheques;
- The Department will no longer have the ability to bind its Officer to certain actions, however, the Education Officer must bring any Committee concerns, issues or resolutions to the Executive for debate OR to SRC/FRC/CRC (depending on which is appropriate);
- The Education Committee will be created and meet no less than once in each month with more than 6 academic days.

The current ability of the Education Collective to bind the Education Officer places a great deal of power in the hands of what has previously been very few, unelected students. The proposal ensures these students are still given a voice and that their involvement in ANUSA is facilitated whilst being subject to checks and balances. This is particularly important in determining major ANUSA campaigns and policy (last year’s Ed Officer and SRC standoff over the Make Howard History Campaign is a prime example), as well as spending the Department’s significant

reserves.

Similarly, it is important that ANUSA speak with a unified voice and presents a consistent message in relation to Education. The current approach has resulted in past Education Officers bypassing the President, SRC and CRC to speak with media which may undermine the work of the rest of the Association.

Unlike other Collectives, who play an extraordinarily valuable role in informing elected representatives about special interest issues and viewpoints, the Education Department has primarily dealt with the very same issues that every other elected representative, and particularly the executive, deal with. Indeed, the primary reason that we have departments (though clearly not the only reason) is to represent and advocate on behalf of minority interests. But education is not a minority interest.

Reform of the Education Officer and Education Collective has been a longstanding issue. These proposals take account of most of the concerns raised previously where possible, whilst resolving problems of disunity, accountability and workload-sharing and effecting a more representative position on educational advocacy.



# Avian Influenza is just biding its time

The ANU and Griffith University put bird flu back in the spotlight.



Joy Thompson  
Research

H5N1. Not long ago, that string of letters and numbers found its way into most newspapers and the worst nightmares of their readers. Several hundred people died; the world held its breath; but the pandemic never came, and the media frenzy died down. Now avian influenza is in the news again, with the research breakthroughs mostly home-grown.

In February this year, a team led by Mark von Itzstein at Griffith University discovered a way of taming the H5N1 avian influenza virus in the laboratory.

Their findings are published in the February edition of the journal *Angewandte Chemie International Edition*. By inserting the virus's haemagglutinin protein, H5, the protein responsible for binding the virus to the cell being infected, into a harmless vector called a virus-like particle, the researchers could study the disease without any risk of catching it. These "hybrid viruses" also abolish the need for the high containment usually required for handling live viruses.

For the H5N1 strain, a single mutation in the H5 protein could increase the virus's preference for human receptors, allowing it to be passed easily from human to human. The information gathered from these and future experiments is therefore essential, both for understanding viral transmission and for developing drugs to prevent the virus from entering host cells.

Also in February, the ANU joined the research effort: the Australian branch of the new Australia-China Centre for Phenomics Research, a venture jointly funded by the Australian and Chinese governments, will

be housed in the John Curtin School of Medical Research. This venture is Australia's most generously funded biological research program with China to date, and was instigated by ANU researcher Dr Edward Bertram. It promises to attract some of Australia's leading immunologists, as well as Nobel laureate Peter Doherty, and will be led by the ANU's Dr

**"A single mutation in the H5 protein could increase the virus's preference for human receptors, allowing it to be passed easily from human to human"**

Chris Goodnow, Edward Bertram and Steve Winslade.

The researchers will use this opportunity to study mutations in the genome that increase resistance to avian influenza infections. They believe that these will help them identify new targets for drug treatment to boost the human immune response against the virus.

So why all the attention now?

More importantly, why do we need all this new research? To put it bluntly, a virus doesn't disappear simply because it vanished from the headlines for a while. Of course, there are a myriad of different animal viruses, but as long as they stay in their original host they don't harm humans directly. The economic consequences of widespread infection

infection occurs, it doesn't spread easily from person to person. What researchers and health professionals are worrying about is the very real possibility of the virus mutating. If this occurs and gives it the ability to spread among humans, most people would have little or no immune protection against it because it hasn't circulated widely enough in the past.

But how bad is the situation really? At present, there isn't much cause for concern, in Australia at least. However, we should keep in mind that there may be similarities between the H5N1 strain and the 'Spanish' flu of 1918. Intensive rearing of poultry is also a prime breeding ground for pathogens, and is probably as effective as the most productive laboratory in churning out mutated viruses. Australia also has its own migratory bird populations, which may carry avian influenza viruses in their digestive tracts. In short, there isn't any magical protection surrounding our country and although we shouldn't panic, it's still a good idea to keep watching out for the birdies.

# Synthetic willpower and the capitalist diet

Obesity is symptomatic of psychological communism.



Katja Grace  
Health

Heaps of people are fat. Most people don't want to be fat. The theory that putting less food into our mouths may solve this undesired obesity has had widespread popularity, but something in the implementation proves endlessly tricky despite the notion that we should be able to control our own behaviour when we know what is and isn't good for us.

Figuring out the philosophical nooks and crannies of free will over a few cream buns never seemed to help, so Richard McKenzie, a formerly rotund econo-

mist, decided to try pragmatism, and it turns out there's a simple solution. In the highly successful capitalistic world, if someone won't do what we want them to, voluntarily, we pay them to do it and it happens. If we can apply this method to ourselves, then ta-da! - The end of psychological communism, and the beginning of successful dieting.

The diet works like this. The overweight person gets a friend to agree to take five hundred dollars from them in ten weeks if they haven't lost four kilograms. Suddenly some foods become effectively more expensive when they can be seen as raising the likelihood of a couple of hundred dollar loss. A chocolate bar irresistible at \$2 is less appealing if we know it will really cost \$502.

There are a few minor complications. The friend may need to sign an agreement to say they will take and keep the money and not guiltily refuse it in the end. The dieter might also want to avoid dinner at their friend's house for the duration of the dieting period.

Putting our desire to eat at odds with our desire not to lose thousands of dollars is just one example of a number of similar schemes that have been experimentally successful. The same idea can apply to all sorts of ways we damage ourselves apparently against our own wishes. Even pregnant women are more likely to give up smoking if a couple of hundred dollars are at stake on top of the wellbeing of their baby.

Eating too much is just one of a range of apparently bad decisions we struggle to control. People gamble, smoke, take drugs, and spend their life savings at the pub. Suggested solutions tend to be a combination of informing people they shouldn't do these things and legally preventing them. The first approach doesn't seem to work that well; that cigarettes are unhealthy isn't a secret but people still lack the self control to stop. The second approach involves the risk of preventing people from legitimately choosing to value their current pleasure over future

health. Systems for giving the 'rational' part of people's minds the ability to strategically rein over more impulsive parts when they wish, could be a way around these problems and forward.

In this vein, the recent political philosophy of 'asymmetric paternalism' has sought policies

**"The belief that on some magical day in the future, humans will suddenly become good at will-power may leave us naïvely fat and diseased"**

designed to make apparently self-defeating choices less irresistible, but still available for those who choose them with more than compulsive drive. Companies are trialling plans to pay staff to lose weight, and the UK government has proposed incentivising its citizens to slow their obesity epidemic.

A fact delightful to marketers, awkward to rational choice theorists, and thoroughly evidenced, is that the choices we make are

easily influenced by outside forces, such as marketing. All the money spent on making the thought of a packet of chips inescapable and the buying of said packet immediate and convenient, are on the side of the impulses we try to fight.

It's hardly surprising that we

fail when we believe we can refuse these calculated temptations with just our flimsy notion that they are bad. Obesity epidemics worldwide suggest we're not doing too well at resisting. The belief that on some magical day in the future, humans will suddenly become good at will-power may leave us naïvely fat and diseased. Let's do what we're good at, think about our bank accounts instead of the future and embrace the capitalist diet.



# Re-birth of the Author

**Kalina Gilbert**  
Honours Candidate

Near the end of Joe Wright's recent film adaptation of *Atonement*, the acclaimed 2001 novel by Ian McEwan, the screen grows dark and the action is interrupted to reveal a television studio and a glimpse into the film-making process. This is a self-reflective moment to echo the unexpected postscript to the novel, where the heroine of the story is unveiled as the hidden voice behind the seemingly objective narration. This transformation from character to author is conveyed in the film, where the aged Briony (portrayed with a distilled intensity by Vanessa Redgrave) gives an interview on her first, and last, novel: *Atonement*, the story we are being told at present. This scene raises questions which are deeply rooted in modern ideas about the role of literature in our lives.

Since Roland Barthes proclaimed the death of the author in 1967, questions regarding the role and identity of the writer are

present, whether directly or indirectly, in any work of fiction. Ian McEwan's *Atonement* engages with these questions on a subtle level of narrative without losing any of the magic of (dare I say it) more 'traditional' methods of storytelling.

*Atonement* is a post-modern novel, but it doesn't read like one. The ingredients of the story are fairly simple: a young girl, endowed with the overactive imagination of a budding writer witnesses – and misinterprets – an affair between two people. The far-reaching consequences of this one crime committed by the young Briony are the subject of the novel. In the course of the narrative we witness her own development into a mature adult and a writer ready to take responsibility for the effects of her distortion of reality. The story, spanning from images of care-free leisure in 1930s England to the horrors of the Second World War is the result of research and narrative reconstruction by the heroine of the novel. Though panoramic in its subject matter, depicting the siege of Dunkirk

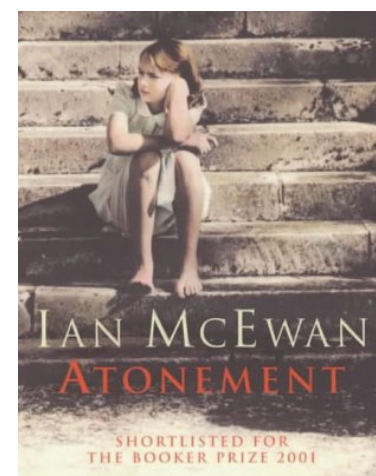
and London on the eve of the Blitz, her story is a deeply personal.

Like his heroine, McEwan moves effortlessly in his style from the minute to the panoramic, from the intricacies of momentary states of mind to wider portraits of the world in which his story is situated. This is a quality which we again find in his latest novel, *On Chesil Beach* (2007), where McEwan reveals his ability to write from various perspectives, zooming in on the most subtle moments of human interaction while also rendering an engaging account of the general atmosphere of the Cold War in 1960s Britain.

Like the mature Briony, McEwan demonstrates a distanced and self-deprecating approach to the burden of twentieth century literary theory. In a scene where Briony contemplates an early manuscript of *Atonement*, the narrator engages in an amusing word play on perhaps the most overused and overgeneralised technique of twentieth century fiction – the stream of consciousness:

"Did she really think she could hide behind some borrowed notions of modern writing, and drown her guilt in a stream – three streams! – of consciousness? The evasions of her little novel were exactly those of her life. Everything she did not wish to confront was also missing from her novella – and was necessary to it... It was not the backbone of a story that she lacked. It was backbone."

Although the situation refers specifically to Briony's guilt about her crime, a guilt which she attempts to expiate through her writing, McEwan is making a more general point about the responsibility of the writer to the world he gives to his reader. Literary technique cannot hide the need for fiction to present some kind of truth. This is the essential paradox of the novel, a paradox clearly picked up in the Wright's film, where the authoress explains why, in her apparently true account of real events, she 'invents' a happy ending for the lovers. She chooses to write a novel, not memoirs or a journal, so that her story may become a



sort of fictional atonement for the ending she denied them in real life. *Atonement* becomes a warning but also an affirmation of the power of the writer, a power, which the thirteen year old Briony misuses and attempts to redeem in the two contrasting endings of the novel. This in turn challenges us, the readers, to choose a version of events for ourselves. Although we are left with a tragic awareness of the bleakness of the true ending, we are also left contemplating the power of literature to create realities, for better or for worse. McEwan does not only tell a story about doomed lovers, but, in the fictional world he himself creates, allows the author to be in a sense 'reborn' in the twenty first century novel.

# Grass Is Even Greener on the Folk Front



**Bradley Kunda**  
Music Correspondent

*Corinbank Festival / Loudon Wainwright*  
**Corin Forest / Tilley's Divine Café, Lyneham**  
29 February – Sunday 2 March

The first weekend of March saw an impressive array of happy, hippy musical storytelling from Loudon Wainwright at Tilley's to as far as the Corin Forest in the Brindabella Mountains, where the inaugural Corinbank Festival was underway.

Having to start from scratch and make a good first impression, Corinbank had a diverse agenda. Organisers and artists consistently propagated a green 'no-trace' philosophy, evidenced in part by the waterless loos. The festival also featured an impressive line-up of national drawcards with a healthy dose of local

talent. Additionally, the festival's 'immersion' philosophy was evidenced in the range of participatory activities available, from mountain bike rides to yoga and workshops with festival artists.

Most of the music at the festival was essentially folk-oriented, with some hip-hop and rock to boot.

Some of the featured acts included Australian hip-hop band *The Herd*, which spun its often overtly political messages to a tightly-huddled audience on the freezing cold Friday night.

Opera-trained soprano Kate Miller-Heidke was a little more pop-oriented but her songs were colourful and her technique allowed her to deliver flawless and electric high lines. *The Lawnmowers* delighted the audience with their bluegrass numbers, but really impressed with their fusion of bluegrass and jazz, with discernable references to the style of the hot club of Paris.

Local duo *The Cashews*, noted for their guerrilla-style (i.e. spontaneous and free) shows, epitomised the folk-ideal by playing on the road in the cold for leaving cars on Sunday night.

Darren Hanlon was impressively humble about having to make way for Xavier Rudd's entourage, which was still setting up on the main stage, and gave

a beautiful performance under a shady tree. Hanlon mused that his performance would have been similar to that of a sixteenth-century festival. Indeed, I think that this highly intimate and acoustic show comprised the stuff of a real folk festival, which should be more about music making for everyone rather than the almost nineteenth-century idolisation of large stages and large audiences.

Xavier Rudd's show tended towards this latter ideal. Instead of working with the singer/songwriter medium that comprises the bulk of the folk genre, Rudd reflected more a contemporary live performance DJ. His songs were largely sustained by a constant dance beat, and occasionally there would be the colourful splash of a didgeridoo or a delay effect. The audience was, for the most part, enthused by this, though occasionally I felt that I was at Academy.

Canberra group *The Andi and George Band* received the warm approval of Xavier Rudd.

As a festival, Corinbank was virginal. Little mishaps like the Hanlon / Rudd complication above, as well as very late starts for nearly every act, says something about the festival's organisation. The music was enjoyable, however, and the philosophy of the festival was admirable. The

location was perhaps too far for some, but was undeniably beautiful and serene. This festival has huge potential and deserves increased support for future years.

Far removed from the cold, dark reaches of the Corin forest was yet another folk-styled concert. Loudon Wainwright gave a revealing and inspired performance of originals on Saturday night. Father to Rufus and Martha Wainwright, as well as his supporting-act, Lucy Wainwright-Roche, Loudon was as comfortable sharing with his audience songs of his divorce from former wife Kate McGarrigle, as he was with songs about wine, women, life and Austrian governors in America. Loudon Wainwright is an ecstatic performer; his voice appears unruly and unconventional, but is well-seasoned and at sixty-one boasts an

impressive and well-controlled range. He also exhibits the capacity to lock in (physically and musically) to the heart of the lyric, and is unbelievably sincere about everything he sings. His talented daughter, Lucy, shares his uncanny ability to befriend the audience, though her vocal technique and guitar-playing skills are still under-developed. Sadly, Tilley's Divine Café has done an appalling job at refurbishing a beautiful baby grand piano with an electric keyboard that sits inside the old piano's original case! It doesn't sound the same, Tilley's, and it was noticed. In sum, however, this was an inspired show. Track down Loudon's recordings to get a real glimpse of a brilliant performer whose clever song writing belies our preconceptions of what is real and utterable in folk music.



The Sun rises on the Corinbank Festival Matt Withers



# Bella

Lyndsay Dean  
Film Critic

\*\*\* out of \*\*\*\*

Personality can cover a multitude of sins. As long as something is done with flair and passion you can pretty much guarantee it'll get through unscathed. It's precisely this principle that gets this low-budget Mexican-American production over the line. New-comer Alejandro Monteverde's brain-child touchingly allows us into the lives of two seemingly ordinary people as they explore their pasts, only to have their futures forever entwined.

Nina (Tammy Blanchard), a down on her luck waitress is fired from her job at an uprising Cuban-Mexican restaurant and head chef Jose (Eduardo Vera-stegui) walks out in protest. Jose soon learns that Nina is pregnant and attempts to console her by offering friendship and sympathy. The film follows both characters over a single day as they explore Nina's options and Jose's tragic past, only to end up with Jose's life-loving Mexican-Puerto Rican family. What results is a beautiful look at how a single day can change the rest of a person's life.

While *Bella's* time frame is ba-



sically a single day, Monteverde expertly shapes empathy for both his leading characters. Via flashbacks we realise the potential Jose showed as a professional soccer player and to have all that taken away in a single moment is heartbreaking. We never question why Jose spiralled into anonymity, but rather share his grief. Likewise, through flashforwards we come to understand the pain Nina experiences in making the decision to keep her child until there's no way we could ever view her as unscrupulous trailer trash.

All this together makes *Bella* feel like an elongated short film and because we connect with these characters, on whatever level, we're even willing to forgive Monteverde his tacked on, convenient denouement. *Bella* may feel like an indie counter to Juno, but it radiates an intangible luminescence due to vibrant personality and fantastic direction. Whereas Juno won praise for its tremendously witty screenplay, *Bella* deserves the same admiration for its elegant portrayal of the love that binds people together, despite adversity, and the triumphs that come to those who wait.

# The King of Kong

Jonathon Fisher  
Film Critic

\*\*\* ½ out of \*\*\*\*

Over the last couple of years, I've seen high-quality documentaries about paedophilia within the Catholic Church, spelling bees, climate change, the American health care system, the Iraq War, and a guy living with grizzly bears. *The King of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters* may not be the 'greatest' of recent documentaries, but it may well be my favourite. It follows two arch-rival Donkey Kong players challenging each other for the mantle of "world's best", and not only succeeds in being funny, but also manages to be a great sports movie.

In case you don't know what Donkey Kong is, it's a way old-school arcade game that involves saving a damsel in distress from a gorilla. It was popular twenty years ago, but even today it still motivates people to trek cross-country to attempt to break the world record high-score. My all-time high score was 13,000 points. The world record is over a million.

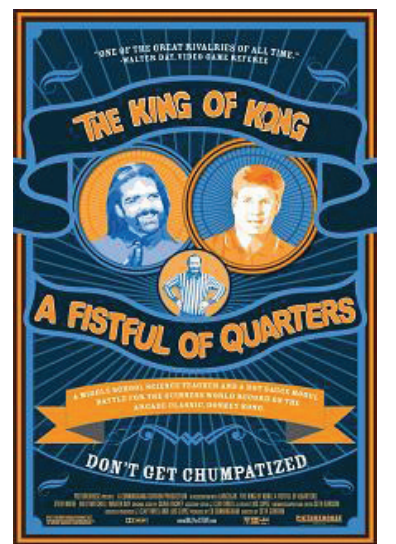
When the film opens, the world record is held by Billy Mitchell, who stares down the camera like a geeky Johnny Cash.

Dressed entirely in black, with a goatee and a mullet betraying his love for 80s pop culture, Mitchell evolves to become one of the funniest and most despicable villains of recent movies. When he's not gaming he's selling hot sauce in Hollywood, Florida, and bragging about being the first man in history to score a perfect game on Pac-Man.

The challenger is Steve Wiebe, a likable father of two who bought a house with his wife on the same day that he lost his job. In the interim time between jobs, he bought a Donkey Kong console just to have something to do. And he did it, alright. He mails a tape to the chief scorekeeper of competitive gaming showing himself breaking Mitchell's record.

Mitchell is not happy, and thus begins a long-running rivalry that turns nasty as Mitchell refuses to play Wiebe one-on-one. Not that many people cared enough to follow any of this at the time. These guys play Donkey Kong to crowds upwards of five people.

*The King of Kong* also works in a non-ironic way, as it has scenes involving Wiebe that approach something resembling actual sentiment. The movie even has something interesting to say. Humans are designed to go to war against each other – no matter how stupid the reason.



# A neverending story?

Joy Thompson  
Creative Writing Serial

Grace stood on the ground looking up. Above, a solitary eagle hung suspended in the sky. She stretched out her arms so that she could rise up, up, away from the earth into the air and fly.

"Grace!"

Grace landed with a thump.

"Grace, come in for dinner."

She ran down the hill, away from the eagle. Running was harder than flying; the earth stuck to her feet and held on to her heels. She paused on the doorstep and looked back; the eagle was still there.

"Where have you been?" said the father, at the table.

"Have you been watching that bird again?" said the mother. Grace looked from one to the other, then at her plate. She could hear her ice-cream melting.

After dinner and before her bedtime, Grace used to press her

face to the windowpanes, mist their coldness with her breath and whisper to the eagle, her voice as soft as feathers. Then Father overheard; he would frown and rumble from behind his newspaper and Mother would tell her to behave. So now she curled up quietly with a book to the approval of both, and the silence crept in.

But tonight's book was about angels.

"Mother, why can't we be angels now? Why do we have to wait till we die?"

The mother reached over and lifted the book out of Grace's hands.

"Grace, you must learn that you are a little girl, not something with wings. Little girls can't fly. Do you remember when you hurt your leg?"

Grace remembered. She remembered sitting in the tree looking down at the ground through a haze of leaves; the ground rushing up and hitting her in a flash of pain; and lying

there, looking up at the sky and seeing the eagle.

"We don't want you hurting yourself again. From now on, there is to be no more talk of flying," said the mother. The father peered over his paper and nodded. Grace stared at the carpet.

"Yes, Mother", she said.

"Good. Now go to bed, Grace."

She stood on a hill. The moon looked down at her and she looked up at it; light poured on her face and streamed off her hair. Below, the silver plains stretched far away. A long way off, there soared a shape: winged, but not an eagle. It floated closer and called to her before swooping into the distance.

Grace leapt out of bed, ran to the window and gazed at the sun. Today she would practise flying.

**Continue this story! Send 300 words to:**  
**woroni@anu.edu.au**  
**by Wednesday 19th March.**

## Sonnet to Rain (son del silencio)

Stuart Cooke (*Block*, *Edition 5*)

Hushed metal crescendo hear the cowbells clang

ing occasionally for the hell of it as if f  
alling spirits weren't caught by anyone but picked

up from the earth by hard white hands it's

hard, yes, to talk about the dust, about what  
what should or shouldn't be but still you want s

omething if the world was at rest you would

have it this way you woul  
d I hope agree with me and cool your frown your har

sh black text. Now (here comes the rain)

with a capacity for change only time will tell la  
vida derecha echa la echaste (trust) live

the drought, eat bad rhyme. Shout: Give back the land!  
My hair's too thin to mimic a downpour.

*Block* is a student-run publication of students' literary and graphic work and submissions are now open for the next issue! Send your poetry, prose, creative nonfiction, comics, photography and artwork as attachments to [anuwriters@gmail.com](mailto:anuwriters@gmail.com) by 4 April 2008.



# Inside the Public Service

**Matt Teran**  
**Token Townie**

As your token townie, I am well aware of the less than complimentary reputation assigned to this sleepy national capital. There's no doubt about it, Canberra has an image problem. If this city was in high school, it would be that kid who played handball (with limited flair) and wet himself at the last cool kid's party (if it was even invited). The feature for which Canberra is most frequently verbally gangbashed is its high population of public servants. As the story goes, to serve the public in Canberra is to have 'just another' attached to the start of your job description and to become simply a link in the never-ending chain of in trays through which your work travels. The connotations here are pretty clear - Canberra is overflowing with boring

people, whose boring jobs only serve to compliment their boring lives, and whose perpetual boredom simply adds fuel to the blazing orgy of boringness that consumes this little patch of the Great South Land.

My incredibly limited experience of the public service has, I'm sorry to say, done little to dispel this myth. I would rather slam down a warm razorblade milkshake than enter one more piece of data into an anonymous and unfeeling information management system of pain (or A.U.I.M.S.P. as it would be referred to in this institution that craves acronyms like anonymous sex). But it ain't all bad. One of greatest perks for those who straddle the public service/student divide is the security pass. Take up residence on the Garema place Emo Cushion on any given weekday and you will see them - they hang casually from necks, they settle in busts, they swing stylishly from hips,

and they decorate décolletage. These plastic medallions of privilege not only allow access into one's office but function as an all areas backstage pass to the University of Tardiness. Even if you

Australia."

And there are other benefits - the near impossibility of actually being fired; the kudos of serving a public of which you are both a part of and oh so above; the mu-

public service excursion at some stage. So yes, you could end up as an Executive Assistant to a Director who does not need/love you, and spend the majority of your time minimising and maximising windows on your computer screen to look busy. However, I am reliably informed that you are just as likely to end up in an office of like-minded youngish people, who are as amused as you are by the bureaucracy of it all, and who prefer to cut the red tape (and cut a rug on Friday nights). And even if your office is as horrifyingly mundane as you feared, you can decide which Office character you want to be - Dwight, who envisions everyone with an APS level attached to their forehead, or Jim, whose refusal to let the air conditioning sterilize his sense of humour or suck the life out of him has won him a hit sitcom and sexbomb status. That could be you.

On all of this, trust me. For I am your townie. And I love you.

**"Yes, I serve the nation; with every piece of data I enter, I am single-handedly forging a better future for Australia"**

stroll into a tute twenty minutes late, upon seeing the pass left oh so carelessly on your person, tutors generally accost you with little more than a knowing look. The same goes for leaving tutes early. Simply pull out your pass with a small flurry of urgency then discretely leave the room. It is a ritual that says - "Yes, I serve the nation; with every piece of data I enter, I am single-handedly forging a better future for

tual understanding that noon onwards on Fridays is a write off; the inevitable joys of being part of a vast population of people just like yourself and 16% super (my dad assures me I will one day think this is 'cool').

So when it comes to the nature of the public service, as any arts 'student' is painfully aware, it is all contextual. And that is a good thing to remember considering we will all inevitably have a

## Long live... the Queen?

**David McGill**  
**Halls and Colleges**

The Residents' Association at St John XXIII College has recently undergone a period of leadership transition following the expulsion of the previous President and has elected a female President for the second time in the history of the College.

Byron Fahey - who accepted a caretaker role in order to organise the college's O-week program - was widely expected to nomi-

nate for the presidency in elections held at the end of week one. However, in a surprising move Mr Fahey chose not to stand for election, leaving the way open for ANUSA General Representative Janet Mills to become the new President. Many residents on Daley Road are now asking whether this leadership change will see a change in the dynamic in one of the University's most prominent Colleges. This change, along with the appointment of a new Principal, certainly means it will be an interesting year ahead at St John XIII.



Is this really the Inter-Hall Trivia Competition? Yes, and Burgmann lost. John's/Fenner equal first.

### INSERT YOUR PHOTO HERE!

Introducing 'Snapshots at ANU'. Your photos published here in short. Some would say it was free advertising. Others, that it's a way to ensure that if we miss out on photographing a fantastic event we won't feel like bad people. *Woroni* declines to comment.

If you are interested in making a dramatic splash and increasing your exposure to the ANU student body or simply want to ensure your place in the *Woroni* archives at Menzies for the next aeon, then please read on.

Conditions are as follows:

- We want a photo of an event that is happening/happened on the ANU campus;
- A caption is recommended but not obligatory;
- The photos to be published in each fortnightly issue will be selected at the Editor's discretion;
- Please provide the photographer's name if possible;
- All submissions should be sent (in high 300dpi resolution .jpg format) to Alice McAvoy at [u4303222@anu.edu.au](mailto:u4303222@anu.edu.au)

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# The Mamuk of Malaysia

**Melissa Jogie**  
International Community

Sometimes I wonder if life is about balancing the extremes. I've spent most of my life on a tiny island where I could safely swim to the shore of a sister isle. Now I'm in Australia, which is far from tiny and I won't dare swim out to anything. Extremes do exist - look at Canberra.

While on my quest for other extremes at the ANU, I happened to fall into a casual conversation concerning college food which doesn't do justice to a student's budget or a foreigner's palate. This particular guy I was talking to came from Malaysia and started telling me about all

things Malaysian.

One aspect of Malaysian culture that is similar to the Caribbean's has to be the love of good food and the appreciation of various flavors. Apparently 'Mamak Culture' is practiced in Malaysia where people hang around and eat a variety of local cuisine late at night. His tale reminds me of kicking a few nights in Santa Barbara walking on the warm streets taking in the aroma coming from the street-side restaurants. Or even the cold nights I've spent in London, eating greasy fish and chips on the pavement out of that day's newspaper. I guess in Canberra we have the late night pizza people, which we are all grateful for at two in the morning.

Since Malaysia has a combination of people from all over the

world: the Malays, Chinese, Indians and the Indigenous people. I learnt that their cultural dishes are mixed with local spices and that some recipes are assimilated from two or more cultures, for instance Peranakan Cuisine that is a combination of Chinese and Malay traditions.

## "Malaysian students are extremely good at cooking"

At ANU some Malaysian students mentioned they find themselves in groups reminiscing about the culture at home and of course the food. Almost every Malaysian student is a member of the Malaysian Student Organization. They generally get together and celebrate various occasions

and keep the culture going.

The regular problems faced by Malaysian students would have to be the typical problems faced by most international students. We all miss home from time to time, especially on Sundays. We have all come to the ANU because it is a fantastic place to study among

ily excusable. However, offending someone accidentally because of cultural differences is difficult to detect unless you are the one offended. This is the joy of tertiary education structuring our minds how to learn rather than around what we learn.

My Malaysian friend introduced me to more people from Malaysia. There are many Malaysian students around, I'm sure everyone knows two or three people from Malaysia. At the end of it all we put political differences aside and in one moment of bliss the western world of the Caribbean and the eastern nest of Malaysia came together and made some fantastic chicken rice. This helped me derive yet another extreme: Malaysian students are extremely good at cooking.

### Thu March 13

ANU Law Student Society presents the launch of its L-Card. **Where:** Mooseheads **When:** 7:00. **Contact:** lssevents@anu.edu.au FREE

### Fri March 14

Canberra Festival presents the Canberra Short Film Competition: "Lights! Canberra! Action!" **Where:** The Hall in the National Museum of Australia. **When:** 7:30pm. **Contact:** <http://www.eormedia.com.au/lca/home.htm> FREE

### Sat March 15

Canberra Festival presents Films at Twilight: Rear Window. **Where:** Garema Place, Civic. **When:** 8:15pm. **Contact:** <http://www.tams.act.gov.au> FREE. BYO Chair

### Sun March 16

ANU School of Music presents Sonatas for Cello & Piano: Uzi & Arnan Wiesel in Concert. **Where:** Rehearsal Room 3. **When:** 3:00pm. **Contact:** <http://www.anu.edu.au/music>. Tickets available at door.

### Mon March 17

The Polish White Eagle Club presents "¡Salud!": Canberra's Monday night social tango venue. **Where:** Polish White Eagle Club, 38 David St, Turner (opp. O'Connor Shops). **When:** Every Monday, 7:30pm. Ticket: \$4

### Tue March 18

ANU Law Student Society presents Tilley's Devine Café Gallery presents Ron Sexsmith in Performance. **Where:** Tilley's Devine Café Gallery, Lyneham. **When:** 8:00pm. **Contact:** Ticketek. Tickets on sale.

### Wed March 19

The Centre for International and Public Law presents "The United Nations in 2008": with Robert Hill. **Where:** Manning Clarke Theatre 1, ANU. **When:** 6:00pm **Contact:** <http://law.anu.edu.au/cipl/events.asp>. FREE

### Thu March 20

National Folk Festival begins (ends 24th). **Where:** Exhibition Park, Mitchell. **Contact:** <http://www.folk-festival.asn.au/index.html>. Tickets on sale.

### Fri March 21

Ranger Guided Activities presents the Wombat and Platypus Walk. **Where:** Cotter Dam, Murrumbidgee River Corridor. **When:** 7:00pm. **Contact:** 6207 2900. No bookings required.

### Sat March 22

The Four Winds Festival. **Where:** The Four Winds Festival, Bermagui, NSW. **When:** Friday 21st - Sunday 23rd. **Contact:** <http://www.fourwinds.com.au>. Bookings required.

### Sun March 23

Watsons Arts Centre presents Bald Archy Prize 2008. **Where:** Watson Arts Centre, 1 Aspinall St, Watson. **When:** Until April 6th. **Contact:** 6241 1670. \$3 tickets.

### Mon March 24

The Phoenix presents Live Music Night. **Where:** The Phoenix, 21 East Row Canberra City. **When:** Evening Time. **Contact:** 6247 1606. FREE

### Tue March 25

National Portrait Gallery presents the National Photographic Portrait Prize. **Where:** National Portrait Gallery, Old Parliament House. **When:** March 13th - March 27th. **Contact:** <http://www.portrait.gov.au/> FREE

### Wed March 26

Hippo Bar presents "Translators (Syd)": A jazz soiree. **Where:** Hippo Bar, Garema Place, Civic. **Tickets:** \$10

**Send your (short) events to [woroni@anu.edu.au](mailto:woroni@anu.edu.au) by Wednesday 19th March.**

**Inclusion is subject to editorial discretion.**



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The Inter-Hall Swimming Carnival made a splash Diwa Hopkins

John Birrell  
Sports Editor

If the uninitiated didn't know it before last week, they sure do now. ANU Inter-Hall sport is intense. For many College athletes the O-week recovery was cut short to start training for hockey, cricket and swimming.

It's often hard to predict the top teams in any of the college sports and this fact was showcased perfectly in the first round of the hockey competition.

The B&G men, former hockey golden boys, struggled without their international students who flew south for the college hockey season last year and suffered a

shock loss against Fenner in the Men's competition. After years in the hockey-wilderness Fenner seem to have finally emerged from their oasis on Northbourne ready to play!

In another shock development on the hockey pitch the Ursies girls lead the female competition after comfortably beating both Fenner and Bruce. Given this strong showing and their solid second placing at the Inter-Hall Swimming Carnival Woroni has a feeling that 2008 could turn out to be the year of the Ursies Bear. However The Green Machine's performance in recent years is a bad omen for things to come.

The men's cricket competition also kicked off last week. Unlike in previous years each College

will get to play each other after the pool style competition was scraped at the Inter-Hall Sports Committee AGM in 2007. This has created a number of challenges for the organising college. However, after some minor complications with pitch availability (namely a dozen six-year-old soccer players at deep-mid-off), the new improved cricket season eventually got under way.

Given cricket is an acquired taste that I'm still working on and nothing out of the ordinary emerged from the pitch this week I won't bore you with a summation of runs, wickets and averages. Instead on this, somewhat flat, note I'll sign off for the week. Goodnight and good luck, sports fans.

SCOREBOARD

HOCKEY

INTER-HALL COMPETITION:  
Men's First Round: B&G 0 drew Burg 0; Fenner 6 d Ursula 0; Johns 4 d Bruce 0; Fenner 2 d B&G 0; Johns 1 d Burg 0; Ursula 1 drew Bruce 1.

	P	W	D	L	For	Ag.	+/-	Pts
Fenner	2	2	0	0	8	0	8	6
Johns	2	2	0	0	5	0	5	6
Burg	2	0	1	1	0	1	-1	1
B&G	2	0	1	1	0	2	-2	1
Bruce	2	0	1	1	1	5	-4	1
Ursula	2	0	1	1	1	7	-6	1

Women's First Round: B&G 0 drew Burg 0; Ursula 5 d Fenner 0; Johns 2 d Bruce 0; B&G 2 d Fenner 0; Johns 1 d Burg 0; Ursula 5 d Bruce 0.

	P	W	D	L	For	Ag.	+/-	Pts
Ursula	2	2	0	0	10	0	10	6
Johns	2	2	0	0	3	0	3	6
B&G	2	1	1	0	2	0	2	4
Burg	2	0	1	1	0	1	-1	1
Fenner	2	0	0	2	0	7	-7	0
Bruce	2	0	0	2	0	7	-7	0

CRICKET

INTER-HALL 20/20 COMPETITION:  
Men's First Round: Bruce 149 d Burg 146; Johns 147 d Ursula 118; Burg 177 d UniLodge 98; Johns 150 d Fenner 137; Fenner 141 d Ursula 122.

SWIMMING

Place	Hall/College	Points
1 <sup>st</sup>	B&G	171
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Ursula	154.5
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Johns	73
4 <sup>th</sup>	Burg	66
5 <sup>th</sup>	Fenner	40.5
6 <sup>th</sup>	Bruce	7

TOUCH FOOTY

ANU LUNCHTIME COMPETITION: Halal Butchers 10 d Darts 2; Fenner Cobras d (forfeit) Off Constantly; Run Straight Johnnies 11 d Hairy Fish 2; Young Libs 13 d Peewees 1; Magpies 8 d Burgmann Cats 4; Living the Dream 5 d ANUS Touch 2; SRA and Johns had the bye.

Memoirs of an IB Virgin

James Dawson  
Breaking in his knees

Each issue leading up to Inward Bound (IB: the late night Inter-Hall orienteering marathon) I will be giving some valuable insight into the life of a rising Inward Bound star. I will endeavour to describe the pain but will hopefully focus on the raging success of Inward Bound for a first-time competitor within the Burgmann College team.

Indicated by the introduction, there would be a totally flawless case to make that I am taking great pleasure in being chosen as the Inward Bound Correspondant Officiate. There would also be similarly strong case against this choice. Last year I spent the first week of university strolling around in my running gear, with a stopwatch. I timed how fast I could get ready in the morning, how fast I could drink a glass a water, how fast I could talk, but never how long it would take me to run long distances. This is because I never did so.

This year has not been entirely different. Only this time, as the Official Omega-Sponsored Inward Bound Correspondent Incorporated™, I am obliged to train and run in the event. Train? Yes. This obliges me to train, but with a cruel twist, this does not oblige Burgmann to select me for the team.

So far I have participated in several of the IB runs. I have even designed my own training schedule: Nutrigrain for breakfast.

As of yesterday, this list has actually become longer. Twice as long. With a container of Pow-erade powder that makes over 100 litres, I have entirely given up water in an effort to use it all by week 6. I am even brushing my teeth and showering with it.

You may think it a silly idea to set up a mole within the Burgmann team to reveal the Burgmann College training schedule and strategy. Let alone getting the secret weapon to do the reporting. Yet true or not, here it is – our training strategy:

Here at Burgmann College, the IB training squad are living by the maxim 'quality over quantity'. We admittedly have not done as much running as other colleges. Our runs are also not as long. We actually don't even exercise as intensively. But it is the quality of our heartbeats, not the quantity. That is to say, our hearts and minds are the happiest and we are having the most fun.

The problem with maintaining a healthy heart and mind is that this can only be done with the avoidance of any intensive physical activity. I have never seen a sweating, groaning, bleeding, and crying distance runner with a smile on his or her face.

This is why our runs go only to the National Museum. It is why we then stop there to picnic. It is also why the length and pace of the runs are monitored to ensure they stay below the 'puffing threshold'.

To be fair, and in order to not entirely jeopardise my ambitions of making it into the team by up-setting potential team members, we do have some warlords of athleticism. This is especially true of the two coaches – made of iron, yet charming and still finding the time to help in the community and read Voltaire.

Indeed, our promotional poster features Russell Crowe as he appears in The Gladiator. This choice of inspirational figure troubles me and greatly threatens my motivation. The immediate feeling when I look at this picture is utter disbelief that such a chubby grumpy slob would survive one round with a finely tuned killing machine and be able to move his mass to avoid his opponent's net and six foot fork. A whaling comparison would fit in here. Never do you hear of a champion whale.

This is wrong. Moby Dick was a champion whale. Although never would you put him on a poster for an event based in drought-afflicted mainland Australia.

Here's to Moby Dick and Burgmann College's IB aspirations for 2008!

Woroni wants your sports results, photos and calendars!

To be considered for the next issue, send your information to woroni@anu.edu.au by Wednesday 19th March.