On Dit
The Winter Edition
On Dit is a publication of the Adelaide University Union. The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the editors, The University of Adelaide or the Adelaide University Union. Now let’s all go and get a hot chocolate!

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So we decide; “ok we’re gonna meet at 10 am tomorrow to do the photo
shoot. Cool.”


So after traipsing around Adelaide trying to swap our back cover advertising
space, for the free hire of a furry skin, we ended up on Marion Road’s
Costumes For You. In vain, we eventually exchanged $25 for the hire of bear
for 1 hour, which was nice seeing as she was going to charge us $45. So that’s
the story. Not that elaborate except that the funniest thing was when a dog
went ballistic at Vincent’s furry exterior on the beach. Couldn’t stop LOLing.

Stay warm this winter, On Dit will be back on campus July 29 with more
googled pics and wanky front covers. Until then muchachos…

Natty O xx
Hi On Dit,

I just wanted to let people know about an amazing conference which is coming up this mid-semester break. The Students of Sustainability conference (SoS) will be held in Newcastle this year from the 5th-9th of July. SoS is a camping conference for anyone interested in creating a more ecologically and socially sustainable world. The five days are filled with great talks and workshops with students coming from all around Australia. http://www.studentsofsustainability.org/

Climate Camp will be held straight after SoS (10th-15th) and will be five days of workshops & direct action aimed at shutting down the world’s largest coal port in Newcastle. http://www.climatecamp.org.au/

If you might be interested in either of these exciting events please contact Nikki asap for more information on the conference, camp and transport from Adelaide, as there will be a group of students heading across from Adelaide Uni.

Email nikki.brookman@student.adelaide.edu.au.

Nikki

Dearest On-Dit,

I was a little dissapointed by the cover of this years “Equality Edition.” There are eleven people on it. Five are male, six are female. There are two elderly people, one child, and a good mix of ages in between. There are also various sizes and shapes, and ethnicities and skin pigmentation. In face I think blonde people are the only ones under represented.

Here’s the problem: it’s such a cliche to do something like this with an equality/diversity edition. It’s exactly what Coles or Westpac or Centrelink would do to show they love people of all types and flavours. Not to accuse you of tokenism, at all. But it does seem like you drew up a table of different groups and made sure you had one of each (Elderly, Asian, tick!). What would be HEAPS more interesting would be to have eleven Anglo-Celtic men on the cover. THAT would make a statement. You could even include a short article saying something along the lines of “We love all kinds of people, whether they descend from the England OR the Scots.”

It would be ironic. Racist/seksist people would pick it up, and have their minds blown apart. They’ll say, “why, this student publication doesn’t support the status quo at all!” But it will be too late. They’ll be changed, subverted.

Uptight people won’t get it. You’ll have edge. You’ll be pirates. Perhaps just something to consider for next time. Do the opposite of what is PC, and challenge the safe and sterilised.

Yours truly,
Justin.

Hannah Frank
Dear Editor,

The latest news is that the Burmese regime is letting foreign aid workers in, my question is how realistic is our optimistic hope? This is a regime that has excellent PR skills; they have hired a PR consultant that worked for the American Republican party to improve their international image after the monk demonstrations of 2007, in which more than 1000 were killed, by their guns.

To analyse this requires little effort, the aim is to placate the world media and UN demands. Ways they will do this is to delay visa applications, allow the aid workers only in Rangoon and not to the Irrawaddy Delta, where 80% of the damage is. Any number of possibilities and everything but god forbid, help the people. To quote the BBC: “But for them, security and control have always come first; the lives of their people come second. Those priorities will not have changed.” Speaking to some optimists here, they were quite jubilant at the promising signs, but the regime is all about delivering promises that due to some technicality, never eventuate.

Why is the regime afraid of international presence? Simply because the people in isolated Burma will finally realise that they are living in a propaganda bubble. Since birth, deprived of all the advances of the world and any chance to gain access to it, the regime is worried that once the people get a glimpse of what is outside the illusion of, this is as good as it gets, that they have created, resentment will grow. Also there is the overwhelming concern that the international presence will compromise their iron-fist control over the people. They rule by instilling fear, if the people sense that someone will be on their side i.e. international presence, the fear will absole.

The message simply is to take the news with cynicism, those aware of the ways of the regime will know that it is a tactic, they have done it before, and diverting attention is their forte. And why do i have any authority to speak you may ask, simply because I’m a young Burmese-Adelaidean Uni student, having lived in Burma surrounded by the propaganda, poverty and coming here to realise exactly what the regime is doing. It really opens your eyes to see Burma from the outside world, and the regime is afraid the people will have this view.

In the words of the Nobel Prize laureate who is the elected leader of Burma (although not allowed to take office, but rather imprisoned) Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, “please use your liberty to promote ours”. I encourage the UN and ASEAN and all other supporters to persist with the efforts and continue to apply pressure until we see some REAL change.

Yours Sincerely,
(Med V Adelaide Uni student)

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Dear On Dit,

Thank you for your timely email. We are glad you took our constructive criticism on board; we’re committed to improving student media across South Australia, and do anything we can to help. That’s how dedicated we are.

We’re pleased that Entropy magazine continues to be the benchmark for media excellence on South Australian university campuses, and we’re glad that you keep trying - you are a true testament to tenacity and perseverance. We applaud you.

We’re excited that more and more students like yourself are turning to Entropy magazine for their university news and lifestyle choices. We do all we can to keep our readers happy. Mr Bloom was particularly chuffed about your comments and praise, and is ecstatic that you enjoyed the quality of the stock. ‘Only the best for SA students’ is his driving force.

We sincerely apologise for not italicising On Dit in the magazine - a formatting oversight; I trust you will forgive us. The person responsible for the mistake has been severely reprimanded, and we have been assured that it will not happen again.

In all truthfulness, in deference to tradition and in case the point hasn’t occurred to you yet, it’s vastly more likely that we’re just baiting you into a war you can’t win.

Kind regards,
Aaron MacDonald
The Chip on UniSA’s Shoulder
[Former Editor: Entropy]
Winter is finally upon us. It was only a week ago I noticed for the first time that the temperature in my German exchange town of Rheinbach was warmer than the temperature in Adelaide. Winter is Adelaide in a funny thing. The introduced plane trees turn orange and then brown, lecturers mysteriously go missing for weeks at a time with the flu, you miss tutes because you are sick, and it all culminates at exam time in a couple of weeks from now. Sorry, but it’s true, and a fact you’ll all have to face soon enough.

So I was thinking about what news items could be tied in with the Winter Edition, and I have come up with the following:

A lot of people take the cold snap at the beginning of the month to indicate that global warming is a myth. In fact, scientists insist that while average temperatures will rise only mildly, this does not represent a uniform two degrees on the graph y=daily temperature. In fact, global warming will result in deeper troughs and higher peaks which more than compensate: a slight rise in average temperatures, but greater extremes.

This brings me to the next major news item which isn’t front page news, although I think it should be: Farmers are likely to get 0% irrigation allocation this coming water year. Adelaide has used less than average, so no further water restrictions will be imposed, but despite rain topping up our reservoirs, farmers are likely to get nothing. With appropriate monetary compensation, I think this is probably a good thing. While it takes seven years between planting and harvesting some citrus fruit and nuts such as are grown in the Riverland, this is a small price to pay to maintain the Murray as a viable ecosystem.

The building of the weir at Wellington has also again been delayed, and (frankly) I’m glad. If building the weir means cutting off the Coorong, that is an unacceptable price for Australia to pay to maintain our Riverland food production.

It’s interesting, because farmers are the key to a lot of debates lately. The Doha round of the World Trade Organisation stalled over American and European subsidies to farmers. I think the European ones are “almost” fair, as they enable small-scale farming and good animal husbandry practices. But the American model represents a massive income distribution away from third world farmers to agribusiness in the US.

Then there’s that whole debate over biofuels and the price of food matching the price of fuel. As I see it, it was intended that farmers only use the chaff to make biofuels, continuing to sell the wheat as food. But this was so profitable, they switched to whole-fuel production, reducing the supply of food just as demand is increasing from China and India. Either you mandate a minimum food production - perhaps 100%, and allow farmers only to convert chaff into fuels, or you quit subsidising altogether, and just admit that solar cars and electric trains are the transport of the future.

Speaking of the price of oil, it continues to increase. (Surprise surprise! But we have to keep saying it, in case one day it does go down.) And we’re all merely complaining about the price of petrol, but keep in mind that these increases have been mitigated more than slightly by a massive appreciation in the AUD. At the time of writing, parity with the USD did not look an unreasonable possibility - something that hasn’t happened since 1984.

Other breaking news, albeit in the northern, summery hemisphere is an earthquake in China and any number of ills heaped upon Burma. Together they have so far killed something in the order of 200,000 Asians, though because of travel warnings in Burma and the non-touristy nature of the Chinese cities in question, this reporter has not heard of any Australians.

I really hoped it would not be so, but in the US, Hillary continues to contest the Democratic candidacy. By the time this is published, I hope she has given in to Mr. Obama, as my sources indicate her only hope of winning is his assassination.

And on that note, stay warm and drink lots of hot toddies!

Eric Smith
In an era when countries still continue to wage war against each other, there seems no better reason to unite than that of global warming. While the existence of global warming has become an established reality in most peer-assessed scientific journals, the warming has become an established reality in the world of science. And not only the media have changed their tune. Environmental organisations, such as the U.S.A’s Environmental Protection Agency states on its website that according to the National Academy of Sciences “the phrase ‘climate change’ is growing in preferred use to ‘global warming’ because it helps convey that there are [other] changes in addition to rising temperatures.” (U.S.E.P.A) These may include, for instance, changes in ocean circulation, or Earth’s orbit. This term very clearly places humanity as just one cause, rather than the major contributor, to climate change.

Global warming of the planet caused mostly by humans. This is often blamed for the past 200 years of industrialisation, which caused huge greenhouse gas emissions through things like old CFC-based cans of hairspray to smoke stacks, erupting volcanoes and mining. While global warming skeptics, particularly in the world of science, are greatly outnumbered by those who agree with the conclusions reached from current research, by using the term climate change exclusively, it is possible the media is unfairly creating a bias against the majority. To anyone interested in watching international media, I would heartily recommend Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting (www.fair.org), a site dedicated to revealing bias, censored information and inconsistencies, particularly in news media.

“I’m sure we all remember that one of Kevin Rudd’s major campaign platforms was how well he was going to tackle climate change. His standpoint on “the great moral and economic challenge of climate change” (2/4/08 speech) appears fairly positive if slightly too mild, placing stronger focus on rain water tank subsidies rather than cutting greenhouse gas emissions (although I heartily agree with the signing of the Kyoto Protocol). And not only the news media have changed their tune. Environmental organisations, such as the U.S.A’s Environmental Protection Agency states on its website that according to the National Academy of Sciences “the phrase ‘climate change’ is growing in preferred use to ‘global warming’ because it helps convey that there are [other] changes in addition to rising temperatures.” (U.S.E.P.A) These may include, for instance, changes in ocean circulation, or Earth’s orbit. This term very clearly places humanity as just one cause, rather than the major contributor, to climate change.

To those of you out there wondering what the difference between these two terms are, it’s pretty simple. Climate change is a fairly general term. It can refer to natural, cyclical changes in the environment, such as droughts, floods, and ‘normal’ temperature shifts. It has also come to take on the contemporary meaning of the effects of human activity on the planet, such as the burning of fossil fuels, the release of other forms of pollution or water usage. Yet it is not so heavily laden a term as global warming, and can arguably be seen as its milder cousin. Global warming is a slightly different kettle of fish. This wild-child of a term specifically relates to the unnatural or highly dangerous

“Global Warming: Debate
In George Orwell’s world is still very divided on how to fight it. In most peer-assessed scientific journals, the warming has become an established reality. While the existence of global warming has become an established reality in the world of science, are greatly outnumbered by those who agree with the conclusions reached from current research, by using the term climate change exclusively, it is possible the media is unfairly creating a bias against the majority. To anyone interested in watching international media, I would heartily recommend Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting (www.fair.org), a site dedicated to revealing bias, censored information and inconsistencies, particularly in news media.

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When the National Wine Centre came in to take over the commercial operations, I was quite excited. I’d walk into the Mayo, the Badly Named Cafe and Backstage Cafe, and it looked...better. Most strikingly, it looked professional. The food was generally more edible (although we saw this in the prices as well as the plates), the staff were well presented, and everything seemed to work better overall.

However, it seems that this improvement hasn’t continued to other areas of the NWC’s takeover. The Clubs Association has received a number of complaints from the different clubs, ranging from a lack of bins to an inability to access rooms that have been booked to clubs having to pay to use rooms after 8pm. The Clubs Association (note: I’m on the CA executive committee, so there’s some bias here) has also had difficulties in dealing with the NWC, and an event in the Clubs Cup was cancelled as a result. The underlying issues between the NWC and student groups, however, have not been solved. Even the AUU Board meetings have been rushed as a result of the 8pm curfew on rooms in Union House. The University has apparently called NWC management to order over this, resulting in what I expect was a heated meeting on May 20.

Furthermore, questions have been raised about the NWC’s negotiating methods. Firstly, there was the suggestion that the NWC was looking to use the AUU’s membership of the TAG buying group (a group that the NWC could not access independent of the AUU, and which caused the level of acronym use in this article to become quite ridiculous) in a way that would preclude the AUU from using it for their own purposes as well. This was followed by Union President Lavinia Emmett-Grey commenting in the AUU meeting that the NWC’s tactics felt awfully like bullying. This could be seen as a weakness in that she can feel bullied in negotiations or a strength in that she feels able to tell this to the Board and spectators, including the one who will go and publish it for the rest of the uni to read.

Lavinia declared herself ‘shocked’ (apparently in a good way) that the Australian National Union of Students has been so active this year, and Simone McDonnell echoed this with a mention that the NUS President (who is visiting on May 21st to meet with the Board) had been promoting student issues on Triple J. There was some concern that the Board might find it difficult to meet their NUS fees this year, but Rhiannon, who has been on the relevant committee, explained that the affiliation fees are based on each student union’s ability to pay as well as their membership.

There was also discussion of the formation of a committee of the presidents of all the faculty clubs on campus. The idea behind this is to develop an authoritative group to look at education issues around the university and take action on them. I expect it will be interesting to see how this initiative pans out, as getting clubs to do extra work can be very difficult.

Hannah Mattner

**Upcoming Board Meetings:**

5th June
8th August
14th September
6pm in the Harry Medlin Rooms.

Feel free to come along and see what’s going on in student politics for yourself.

**State of the Union**

FREE ALCOHOL!!!

That’s right. The government has just put up the price of “alco-pops” (I had never heard mixers called that until Wayne Swan used it - I just refer to these drinks as my friends), but the Adelaide University Union is there to help. We’re holding our first members-only party at the Electric Light Hotel on Friday May 30 from 8pm. There will also be food available in case you go a bit hard on the booze. Just bring your AUU membership card and we’ll sort out the rest.

**THE FEDERAL BUDGET -** this is relevant to YOU, so keep reading! Aside from the increased alcohol tax, the Federal Budget introduced changes in the area of tertiary education. Much of this information is provided by the National Union of Students and many of the positives can be attributed to NUS’ tireless campaigning during the Howard era.

An Education Investment Fund (for higher and vocational education)

This will combine the $6 billion already committed by the Howard Government to the Higher Ed Endowment Fund with an additional $5 billion committed across this budget and the next budget. This money is for capital expenditure and research facilities ONLY.

A one-off $500 million Better Universities Grant

This is a one off payment to be given directly to universities this July to go towards urgent capital expenditure and infrastructure including and LIMITED TO: IT infrastructure, labs, teaching space, libraries and student amenities (NOT SERVICES)

The Compensation for the abolition of full-fee degrees

$249 million over four years based on negotiations with individual universities. This is a significant win in the name of equal opportunity in education. It means that those with up to a ten point lower TER score than their HECS counterparts cannot buy their way into university and that the government is committed to ensuring those places are still accessible, but now only on the basis of merit.

Doubling undergraduate commonwealth scholarships

This was a core election policy worth $238.6 million over four years for new national priority and accommodation scholarships, which will help lower income and rural students. However, as the Adelaide University Union’s submission to the government highlighted, without significant change to the eligibility requirements for Commonwealth Scholarships, these scholarships will not reach those who need it most. Many universities do not reach their quota of scholarships that they are able to access because they are restricted to students on Youth Allowance. As long as the means testing and requirements for Youth Allowance remain so ridiculously restrictive, this election promise will sound hollow.

Targeted HECS reductions

Again this is core election policy to reduce HECS costs for science, maths, nursing and early childhood courses. This will cost $779.2 million over four years.

Doubling Australian Postgraduate Awards by 2012

A core election policy worth $209 million over four years.

Establishing the Australian Youth Forum

Core election policy worth $8 million over four years, which includes funding the re-established Office of Youth.

Assuming you made it through the budget highlights, then I wish all of you the best of luck with your upcoming exams and assignments. Remember, the Adelaide University Union is there to help you, so if you want some support during these high stress time, you can contact us. Whether it’s counselling, questions about how to get a supplementary exam or rescheduling an exam time, or if further down the track you feel you received an unfair assessment or mark, speak up!

Alternatively, if you want to procrastinate with me during Swot Week, you can email me at lavinia.emmettgrey@adelaide.edu.au.
We have reached the pinnacle of Clubs Cup! Come to the Unibar on Wednesday the 11th to show off your amazing strength or determination in the bungee run from 3pm. Then join us after the holidays for events like sumo wrestling, bull riding and paper plane races. Have a blast and contribute to your club’s fame and glory while you’re there.

Council went very well the other night, and we are proud to announce that the CA can now offer grants to the clubs around campus. If your club has plans for the future that it can’t quite finance, come and see us. We can now help you out with the money side of things, whether you’re looking for a new chess board or the money for your next event.

There’s also a few new ways to advertise your upcoming events to the rest of the student body. Come down to the CA and borrow a spot on our white board in the Cloisters to let people know about what you’ve got coming up, or email Lara at lara.mieszku@adelaide.edu.au for a spot in the ‘Bread and Circuses’ section of the AUU newsletter.

Finally, don’t forget to keep in touch! The CA is always interested in hearing about what you’ve got happening, and we’re there to help out in any way we can. Come down to the office on the ground floor of the Lady Symon building sometime and see what we can do for you.