

Extreme ways to qualify for Youth Allowance

Even though the government has gone out of its way to prevent students from obtaining Youth Allowance, it can actually still be obtained, depending on how far you're prepared to go, the level of risk you're prepared to accept and the extent to which you are prepared to ignore the government's direct attack on your right to an education. The trouble for most people is qualifying for the independent rate so you can keep your parents out of it. This requires conforming to the government's preferred Christian Family Values/Protestant Work Ethic and being a Fine Upstanding Tax Paying Breeding Poor Hard Done By Battler who turns the tap off when brushing (his) teeth and never jay-walks.

Or faking it. It is most unsavoury to have to lie, but to have to conform? Here are a few things you can do if you have some strange problem with being supported by your parents and/or living off your friends in the bad times.

***1 you can wait** until you've either earned \$14,580 of declared, taxable income in 18 months, or have miraculously made it to 25 still studying full time, undergraduate. Working 15 hours/week for 2 years or 30 hours/week for 18 months also work. It's all a bit difficult if you came straight from school to uni.

***2 Have a kid.** Ouch. A few more bucks a week will rally help with the expenses, the inability to do anything else with a large chunk of your life, the emotional trauma...

***3 Get married.** Obviously this is wildly discriminatory, but many queer people have found queer friends of the opposite sex for a "Youth Allowance Couple" which the government finds totally acceptable. The good thing is that with an official marriage, Centrelink don't come knocking at the door to see whether you actually live together, seem in love, sleep together, like they do in the next option. Be warned, though, that marriage does complicate other things, the most immediate being that if your 'spouse' starts earning too much money, your pay will be docked too. Make sure it's someone you trust.

***4 The "Marriage like relationship"** is even worse, unless you happen to have a suitable, opposite sex, live in partner. Even if you do, you have to submit to examination of "your financial and household arrangements, social and sexual relationships and the perceived permanence and commitment between you". Remember you can always refuse access to your home; make an appointment to see an official at Centrelink instead.

If you are planning on informing Centrelink about any sort of partner, be very careful and do your sums. If it backfires, you'll be stuck submitting information about their income every two weeks or on a shared payment which is much less than what a single person receives.

***5 "Unreasonable to live at home"** This account was sent in anonymously: "The first thing you should do is go to a councillor at uni and ask what kind of information the government requires if you claim that your parents refuse to financially support you. I had to fill in three forms. One from the point of view of my parents, myself and a family friend, doctor, or relative. What 'they' really want to know is that the relationship between you and your parents is irreconcilable, and that no amount of counselling is going to change this. You need to claim that you have already seen family councillors, and doctors. Then, 'they' will want to know if it is damaging to your physical and mental health to remain at home. Basically there can be no hope left – for them to pay you they want to make sure that you have no other alternatives. The forms must be filled out by hand, so you will need three different styles of handwriting, and signatures. Dates, details referring to specific events, and evidence that the 'abuse' etc. has been long term is necessary. The story must be consistent within each form, and they should all refer to similar events. I advise sitting down with a friend and writing a plan for each character. Talk it through with several different people, and before you hand the forms in, go back and see the councillor, and ask them if it is convincing. Each form will require an address and phone number. 'They' will probably want to speak to your parents over the phone as well. Choose someone who is reliable, and convincing to play this part. You can also submit mobile phone numbers, which makes it easier. At Centrelink your request will be given to a councillor. They will contact you and ask you to verify some things, and they might ask you to elaborate on an event, so keep a copy of the forms by the phone. When I handed my forms in, they were very slow to respond, so I called them several times a day, reminding them that I had to pay rent and buy food. When they realise that you are a human being and not just a form I think they become more compassionate."

Go to the MUSC front office and pick up the NUS Guide to Youth Allowance and Austudy, and Youth Allowance fact sheets. They are clear and definitely worth reading, and like everything else from NUS, free. (brought to you by that under \$5 of your Student Activities Fee.) MUSC and the editor, of course, can not encourage these practices although we may not discourage them either.

It's Yours!

Occupy

the University!!!

The Alternative Calendar was won for students in the student occupations of 1974 as part of the campaign to allow MUSC to gain a larger part of the student activities fee, in order to hire a full time chairperson and a researcher. The last occupation which took place on this campus in 1992 was a culmination of events based around the lack of student, staff and community involvement in the decision making processes of the University, the lack of disclosure on the part of the University administration of matters of public interest, and the increasing corporatisation of the university. This has been building for some time, and came to a head when the Vice Chancellor gave herself a substantial pay rise, strangely approximating the amount she had cut from course funding. Students and staff occupied the Council meeting room and the Vice Chancellor's office in an action which lasted over 4 days.

Macquarie University is constituted by act of parliament. As such it is a public institution. The function of the University, established by the Macquarie University Act 1989, includes "the dissemination of knowledge and the promotion of scholarship generally" (s.5.c). Students submitted that the Act, and this section in particular, determine that Macquarie University should operate in the interests of the wider society. Those functions do not include the pursuit of a corporatist ethos. Nor do they outline a central role for management prerogative. Students submitted that all decisions within the University should be open to scrutiny by members of the University and the broader public. Given that the Vice Chancellor and other members of senior management are public officials, such scrutiny should extend to details of senior remuneration packages. This was not done at the time. In a recent voluntary disclosure by Vice Chancellors, Di Yerbury disclosed that she is the second highest paid Vice Chancellor in the country on \$730,000. This disclosure did not include her provided house or chauffeur driven Statesman. There are still no provisions for accurate disclosure.

Scrutiny can have meaning only when students and staff have the opportunity for input prior to a decision being made and when decision making bodies accept some level of accountability. Students and staff do not ask for the power of veto, but rather for meaningful input, some assurance that the decisions of these bodies reflect the interests of the University community and the wider society. The mere publishing of a decision while the issue is being debated among students and staff merely preempts the views of the university community instead of harnessing them in the best interests of the University in an inclusive way.

The provision of a single student representative for 15,000 students is legislated by act of parliament. But the composition of the committees formed by that Council, and the academic senate, is not, and as such the Academic Senate and few committees have student representation. Even when they are allowed a place, students have little input and, like the staff of this uni, are hopelessly outnumbered on committees. As such MUSC submitted that the University needed a greater input from students and staff, otherwise the Administration ran the risk of appearing to be self-serving.

Factors leading to the occupation of the Vice Chancellors office 1992.

- an increase in parking fees of 79%
- the introduction of Masters in Commercial Law
- the lack of student representation in University decision making
- an increase in salaries for some executives of the same 79%
- an increase in the salary of the Vice Chancellor of \$250,000 to over \$700,000pa at a time when around \$1,000,000 was cut from course funding.
- annual allocation of funds to the library had fallen 25% per "EFTSU" (formerly known as student) in five years.

Demands of students as per submissions to University Council and the special working party:

- that all documents pertaining to the decision of the salary increases for the Vice Chancellor and senior officers be immediately released and that the decision be reconsidered at an open meeting of University Council at which all in attendance be given speaking rights.
- that an ad hoc committee of University Council comprising of representatives of students, staff, and University management, with students and staff comprising no less than one third of total membership, be established to investigate a proportional increase in student and staff representation in decision-making within the University.

University response to occupation:

- threat to rescind pay increase to staff after their support of student protest.
- Di Yerbury spends further \$10.3 million of education funds on building herself a new office.
- further privatisation of security.

Issues still to be resolved include:

- cuts to courses
- cuts to academic staff
- cuts to audio-visual staff (people who put on your movies and tape your lectures)
- lack of library resources, massive cuts to library staff and funding levels.
- ridiculous parking fees for spaces we dont have, carparks oversubscribed while spaces given to multinationals are mostly empty.
- massive salary hikes for senior executives while academics languish on static wages.
- lack of affordable housing
- privatisation of security
- Australian Vice Chancellors Committee still engages in sycophantic aping of corporate interests and conservative strategies to exclude the poor from higher education rather than transmitting the concerns of university communities to government (which is their supposed role, and the role they claim). Di Yerbury and AVCC consistently ignore students concerns, especially those regarding income support for students.

Vice-Chancellor's Remuneration

The rise in the Vice Chancellor's remuneration in 1992 was triggered by a Remuneration Tribunal recommendation that the heads of Australia's 36 higher education institutions receive a 25% pay increase, backdated 12 months. Later it was revised down by the government to 19%. This was at a time when Australia was in recession and workers were having wages frozen or cut, or being laid off. Macquarie Uni executives took this as the cue for a 79% salary free-for-all, then threatened to freeze the wages of academics who cried foul. There have not been significant wage improvements for workers in the last decade, especially of the scale of remuneration improvements for Di Yerbury. In the last decade cuts to courses have ravaged the campus. Not only is Di Yerbury paid a salary of \$730,000, but this does not include a fully maintained V8 Statesman with chauffeur, mobile phone, fully maintained home in Killara, including a gas heated swimming pool. (all we get is a filthy lake which is really for the twisted aesthetic pleasures of Graduate School of Management patrons.)

Privatisation of Security

You can tell a lot about an institution by who defends it. Before privatisation began, university security were public servants as they worked for a government funded institution. With the full privatisation of security, security staff are often part time or casual guards with no knowledge of the campus., as each guard only works here for a short time, days or weeks. Furthermore, private security guards are trained to guard private property, which this campus is not. Their employment demonstrates that Admin regards the university as the private property of the administration, and the security guards as their hired thugs. Women and disabled people are especially at risk under these conditions, not to mention the general student populace including those students the guards have been told to "look out for". Their attitude and assumed powers to harass students have no place in an institution of higher learning.

Gains to students from occupying a Vice Chancellor's office:

- University tends to back down, they fear exposure like a vampire fears the sun.
- Issues referred to committee - get the results.
- Massive media publicity for public education and the issues on campus.
- Public education was in crisis. It now nearly no longer exists, and everyone knows it. You have the support of the majority of thinking Australians.
- All students involved received their degrees. Dont be intimidated!

The University is afraid of you. Admin knows that their power derives from the silence of the majority, and the majority at university are the Students. Their corporate rorts are at risk. Students have a university to win, and nothing to lose but their poverty.



PHIL 131 MIND, MEANING & METAPHYSICS

Semester: 1

Academic: Dr John Sutton, Dr Robyn Ferrel

Responses: 46

A very important course with practical applications in all fields of human contact. A “mentally draining subject – really worth doing”. Some students found the lectures by Robyn Ferrel opaque and dislikeable, but as head of the philosophy department its better to listen even though her lectures make more sense to the 300 level courses, and taking notes in her lectures is difficult. The tutors are reportedly “great”. The 200 level subjects are better so its worth continuing, and you will cover all this again at 300 level in a more interesting way. Focus on mind and body. Books, \$20.

PHIL 132 PHILOSOPHY,

Semester: 2

Academic: Dr Caroline West, Dr Nick Smith

Responses: 82

This is a broad course because philosophy needs a broad introduction. It is designed to make students think about some of their fundamental attitudes and assumptions about the world, and demonstrate the strands of theory which students may recognize as being the sources for their beliefs, to give students the tools to begin to work through their personal ideas in pursuit of a more ordered and complete belief system. Philosophy is heavy going at times and is at times personally challenging. You really need to have done the readings before tutorials and start assignments as soon as you get them, esp as the due dates are at the most inconvenient times, though penalties for late work are minimal. Philosophy now has end of semester exams. The lecturers are really good, especially Dr West. Books, \$34.

PHIL 137 CRITICAL THINKING

Semester: 1

Academic: Dr Menzies

Responses: 1

3x 15% in class quizzes, 10% tut participation, 45% final exam and no other work unless you really need to study. This course is really easy if you feel you have a logical mind. Sleep through the lectures and open your eyes when there's a new topic. If the material is new to you, you probably ought to pay attention.

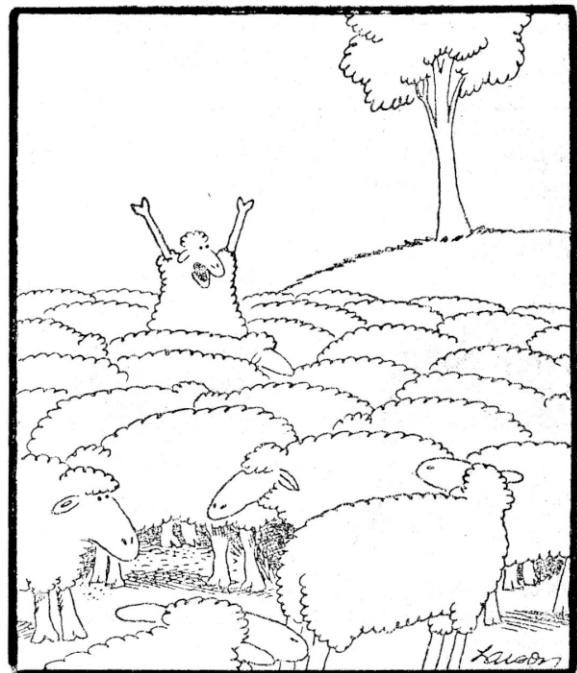
PHIL 232 PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

Semester: next year

Academic: Dr John Sutton

Responses: 35

This course has no final exam. Take this if you must, or if you are a science student. “I would recommend this course highly to anyone but science majors in particular. It gives you a new perspective on what science is and how it should be practiced” But watch out if you are bad at essays. Books \$40



“Wait! Wait! Listen to me! . . . We don't have to be just sheep!”

PHIL 238 PHENOMENOLOGY AND EXISTENTIALISM

Semester: 1

Academic: Dr Simon Lumsden

Responses: 2

A gripping edge of your seat psychodrama. Although some students said it was boring, these people probably wouldn't like Kant 359 either. Yes this course is for “philosophy buffs” and is totally relevant to daily life – its about existence and *how* we do or should exist. Philosophers covered are Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty. Lectures by Dr Lumsden are a little hard core, but this course is essential for any philosopher. Books, photocopying \$90

PHIL 242 PRACTICAL ETHICS

Semester: 1

Academic: Dr Caroline West, Dr Catriona Mackenzie

Responses: 1

This course has a reputation of having easy essays where you can crap on for ages, which is mainly because ethics is one of the longest running debates in philosophy. Books, photocopying \$30. Do yourself a favour and take another subject with Dr West, you know you want to...

PHIL 250 / ARTS 200 THEORIES OF AESTHETICS.

Responses: 1

This subject is very different from all other philosophy subjects. The assessment is basically made up of weekly prac projects so you have to keep on top of it which is a pain in the arse. Don't assume you can just do it all at the end like usual. It's a good course reader but unless you are doing a creative arts major there isn't a lot to be gained by taking this. It's interesting but if it's too weird to pass that's not much good to you as you have to pay HECS for it.

PHIL 352 PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEMS OF GENDER

Semester: 1

Academic: Dr Robyn Ferrel, Dr Caroline West

Responses: 2

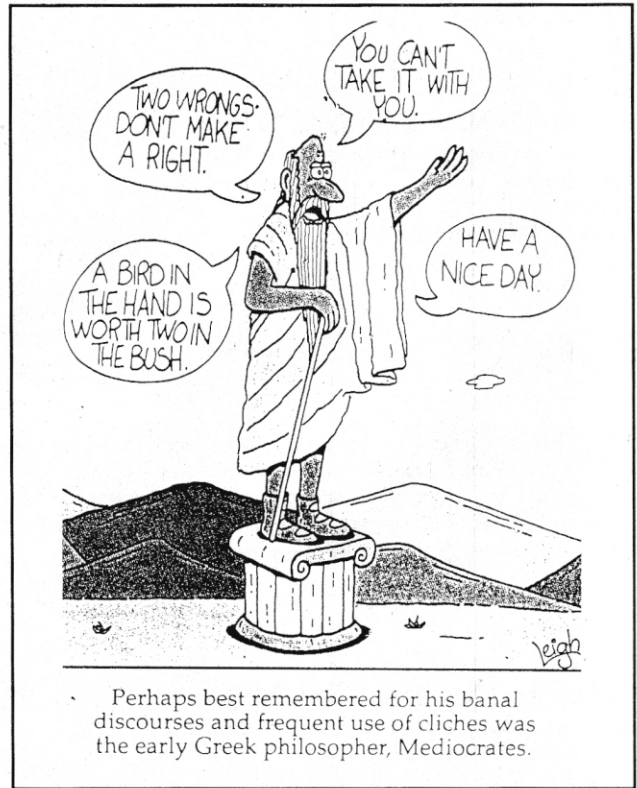
This course is essentially a feminist one but is highly recommended for both sexes as the problems covered in this course need to be dealt with by the whole of society. A totally fascinating subject. This subject demonstrates that people who think feminism is for the loony left are unable to justify their own beliefs on any level, and will arm students with a framework for rethinking their own attitudes and practices. Tutorials will be good if you participate. Lectures are taped which is essential for this course, it helps to listen to Dr Ferrel more than once. Books, \$30.

PHIL 356 POWER, DESIRE AND SUBJECTIVITY

Semester: 2

Responses: 1

The tutorials are on the internet. You'd think discussion would be a good idea in a philosophy tut, but you are given a room full of computers to sit at and type to each other, so plenty of people just do it at home.



PHIL 357 THEORIES OF JUSTICE

Semester: next year

Academic: Dr Caroline West

Responses: 35

Caroline West shines teaching this subject. The only place to study Marx in a critical way. With the foundations of western civil rights being given no more than lip service, and a movement away from the welfare state globally, a consciousness of what it at stake, a personal opinion of what to do about the global political situation, and a clear picture of what sort of society you would like to live in are the most important things you can take from university. You may even have a fresh interest in university funding and how much you are paying for your degree, and why! Take this course, even if you have to ask for a waiver. Since the axing of Phil235 Marx and Marxism in the 1990s, this is as political as philosophy gets at Macquarie. Of course, since the school of History, Philosophy and Politics was broken up and these three subjects sent in different directions, there isn't much of a critique of the capitalist state left at this University. (Thanks Di Yerbury).

PHIL 358 METAPHYSICS

Semester: 2

Academic: Kojo Tanaka, Peter Menzies

Responses: 1

Department of Sociology

Lectures were very good. Lecture printed notes were provided. Very informative all round. Tuts were good too. Need to do the readings for them but if people do interesting discussions resulted. Assessment and workload was very fair: 2 essays and 2 in class tests. Course content challenging yet fair. Texts are economical for BA students and necessary. Class sizes are marvellous, just big enough for a good discussion. The lecturers are very engaging and helpful.

PHIL 359 KANT

Semester: next year

Academic in Charge: Dr Nick Smith

Responses: 2

This is quite a difficult course but the most rewarding in the department. You read one book and do one essay. Dr Smith is excellent at making the subject make coherent sense, which is difficult with a text this dense. This course will make you think differently about the nature of your existence, the metaphysical, the appearance of objects, and cognition. Its more interesting if you have done Existentialism. Don't be scared by the textbook the Critique of Pure Reason, it will soon be your friend. Do take notes though, as the essay is hard. This course needs more class time to explain the ideas in the text. Books, \$70.

PHIL 363 PHILOSOPHY & COGNITIVE SCIENCE

Semester: 2

Academic: Dr John Sutton

Responses: 1

What you should take instead of Agency and the Self. This subject has no exam. Books and photocopying \$68.

PHIL 382 AGENCY AND THE SELF

Semester: 1

Academic: Dr Mackenzie

Responses: 1

There are better 300 level courses to take. Don't take this course unless you need it for the credit points and there is nothing else available. It is more likely to be confusing than enlightening and essays are unnecessarily difficult, although it does tie up some loose ends from first year subjects. This course can be interesting, but silly. If you really want to know if a group or collective can be regarded as a morally responsible agent, take Law.

SOC 100 / ARTS 100 CONTEMPORARY ARTS IN AUSTRALIA

Semester: 1

Academic: Dr John Lechte

Responses: 2

These two students didn't agree on all that much, but it seems the lectures were interesting, and not overcrowded as the tutorials were. Workload was about right and there were three hours of classes per week. Students were allowed input into the course content, which was broad and useful. One respondent considered the assessment methods were unfair, but the course requirements were clear, so you might want to watch out for that.

"The course is focused too much on jobs in the Arts Industry, and doesn't focus enough on the Arts. The introductory lectures opened space for discussion about Art in society (the role, relationship to class etc) but provided inadequate time within the course to discuss this. The lectures made deserving criticisms of the Vice-Chancellor which was the only good part of the course!"

SOC 181 AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY

Semester: 1

Academic: Dr Michael Fine

Responses: 132

This subject is highly recommended because of what it is. Students found the material interesting. Overall, this subject does not live up to its potential, although it is a good subject to take to develop research skills for sociology. This subject bored students and it's the department's fault. Sociology is taught in Universities as a direct result of the worker-student riots in Paris in May 1968, as a way for citizens to study and critique the society they live in. (this is taught in SOC180 and needs to be put into practice in SOC181) The lecturer needs to remember this and actually discuss the poverty of existence in Australia, the class system and how it impacts on students through paying for their education and in other ways, and how capitalism does or does not have its own uniquely Australian manifestations. There also needs to be a critique of research itself. The lecture/tutorial format is not working in this subject; students want more direct participation and discussion in a classroom environment – tutorials were too short. An easy 3 credit points. Books, photocopying \$20 + HECS.

SOC 284 SOCIAL POLICY

Semester: 1

Academic: Prof Anna Yeatman

Responses: 1

“Definitely one of *the best* courses around. It gives a background to the economic trends that are currently shaping our lives, such as deregulation, privatisation, and neoliberalism. The readings are challenging but very useful, especially the text, David Levine’s “Wealth and Freedom”. A greater emphasis could be placed on potential solutions after having defined the problems (yes, an activist sociology department!) Also the tutorials need to be more structured, perhaps with specific questions to focus on and the links to current issues. Otherwise a very important course that provides the conceptual tools for analysing and discussing the current state of society and the market economy.” “no prerequisites are really necessary, anyone should be able to do the course.” Independent critical thought “depends on the student. The course promotes logical reasoning & argumentation. Course is recommended to everyone, especially business/economics students.” This respondent noted discrimination on the basis of “economic status – being a uni student is not viable for the poor”. Books, photocopying \$40.

SOC 287 METHODS OF SOCIAL RESEARCH

Semester: 2

Academic: Dr Michael Fine

Responses: 1

This subject has a long reputation for being boring, but you’ll need it for your career in sociology. “This course was boring, take a pillow to tutorials, There is no exam, The assessment takes time”. Books, photocopying \$80.

SOC 288 KNOWLEDGE, POWER AND DIFFERENCE

Semester: next year

Academic: Dr Johnson

Responses: 1

Our one respondent let forth a barrage of criticism on this subject and the university. We know it is not a bad course, and is one that teaches ways of looking at identity politics. This course is important for understanding refugee issues, culture, race, sexuality and big brother issues. This course allows for a critique of capitalism and oppression in essays but does not teach it. It is a great loss that students gain little from tutorials. The tutor monopolised time, which is an easy way out when students in tutorials are forced

dialectically to identify themselves along various lines and defend those identities, or to take the hard line that identity is irrelevant in a course regarding the problems of identity! Nonetheless this course encourages students to challenge their assumptions on who they are, how they formulate or arrive at an identity, and where they stand on issues. The time given for the exam is reportedly too short and places students under unnecessary stress. But as Prof Ross Poole pointed out in 1976, the quality of work presented in exams is abysmal anyway and departments should not pretend this constitutes fair assessment. Books, photocopying \$30. You will no doubt know that the computers in the library are a joke – “sociology should get its own computer lab or make internet use optional”. Provision of essential services is difficult under Liberal government budget cuts of \$1 billion.



SOC 379 SOCIOLOGY OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE

Semester: 1

Academic: Dr Pauline Johnson

Responses: 2

This course is highly recommended as being vital to an understanding of society. “Pauline is a lecturer who works really hard. But she *must* review the way she gives the lectures. She explains the readings in the same language that they are written in. So, in effect, one does not get an *interpretation*. Pauline understands the work really well, but she uses difficult, inaccessible language to explain it. She doesn’t simplify the concepts, she regurgitates them. It makes lectures a bitch. It’s like teaching someone a language by speaking it 24 hours – eventually you’ll pick it up, but not in a 2-hour lecture. That’s why I feel a bit jipped (in paying too much for the course) – it would have been a great course. I did Soc. Perspectives on Modernity with Pauline, and I *still* don’t understand Marx or Nietzsche.” The writing is on the wall – this course needs to focus on concepts and how they relate to the language of sociology, perhaps *before* they take this subject. Students want to be taught their Marx! Books, photocopying \$60

How to open a Door

One year ago, Professor David Gibson stunned philosophy conferences with his revolutionary thesis on door opening. In this issue, the Professor presents an expanded bifurcative account, demonstrating the fundamental ongoing re-think process currently affecting the door-opening vs. porte-ouvert dichotomy.

In this short discussion I will be looking at doors. Specifically, the process by which they can or may be opened and, perhaps very briefly, a number of possible ways in which they can or may be closed (see footnote 1).

Obviously as with most discussions of this kind, a thorough examination of all the factors relating to door-opening – as I call it – is well beyond the scope of this paper. However, some of the more salient points can be dealt with here, specifically; the decision to open the door, the approach to the door, and the basic actions undertaken by the agent to render the “closed” door “open”.

It is a significant point that throughout the course of Western philosophy, doors have been largely ignored. This dearth of dialogue achieves an even more sinister significance when it is recalled that the opening of a door is one of the most basic (and therefore fundamental) aspects of daily life. (See footnote 2).

Indeed, very few ethical questions can be dealt with until two or more rational human agents come together in some way and interact. This can rarely be achieved until at least two (see footnote 3) agents come into a house or a room of that house, or indeed, leave a house or a room of that house via a door. (See footnote 4).

Likewise, various epistemological problems (see footnote 5) cannot be fully confronted until, for example, an object (or number of objects) can be said (or thought) to be seen “clearly”. And of course, a clear line of sight can rarely be achieved through a closed door. (See footnote 6).

Russell Bertrand notes this problem in his short book *An Introduction to the Extremely Obvious*, from which I will quote heavily.

“In my study I have a desk at which I write many of my immensely popular books. It is a brown desk, smooth when I rub my fingers along it, hard when I wrap my knuckles against it. This, of course, may very well mean that when I rub my fingers along it, its property of hardness somehow disappears and that, conversely, when I wrap my knuckles against it its property of smoothness vanishes. An interesting point.

For example, if I were to rub my fingers along its smoothness and then, without warning, suddenly wrap my knuckles against it, my hand might very well go straight through the wood which could have assumed the properties of a large, brown, shiny marshmallow. Perhaps too, if I were to spend some time wrapping my knuckles against its hardness, I might lull the desk into a false sense-data of security. So that if I were to

suddenly, and again without informing the desk of my intentions, rub my fingers along it, I might find that it had taken on a terrible abrasiveness.

So there I would be – a philosopher of some international repute – with one hand bleeding profusely and the other stuck up to the elbow in a brown, gooey mess.

I concluded that desks could be dangerous things. Perhaps even more so than atomic bombs or fascism. The problem, however, with all of this was actually opening my study door, going inside and trying it all out once and for all”. (Page 4)

Deciding to open the door, then, is a hurdle that must be overcome if any meaningful dialogue is to be achieved in any of the branches of endeavour that philosophy is generally said to entail. (See footnote 7).

Robert Nosbig, in his influential book *Anarchy, State and Doors*, argues that in order for an agent to decide to open a door, that is, in order for such a decision to be truly “free”, the agent must purge his mind of all external considerations.

The decision to open a door must be arrived at rationally, and yet without regard to any apparent reason. It has to be a spontaneous desire shared by all people. So that in a Hobbsian State of Nature, with rampant self-interest and war being the general rule, mankind’s barbarism would be subjugated to a large extent by a common, primordial desire to form a society, construct a large number of doors, and open them.

It is my contention, however, that Nosbig’s theories fall down on a number of points, and that those which remain standing are, at the very best, highly dubious. Unfortunately, a discussion of my arguments against these points is well beyond the scope of this short paper. Suffice it to say that I am more than likely right.

The leap from decision to action is a major one. Having decided to open a door, the agent must rationalise to himself that a journey ‘to’ as opposed to ‘away from’ the door itself is a logical necessity. Plato would argue that such a realisation was arrived at before the desire to open the door arose, or, indeed, before the agent was even aware of the door’s existence. See, for example, the Socratic dialogue known as the *Creepo*, where Socrates demonstrates a young slave boy’s innate knowledge of opening doors.

SOCRATES: So then Creepo, you have seen that after being beaten savagely about the head for several hours, young Fido here has finally recalled how to open a door – something that you stated he did not know previously.

CREEPO: It appears that you were right after all, Socrates. It also appears that you have won our little wager. You are free to sodomise Fido.

SOCRATES: Thank you. (P 321a-322e).

Doors in fact, are mentioned – and indeed given in-ordinant prominence – in a number of Pre-Socratic works, despite the fact that they were not in great use at the time. At least I'm fairly certain they weren't. I could very well be completely wrong about this, and I wouldn't really like to be quoted on the matter. Then again, I suppose that in writing this article I already have been. A common problem with philosophers. We do paint ourselves into some pretty hairy corners sometimes. I'd stop in mid-sentence, only I'd be made an academic laughing stock by a lot of clever dick "fellow" lecturers who probably couldn't put a damned terrific article like this together if they tried.

I think I'll just put forward the view that any further discussion of opening doors would be well and truly beyond the scope of this short paper. That's always good for a quick exit.

by David Gibson, Associate Professor of the Kensington School of Applied Philosophy.

Footnotes:

1. I am indebted to Howard Blair for a number of marginally helpful comments on the first draft of this paper. In

his article *How To Close A Door* he rightly states that the closing of a door should not necessarily be regarded as a mere reversal of its being opened.

2. Robert Cummings' scholarly work *Shintoism and Doors* brings out the point that doors are also rarely mentioned in the East – and then only briefly as in "the old philosopher opened the door and went inside to think about the problem of existence". (P.24). Also, Peter Morley's book *Zen and the Art of Door Opening* shows that of the 3,000 *Zen koans*, only three make mention of doors. k"But these are invariably of the sliding variety and besides which are usually made of rice paper". (P.9)

3. Or perhaps even three.

4. It can be seen here that the closing of doors is only a secondary consideration in ethical dilemmas, as it only entails the exclusion of other agents from watching these dilemmas being solved. For a more detailed discussion of this field see James Riley's article *Watching Ethics Through Doorways: A Kantian Approach*.

5. Dr. Mary Greenburg would say "All epistemological problems" see her *Doorways to Scepticism* (P.68)

6. Norman Blackwell, however, gives the interesting example of an agent being endowed with superhuman powers such as X-ray vision: powers which, of course, would also give rise to a number of ethical dilemmas. See his book *Man, Superman and Doors*.

7. Professor Warren Simpson, to whom I am indebted for various comments on the first draft of this paper and who made me a cup of coffee while I was typing out the final draft, would contend that door opening is not necessarily related to any form of philosophical dialogue. He is what is known as "An Armchair Philosopher". See his book *Philosophy Without Doors*".



Department of Critical and Cultural Studies

HECS band 1

CUL100 TEXT IMAGE CULTURE

Semester: 2

Academic: A/P Nick Mansfield

Responses: 3

An essential course for any Macquarie student. This course draws a large number of students all of whom have their eyes opened at a different way of looking at the world. For many students, Cultural Studies is the most memorable part of their degree. Course covers an introduction to using psychoanalytical techniques to critique text, everyday life, cultural assumptions about the self, human development and technology, and of course gender is an issue as well. Also draws on the major recent European philosophers, most of them French. Texts for essays are never available in our under-staffed, under-resourced library. There are no alternate lecture times. The textbook is written by Dr Mansfield and is an essential tool that can be used for most other arts subjects. Books, Photocopying, \$100. This subject is a must take.

understand the jargon, oops! I mean key terms. This lecturer skirts around the topic without explaining them. 3 hours per week with one 2 hour lecture. The books on the reading list are not all in the library. Books, photocopying \$50+ HECS – why should we have to pay for boring prerequisites?

Lecturer's comments: Anne Cranny-Francis

Assessment: tutorial paper 20%, midsemester essay 30%, end of semester essay 50%. Available for consultation: "2 hours per week and other times by appointment; I also answer a lot of emails." Main problems: "Some students find it hard it hard to let go of 'common sense' opinions about media products or even to treat them seriously or critically." Student opinion: "We consider student opinion particularly in relation to the contextual material used to relate concepts to everyday, material culture and also assessment (eg, we changed from last year to account for some student concerns." Changes: "We will reconsider some of the texts we used to discuss concepts and change those that didn't work so well. The aims and content will probably stay substantially the same, though we may add some basic material on critical categories. We'll review the assessment after the final essay."

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CUL101 INTRODUCTION TO VISUAL CULTURE

Semester: 1

Academic: A/P Anne Cranny-Francis, Joseph Puguese

Responses: 6/300 +

An interesting subject with a boring lecturer. Dr Cranny-Francis used to take CUL100 with the legendary Patrick Fuery, and when she came in for the second hour everyone left the room. Nothing has changed it seems. An understanding of cultural studies rests on being able to use and

CUL200 THEORIES OF SUBJECTIVITY

Semester: 2

Academic: A/P Nick Mansfield

Responses: 2

Really good course, the flagship subject of the department. Requires a lot of work but very rewarding. Subject is overcrowded as tutorial numbers do not dwindle through the semester. Subject matter is fantastic: Kant, Freud and the Oedipus complex, Lacan and the Mirror Stage, Derrida, The Panopticon (a must for anyone who has ever been anywhere which may have been under camera surveillance), Kristeva's abjection and horror, Rhizomatics, Vampires, Consumerism, in all a postmodern paradise.

CUL203 PERFORMANCE STUDIES 1

Semester: 1

Academic: David Ritchie, Justin Dutch

Responses: 1

Challenging performance based subject with a large reading list. Some plays like Hamletmachine are awesome and this subject moves theatre out of the clutches of the Bard, sortof. Our one respondent wanted about 5 plays cut from the reading list, and advised to take lots of notes while reading the play, and to make your critiques text based and not image based. Texts are once again not in the library. Books, photocopying well over \$50.

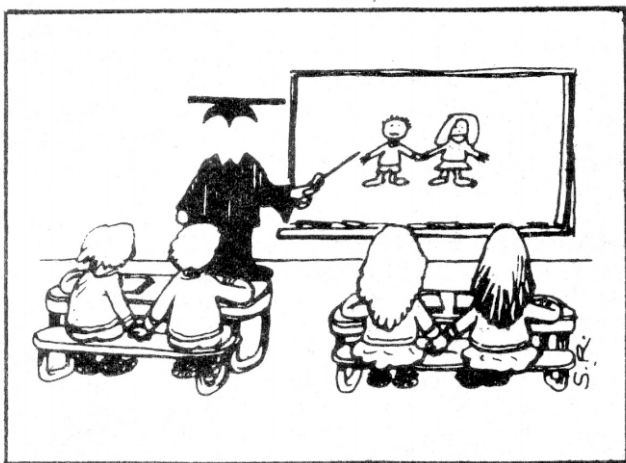
Lecturer's comments: Available for consultation weekly.

Extensions and late penalties: "According to individual

need. Only penalize in extreme cases." Main problems:

"Time pressure on students, most of whom have to work to support themselves. Irresponsible group members."

Assessment: essay/critique 25%, tutorial contribution 15%, performance 30%, exam 30%.



CUL 204 SEXUALITY/GENDER/CULTURE 1: QUEER THEORY

Semester: 1

Academic: Dr Nikki Sullivan

Responses: 1

We live in a culture built on assumptions of sexuality which are paper thin. This course is based more on subjectivity than sexuality for the heterosexual student and CUL200 is an unofficial prerequisite. It is good to do them both at once. 3 hours per week. Books, photocopying \$50. Extensions are a dime a dozen in the Cultural Studies department.

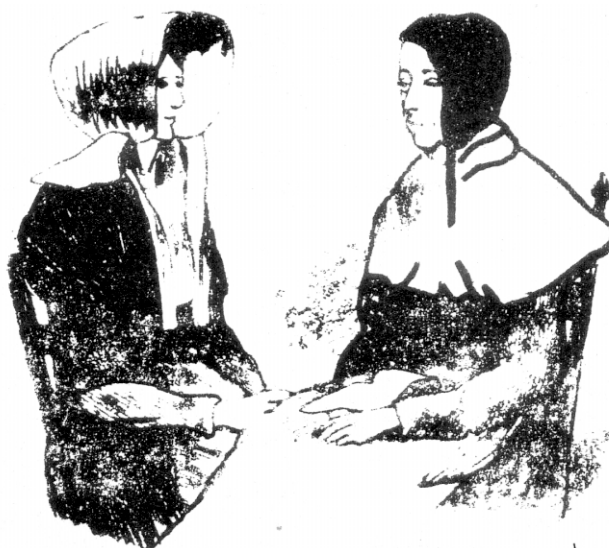
CUL302 WRITING 2: GENRE WRITING

Semester: 1

Academic: Dr Nick Mansfield

Responses: 1

"This course is amazing if you want a career in writing. It really teaches you the secrets of genre, and the tools of writing. Plus, the seminar tutor Elizabeth Lhuede is really talented". Books, Photocopying, \$min.



The grenades are under the sink.

CUL305 WAYS OF READING U.S. CULTURE

Semester: 2

Academic: A/P Kirkby

Responses: 1

This course is the victim of funding cuts as there are no taped lectures in the library, making it very difficult to catch up on work. An easy 300 level course. Be ready for your essay question "Is Forest Gump the American Adam?". Will the department take the bait and allow non-CNN explanations for September 11 as assessable material? Books, photocopying \$30. 4 hours per week. Highly recommended.

Department of Anthropology

HECS band 1

ANTH 106 DRUGS ACROSS CULTURES

Semester: 2

Academic:

Responses: 1

This is one of those subjects that you simply must take. As a university student it is your responsibility to experiment with mind altering substances and this subject will tell you all about what you need to know so you can make informed choices. Maybe your usual poison isn't really for you, and maybe there's something else you simply must try, like for example mescaline. This subject will tell you how drugs work, what they do to you, what they do to other people, what to watch out for, how to deal with habitual users and drug fuckups, and what drug users can learn from other cultures. You will probably realise that in the end everyone is a user, so how much and what is entirely up to you. Its a difficult subject to pass however, as you need to remember lots of medical jargon and really know your stuff. But its totally worth it. Books, photocopying \$50

ANTH 150 INTRODUCTION TO ANTHROPOLOGY

Semester: 2

Academic: Dr Jani Klotz, Dr Jennifer Biddle

Responses: 5

If youre not interested in boring lectures, avoid anthropology altogether. The subject matter has great potential and some lecturers like Jennifer Biddle inspire students to study their material in depth. On the whole, anthropology, along with missionaries, has a sordid history as an integral part of the colonial strategy to destroy indigenous cultures. This is largely downplayed today as the lack of untouched cultures has made anthropology increasingly mainstream. This course "introduces students to some of the central issues in contemporary anthropology and expose them to some of the diverse areas of research that anthropologists are engaged in." Students had choice of assessment, "but all the choices sucked". There are taped lectures, and some notes are on the internet. Extensions are

hard to get, as lecturer is concerned with the high number of essays being handed in late and is considering increasing the penalties for late work. Some of the readings are *really* long, and focus on aboriginal studies. Books, photocopying \$35.

ANTH 268 CULTURE, MYTH & SYMBOLISM

Semester: 1

Academic: Dr Ian Bedford

Responses: 1

"This course needs to be improved! The content is not the problem but the way it is presented. Course does not fully explore the language of symbols. For students wanting to study this try psychoanalysis, heraldry or masonry!" Lectures can be dull and boring. Take the power back in tutorials, the tutor monopolises time. 3 teaching hours per week. Course not recommended, it goes nowhere and makes uninteresting conclusions. Tutorials are crowded and there are neither notes on the internet or taped lectures - how else is the lecturer going to maintain attendance? Books, photocopying \$30.



"Anthropologists! Anthropologists!"

ANTH 372 ETHNICITY AND NATIONHOOD

Semester: next year

Academic: Dr Bob Norton

Responses: 3

Highly recommended course. "This was the most interesting course Ive done in 3 years at Macquarie. To improve it, provide lecture notes for lectures by the visiting professors." Heavy workload. There are evening classes and some notes on the internet but once again no taped lectures. Books, photocopying \$30.

ANTH 374 GENDER, COLONIALISM & DEVELOPMENT

Semester: 1

Academic: Dr Vanda Gorecki

Responses: 1

About a broad a topic as one can hope to study. Obviously not a critique of imperialism and capitalism in colonialism, gender and development, without which studying these areas is hollow. Lectures are boring, a given for anthropology. Tutorials are more helpful. No taped lectures or notes on the internet again, making studying and catching up difficult. Books, photocopying \$30.

ANTH 381 MODERN THEORIES IN ANTHROPOLOGY

Semester: 1

Academic: Dr Ian Bedford

Responses: 1

Focuses on theories and research happening right now. Course can be really interesting and really boring, depending on the readings. Readings are often long and difficult to understand. No student input into assessment, but the lecturer is interested in your feedback from the course. Teaching hours 3 per week. A very broad course requiring independent critical thought. Recommended. Books, photocopying \$20



ANTH 382 SEXUALITY AND CULTURE

Semester: next year

Academic: Dr Lyddleton

Responses: 1

Highly recommended course. Lecturer is friendly, interesting, well organised and obviously dedicated. Course is really interesting with important subject matter for everyone, and extensions are very easy to get. Three teaching hours per week. Assessment is based on the lectures rather than the readings, but the lectures are not taped! Some notes on internet. The department needs to get its act together, or students will start disputing their grades based on lack of access to course materials. Books, photocopying \$30

ANTH 384 ABORIGINAL CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

Semester: 1

Academic: Dr Jennifer Biddle

Responses: 2

Highly recommended course. "The course was *really* interesting & challenging. Lecturers were entertaining." Fantastic lectures and small tutorials. Mild penalties for late work. Independent critical thought encouraged. Books, photocopying \$40.

Institute for Women's Studies

HECS band 1

WST 210 READING GENDER IN EVERYDAY LIFE

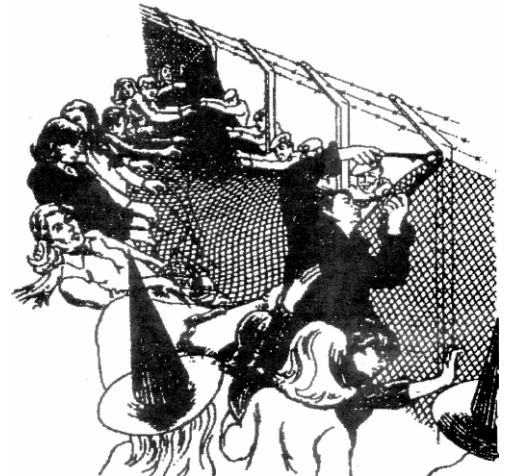
Semester: 2

Academic: Dr Judy Lattas

Responses: 9



lectures were interesting and the 15 person tuts stimulated discussion. Workload was deemed "about right" The course is broad, and encourages independent, critical thought. "We were given lots of room for individuality." Lectures were taped, notes on the net. \$0 - \$50, above HECS. Overall, this course was well recommended. "Definitely, very challenging and informative." "Good point - lots of choice as to what essay question to do, as well as for the other assignments. Also, useful references supplied. Also, good website. Advice - do the first year course WST 110 - it might make this course easier to understand."



WST 310 THE POPULAR CULTURE OF RESISTANCE

Semester: 2

Academic: Dr Judy Lattas

Responses: 2

Independent, critical thought was encouraged in this broad and challenging course. Lectures were interesting, with an inspiring and clear lecturer and the 7 person tuts were helpful and relevant and stimulated discussion. In assessment, there were choice, feedback and extensions. Workload was about right and the prerequisites were helpful. Texts cost \$50. "Women's studies has been an interesting/challenging and educational as well as stimulating. That Macquarie is mainstreaming this subject is not good enough. Women should be encouraged to study women's issues (actually so should men)"