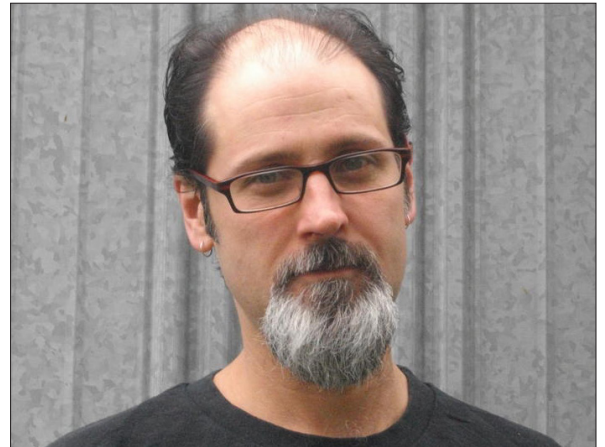


‘An assault on the humanities’ by James Ley

In a scathing commentary piece for *ABR*’s August issue, critic James Ley interrogates the Morrison government’s vendetta towards the ABC, the arts sector, and the humanities. Since the pandemic began, we have seen a belated funding package for the arts as well as an unprecedented overhaul for universities, resulting in fee spikes for humanities courses. Australia has a long history of hostility towards its artists and intellectuals, but, as Ley writes, never has it taken such a ‘malignant ideological form’.



James Ley

An extract from James Ley’s essay

‘The education minister has just proposed yet another restructuring of funding arrangements for universities, one that is explicitly designed to shift the cost of education onto students and deter them from studying allegedly unproductive humanities subjects. Lest there be any doubt that this is a crass attempt at top-down social engineering, the proposal does not simply target degrees but also individual courses, with the aim of making those the government views with disapproval prohibitively expensive. Joy Damousi, president of the Australian Academy of the Humanities, described this unambiguous attack on the very foundations of intellectual inquiry as “potentially the greatest hit to Australia’s humanities sector in a century”.’

About James Ley

James Ley is an essayist and literary critic who lives in Melbourne. A former Editor of *Sydney Review of Books*, he has been a regular contributor to *ABR* since 2003.

Interviews

James Ley is available for interview.

Please contact Peter Rose at editor@australianbookreview.com.au or call on (03) 9699 8822.

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