

# GRIN AND BEAR IT



Another improbable artists impression of the microscopic little bugger that's causing all the grief.  
Image courtesy Indo-Asian News Service



Breaking in new styles including outbreak appropriate facewear, the Nimbin Fashion Show was a raging success.  
More on page 15.

Nimbin shows off pandemic styles

## Mathematics goes viral

by S Sorensen

Social distancing is the new thing. Everybody is doing it. I stay home a lot these days. It's easy, because I have no jobs to go to anymore.

But, if I have to leave home to, say, line up at Centrelink with everyone I used to have pre-work coffee with, because the MyGov website works about as well as a Peter Dutton smile, then I always leave home with a tape measure, because I want to be safe and to be safe I need no less than 1.5 metres between me and another human.

This distance was given to me by social media who got it from the government who got it from Dr WHO, apparently. And I don't want to rely on some cranky newly unemployed ex-coffee-drinker's distance judgement, so I carry a tape measure. Unlike Facebook, News Corp and the government, my tape measure doesn't lie. Its reality is based on science, not the number of likes.

That 1.5-metre distance advice was then updated by social media and the government to two metres as the coronavirus situation went viral. Good move. It is hay-fever season and there are people around here who have a really big sneeze. My musician

friend Susan can blow your beanie off at 1.5 metres with one of her scream-assisted blow-outs. Lord knows how far she could shoot a virus-laden sneeze droplet.

As for people coughing, well, everyone knows that a bong smoker's early morning hack can paste globules of phlegm on your Jimi Hendrix poster at 1.5 metres. So two metres is definitely safer.

Of course, the information is constantly changing. Social media revealed that boiled garlic is a cure for this virus which was created by socialist children in order to kill adults. The government realised the people need to hear something from it, apart from the sound of feet dragging – something reassuring and science-based. So our safe social distance safety measurement was updated from linear to spatial. Now, my social distancing safety space is four square metres. This definitely sounds very scientific and updaty.

I'm happy the government listened to its scientist. At first no-one in government could find its scientist or knew where the government science department was, or if it actually still existed, but the PM finally found the government scientist sitting in the government science department, which is a room

under the carpark measuring two metres by two metres.

"What is an appropriate distance to appear to be limiting viral contamination, but still enabling financial transactions?" Morrison asked, aware that capitalism is threatened.

The scientist, of course, left the room. Morrison thought that meant the four square metres of the room must be the safe social-distancing area, not realising the scientist had left because who'd want to be in the same room as a person who denies climate science and embraces virgin birth?

So social media and the government gave us the *Four Square Metres Social Distancing Act 2020*, but the government, being the government and not inclined to mathematics unless it's adding up shares indices or poll numbers, didn't really think it through, did it? Because, a one metre by four metre space is also four square metres.

In fact, I could create a half metre by eight metre space around me, which, being four square metres, would legally bring me very close to my overworked Centrelink staff person, but still give me a realistic safety buffer of eight metres from Sneezin' Susan (also lining up for the dole).

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