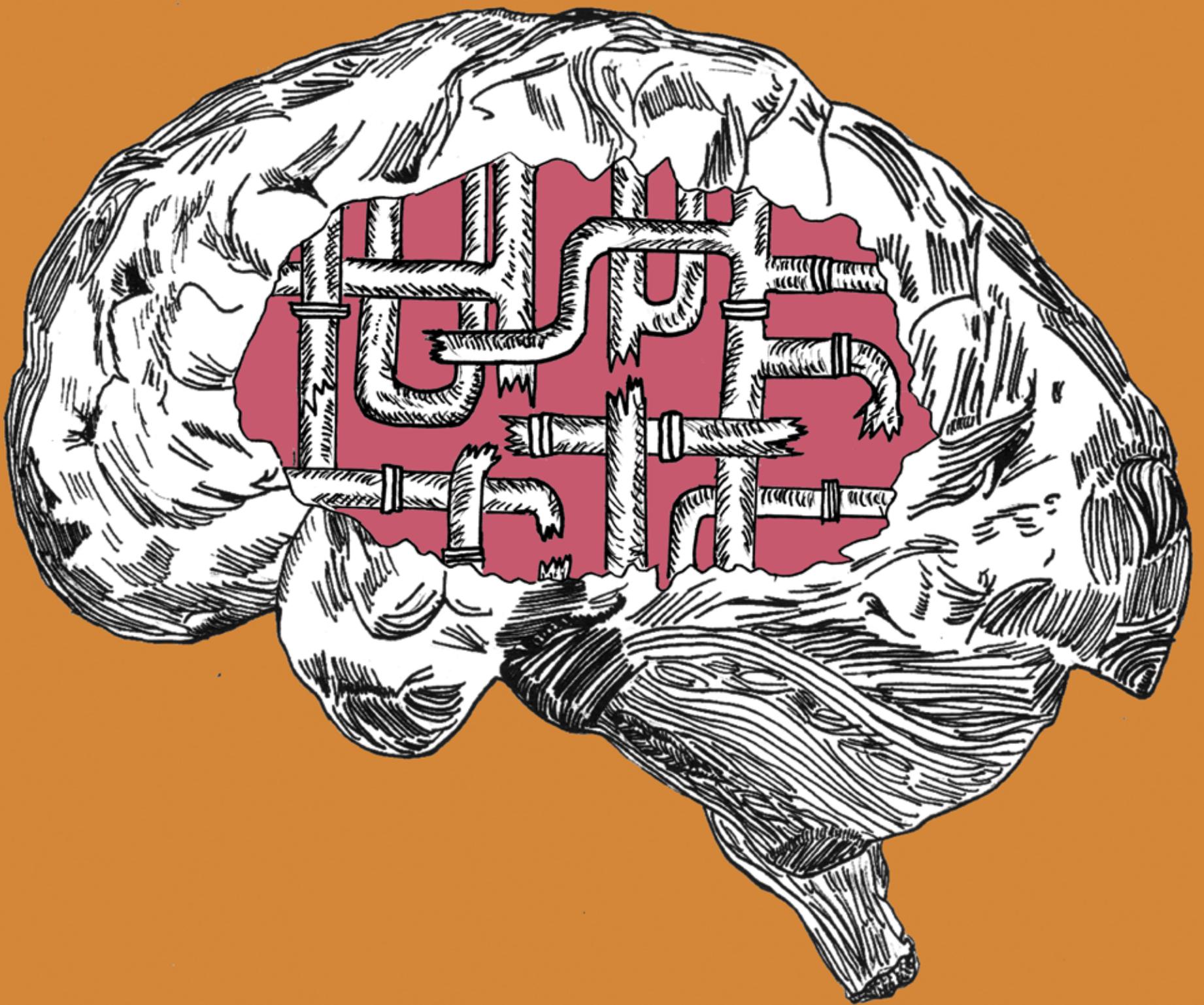


HONI SOIT



AUTONOMOUS COLLECTIVE
AGAINST RACISM EDITION



Acknowledgement Of Country

Before you begin reading this edition of *Honi Soit* edited by the Autonomous Collective Against Racism (ACAR), we ask you to join us in acknowledging the Cadigal people of the Eora Nation, upon whose stolen land the University of Sydney stands. The Cadigal people are variously described as the traditional owners, custodians and caretakers of the land that spans Sydney's CBD and Inner City. However it would be just as accurate to say the opposite; that this land is the traditional owner, custodian and caretaker of the Cadigal people. In truth there is no way in the English language to sufficiently summarise the complex, symbiotic and spiritual relationship the Cadigal nation has with this sacred land.

We acknowledge that those of us who are non-Indigenous and identify as a Person of Colour, from an Ethno-Cultural background and/or marginalized by White Supremacy must confront our own participation and benefit in the ongoing colonisation of sovereign Indigenous land. Whiteness in this country is intrinsically linked to the power to colonise and settle Indigenous land—in this capacity we must recognize that all non-Indigenous carry with them a piece of Whiteness.

We acknowledge that Cadigal people and the greater Eora nation were the first to suffer, resist and survive the brutalities of White Supremacy in Australia. Therefore we recognize that our struggle for liberation is intrinsically linked to the centuries-long resistance of the Australian

Indigenous community. Any anti-racist victories claimed by those who are non-Indigenous are empty, without full freedom for Australia's First Nations. Therefore we stand in solidarity with Indigenous peoples and acknowledge that anti-racist activism in Australia will never be successful without the restoration of land and sovereignty to them.

We acknowledge the atrocities of the Stolen Generations, the untold destruction it wreaked on Indigenous families and individuals through the forcible removal of children from their families. This attempt to 'breed out' Indigeneity was nothing short of genocide and no amount of reparation will ever repair the damage that has been done. We also add that the kidnapping of Indigenous children and the calculated attempt to dismantle Indigenous families continues to this day, with more children than ever being taken away from their families by the colonial Australian government.

We acknowledge the crimes of the ongoing Northern Territory Intervention, now in its seventh year. This military occupation of sovereign Indigenous soil blatantly disregards the Colonial State's own legal obligations and highlights its moral bankruptcy. We condemn the gross fabrications of 'paedophile gangs' and 'child sex rings' used to justify this intervention. These are nothing but old colonial stereotypes of deviant black sexuality mobilised to facilitate new colonial goals of control, dispossession and criminalisation. With bi-partisan backing, these policies

indicate that the White Australian government's legacy of disregard towards Indigenous people, land and culture continues to this day.

We acknowledge the role of the police in continuing to suppress the Indigenous population through racial profiling, police brutality and deaths in custody. These are injustices that occur everyday and contribute to the fact that Australia's Indigenous people continue to be one of the most over-policed and over-incarcerated populations in the world today.

We acknowledge that the court system continues to be deployed as a technology of colonial power. The legal regime of this country continues to prioritise White Supremacy and Indigenous dispossession. This legal system is a daily threat to the lives and liberty of First Nations people. For these reasons, we are wary of superficial legislative solutions to deeply foundational racism.

We stand in solidarity with Indigenous wom*n who face the highest rates of sexual assault and domestic violence in this country. We stand with Indigenous men who experience the highest rates of incarceration and suicide in this country. And we stand with non-binary Indigenous people, whose culture's progressive stance on gender and sexuality was first suppressed by conservative settlers and their repressive laws, and then later whitewashed by liberal ones.

We pay our respects to Indigenous

leaders throughout history, who, against all odds, fight to defend their land, culture, communities and way of life. We pay our respects to every brave warrior fallen during the Frontier Wars. We pay our respects to the scores killed by foreign diseases from the colonisers' use of biological warfare. We pay our respects to every Indigenous child, woman and man who has died at the hands of White Supremacy and to all those who continue to **live** in the face of it.

However, we regret to admit that there are no Indigenous voices represented in these articles, nor were there any involved in the editing process. This is a failure we endeavour to remedy in future publications, and seek to consciously and respectfully pursue the insightful stories and perspectives of our collective's Indigenous member that we know are multiple, nuance and unique.

We acknowledge that Australia is **not** a post-colonial nation. That this land was **never terra nullius**—a myth retrospectively concocted by a colonial regime to justify the genocide and dispossession it was already enacting. That Indigenous sovereignty was **never** ceded and that until the treaties are signed, the occupation is **ongoing**.

Finally, we, ACAR, acknowledge that White Australia has a Black History.

And we pledge to fight for a Black Future.

Credits

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Cover art: Stephanie Barahona and Fatima Rauf

Disclaimer:

The opinions of individual authors published in this edition do not necessarily reflect those of ACAR.

Trigger Warning:

This edition contains personal and at times graphic accounts of experiences of racism and other oppressions.

We are extremely proud of our second ever issue of *Honi Soit*, edited by the Autonomous Collective Against Racism (ACAR). As an ode to the importance of self determination, autonomy and independence, this issue was written and edited solely by individuals who identify as a Person of Colour, Indigenous, from an ethno-cultural background, or marginalised by White supremacy. Last year we debuted our first edition, which reflected so much of who we are as a collective and all the experiences both shared and never before said. In this paper, we aim to once again give voice to those who are left voiceless in mainstream media, and provide a platform for those whose stories of oppression are too often dismissed in everyday life.

We are proud to present a collection of varied experiences of people of colour, Indigenous, ethno-cultural minorities, and individuals marginalised by White supremacy. Intersectionality has always played (and will hopefully continue to play) a significant role in ACAR's politics. We sought to include voices that are often left behind in non-inclusive activism, and we hope to empower such voices in this edition.

Most of all ACAR is a community; we're constantly striving to fulfil our role as a safe space, and as a place of growth and learning for those who experience racism—this ethos extends to our edition of *Honi Soit*. This very edition is the product of a community that rallied together to create this issue in under two weeks, after a major deadline shift. In a momentous effort, we've gathered these pages here for you; we have found the space to express ourselves, to challenge assumptions and to defy the restrictions of white supremacy that this nation was built upon.

For our white-identifying readers: we hope this edition provides some further insight. We hope you don't take offence, but rather set aside sensitivities to internalise our voices and consider ways to challenge and deconstruct the oppressive structures you happen to uphold.

For our fellow people of colour and ethnocultural kids: this is the end of allowing ourselves to feel shamed or embarrassed by our cultures and identities. We're rediscovering the empowerment and solidarity that our

cultures and identities provide us. We hope that you will find the same empowerment and solidarity within these pages too.

We would like to thank the wonderful ethnocultural individuals, both on and off campus, for their contributions in this edition. It is not always easy to share experiences and thoughts so freely. Many personal pieces can be triggering and difficult to overcome emotionally. And while many people remain concerned with sharing their opinions or reliving their experiences, their stories are equally powerful, and we hope that this edition will be of solace to them.

Once more this edition clarifies that the stereotypes of people of colour, Indigenous people, ethnocultural minorities and individuals marginalised by White supremacy are wrong and informed by ignorance. To many of the uneducated wider community, we exist solely as the racial cliché that politicians and the media portray us as. However, as we can see in these pages, we are writers, editors, poets, illustrators, photographers and curators. We exist.



Editorial team at 5:55am, 17 continuous hours in this office. Rekt.

ACAR Office Bearers' Report

By Eden Caceda, Lamisse Hamouda & Kavya Kalutantiri

bettering the group for all its members.

As we approach the middle of second semester and celebrate the publishing of this incredible second Autonomous Collective Against Racism (ACAR) *Honi Soit* edition, we take this chance to look back at the progress this collective has made in the past year and a half.

Originating as a small group of empowered people of colour determined to create a safe space for all ethnocultural students, ACAR has grown to hold 300 diverse members who regularly contribute to active discussion and work together to make change both on and off campus.

For the first time ever, all current office bearers of the Ethnic Affairs department of the University of Sydney

Student Representative Council (SRC) were elected from the collective. Earlier this year we were fortunate to have an Orientation Week stall and be involved with welcoming new students to the collective and the university.

We're also looking forward to an upcoming ACAR revue performance, a joint resource sharing platform campaign with UNSW and PoC Poetry Slam Feature night for Verge Festival. Despite taking a semester to find our feet, our efforts in semester two are testaments to how ACAR continues with realising its potential and growing strong, and providing platforms for people of colour from different disciplines and interests. Lastly, we are in the process of enshrining in SRC regulations the necessity of autonomy

for this role. Through this, we also intend to change the name of the department from 'Ethnic Affairs' to 'Ethnocultural'. This is something we believe will reflect the autonomy and self representation we have sought to bring to this position.

Many of our ideas are still yet to be implemented within the collective, as always there is an abundance of passion and a restriction of time. We hope to pass this collective on to individuals who will carry on the incredible and necessary work of this collective. We hope that with new people, come new policies and ideas; all of which will continue to change and develop the way ACAR grows. We believe all collectives must invest in exploring new pathways and always be conscious of

As ACAR continues to thrive, we still have detractors and cynics who are hostile towards our presence. Last year we received volumes of hateful messages about our group, its place in campus life and our influence. These comments, if anything, simply signify the need for this collective even more.

We believe it is essential to enshrine self-representation within our institutions for people of colour, people from minority ethnocultural backgrounds and Indigenous people. We stand "against racism" but we also stand for friendship, community, empathy and for a better future collectively and individually. We hope to continue to remain positive and strive towards a better future.

How The Sausage Gets Made

There's one big fib they teach you in primary school. It's a case of twisted biology: that you can get to the heart through the stomach and tongue. It's the lesson at the core of the great Australian bring-your-ethnic-food-to-class day; that formative mess of share-plates and finger food.

By Naaman Zhou

For hungry student and hurried educator alike, food is always the go-to metaphor for multiculturalism. It's a wonderfully elemental tactic, rooted in instinct and alimentary canal, this idea that tolerance can be bred around the picnic table, the unfamiliar made palatable via palate. It's also a bit of an oversimplification; not untrue, but just prone to hypocrisy.

Sydney prides itself on the diversity of its food culture. Ethnic food, in its ready availability and high quality, is a selling point on the Destination NSW website. But it's also something of a forgotten gift—absorbed by most but not explicitly appreciated. Think for example how the modern Broadsheet-bohemia of the inner-city rests on a bedrock of early immigration. The shiny pop-ups and micro-dumpling bars are the fruit of a few hardy souls who sold food in the face of a pretty unfriendly marketplace—and we just sort of forgot about it.

For all the Harmony Days and school-hall buffets, there remains a certain disjoint between the theory of food-as-bringer-together and its practice. It's the cognitive dissonance of the person who proclaims to 'love' Asian food but balks at Asian faces in their child's classroom. How can you enjoy the food but cringe

at how the sausage gets made?

Apinya runs a Thai takeaway down the St Peters side of King Street. Her story, when she tells it, is a rejoinder to mine.

Apinya came to Sydney in 1988 and the presence of food, prepared and consumed, smoothed the way. "Coming over," she tells me, "wasn't too bad an experience." Her aunt had owned a

"Most people are polite, they enjoy my food, they smile, they get to know me. When people taste my food, they're happy. They come back and they refer to me as family, as their sister or auntie. There was a lady—she's now moved to Gosford—but she would call me up and tell me that I was like her sister."

I ask her if her experience of immigrating would have been harder if she didn't

most diners actually want to see ethnic faces. It's a question of authenticity: if it's a Korean restaurant you want to see a Korean face; a Chinese restaurant, a Chinese face.

For Apinya, the harmony day narrative rings true. Her experience, with two children born and raised in Sydney, is that their food has only ever been appreciated, a source of pride in the



Illustration: Michael Lotsaris

restaurant in Thailand and by 1990 had one in Newtown. She gave Apinya a job, and it helped her settle down.

For Apinya, the migrant restaurateur experience has been relatively idyllic;

have the restaurant. She's not so sure.

Though she knows she doesn't speak for everyone, Apinya denies she has experienced racism as a restaurateur, even in the early 1980s. "I'm very lucky," she smiles.

It's the others who weren't so fortunate. "Before I opened my restaurant here, there were a lot of Thai people who lived down the road. I saw so many shops open and disappear. Three months and then they were gone. They said it was because the locals didn't like Asians. Everybody

knew."

Apinya's partner is white. Her friends say this is why their shop survived. Nowadays though, she points out that

playground.

Apinya's story is the fable we're all told, but it too often gets elided. We brand the cheap Newtown Thai scene as a part of the student experience, we don't attribute it to a very unique quirk of immigration.

It's a selective blindness where certain ethnic foods are accepted, and in the process lose their ethnicity. It's a dissonance where the exploded, one-of-every-colour approach to food is acceptable, but any en-masse bloc of a single cuisine becomes a ghetto. Ethnic food is fine as long as it's pleasantly anthologised—the shopfronts as distinct as possible, as slim and crushed together as terrace houses.

"It's a wonderfully elemental tactic, this idea that tolerance can be bred around the picnic table"

Coming soon:
ACAR podcast

facebook.com/usydacar

Lived/Academia

It's a Saturday and I desperately need to catch up on my university work. I sit in the secluded guest room skimming over my overdue cases. My brother's singing interrupts me. "I am, you are, we are Aussssssttraaliiiiiiaaaan," he belts from the kitchen as he makes himself a cup of tea. "Unless you're eeeeeethhhnniiiiicccc!" He follows up.

By Justine Amin

I laugh. "So I was at uni and this dude comes up to me and asks me what 'natio' I am," he yells over. I already know where this is going. "I told him, mate, I'm Australian." At this point, I should probably point out my brother is Egyptian. Dark brown skin. Dark thick beard.

"I'm guessing he didn't accept that answer?"

"Nah. He looked at me funny, told me I had an accent—asked me where I was REALLY from."

My brother doesn't have an accent. English is his first language. If anything, he has an accent when he speaks Arabic.

"It's like you're told to assimilate right, and you do, but people will still be like fuck off you're not REALLY Australian, or they will imply it, or whatever."

He grabs his tea and ends his rant there.

My brother experienced a micro-aggression. That's the academic term for it. He doesn't know that. My brother has never engaged in critical racial discourse. He hasn't read Edward Said, or deliberated over the intricacies of orientalism. He hasn't stayed up admiring the depth of Crenshaw's groundbreaking work on intersectionality. No, my brother hates the humanities.

He's an engineering student, he loves cars, his favourite show is *Top Gear*, and would very easily be described as a 'dudebro'. It's safe to say, we are very different people.

My engagement with race has been to understand my own lived experience through academic racial discourse. I let the brilliant minds of academics and activists of colour guide my understanding. In this sense, my lived experience and intellectual understanding of race coincide to inform my racial politics. His understanding of race is far less considered. He simply allows his lived experience to illuminate the racial realities that people of colour inevitably encounter. In describing our racial realities, our articulation is highly convergent, but the substance is the same.

To me, this revelation is significant. When engaging in highly intellectualised racial discourse, one can easily become consumed in the concepts, the terminology, the politics of it all. It can seem distant, abstract and alienating. Indeed, it can become exhausting. Our racial discourse should not exist in some bizarre, inaccessible academic realm, but rather as supplementary to the reality of people of colour.

The beauty of accepting the supplementary nature of academic racial discourse is that we create a more inclusive space. Critical race and postcolonial theory should not be viewed as the domain of the far left, because my reality cannot be placed on the political spectrum, nor should it. Attempting to do so strips away my agency and autonomy as a person of colour, and confines me to political positions that lack nuance. I deserve the breathing space to be complicated. No one has the right to claim me or my narrative.

The significance of my brother's brief rant is the unifying thread of experience that alerts people of colour to the nature of society. We need to always remember that the realities come first, and our attempts at explanation come second. We need to reclaim academia as a qualifier to our experiences, it should act as a tool of understanding, not a means to pigeonhole us.

Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney Annual Election

Polling Booth Times and Places 2015

Polling Location	Wed 23rd Sept 2015	Thurs 24th Sept 2015	Pre-Polling
Fisher	8:30–6:30	8:30–5:00	Pre-Polling will also be held outside the SRC Offices, Level 1 Wentworth Bldg, on Tuesday 22nd September from 10am–3pm.
Manning	10:00–4:00	10:00–4:00	
Cumberland	11:00–3:00	11:00–3:00	
SCA	12:00–2:00	No polling	
Engineering	No polling	12:00–2:00	
Conservatorium	12:00–2:00	No polling	
Jane Foss	8:30–6:00	8:30–6:00	



Authorised by P. Graham, SRC Electoral Officer 2015, Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney | p: 02 9660 5222 | w: src.usyd.edu.au

Fair Go (Back To Where You Came From)

By Millie Roberts

"Do you wear [the hijab] so you can marry a man who's going to marry a 6-year-old?"

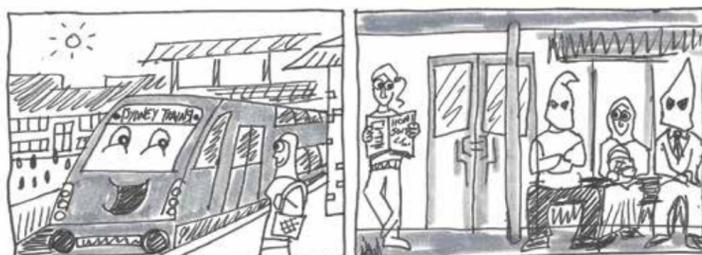
Good old 'straya: a land that prides itself on the surface values of diversity, multiculturalism and all-abiding acceptance. And yet the plague of racism, deeply embedded into the core of our society, still prevails—flourishing most vociferously on our public transport system.

Earlier this year, a video of an elderly woman berating a Muslim family on a Sydney train emerged, causing a viral uproar with nearly 80,000 views. In a media statement, 23-year-old Stacey Eden, the woman who stood up for the couple and their children, expressed that she "just felt like if no one said anything, it was just going to keep going" because "people like [the offender] are just very ignorant".

This is but one of many examples from an outburst of 'bias-motivated crimes' over the past nine months. September of last year saw an unprovoked attacking of a Muslim woman at a Melbourne train station, who was bashed and later thrown onto the train tracks. A month later, a

Brisbane patroller was called a "n*****" and a "black c****", while he was also told to "learn some fucking English, cause this is Australia".

Recorded on smartphones and other personal devices, these rants, slurs and taunts often infiltrate the news due to their shocking and extreme nature. But how often do such cases go unheard



every day? How truly common is public transport racism, and is it always as extreme as the YouTube videos portray it to be?

It is not these raucous displays of abuse that cause the most harm, but also the inaction and complicit silence of other

commuters. What has been termed as 'passive' or 'casual' racism is so insidious, that most of us cannot even identify when it is happening.

It is the staring at the traditional attire on the passenger in the seat opposite. It is the shock of hearing a tongue foreign to your own when they make a phone call. It is the subtle shuffling away from the person of

The end of 2015 marks sixty years since Rosa Parks first brought the topic of racism on transport into the public sphere. It is a different world now. We've come far enough to eradicate the segregating laws that separate 'whites' from 'blacks'. We've come far enough to realise that bigoted and racially-motivated outbursts, especially on public transport, are morally wrong and socially taboo. We've come far enough to declare unwavering support for the victims and show our outrage against the perpetrators in the videos we see on our screens.

We have come far—but have we truly come far enough?

If you witness racism on public transport, be it covert or overt in its nature, you, as a bystander, are not entirely without influence. If (and only if) it is safe to demonstrate your opposition—do so. Whether it be through confrontation, showing support to the victim or even simply contacting a staff member or the police, you have agency. Hundreds of cases across Australia go unnoticed and unreported everyday.

Danger lies in our complicity.

colour next to you, the subconscious turn of your nose or the sense of fear burning within you because they look, smell or sound different. It is the awkward flit of your eyes and the bow of your head when you hear a racist remark directed at them. You are enclosed, trapped within the confines of the carriage, with seemingly no other choice but to look away.

Illustration: Michael Lotsaris

Split Down The Middle Of Me

Here's a fact about me: Zayn Javad Malik and I share an intense experiential bond.

By Jamie Lowe

He doesn't know it yet, but we're actually connected on a deep and meaningful level—hopefully one that transcends his Twitter feuds and questionable life choices.

Let me be clear, this is about more than his perfectly symmetrical face and angelic vocals (although I'd be lying if I said they weren't contributing factors). I recently found out Zayn Malik and I are both from mixed race families, and that our parents are of similar backgrounds.

It's strange to think that someone like Zayn could understand what it's like to grow up between two cultures. It's always a surprise, and in some ways a relief, to remember there are other people who inhabit liminal spaces, living on the border between one cultural category and another. It's an unstable way to exist.

Regardless of whether the speaker in question is white or a person of colour, we're a tangent in the ongoing discussion about race. This is not an intentional exclusion. Navigating issues of race in Australia is difficult enough without throwing mixed race experiences into the discourse. We complicate things. I've sometimes said, half-jokingly, that I'm too brown for the white people and too white for the brown people.

Personally, I know that no matter how much I try to learn, there will always be parts of my mother's culture that I just won't be able to join in the same way that other people do. I don't speak the language, I've never been to the country, and I'll never quite know how to play the part right. But then again, nobody really expects me to. The lack of rules when living on a cultural fringe is a rule unto itself. There are rules for living on the cultural fringe, and one of them is that there are fewer rules.

At the same time, I'll never be an unquestioned member of my white father's culture either. It's satisfying to know that my family has been here longer than Tony

Abbott's. However, this doesn't translate into "Australian-ness", which is notoriously unachievable for people of colour.

I've had the Australian proverb "go back where you came from" tossed my way more than once. Regardless of what white Australia might say, my mother's family think of me as more 'Australian' than anything else. Meanwhile, my father's relatives tacitly agree that my sister and I are "from overseas". How we are supposed to reconcile these labels is beyond me.

The borders might be porous and they might also be arbitrary, but they're still there. When I say mixed race people live in a liminal space, I don't mean that we can shift from one culture to another. In my experience, culture isn't a confined to a set of learnable features. Even if you can adapt to fit whichever side of the family you happen to be hanging out with, it's no substitute for a stable cultural identity.

Ultimately, some mixed race people are never really going to identify with a singular cultural identity, and that's not something that's unique to us, either. Most Australian

Dear SUSLAS,

By Una Madura Verde

Dear Sydney University Spanish and Latin American Society,

When I found out about your society earlier last year, I looked forward to a place where moments of friendship or acquaintance could be based on a shared commitment to what I deem to be my Latin@ identity.

Instead I was confronted with a very exclusive claim to Latin American cultures, languages and the people they represent. One which sought its expression from a handful of people who despite identifying as either Latin@ or enthusiastic students of my 'culture' or 'language', flaunted an air of indifference towards what I wrongly thought to be a unique opportunity to create and sustain a complex, pluralistic and above all, inclusive space.

I was confronted with the claim that my Latin@ identity is nothing more than a dose of feverish excitement available to those looking to do nothing more than overcome the stress and monotony of student life.

If you think that I am exaggerating, think twice. Here are four examples of both subtle and obvious ways in which you have made and continue to make, my claims bleed true:

Example one: Have you considered that your society name may be problematic? By insisting that Spain precedes Latin America without any justification except perhaps that history privileges the colonisers, you are proudly and publicly parading a Eurocentric, neo-colonialist version of Latin America, and by extension, consciously reinforcing perceptions of Latin America as the colonised other. Moreover, have you considered how the use of the Spanish flag as one of main visual reference points to your society suggests a metonymic reduction of Latin American cultures, languages and peoples to the habits, customs, religious practices and diseases exposed to them during and after colonisation? Are you aware that this triggers memories of centuries of oppression and continued political, economic and cultural arbitration? Indeed this pride in the long-gone Spanish empire renders your society a space which unnecessarily, yet consciously, thrives in the past, and consequently a space which actively and unapologetically suggests European colonisation to be the starting point of Latin American history, identity and political agency.

Recommendations:

1. Educate your executive and your members about Latin American foreign relations.
2. Reorder your society name to read 'Latin American and Spanish Society'.
3. If you are going to use flags, you are spoilt for choice. There are 22 Latin American countries in the world. Grant them representation; use their flag.

4. If possible, consider the use of a different flag as an opportunity to educate your executive and members of that country's independence from imperial rule.

Example two: You are one of the few clubs and societies at the University of Sydney which does not pay respect to the traditional owners of this land. Speaking from my own experience, you have never have paused to acknowledge country at your events or routine society activities. This is outright offensive. This is unequivocal denial of the conscious and continued efforts on behalf Australian and Latin American indigenous populations to the making of their histories, the recovery of their identity, their land and lastly, to the recognition of their continued oppression as consequence of centuries of European colonisation.

Recommendations:

Always pay respect to the traditional owners of this land past and present

Actively acknowledge the shared histories of colonisation between Australia and Latin America.

Example Three: Language matters. Firstly, if you are going to use gender neutral language, use it consistently. Secondly, if you are going to skip between English and Spanish, make sure your sporadic bilingualism is well considered. Both of these inconsistencies have the capacity to insinuate and reinforce populist or stereotypical Latin@ personality traits, identities, genders and from this, cement essentialised ideas or criteria of what is or isn't Latin@. Consider for example, how comments like 'even if you can only say "hola" and "me gusta la cerveza" (the important things)', involve treating cultural pluralism as a facile, feel-good concept which fosters tolerance rather than intercultural education and thus a missed opportunity to address the myriad of structural barriers which prevent any real inclusion of "others" into mainstream society.

Recommendations:

1. Use gender neutral language consistently.
2. Educate members about the importance of language, memory and visual imagery in achieving genuine opportunities for intercultural interaction and opening up spaces wherein it can occur.

Please note: hosting occasional film nights or peppering your weekly newsletters with random country profiles doesn't count as an attempt to explore and address broader issues of cultural ownership, cultural identity and cultural interaction. Leadership on these matters needs to happen on the ground first.

Example four: There seems to be a trend in SUSLAS that only your friends or your partners get into positions of power. When I tried to get elected in your executive last year, any possibility of my

electoral success was eliminated amid knowledge of pre-existing alliances which of course cemented pre-determined decisions about who the next crop of leaders ought to be. What I observed from this experience is that you run your society on a "who thinks and acts like me" basis rather than any principles of the democratic governance. This type of leadership and governance creates an intentionally exclusive space for what could provide genuine opportunities for intercultural exchange, education and engagement.

Recommendations:

1. Practise the democracy you preach.
2. For the sake of your members, host elections which grant opportunity to candidates of merit. In other words, vote not for your friends but the change, ideas and innovations they claim to guarantee during their tenure.

As my letter draws to a close I would like to remind you that its purpose is not to attack you or members personally. Rather this letter should be taken as an opportunity to increase inclusivity and respect of those people who own the cultures, identities and languages which you are trying to represent or make your members 'experience'. Moreover I am not insisting that there is some 'true' version of Latin@ culture that you should adhere to. Suggesting that will in itself involve taking your side and weakening my defence against the metonymic reduction of the customs, traditions, histories, identities and so forth which have and continue to shape my Latin@ identity today.

Lastly, this letter serves not to interpret non-Hispanic or non-Latin@ interest in Latin American cultural productions as unequivocally good or unequivocally bad. Rather it is a heartfelt assertion about the appropriation, reduction and manipulation of my identity; an assertion that contends that identity is real, cultures are real, and languages, the voices by which these lived realities are expressed, defined and contested, are real.

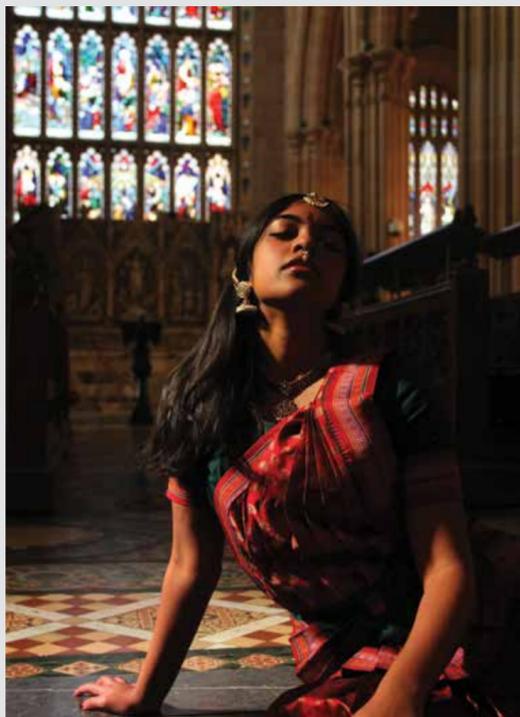
Having said this, it is up to you to listen and consider the validity of my claims. At the end of the day, you have made it clear that this is your society and not mine. At this point all I can do is reassert that failure to consider my concerns may result, among other things, in my identity becoming a mere excuse for university funding.

Just as the publication of this letter represents collective shame and indignation towards the workings of your society, there exists the real danger that your indifference to my claims may result in your society representing nothing more than the mere caricature it has already become.

THE METAMORPHOSIS



Illustration: Emily Shen



Rapture by Yiu Nam

Instagram: @yiuamcheung

Philippians 3:20-21: But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. Rapture is a triptych of portraits that seeks to explore the displacement of South Asian identities. The photographic subject exists as a figure of beauty, confidence and poise even in the face of a confronting diasporic experience. Positioned against a biblical framework, the photos aims to draw ironic comparisons between colonial ideology and the second coming of Christ.



Poetry Suite by Michael Sun

brine	i
You soaked me in brine	I am a Bad Ethnic Boy
Desiccated my skin	I do not, will not behave
I was a vacuum-packed yellowfish	I do not, will not wash my feet
And you my vagabond vendor	I do not, will not comply
Your whispered incantations	I will listen to your corporeal symphony
Lost rituals, crystallised in	I will rationalise your mortal cacophony
Your whitewashed linen	I will soak the TV into me
Bleached and re-bleached and re-bleached	We will be whitewashed bodies on whitewashed linen
Linens draped over my body	I am a Bad Ethnic Boy
Curtaining my form - behold!	
I was a spectre shapeless	

(Im)possible Desires



By Shareeka Helaluddin

There are very few coming-of-age films made for girls of colour, at least not in the way there are for white girls. When Gurinder Chadha's film *Bend It Like Beckham* was released in 2002, it was the first time I was able to see myself in pop culture: in a young South Asian girl struggling to reconcile her passion and identity with that of her family's seemingly conservative ideals. Thirteen years since the film's release, it still remains formative. Queer-ing *Bend It Like Beckham* is an attempt to both coalesce my love for the film and interrogate my experiences and growing consciousness as a queer, South Asian woman of colour.

I'm convinced that there was an unrealised romantic relationship between the two female leads Jesminder "Jess" Bhamra and Juliette "Jules" Paxton. An interpretation that is not only based on suggestive queerness in the girls' interactions (ok, and my fantasy); but also the persistent yet unconfirmed rumours that there was a love story between Jess and Jules, denied out of fear of isolating mainstream audiences.

Exploring this seemingly impossible narrative between Jess and Jules could unearth the radical potential of queer South Asian female desire as a form of resistance. Queer identities within diaspora introduce bodies and identities that disrupt gender normativity and challenge the dominant whiteness of queer stories.

Jess interacts with her Indian identity as if it were a burden, and negotiates this through challenging stereotypes of what a 'proper' Indian girl is. This fragmentation of identity is a narrative many young South Asian women, including myself, can relate to. Jess is resistant, resilient and disruptive in more ways than one. She embodies the paradoxes of what it is to wield a hyphenated diasporic identity and be a young woman of colour in a predominantly White community. Jess' potential queerness complicates this further, and dispels presumptions about South Asian girlhood and being part of a diaspora.

I'm definitely not advocating for a 'coming out' story, but rather I'm saying that queerness here could operate on multiple levels: sexual, social and political. Queer in this sense refers to non-normative sexualities, but is more than 'just sex'. Queerness is also about disorientating and complicating dichotomous understandings of identity. Queer, for me, offers the political potential of intruding and shattering dominant modes of understanding and interacting.

No doubt, the film sets out to challenge gender roles and narrow conceptions of femininity and masculinity. The title itself, refers to girls 'bending' prescribed cultural and gender roles, as well as taking up space in (literally) a male dominated field. Both Jess and Jules have to resist the patriarchy and

its stereotypical gender roles, but I feel this is an insufficient reading; as Jess navigates Britain as a racialised and sexual being as well; orienting her in a specific direction, thereby affecting how she 'takes up' space.

'Bending' also lends itself to a queer interpretation, but Chadha opts for its feminist implications. Yet, there are many scenes between Jess and Jules charged with coded queer desires: Jules' awe and wistful staring, the 'almost' kisses, the mis-recognitions of a lesbian relationship? These fuel the queer imagination, and leave lingering a dialogue about the potentials of queer diasporic representations.

Despite this, there are many derisive references to lesbianism via comedic plot lines of multiple mis-recognitions of lesbianism—trivialising same-sex relationships with one-liners. "Mother, just because I wear trackies and play sport does not make me a lesbian," intones Jules. The attitudes around same-sex relations (from both the South Asian and British communities) in this film, however trivial, present these non-normative desires as unacceptable, inadvertently implying that diasporic queerness is in conflict with racial and gender subordination.

Though the film is progressive in many senses, mobilising a queer diasporic framework reveals how Chadha utilises a conventional trope of shutting down the possibility of queer female desire. Jess is decreed as heterosexual, and queerness is displaced (with little effort) to her best friend Tony. He confesses his

homosexuality: "I really like Beckham." The dislocation of queerness onto the body of the male supporting character, rather than the central female character, is an act of making invisible the queer female experience. Denying Jess' queer potential erases the ways in which queer female identities intrude, resist and reconfigure 'home' spaces.

It may seem like I am affording Chadha's film with more political potential than it deserves, but I think it can offer a platform and accessible starting point to interrogate 'broader' issues regarding gender, sexuality, race, class, caste, culture, nation, diaspora. Exploring moments of deviation from presumed scripts of identity is vital for alternative communities that are inclusive and committed to sustained intersectional politics.

The omission of Jess and Jules' love story upholds the erasure and impossibility of queer female desire, which further isolates these members of diasporic communities. This contributes to nationalist, patriarchal and colonial narratives that shrouds and reinscribes norms, which queerness shatters. The relationship between Jess and Jules could have served as an example of respectful and considerate alliances across difference, as well as the complexities that come with interracial, queer relationships. That's a film I want to see. But this potential remains unrealised, liminal, impossible.

Struggling Against, Not Just Within

Identity politics proposes that the focus of activism and politics should be in the representation of perspectives from minority groups—women, queer people, trans people, people of colour, people with disabilities, etc. In organising around identities, the people who suffer from a particular oppression lead the struggle against that oppression, are given priority of voice, and determine the direction of the movement.

of the Racial Discrimination Act and policies advocating for a 'multicultural' Australia. However, 'multiculturalism', albeit well-intentioned in its aims, is betrayed by the wording of the policy itself, which describes itself as one of "manag[ing] cultural diversity" and accommodating immigrants and foreign cultures within the immutable core of white Australia.

Thus, it is not difficult to see exactly

drive for capital to colonise continents, enslave entire nations, pillage the wealth of people who looked different?

Class is not just an economic abstract compared to the deeply felt phenomena of racial identity. It is connected. As Selma James points out in *Sex, Race, and Class*: "Culture is how you feel on Monday morning at eight when you clock in, wishing it was Friday, wishing your life away... Culture is making the tea while your man watches the news on the telly."

When we constantly use our energy to fight ignorant White people, we submit to a belief that our struggle is against them for survival in a world that currently favours them, when in fact, our struggle is against the wealthy and powerful who withhold from all of us, white and non-white.

“Intersectionality should instead be used as a foundation for a common struggle where the common struggle is in class.”

By Rafi Alam & Xiaoran Shi

Identity politics hasn't been entirely irrelevant to activism and the left. It's undeniable that these political currents were, and still are to a lesser extent, dominated by White straight cis men.

But the utility of identity politics ends at the point where people are internally reforming their organisations or social circles to be more accommodating of minority voices. No matter how hard we work to create safe spaces, it can never be the end goal; safe spaces must be used as radical places to organise the liberation of a restrictive world, or else they become pockets of safety in a fundamentally unsafe world.

Identity politics can neglect engagement with politics, with ideology and instead concerns itself with defining and coalescing around the parameters of the ethnic and racial groups to which people can belong. This is harmful not only because it furthers the essentialising of racial and ethnic constructions, but also because it contributes to the 'divide and conquer' schema implemented by imperialist powers to formulate and disseminate myths promoting a normative and homogeneous nationhood.

Let us take the example of Australia and its dark history of institutionalised racism. The White Australia Policy was wholly dismantled, at least in the legislative sense, by the 1970s with the Whitlam government's introduction

how conservative multiculturalism is, namely in its devotion to valorising and maintaining ideals of a culture inherited from a bygone Britain and bolstered by Christian morality. Non-Anglo-Celtic immigrants are to be "tolerated" and viewed with the expectation that they will conform to the narrow strictures of an Australian national identity, but never have a stake in full cultural participation.

Another supposed aim of identity politics is to promote intersectionality. However, people who profess to believe in identity politics use intersectionality as a framework to show how intersecting identities of oppression lead to worsening oppression; this is a given.

Intersectionality should instead be used as a foundation for a common struggle where the common struggle is in class.

By ignoring class struggle as a fundamental aspect of racial liberation, we can give in to the belief that 'working class' means poor white man and nothing more, even though globally we see that people of colour and women make up the large bulk of the working population, even in majority White countries. We see over and over again that many of the social and labour struggles of our time are led by people of colour and women. Race and gender aren't delinked from class, capital, and labour—they are products of it. Would the myth of race exist if it wasn't for the

I Am A Muslim Woman, And Would Like A Moment Of Your Time



I am a young girl, no more than five, and sitting in the car as my mum parks in front of a grocer in Liverpool. I ask her to please get me a Kinder Surprise, more for the toy inside than the chocolate exterior. My mum nods and smiles down at me before getting out of the car. I'm about to follow her when I see a middle-aged woman with blonde hair, who is older than my mother and carrying a bag of groceries in each hand. She stops, puts down the groceries, and hurls expletives at my 'wog' mother who, according to her, should 'fuck off back to her country'. Seventeen years later and I still see that experience as the one that really, truthfully showcases mainstream ideology towards Muslims.

By Nabila Chemaïsem

I am eight and in the passenger seat; my mum is driving along the Hume Highway. I've just begun to notice the strangeness with which the man in the white Commodore ahead of us is driving. He keeps braking suddenly, and my mum tries to merge into another lane to move away from him but he follows, merging in front of us. He brakes abruptly again, and once more my mum tries to move away from him. This time he stays in his lane—the one on our right—and he and his friend begin to yell at us from their car. Before we can do anything, the friend hocks back and spits directly through the open window and into mum's face. They speed off, laughing, and I stare up at my mum who's now crying angry tears, and wonder what she had done to offend them.

I am ten and now wear the scarf. We've just landed back in Sydney after a visit to Lebanon to see our family. I'm making small talk with the white woman in front of me, who's from Britain and in Sydney on a two week business trip. She asks me how long I plan to stay in Sydney, and I reply that I was born and raised here. 'Oh,' she says, and turns around. That's the end of our conversation, and staring wide eyed at her back I wonder what I had said to offend her.

I've been asked multiple times where

I'm from by people who aren't satisfied when my answer is 'Australia'. So I have to tell them that my parents were born overseas but that I was born and raised in this country. The response to this is almost always an awkward knowing smile, as if I've given an answer that could not possibly be right.

These are not new or foreign experiences, but rather constant reminders to myself and my Muslim sisters—reverts and those born into Islam—that we live in a society that barely knows us or treats us with the same kindness and inclusion that we see afforded to others. I am an Honours student majoring in English literature, and just two months ago I was asked if I planned to use my Honours education to become a translator.

This is real. This is the prejudice, the ignorance, and the presumptuous attitudes that we deal with every day.

But surely in university, in an environment where all kinds of people come to learn, surely those assumptions would no longer be an issue. Except that they are. Mariam Bazzi attended her first day of university with the same naivety that we all do. "I thought I was going into an environment where like, they're so open-minded and going to accept me for who I am... but on the contrary, y'know. I remember my first History tutorial. I walked in, and this guy walked in late, and there was only one seat left next to me. And he was so hesitant to sit next to me. And when he sat next to me he sort of moved his seat over so he didn't have to look at me or speak to me."

But maybe he was just anxious to sit next to a woman? That may be true, but we experience the same thing with non-Muslim women as well. Most, if not all of my undergraduate classes were spent sitting alone, watching as men and women filed in after me and took their seats at tables that were not mine.

"There's a definite consensus that the scarf makes us unapproachable," says Fatima Alameddine, in reference to her observations of discussions in her class about the hijab (the veil which

covers the hair but not the face). "We were discussing implications of it, and there's a lot of white boys in the class. And they're like, 'it's restrictive, they feel like they can't talk to you!'" But who, other than Western media, paints it as a restriction? Time and time again Muslim women have appeared on television as part of interviews, and said repeatedly that the scarf is anything but a restriction. How can it be fair to view a religious practice that is not Western, within a Western framework?

And often times it goes beyond just ignorance. Juman Abdo is an Australian-born Palestinian woman, and at the end of 2014, was 'giving out flyers for an event for SUMSA' on the busy bridge above City Road. 'And then there was a lady; she was in her early 20s ... she came up to us. My friend was giving her a flyer and she attacked her verbally.... "You bloody Muslims! Go back to where you came from! You're the filth of this country!" It was very in your face'. But perhaps the worst part was that no passers-by said anything. "They sort of just separated and walked around us."

'I might be the only Quran anybody reads,' Mariam says, understanding that people may not ever read a physical Quran and that, as a result, she must remain an accurate representation of Islam regardless of the Islamophobia around her.

Her identity as a Muslim woman is an 'advantage... [it] pushes me every day... It's my drive.' And yet the media would have us believe that being Muslim requires that we remain ignorant and subservient, as if our Islam oppresses us. Juman's desire to excel is not the exception to the rule; it is the rule. Fatima al-Fihri in the year 859, founded Al-Qarawiyyin in Fez, Morocco, the first degree-awarding university long before Western civilisation stopped deeming women as property and non-whites as racially inferior. Getting an education in Islam is mandatory.

During a temporary stint at a small law firm, Fatima Rauf found herself acquainted with a white woman 'who

just came and sat down next to me and wouldn't stop asking me questions about being Muslim. And I could sense that she wasn't trying to offend me...but she was so ignorant and so racist in her beliefs about Islam that I was just internally cringing and laughing at the same time. She was just like, "oh god, so like you're educated and stuff"... "it's so great that Muslim girls are now going to uni". I was like Muslim girls have been going to uni for a long time!

Islamic tradition is full of female role models; Khadijah, (may Allah be pleased with her), was a woman who governed her own business in Mecca, who proposed to the Prophet rather than waiting for him to make the move, and who remained his rock till the day she passed away. If to be a successful, well-learned, and ambitious woman is so wrong in Islam, then the Prophet would not have loved her so dearly and wept so ardently at her passing.

Today, culture and the abhorrent actions of a minority are so easily mistaken for religion, that we fail to see that arranged marriages in Pakistan, the horrors in Iraq, and an inability to drive in Saudi Arabia are not in any way reflective of Islam or its teachings. The rulings of ISIS and Taliban are not in any way indicative of the fundamental teachings of Islam, and to conflate the two is harmful.

My dad was agnostic for a time because he believed that Muslims did a poor job of representing their religion. I know too what it means to have doubt, and what it means to be surrounded by people who call themselves Muslims but do nothing that Islam asks of them. However, that isn't Islam's fault.

Who we are, as Muslim women, is unique, varied and encompasses a multitude of aspirations and experiences; every one of those experiences are as valid as each other.

So put down the Western lens and let us show you who we are.

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What A Shame

[Trigger Warning: this article discusses mental illness and suicide]

By Whitney Duan

“Suicide is selfish.” That was the pearl of wisdom that slipped out of a three-year-old’s mouth, Michael, my oldest and closest friend—we were born only three days apart. “What words of wisdom for such a young child,” my mother said to his mother. “You are so lucky—your son will most certainly have a very successful future.”

Years later, when I was 14, our mutual family friend Auntie Aily suddenly stopped making weekly visits with her shopping bags of snacks and fruit on Sunday afternoons. At night, I overheard Michael’s mum gossiping with mine, “She says she has depression but she’s over-exaggerating and I just can’t stand her whining anymore.”

“What a shame.”

Aside from the midnight gossip sessions on the phone, my mother has never mentioned mental illness in conversation; it was a “not in front of the kids” topic, as if talking about it with my brother and I would somehow contaminate us with a ‘mental illness virus’.

My childhood and teen days were a mindless, mechanical manifestation of the stoic mantra of a child of two Chinese immigrants; head down, work hard, don’t be a burden on anyone. Indeed, I was never a burden. I refused to share my sorrows with my closest friends, kept quiet about suicidal thoughts around my family, and kept a cold distance from people I knew with mental illness, especially when they needed me most. I felt deeply ashamed to need help and like most East Asians I was prepared to take my shame to the grave.

I had never considered my shame to be an issue shared by People of Colour (PoC). Mental illness only ever seemed to prey on white people, according to the pamphlets they handed out in PDHPE. I would look down at the pale complexions of their

stock image psychologists and doubt they could begin to understand the plethora of experiences hinged on my cultural identity. Without the necessary support networks and social services, I, amongst multitudes of PoC, stayed silent, internalising the victim-blaming mentality taught by our communities.

It wasn’t until I left school that I realised this deeply-ingrained shame was instilled in the collective consciousness of many immigrant communities. Within these communities, mental illness is widely considered a first world luxury for the white upper middle class to indulge in, and something PoC don’t have time for. Gloria Flores*, a Latin American immigrant, admits that despite trying to be sympathetic towards her ex-husband’s anxiety, there was always an element of intolerance she had inherited from her family. “I would be at work trying to calm him down over the phone,” she said. “But quietly I would think ‘If you were back in the old country, you couldn’t do this. You would be left to die.’”

Having escaped political unrest in 70s Argentina, Gloria, like most immigrants, was taught to be profoundly appreciative of her new home. By extension, mental illness—wrongly understood as merely negative moods—was construed as ungratefulness. Remembering the East Hills migrant hostel provided by the Fraser government for immigrants with free housing, food and entertainment, Gloria articulates her family’s attitudes toward mental illness: “You were safe, you had a roof to live under and enough food to eat—what was there to be depressed about?”

The shaming and victim blaming of mental illness victims within ethno-cultural communities fundamentally stems from a lack of dialogue. PoC don’t receive the necessary educative tools, resources or support systems to understand mental illness or its victims. Moreover, its hyper-stigmatisation perpetuates a vicious cycle of shame and silence, further suffocating any hint of meaningful interchange on the issue. However, attempts at fostering a culture of acceptance—a White concept in

itself—within ethno-cultural communities seem assimilationist in nature, necessitating the need to find a solution that balances the importance of mental health awareness with respect for cultural autonomy.

In initial conversations with activist Lily Guo*, who has shared similar experiences as an East Asian Third Culture Kid with mental illness, she offered solutions beginning with “education from within” by PoC aware of the continual sidelining of mental illness within their communities. She suggested methods including educative seminars held in ethnic community spaces, articles in foreign language newspapers, PoC in positions of power speaking out, involving international organisations and perforation of the issue in arts. However, she was also quick to notice that her activism had been conditioned to be White-centric with most of these suggestions of questionable effectiveness in ethno-cultural communities. While indeed these methods may be very effective in beginning dialogue on issues of social justice in Western society, it treats PoC as a homogenous group without understanding different cultural conceptions of mental illness.

As Third Culture Kids, we feel a sense of helplessness being stuck in the bewildering limbo between two ethno-cultural identities where our voices are ignored for being “too corrupted” by the other identity. While we are at the epicentre of the problem as victims, in conversations with members of our ethno-cultural communities, our input is compromised by our Westernised thought that is often paternalistic in tone. Any attempt at starting dialogue is usually immediately stifled by interjections from family and friends: “You don’t understand our culture, you didn’t grow up in the old country”, “you don’t know what’s best for our country because you’re a westerner now”, “you’re sounding just like a White person”.

And indeed, as Australian Third Culture Kids, we often forget we speak from a place of privilege with our attitudes towards our ancestral homelands tinged with neo-colonialism. Perhaps having grown up

in Australia, our voice in ethnocultural matters have lost validity as judge from a point of incredible privilege. Attempting to destabilise another nation’s cultural conceptions of mental illness disrespects its right to autonomy by forcing change. For immigrants, the strongest and most impacting voices do indeed come from “home”. PoC diaspora, my parents amongst them, are significantly more receptive to dialogue from their original country than that from their new one. Of course, the problem is that whilst mental health awareness bred at the origin would produce the instantaneous and widespread reaction we need, it is difficult to express how important this issue is without crossing the boundary of paternalism.

Ultimately, there is no great solution, no momentous watershed moment. While the attitudes inherited from our ancestral homelands remain an inherent issue, it is a difficult topic to navigate as it’s not our place to effect change. Change needs to begin in Australia within PoC circles. “We must promote change here with hopes than it may penetrate beyond our shores, in the age of digital mass media,” Lily concludes. Beginning with small steps like multilingual resources in ethno-cultural spaces, increasing PoC psychologists in social services and media attention in diverse language print and digital platforms such as newspapers and social media will make significant ripples globally. Perhaps dialogue around mental illness in PoC communities won’t be the instant and enormous international attention we really need, but it can only get better from here.

*Names have been changed.

Support is available for anyone who may be distressed by phoning Lifeline 131 114.

Stranger

How you identify and how others racialise you is a limbo so difficult to navigate, you may as well explain your ethnicity one more time. Not just for their benefit, but to remind yourself that you are real.

By Bridget Harilaou

Your mother’s family has lived in Indonesia for three or four generations, but they are ethnically Chinese with no marriages outside of this specific category until her marriage to your father. Your father is Australian, a second generation migrant whose parents are from Greece—“Wow! What an interesting mix!”—blah blah blah.

So Greek people think you look Chinese, and Chinese people think you look Greek and White people think you look Indian, Latina, Fijian or “Arabic”... which is a language, not an ethnicity. Where does this leave your identity? Both your communities ‘other’ you, and mainstream (read: White) Australia likes to ask you where you’re from—“No, where are you really from?”—your identity is a maelstrom of misunderstanding, internalised racism and an intense fear that everyone is going to find out your middle name is Ying. That is your best kept secret for 15 years.

At eighteen you start studying your mother tongue at university, because it will be an easy subject, right? And I guess you’re kind of interested. Which mother tongue exactly? Not Mandarin, your mother doesn’t speak that. Not Greek, your father only speaks that to his parents. Bahasa Indonesian. Too bad you didn’t realise your Mum spoke a

Jakartan dialect from the 70s. Class isn’t as easy as you thought, but you’ve still got a leg up on everyone else.

As you get more involved in politics at university, you grow increasingly race conscious. You start to realise that all the anger you had towards your mother was because of how people racialised her, and how that racism dripped onto you like burning wax. You start to identify as a Person of Colour, who has experienced racism all your life. These flashes hit you every now and then, of things that happened to you that make you realise: that was racism. That was whiteness burning a hole into your sense of self.

So you identify as Asian, which any person from ‘Asia’ would laugh at. How can you identify as a continent? Well in Western countries it’s pretty easy—“All Asians are the same”—an erasure, but one that also creates solidarity.

You decide to go on exchange, to live in Indonesia. You don’t really remember making the decision or why; it just starts to happen. After all, it is the culture that has had the largest influence on your life. You are Indonesian. There’s just one small problem. You haven’t been there since you were five.

So how do mixed-race Third Culture Kids who’ve grown up in entirely different countries, with immense privileges and no real understanding of the country their parents are from, deal with this? How do we claim a culture we’ve never lived in, whose customs we don’t know?

When you get to Indonesia, a lot of people think you’re half Indonesian because of your darker skin (oddly enough, you have the island of Samos in Greece to thank for that). Most people you meet say to you “Sudah lancar”—already fluent, or ask you “Berapa tahun tinggal di Indonesia?”—how many years have you lived here? It’s a comfort to know you’re not usually considered a *bule* (albino, white, foreigner; take your pick). To speak only Indonesian and have it come out easily, to be able to blend in a little more, to know people see you as part of the majority, it legitimises your identity. Your accent improves, you learn the phrase “Saya ada hati di sini”—I have heart here. That’s why you’re

in Indonesia. You have heart here.

Even though you’re living in a city with one of the highest average standards of living; with air-conditioning, a queen bed and a private bathroom, you don’t feel the irony just yet. You feel Indonesian. For once, you feel part of the mainstream.

But the questions don’t stop. How do you balance your Western privilege with your Indonesian identity? How do you reconcile the ridiculous amount of money you have compared to the millions of Indonesians living below the poverty line? You have never even lived here before your Australian government funded exchange, you are a stranger to this country. Are you even a part of the diaspora, with your Chinese culture and mixed race complications? But it’s comforting to know you are not alone. You know other Third Culture Kids who are returning to their motherlands, trying to go back and make a difference, to use our privilege and create change. To reject the countries we were raised in and the affluence reaped from the colonisation, theft and genocide of black and brown bodies. We explore the yearning to find that something that’s always been more disconnected in us than in anyone else. And when the wind whistles past your ears, you hear it.

Saya ada hati di sini.

Podcasts By People of Colour You Should Be Listening To (an incomplete list)

Pushing Hoops with Sticks. A new pop culture podcast by editor of *The New Inquiry*, Ayesha Siddiqi. The uniquely entertaining podcast features conversations with artists that both consume and produce the values that shape how we see race, gender, sexuality, class and how we narrate our lives via pop culture. Kanye comes up a lot.

Another Round. Podcast by two BuzzFeed editors not short of the wit and blunt commentary from their writing at BuzzFeed. The ladies are drinking throughout the podcast so things get pretty interesting towards the end of each episode.

2BrownGirls. A pop culture podcast by two women of colour writers/critics/friends that feels like you’re listening to your older sister and her friend rant about cool stuff and cute boys (Zayn Malik). Because of the candid nature of the podcast it can get quite intense, but have become a unique identifier of the show itself.

#GoodMuslimBadMuslim. An amazing podcast by two Muslim women that dispels any assumptions about growing up Muslim, and counteracts the current discourses on the Muslim community. Taz and Zahra are both intelligent and humorous, comforting and generous.

Minority Retort Podcast. A new, Sydney-based critical film podcast by people of colour. Unpacking ‘what makes a good film’ through current reviews and old faves, whilst interrogating the dearth or tokenistic representation of non-white stories on film.

Untitled Kondobolou Podcast. Brothers Hari (comedian) and Ashok (former rapper for Das Racist) ramble about seemingly mundane events that actually weave important but hilarious commentary about immigrant and diasporic experiences.

The Back Talk. A powerful podcast featuring conversations, essays and anecdotes from young women of colour. Discussions about confidence, self love and grappling with identity.

The Read. A witty and distinctive duo that discuss pop culture and racial issues with their typical honesty and profanity. Throwing shade, spilling tea.

Black Girls Talking. The title is pretty self explanatory, four black girls from varied experiences and backgrounds talking about pop culture, representation of people of colour, and the pursuit of the perfect body oil.

Notice of Council Meeting

87th Students’ Representative Council, University of Sydney



Students’ Representative Council, The University of Sydney
Phone: 02 9660 5222 | www.src.usyd.edu.au

DATE: 2nd September

TIME: 6-8pm

LOCATION: Professorial Board Room (Quadrangle)

Linking Activism Across Settler-Colonial Nations

The Case-Study of Australia and Israel

When I was about nine or 10 years old, I saw a clip on the evening news about the second intifada. I had no idea what it was but I knew one thing; they were Arabs. As a mixed-race Australian-Egyptian, I was born an identity crisis but something about this clip had me wandering down the hallway in search of dad to ask him some questions. Who were they? Why were they fighting? And stones? Don't they have guns? Do we know them?

was one of the first recorded massacres in which up to 200 Gundjtmara peoples were unjustly slain. Without this legacy of white settlement, my mother would have never been a naive 21 year old Australian woman who fell in love with an Egyptian sailor at the port of Portland, Victoria.

Wars, the presence of Stolen Generation deniers like Andrew Bolt in the public space, to the Intervention and ongoing acceptance of racism evinced by the recent Adam Goodes situation; we are so quick to condemn others before facing our own horrific settler-colonial history.

different to what is needed in Palestine. In Australia, we need to be working toward a decolonisation of our mind and our culture; just like our Israeli counterparts, we won't be leaving to give back this land to Indigenous peoples anytime soon. And this is where we completely diverge: the settler-colonial project in Australia is a sophisticated and entrenched system that has morphed beyond the crude violence of its early years, a violence which Israel is still grappling with as it seeks to expand and entrench itself across historical Judea and Samaria.

Israel is not an anomaly; it was just late to the settler-colonial party. We're witnessing the horror of settler-colonialism in real-time, with all the politics and awareness of the violence it needs to survive. That's why your Palestinian activism, as a citizen of Australia, is meaningless without a commitment to allyship and support of Aboriginal peoples. Whether you are a white-Australian, or a recent migrant, you benefit from the structures built by a settler-colony at the suffering of its Indigenous population. And if you choose to condemn the violence of the state of Israel, the violence of the state of Australia deserves your condemnation.

Thus, the 20 million or so of us Australians who exist with citizenship and without Indigenous heritage, it becomes imperative that we work toward supporting the efforts for recognition, safety and self-determination of Aboriginal people beyond tokenistic gestures undermined by paternalistic policies and police brutality. If we can be a shining example of the success of settler-colonialism (along with our cousins, America and Canada), then would it be not be too much to consider that we can, one day, become a success of modern decolonisation?

Naturally, complex nuances exist and Australia and Israel possess unique and divergent histories. Yet, on an overarching scale viewed through the lens of settler-colonialism, it becomes a case of dizzying similarities. Consider some of the parallels; Gaza is an open-air prison, and so were the reserves where Aboriginal peoples experienced restricted movements along with food rationing and minimum calorie intakes. We might not have used phosphorous acid, but we used starvation and smallpox; we might not have built checkpoints or an apartheid wall but we share a history of segregation and vicious settlers who enacted violence upon Indigenous groups in the vicinity of settler towns. In various forms, economic disparities and disadvantage continue alongside disproportionate incarceration and deaths in custody.

So, if you consider yourself an ally of Palestine, passionate about Middle Eastern politics and history or an avid reader of Ilan Pappé and Edward Said; if you're studying Arabic or Hebrew, reading Benny Morris, taking the subject 'the Arab-Israeli Conflict' or watching *Paradise Now* and thinking of going to Palestine, but have never taken a subject from the Koori studies department or interacted with your local Indigenous community, then consider something; consider the reason we are able to attend the University of Sydney.

It's not easy; as I waded through my own feeling of complicity, I find guilt does nothing but centre myself in an issue that isn't about me. The type of activism needed in Australia is diametrically

Pro-Palestinian activism maintains a consistent presence in the lives of many Australians, irrespective of religion or ethnicity. Palestine has transcended physicality and become a universalising cause to be adopted by any progressive seeking to take the side of the oppressed. Co-opted by political movements and politicians, the range of semiotic meanings ascribed to the tiny sliver of land by the Red Sea is nearly innumerable. The images birthed in Palestine are instantly recognisable, from Rachel Corrie, to pictures of young men throwing stones to plumes of tear gas, IDF (Israeli Defense Forces) uniforms, flattened concrete houses, uprooted olive trees, and the Golden Mosque of Jerusalem upon its contested ground of the Temple Mount. People get excited about volunteering in the West Bank, attending fundraising events, wearing a keffiyeh, eating knafeh and purchasing 'Free Palestine' woven bangles. It shocks us, awes us, moves us, and we cry over the deaths of Gazan children and the ongoing suffering caused by blockades, water-shortages, health-care limitations, checkpoints and settler violence. We want to support Israel and the right to a safe homeland for Jewish people, but we can't abide by the violence.

And I ask, why?

Is not the violence enacted upon the Indigenous people of our country also worthy of our concern? When do we question Australia's presence on this land by posting petitions about BDS (Boycott, Divest & Sanction) for the Australian government over its treatment of Aboriginal people? From the unreconciled horrors of the Frontier

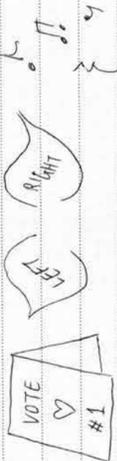
By Lamisse Hamouda

My dad, a man deeply invested in Middle Eastern politics, was so excited by my interest that he sat me down and explained the conflict to me from the collapse of the Ottoman Empire to 1948 to 2000-and-whatever-the-year-was-that-year. I don't remember any of it, I just remember being really, really, really shocked. My whole little, innocent world came crashing down beneath the weight of incomprehensible political realities and dad's unmistakable passion for this topic.

I've spent a lot of time plumbing the complexities and intersections of my identity as a Muslim-Australian-Egyptian woman. However, it was on a trip to Palestine and Israel that I had a realisation that forever shifted my perceptions. For days, all I could think was, "I am an Israeli." My mother's ancestors came to Australia in the mid-1800s and settled in country Victoria; they've a road named after them and more than a few headstones at the local cemetery. My great-grandfather recalled a time when local Aboriginal men were rounded up and shot behind cattle sheds. I've searched for verification but I can only conclude it further proves the countless uncounted deaths that have occurred over the centuries, unrecorded by White settlers and local law enforcement. The local population there are the Gundjtmara peoples. The Convincing Ground massacres in 1833

30th July

There's a certain feeling I've developed towards a particular group of people I've met at uni. They're older than me, and are far more experienced than me. They've read more books than I have. Some of them have directed dramas, some are activists planning campaigns, some are very sophisticated in their politics, some have written beautiful songs.



Most of them are Arts students and something worth noticing - they all speak ENGLISH.

It would be very hard to clarify my precise feeling. It's like a grey, tempestuous sea swirling inside my mind. I just feel stressed out by the seemingly opposite emotions inside me. Overwhelmed by depression and excitement, by all isolation and friendliness. I devoted all my strength to locating my identity in a hospitable yet hostile foreign land, among a stream of values intimate yet strange.

4th August

Today I joined a discussion group. I was 15 minutes late.

"So are there any other opinions about the transition from capitalism to socialism?"

That's the first question I heard after nervously sitting down on the lawn. Fragments of other words lost in the wind. Still bewildered, I let loose my voice. "Well... reckon..." All eyes gaze at me, friendly.

I simply recited a paragraph from my Anthropology lecture that I had found

tremendously interesting. But it had nothing to do with their question - OMG the transition from capitalism to socialism. Oh, but what am I talking about?

I get the urgent impulse to make up for my mistake, and do so by reverting back to a theory from my philosophy lecture:

"Xristine said that every process has a natural end. For instance, you're building a house, the house is the end. And he said that the 'end' is the only most reasonable thing. So the evolution of ideology within different contexts must be reasonable."

"Oh, philosophy. I don't know about that,"

someone said.

"What do you mean by 'end'?"

one guy laughed.

The tension broke and I felt more at ease. They talked. I listened attentively. They mentioned several revolutions, several major shifts during the transitional period. Their words flowed through me like the wind, and time and space became more and more real, yet more and more unreal. I put up a question. "Do you think people's 'emotion' is the root cause for the transition of the society?"

"Look, you can't look at questions in that way. It's too **ABSTRACT**. You need to put them in factual contexts. You need basic facts." That's it! That was what had been unsetting me for a long time. Basic facts, concrete knowledge - those were things I needed to accumulate during the next couple of years. I've been thinking about this a lot recently. I've read quite a few books - but they were all literary novels. I barely know anything about

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- but I read novels. Novels can point an unrealistic, idealistic version of the world that, I felt, would do me no good in understanding my place in all of it. That guy showed me what I needed to do. I felt like the hazy mist blurring my eyes had cleared. I felt truly good in that moment.

YIFAN KONG.

Why BDS?

Apartheid in South Africa was not demolished overnight.

BY FAHAD ALI

It took an embarrassingly long period of time before international pressure was brought down to bear on the system of segregation, violence, and social control that categorised the Boer regime for almost five decades.

The coup de grâce was delivered with the introduction of international sanctions. The issue was brought before the United Nations in 1962, with a majority of nations voting to establish a Committee against Apartheid calling for various sanctions upon South Africa.

The entire Western world boycotted a boycott of gross human rights violations.

It took some two decades before the issue of sanctions gained momentum within the West. Finally, in 1994, after years of economic and cultural pressure, apartheid in South Africa was dissolved.

In 2015, only one state in the world maintains a regime of racial division and state-sponsored violence that parallels the experience of Black South Africans at the height of the apartheid era in South Africa.

Israel is an apartheid state. There is no sugar-coating this subject. It is, for anyone who has visited the occupied Palestinian territories, clear as day.

This fact is echoed by those who fought on the front lines against apartheid, from the African National Congress to Nobel Peace Prize laureate Desmond Tutu.

It is echoed by Jewish-Israeli journalist Gideon Levy, who writes: "From every West Bank Palestinian village, from every reservoir and power grid that is for Jews only; apartheid screams from every demolished tent encampment and every verdict of the military court; from every nighttime arrest, every checkpoint, every eviction order and every settlement home. No, Israel is not an apartheid state, but for nearly 50 years an apartheid regime has ruled its occupied territories. Those who want to continue to live a lie, to repress and to deny are invited to visit Hebron. No honest, decent person could return without admitting the existence of apartheid. Those who fear that politically incorrect word have only to walk for a few minutes down Shuhada Street, with its segregated road and sidewalks, and their fear of using the forbidden word will vanish without a trace."

It has become so undeniable that Bradley Burston, an award-winning Israeli journalist was last week forced to admit: "Our Israel is what it has become: Apartheid."

Burston writes: "I used to be one of those people who took issue with the label of apartheid as applied to Israel. I was one of those people who could be counted on to argue that, while the country's settlement and occupation policies were

anti-democratic and brutal and slow-dose suicidal, the word apartheid did not apply. I'm not one of those people any more."

The world is slowly coming to recognise the enormity of the injustice perpetuated by the State of Israel. This is in no small part due to the efforts of the Palestinian civil society call for 'boycott, divestment, and sanctions' (BDS) upon Israel until it complies with international law.

The call for BDS was issued in 2005, and brought together an extraordinary cross-section of Palestinian civil society organisations, trade unions, and humanitarian groups. Taking inspiration from the successful anti-apartheid movement, it calls upon "international civil society organisations and people of conscience all over the world to impose broad boycotts and implement divestment initiatives against Israel similar to those applied to South Africa in the apartheid era".

The guidelines of BDS are clear: it is a tactic, not a dogma. As such, the call refers to a boycott of organisations and institutional links, not individuals. The boycott does not preempt any political solution, but it does place economic pressure upon Israel to comply with international law and take concrete steps to end the occupation.

In effect, what it does is level the playing field—negotiations don't work when one side has an obliterated economy and slingshots and the other enjoys booming trade and one of the world's

most advanced militaries.

The alternative to action is at best a maintenance of the status quo, and the human suffering along with it, and at worst an intensification of violence and segregation.

This month, former US president Jimmy Carter declared that the internationally preferred "two-state solution" was dead, and that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu did not have any intention to move towards peace.

And why would he when the stakes are so low?

BDS exists for this reason: to raise the stakes, and to make the occupation costly and undesirable. The international community came together to stand up against apartheid in South Africa, and we must do so again, and by the same means.

Burston says it best: "Years ago, in apartheid South Africa, Jews who loved their country and hated its policies, took courageous roles in defeating with non-violence a regime of racism and denial of human rights. May we in Israel follow their example."

For more information about BDS, visit bdsmovement.net

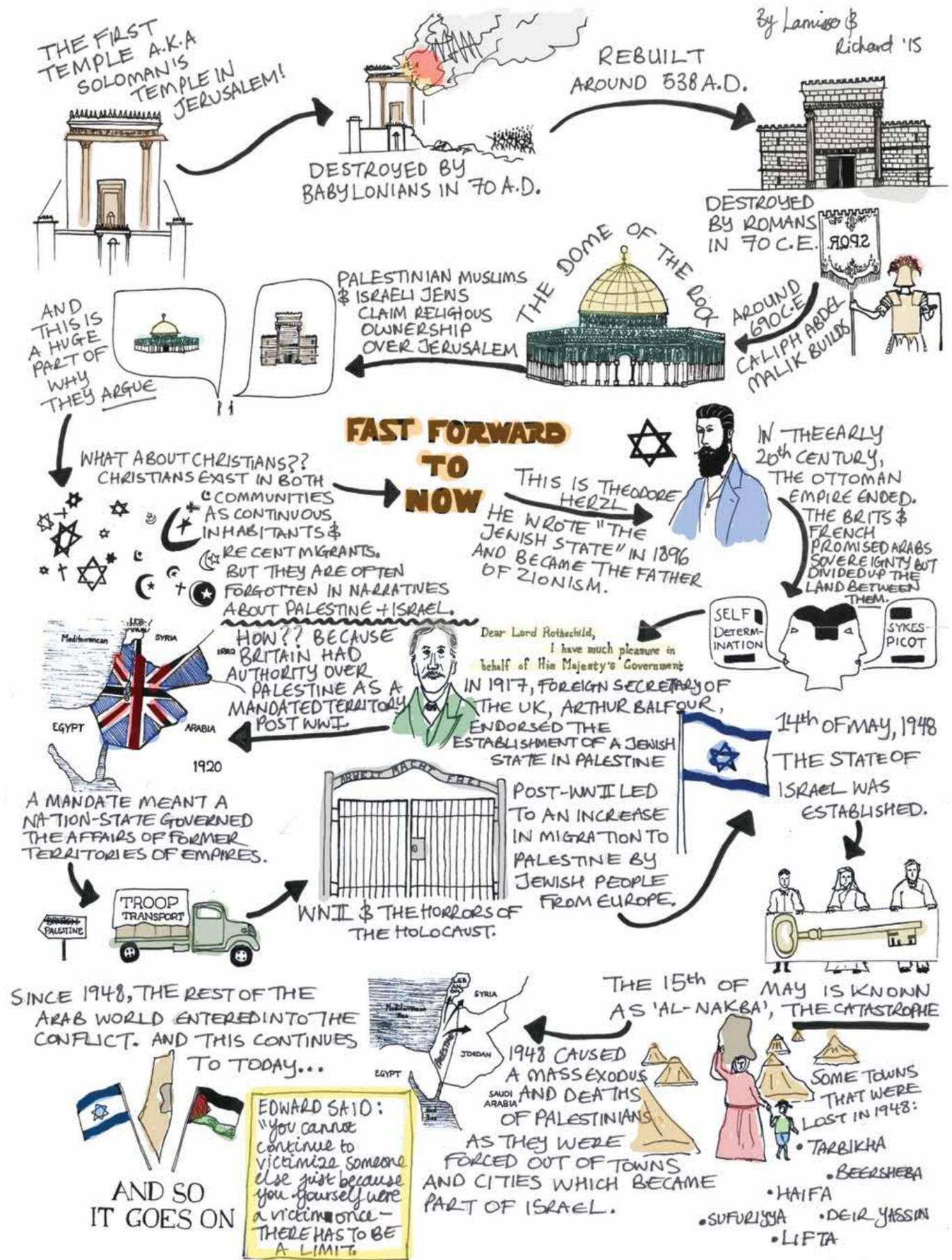
If you want to get involved with Students for Justice in Palestine contact the Executive at sjpsyd@gmail.com

THE POEM THAT SPOKE WHEN I COULD NOT

They call us now.	It doesn't matter that	that there's no one here	or your shoes
Before they drop the bombs.	there is nowhere to run to.	except you and your children	or to gather everyone in the house.
The phone rings	It means nothing that the borders are closed	who were cheering for Argentina	It doesn't matter what you had planned.
and someone who knows my first name	and your papers are worthless	sharing the last loaf of bread for this week	It doesn't matter who you are
calls and says in perfect Arabic	and mark you only for a life sentence	counting candles left in case the power goes out.	Prove you're human.
"This is David."	in this prison by the sea	It doesn't matter that you have children.	Run.
And in my stupor of sonic booms and glass shattering symphonies	and the alleyways are narrow	You live in the wrong place	Lena Khalaf-Tuffaha is a Palestinian-American writer. This poem, along with more of her work, can be found on her blog: http://www.lenakhalaftuffaha.com/running-orders.html
still smashing around in my head	and there are more human lives	and now is your chance to run	
I think "Do I know any Davids in Gaza?"	packed one against the other	to nowhere.	
They call us now to say	more than any other place on earth	It doesn't matter	
Run.	Just run.	that 58 seconds isn't long enough	
You have 58 seconds from the end of this message.	We aren't trying to kill you.	to find your wedding album	
Your house is next.	It doesn't matter that	or your son's favorite blanket	
They think of it as some kind of war time courtesy.	you can't call us back to tell us	or your daughter's almost completed college application	
	the people we claim to want aren't in your house		



Illustrated Historical Guide To The Palestine-Israel Conflict



The Best Place In The World

Talking Palestine With Mohammed Abu Eid

Sitting behind Manning House, tucked behind hedges and overlooking the soccer field, I sat down to have a chat with an international student from Palestine. Having grown up through the second intifada, Mohammed was softly spoken but fiercely passionate about Palestine. Edited for clarity, here is our conversation.

Please, introduce yourself and where you're from. My name is Mohammed Abou Eid, from Jenin. This is a small city located in the West Bank, Palestine.

By Lamisse Hamouda

And what is Jenin like, as a city?

Jenin is an agricultural city, and most people are working in agriculture and farms. It is the last city in the North, near the border with Israel. It is a very small city, like village, if I compare to other cities in Palestine. But it is a very nice city... it's a beautiful place.

So what are you studying? I'm doing a Masters of Public Administration at the University of Sydney, but I did my Bachelor in Accounting at Al-Najjah University in Nablus City, in the West Bank.

I've looked into sourcing scholarships for some of former Palestinian students when I taught English in the West Bank, they're quite difficult to find and there a lot of restrictions... how did you find your way to Sydney University? Actually, I have a scholarship from the Australian government from the AusAid program. I also work for the Palestinian Ministry of Finance, and my ministry have chosen me to go to Australia to study Public Administration so I can go back and work for the government and my department.

Wow, that's incredible. What do you hope to take back to Palestine then? Actually, I came here just to get the political system and government experience... but when I arrived I've seen different things that are not just related to my studies. From the lifestyle to the multiculturalism. Everything here is something I can move with me to Palestine—new ideas, new behaviours, new culture. Actually, I've seen in here many, many interesting and beautiful cultures and people and landscapes. So I'm not just going to move my experience from my studies, I'm going to move transfer many things that I've learnt from Australia to Palestine.

And what are some of the things you've learnt? The safety; it's a very safe place. And the friendliness. I've seen that all people are friendly, not just Australians or local people. It seems that many people come here and change their minds because they learn to follow the culture of the place—but everything here is beautiful.

And have you experienced anything that is maybe, not beautiful in Australia? I'm not sure; I think the most of that I miss my family. When you live alone, you feel very bad. I have extended family in Palestine. I have 5 sisters and 1 brother, unfortunately my father passed away couple of years ago. And we have a lot of relatives so we are always with people around us.

In Australia, there is a fair bit of activism for Palestine. However, it's often not spearheaded by Palestinians. Do you have some advice to people who are not Palestinian, but are very passionate about Palestine as activists? I think the important thing we have to mention in our struggle to get our freedom is to explain to people how our issue started. Because, all colonialism and occupations started from one country, state to state but our issue is different. Groups coming from many different places all over the world are coming to Palestine and then they started their country in Palestine. Many people do not understand this issue and how the Palestine issue started, so it is important to explain and understand the history.

Many people don't know Israel was established in 1948; they thought, or they think, that Israel is already existing like Britain. So we have to explain to people that is a recent country, a new country that was established in Palestine and other countries were devastated because this new country came to a land and said to the local people, the indigenous people, 'go outside!' and sent them to live in other places.

What do you find is the most difficult aspect of the occupation of Palestine? You cannot know when you could lose your brother or your sister or your friend. They could be killed anytime. Or going to jail anytime. So maybe you are suffering everyday from this, but no one knows.

How do you stay strong?

By being united. Of course there is very bad occupation in Palestine, but there is very very bad isolation between Gaza and West Bank. So to

be strong, you need to be united. And not just by always struggling against occupation, but to be thinking of new ideas to resist. Not just by stones, but by education. We're not just thinking about the Palestinian future, we're thinking about the world future and I think the Palestinians are some of the most educated people. If there is no occupation, you'll see a different situation in Palestine. I believe we would be like Australia or other developed countries by now.

And what is the best thing about Palestine? I'll tell you a story; about three years ago I went to Jerusalem. That was the first time for me to go to Jerusalem. And when I entered the old city, I felt something I cannot explain with words. You know, to express your feeling as to how it is to live in Palestine or when you visit Palestine, you can feel something you cannot explain or tell other people.

Palestine, as a whole, is not just a beautiful country... it attracts you to want to stay. Even non-Palestinians, who come to Palestine, you ask them 'do you want to go back?', they say no! Even though the political situation in Palestine is very bad and not safe, the best thing in Palestine is the people living in Palestine too. They're friendly, they'll feed you from the first meeting! When they see you, they'll say "oh can you come to my home and we'll have lunch together?" and you're like 'but you just met me? How can you invite me to your home?' They are very friendly. And when you go to somewhere like Ramallah or Nablus, so many people know you and say hello. It's connected, many people know each other in many places. We have very wide friendship circles and networks.

And when I got permission Jerusalem, it was for one month during Ramadan so I went to Jerusalem every day! I wanted to invest my time and my permission to visit Jerusalem every day. Every day! I know this was costly for me, but this was such a nice opportunity to visit the best place in the whole world.

So I'm curious, when someone asks you where you're from, and you say 'Palestine' and they don't know what Palestine is, what do you tell them? You know what is the problem I've faced most in Australia? Is that, when I say I'm from Palestine, many people don't even understand what I'm saying. You know, especially when I'm talking to other international students. They listen and they hear it as 'Pakistan'.

So I explain to them Palestine; I say you know Jordan? Egypt? Syria? Well, we are in the middle. Then they'll ask if I can show them Palestine on a map. But then there is no Palestine on the map! So then they say, 'but where is Palestine? There is only Israel here?' And this is starting point to talk about our issue...

That's a very frustrating but revealing conversation you are having with people; it really highlights the erasure of Palestine from popular memory and geography. Do you ever get tired of discussing Palestine? No, I feel very passionate when talking about my country. And I don't mind to explain a lot because when I'm talking with people I know they will begin to understand. It's a good chance for me to promote my issue, our struggle against the occupation.

I want people to know what Israel is doing everyday in Palestine. Everyday I watch the ABC news since I have been here in Australia. So far, I've never yet seen something about Palestine and I have been here 7 months. Especially about the last thing that happened in Palestine! Some Israeli settlers burnt an 18 month old baby in a house-fire. I'm always surprised that they have transferred their suffering and are causing suffering to us in Palestine. The suffering is everyday. I think that if I suffered, I would not want it to happen to other people. I don't want people to suffer from the same pain.

Also, it's important to know how Palestinians resist Israeli occupation; it's not bombs and rockets. We have to use simple things from stones to flags. Almost all our struggling ways is peaceful, just by being alive. You have to resist; because people are coming to our homes and telling us to go out, telling us this is MY home now. And you ask them, what is the reason? Your logic? Your evidence? And they say no, this is our land because David lived here thousands of years ago and so this land is for us. So what? I can go to Saudi and tell them to go out because Mohammed lived in Makkah thousands of years ago and I am Muslim? Or Christians can come to Palestine and take Nazareth and Bethlehem? It doesn't make sense.

Finish this sentence, I am...? I am a Palestinian. I am Palestinian forever.

Malcolm X In The Modern Age

Malcolm X described John F. Kennedy's assassination as "the chickens coming home to roost". During his presidency, Kennedy had failed to effect meaningful change to advance the civil rights of African Americans and his death, Malcolm X posited, was retribution for this. Malcolm X was assassinated less than two years later. His contemporaneous detractors similarly described his murder as the chickens coming home to roost, a consequence of his polarising views and outspoken nature.

By Adam Ursino

2015 marks 50 years since Malcolm X's assassination, but his words and actions haven't remained confined to his context; they still endow thousands worldwide with empowerment and solace. This milestone begs the question: have we made proud strides towards equality and justice for people of colour, or are we disoriented and apathetic, meandering lazily towards the intangible ideal of a post-racial society?

There was a false dichotomy established between Malcolm X and Martin Luther King: the former was considered "violent" and the latter "peaceful". While the reality of the situation was much more nuanced, the two giants of the civil rights movement pursued starkly different methods to achieve the same objective. Malcolm X's belief that "white people are devils" and his partiality for segregation were views he abandoned in the final year of his life. One idea, however, remained constant: Malcolm X believed that African Americans should aim to achieve and defend justice and equality "by any means necessary". Of course, because of his socio-historical context, much of Malcolm X's activism pertained predominantly to African Americans, but the frustrating universality of racism provides his views with broader relevance to people of colour internationally.

The death of US teenager Michael Brown just over a year ago elucidates how communities (in this case the Missouri city of Ferguson) can unite to achieve justice by any means necessary. After Brown's death, the African American community protested to express their disapproval of an unashamedly racist police force and the inescapability of systemic racism.

I vividly recall arguing with somebody on Facebook shortly after the riots began. They commented on a post a less articulate version of "this is why black people are getting killed; it's because they act like this". I replied with something to the effect of "it's their way of being heard. People of colour often don't have

the systemic privilege to create change in other ways" (admittedly, though, I was a little less civil—was I channelling my inner Malcolm X, who insisted "when people get angry, they bring about a change"?).

Both Ferguson's riots and my subsequent Facebook argument illustrate a broader issue: as people of colour, we are inherently perceived through a lens obscured by whiteness. Accordingly, any attempts at resisting racism in a manner that isn't underpinned by pacifism and harmony run the risk of our vilification. Sadly, this vilification can run counter to the change desired. This was emphasised in Ferguson, where inevitably, 'angry' people of colour were presented as primitive, uncivilised, and wild.

The issue is not unique to the US, though. The recent Reclaim Australia rallies were (rightfully and thankfully) answered with counter rallies more abundant in number and void of discriminatory hatred. However, while both rallies were violent, various media outlets depicted only the counter rallies as such. Malcolm X implied the possibility of this by arguing that the media "have the power to make the innocent guilty and to make the guilty innocent". It is in the best interests of the white supremacist system to vilify and silence people of colour to maintain the status quo. If this is how a broad coalition of anti-racist protesters are treated and presented, it's harrowing to imagine the treatment of an autonomous group of people of colour acting in similar ways. The treatment of Ferguson's protesters and anti-Reclaim Australia protesters both indicate the difficulty of striving to achieve justice by any means necessary while still being heard and not simply being written off as aggressive, primitive racial "others".

Contemporarily, metaracism (or systemic racism) is the most potent type of racism. This is punctuated with occasional examples of dominative (or blatant) racism, including Ferguson's protests and the Reclaim Australia rallies. The decline in dominative racism parallels the decline in the perceived necessity of figures like Malcolm X and, by extension, his ideologies.

This decline doesn't necessarily translate into the notion that Malcolm X's views have no place in modern Australia. Importantly, the capacity for peaceful and harmonious collaboration to create change (while inarguably legitimate) is limited. In the words of Malcolm X, "if you want something, you had better make some noise". By the same token, this decline may be indicative of ineffectiveness. Malcolm X's claim that "non-violence is the philosophy of a fool" does not carry unfettered weight.

It is fundamentally important to avoid dismissing Malcolm X as an angry, hypermasculine black man with a predilection for violence and aggression. Not only is it a vastly inaccurate representation, but it neglects other salient aspects of his activism. He was almost prophetic in his assessment of governments. He reminded the American public that "America preache[d] freedom and practice[d] slavery" in the same way that Australia now preaches multiculturalism and racial acceptance, but practises exclusionism, xenophobia, and toys with the repeal of a section of the *Racial Discrimination Act*.

He was supremely intelligent; he repositioned the fight for the rights of minority groups from a domestic context to an international one, arguing that black rights equalled human rights. His influence has not evaporated.

There will always remain numerous responses to racism. Peace and violence are purportedly opposite approaches, but equality and justice are the shared goals. Malcolm X's most resonant avowal was perhaps that "a man who stands for nothing will fall for anything". In 2015 Australia, it's important that we heed this advice: shackled to a system necessarily characterised by white supremacy and in the face of a draconian government, people of colour need to stand for something. We need to stand for justice and equality. We need to be able to do this by any means necessary.

Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney

Want some work? Poling Booth Attendants Required

The SRC is looking for people to work on the polling booths for its elections this year.

If you can work on Wed 23rd Sept and/or Thurs 24th Sept, and attend a training at 4pm Tues 22nd Sept, we want to hear from you!

\$33.02 per hour

There may also be an opportunity to undertake additional work at the vote count. Application forms are available from the SRC Front Office (Level 1 Wentworth Building). For more info, call 9660 5222. Applications close 4pm, Tues 8th September 2015.



Authorised by P Graham, SRC Electoral Officer 2015.
Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney | p: 02 9660 5222 | w: src.usyd.edu.au

Checking The Boxes

Disclaimer: I am a Chinese person writing about Postcolonial literature. Postcolonial literature is an inconceivably large and diverse body of literature, which includes a multitude of different voices and culture. I do not intend to speak on behalf of all Postcolonial perspectives, instead I only write from my own experiences.

By Anonymous

As I handed in my Postcolonialism creative piece to my Year 11 English teacher, he made sure to ask if I had included ‘hybridity’ and a ‘marginalised culture’ because the aim of the course was to ‘capture Postcolonial elements’. The richness of Postcolonial stories had been reduced to a series of checkboxes.

Don’t get me wrong—I am a staunch supporter of Postcolonial literature and reclamation. I think the study of literature and art is extremely valuable to society, especially when it discusses race and culture. What isn’t valuable to society is a system of teaching that evaluates artistic and critical expression with a hard, dry number.

Unfortunately, the HSC has to rank and evaluate kids’ ‘intellectual capability’

in the most arbitrary way possible (a combination of memory work and pandering to the marker). When you combine this way of thinking with complex and deeply significant expression such as Postcolonial literature, you face a problem. You are essentially teaching students cultural empathy in a sterile and removed context where Postcolonialism is reduced to mere token words, scattered throughout a piece in order to get high marks.

I am more than willing to call myself out for my previous insensitivity—I viewed Postcolonialism as a list of one-dimensional words that I could copy and paste into a narrative so that a 12 out of 15 would numerically classify my (truly) piece-of-crap writing as somewhat Postcolonial. This was wrong, and I am not proud of this way of thinking at all. But it’s pretty terrifying to think that if I was capable of viewing Postcolonialism in this light, then perhaps other students also did too.

Not only this, but my class (largely ethnic minorities) was taught by an old white man. That isn’t to say he was a bad teacher; in fact, he was a fantastic teacher. The problem lies in the fact

that this man had never had to navigate between different cultures. He had never been made to feel ashamed of his ethnicity because it was deemed as lesser. He never had to wish that he could wake up as a white person so that he wouldn’t have to walk down the street and fear harassment and discrimination. The class of students, albeit far younger than, would probably

“You can’t truly teach Postcolonialism on a deeper and more spiritual level unless you identify with those authors who are speaking.”

understand what that felt like more than he did. If he had never experienced true cultural marginalisation, how could he convey the depth of feeling and sense of loss that many Postcolonial writers were trying to evoke?

I don’t claim to be a Postcolonial literature expert. I only really started to kind of understand hybridity and the idea of a voice and autonomy later when I was doing my own research into my ethnic identity. It was only by relating my experiences as an ethnic minority in a Western community that

I could only begin to understand the vast implications of Postcolonialism. Even then, I doubt I have even dipped my toes into the Wide Sargasso Sea of Postcolonial literature.

I understand the defence that in a purely academic discussion, it is fine to have someone who is very well-read and scholarly teach Postcolonialism. It’s conceivable, and it happens. But I firmly stand behind the notion that you can’t truly teach Postcolonialism on a deeper and more spiritual level unless you identify with those authors who are speaking. And that retaining a deep, spiritual level is the very thing that is so vital to continuing and foregrounding those voices which were buried for so long under Colonialism.

Learning Postcolonial literature is a hugely important task, and I applaud the sharing and discussion of it. But such a significant and meaningful body of work needs to be shared in a respectful way, not one that is abused for the sake of higher marks.

Normalising racism

Last month there was significant debate when Mackay Member of Parliament and Liberal Party politician George Christensen announced that he was to attend and speak at a Reclaim Australia rally in Queensland. At the time, the Labor Party condemned Christensen for attending, while conservative columnists applauded his stand for “free speech” against the “politically correct”.

By Eden Caceda

What is most surprising is that, despite problematic ideologies, groups such as Reclaim Australia are considered legitimate “activist” organisations, and Christensen’s attendance was ultimately considered a reasonable decision. However, to understand Reclaim Australia’s place in the current landscape of Australian politics, we need to look closer at where Reclaim Australia stands within the context of contemporary Australia.

Said to have formed in the aftermath of the December Sydney Lindt Cafe siege, Reclaim Australia consider themselves a national “grassroots movement” of relatively average individuals who “want to retain our successful Australian way of life”. Expanding into the national consciousness this year with rallies in April and July, the group appear to be growing in numbers and are only one of many “patriotic” and “pro-Australia” organisations popping up.

Reclaim Australia appear to be promoting a number of ideals that, when reduced to buzzwords, appear completely reasonable. They fight for “equality and tolerance of all races and religions”, “equality of gender” and “freedom of speech”, but underneath this doctrine lies an exclusive support for White Australians, alongside clear anti-immigration and anti-multicultural sentiments.

In fact, all of the “reclaims” of the group are based on straw man arguments (informal fallacies based on giving the impression of refuting an opponent’s argument, while actually refuting an argument which was not advanced by that opponent); none of the aspects of Australian life that they deem to be under threat are facing any peril whatsoever. Rallies have included ludicrous claims that Islamic leaders intend to force religion upon Australians, religious taxes are to be added, and Islam’s intention to invade Australia and segregate men and women is a looming, immediate threat—all unsubstantiated claims that have been falsely reported.

Danny Nalliah from the Rise Up Australia Party addressed the recent rally in Melbourne, endorsing his opposition to the teachings of Islam,

but apparently not against Muslim people. “We love the Germans, we oppose the Nazi philosophy. We oppose the communist philosophy but we love the Russians and Chinese,” he said. “Likewise, we oppose Islam but we love the Muslim people.” Though attempting to make a profound point, Nalliah’s inability to differentiate Muslim people from Islam, as well as incorrectly implying that Muslim people are a race, conflates religion with violence and simply repeats many unfounded opinions that exists in the public space.

Further, according to their website, Reclaim Australia want to preserve “traditional values” like “Christmas and Easter and ANZAC day”, reaffirming the group’s position that Australia is first and foremost Christian. I, myself, have never heard or read about minority groups actively campaigning against Christian religious holidays, and should a Reclaim Australia member be asked from whom this statement was made, there is a high chance that they would be unable to determine the source of it too.

Regardless, the inherent hatefulness and xenophobia demonstrated by Reclaim Australia is only an indication of deeper social issues within Australian society. While not every member or supporter of Reclaim Australia is a neo-Nazi or fascist, the group is certainly a more extreme version of the general attitude in contemporary society and uses current issues to further their own agenda.

In the past few years, the asylum seeker issue has been unjustly tied to national security by being conflated with Islamic extremism. This issue has driven many of the xenophobic attitudes towards Muslim people, and has converged with the fear of “changing Australia and its cultural identity”. As hate towards immigrants increases—particularly towards Muslim migrants—collective national attitudes are also moving towards being increasingly opposed to individuals of different races, cultures and religions.

After a photo emerged in April of a person of colour being confronted by a white supremacist during the Reclaim Australia rally in Melbourne, the organisation has been trying even harder to distance themselves from the extreme right and ultranationalist behaviour of white power advocates. A Reclaim Australia spokeswoman, who chose to remain nameless, told *The Australian* newspaper in early August that “plenty of people are trying to hijack us. Reclaim is the voice for everyday Australians to say what many Australians think, but don’t always say.”

However, it’s inaccurate to brand Reclaim Australia as a fringe movement. Pervasive racism in the

mainstream has been utilised and built-upon by Reclaim, thereby contributing to the normalisation of racism and bigotry in Australia by dressing it up as everyday patriotism.

The *Guardian Australia* contributor Jeff Sparrow is one of many observing parallels between the pure bigotry of Reclaim Australia and traditional anti-Semitism. In fact ties are closer than ever, with reports that neo-Nazi websites in the United States are being used to recruit members to attend the Reclaim Australia rallies. While Australia isn’t experiencing anything close to the devastating crisis faced by Germany during the Weimar Republic, we are experiencing a prevalent and ever present bigotry radiating from the media, political parties and on social media. As history and human nature have proved, there is very little separating ‘fringe’ beliefs from attracting mainstream audiences in times of war, economic hardship and global instability.

Reclaim Australia’s position seems to be primarily informed by our national leaders, those very same individuals who run our country and ought be delivering accurate information to the public. As Tony Abbott continues to blur the lines of truth to promote ultranationalism by calling for “the end of radicalisation of Muslims in Australia”, he remains silent regarding the presence of racism and extreme white supremacy in the public sphere.

While a majority of Reclaim Australia supporters co-opt the Australian flags and Vegemite as a means of “representing nationalism”, other more radical members conceal their faces with masks or flags while out protesting. For a collection of individuals who believe they are acting in the best interests of the nation, their aggressive behaviour and refusal to express their beliefs unmasked is telling. Historically, hate groups have covered their faces, aware that their anti-social behaviour and activism is simply crime camouflaged

as acceptable forms of protest. That this practice exists is worth mentioning regardless of how few or how many members of Reclaim Australia engage in it.

As “patriots”, Reclaim Australia and the growing support of assimilation go against the freedom of choice and religion, purportedly upheld as symbols of our democracy in Australia. While Reclaim Australia continues to supposedly fight for free speech and expression, they concurrently stifle those very same freedoms.

Indeed, the bigoted views and xenophobia of Reclaim Australia’s supporters are symptoms of structural racism and white supremacy in Australia. Worryingly, a large aspect of Reclaim Australia’s continued growth and success comes from politicians not calling out bigoted, ignorant and racist views in everyday public life.

Reclaim Australia aren’t outsiders in the Australian political landscape. Their views and ideologies are born of the same mindsets which other Australians simply keep secret. However, we need to talk about these issues in order to make Reclaim Australia less of a problem and more of a fringe group. We need to stop normalising racism and start condemning it. We need to sit down and have a discussion about why it is that Australians are so afraid of the dreaded migrant, so that we can, altogether, live in a kind of Australia that’s inclusive and understanding of all people.

Photo: Nabila Chemaissem



Emotional Labour

By Aulina Chaudhuri, Tabitha Prado & Shareeka Helaluddin

Emotional labour is the societal, occupational and interpersonal norm that promotes individuals to regulate and accommodate others. This role is gendered, as wom*n are implicitly and insidiously required to absorb their surroundings and accommodate others. Once we begin to unpack the impact of racial dynamics on these gendered roles, it becomes apparent that wom*n of Colour are often left to ‘loves labour’s lost’, where our emotional capabilities and strength are all too often exploited.

Engaging with this unpaid labour can result in interpersonal stress due to a mismatch with felt emotion and that, which is required to display. The pressure to be ‘approachable’, ‘friendly’ or ‘kind’ can be insurmountable for many, and for many wom*n of colour, this is an all too tired reality. For those aligning their morals with progressive ideals in search for equality and justice,

it is important to take a step back and assess our own complicity in oppressive interpersonal interactions.

Taken from Jess Zimmerman’s Article ‘Where’s my cut?: on Unpaid Emotional Labour’ here are some key points to help start engaging in Introspective Activism.

Do I actively maintain my mental health and do my own emotional work?

Am I aware of where my body is in space and how that is likely to affect those around me? E.g. Walking in a direction where I will intersect and force someone to step aside, walking or riding three or four abreast so that no one can get past.

Do I demonstrate care towards other people?

Am I spending approximately the same

amount of energy looking after the other person’s emotional needs as I’m asking them to spend on mine?

If I’m privileged in a way that other friends of mine are not, do I use my privilege to support and amplify their voices as well as personally advocating for their rights and well-being?

Do I work to create a social atmosphere where women feel safe and comfortable?

As a white person, do I vocally oppose racism?

Do I educate myself on the history and current situation of minorities in my community, rather than asking my friends to teach me something I could Google?

Do I check in regularly with friends who

don’t share my privilege to make sure I’m helping to make our shared social circles safe and comfortable for them?

Do I need to perform similar amounts of emotional labour to a woman who shares my class background, economic instability or other oppressions?

These are not easy questions to ask yourself, but necessary if we’re striving for meaningful and sustainable politics and relationships. This does not mean that there is no room for anger. Rather, we can create multiple spaces and engage in dialogues that are critical, kind, passionate, generous and actively self-aware. This can be transformative and radical. We all fuck up, but we should strive to hold each other accountable in a way that is not tokenistic, exploitative or, ultimately, disposable.



**Ties by Kavya
Kalutantiri**

Inspired by the art style my grandfather was a master in, *Ties* explores my relationship with my Sinhala cultural identity and family ancestry through art. With the passing of my grandfather almost a year ago, I have come to realise that art is the vehicle that has allowed me to understand and explore the country my parents left behind but still fiercely love.

Radical Love

For *Wom*n's Honi* this year, Astha Rajvanshi wrote an article entitled 'What I Learnt About Love' in which, based on her reading of Chimamanda Ngozie Adiche's *Americanah*, she extrapolates the politics of inter-racial love. She explores the story of the novel's protagonist, outspoken and confident Ifemelu, and her relationship with Curt—a white male of wealth and privilege.

By Radhika Rajan

I have dated many Curts. In fact, much to my dismay, they have been the only subjects of my affection. Heterosexual white men who had all had the privilege of going to North Shore or Eastern suburbs private schools. Through a gradual but mounting process, these men taught me to worship whiteness for all that it could bring me—ski holidays to Japan, family dinners at Mr. Wong's, and stunted dinner table conversations spent scanning the table to check the cutlery was not ill placed in my painfully brown hands.

At times they would laugh at me for pronouncing words incorrectly, make

jokes at the expense of asylum seekers or use accents to mimic my family. They sat open mouthed at the possibility I had not read Kafka or watched *The Castle* and condemned me for "fetishising my race too much". Their parents asked me whether or not I had come to Australia legally and complained about how difficult the "greedy and uncivilised Chinese" were to do business with. Despite this, in a unique blend of acquiescence conditioned by gender and otherness defined by race, I said nothing in opposition.

I wondered why all these relationships had failed miserably, bringing it down to my own inability to compromise, my need to pick fights—anything and everything that left them unscathed. I would constantly remind myself how lucky I was, how few friends I knew in inter-racial relationships—scoffing at those around me who had settled for anything but the trophy of whiteness.

These men were a signifier of assimilation, a badge of honour I wore home to conversations with my parents—they could never meet them of course, or the ruse would be over—all of us impressed at how well I had started to pave the future for our

second generation. I dreamt of children named Belle and Rosie, and to change my surname from the disconcerting reminder of our life before Australia to something more innocuous, like Smith or Baker.

At the end of her article, Astha posits an uncomfortable and difficult possibility. She says, "Adiche's notion of love can never be a happy, blissful one...but at least it will be real." With all due respect to Astha, my experience would indicate the converse. Despite the pledge to strip myself of heritage, culture and colour, in the last year I feel I have experienced the radical love that Chimamanda and Astha speak of, and it has been the only blissful one of them all. Radical love acknowledges the power dynamics that seep into our relationships and challenges them unashamedly. It involves a conscious and committed process of asserting and embracing difference, ensuring that societal norms do not simply reinstate themselves in the paradigm of love.

My current partner and I love each other radically, fully and uncompromisingly. He is still a Curt, but a Curt that is self-aware of his privileges, negotiating his gained profits to those I lack. He learns

little phrases in my native tongue to entertain my mother and eats curry with his hands alongside my father. He cheekily whispers to me when I set the table incorrectly at his house and comes to my defence when his sister sweetly and unknowingly asks, "why did you come here anyway?"

We speak of a future where we combine our surnames together as some strange inter-racial metaphor (my name first of course), where our children will go to the temple with my parents and celebrate Christmas with his. It is a radical love in which we embrace our differences and the power structures that separate our lives, but let that process be part of how and why we love each other so dearly.

The love that is blissful and is freeing is therefore not that which confines us within the same structures that dictate this oppressive world, but one that figments an alternative fantasy. It is a love where race is not only seen, but also discussed and overcome—where whiteness is not the victor by default.

Westside Racism

Living in Western Sydney has taught me three things: racism is seemingly a non-issue that just makes for good watercooler talk; those who suffer do so together; and don't rock the boat.

We have to change the way we see racism.

But it's okay, people say, just look at all the Asians in Cabramatta and the

By Liam Luangrathrajasombat

Indians in Blacktown. Penrith High has a school population that is only one fifth white Australian. What more do you want?

What do we want? We want to be treated the same.

I walked down High Street in Penrith, when a honk came from the road and the words "chink" and "go back" flew past

me. The words went in one ear but failed to escape the other. I couldn't shake off that they weren't just insulting me, but insulting something that is inherent and inescapable—a trait beyond my control. I'm still a person, so why is my colour a mark of difference?

They spit in our faces. They laugh at us. They tell us to go back. Intolerance is nothing new in Western Sydney,

irrespective of its demographic diversity. It's a cultural sphere where people protest a mosque in Penrith because it apparently turns our youth into 'terrorists'. These perceptions and attitudes need to be challenged—we need to change the way people see themselves and others.

My friends walked past Blacktown Station, encountering high school

students imitating gunfire and grenade sounds in their presence.

"Is Blacktown next?" they asked my friend with a turban, giggling to themselves. Their jokes can't kill us. We

*"Is Blacktown next?"
They asked my friend
with a turban, giggling
to themselves."*

try to rise above it, but suffer in silence.

When my friends and I hang out, one particular type of story always pops up.

'Remember that time that kid called us.'

'How about when they threw that.'

The stories are always the same, and

none of us have ever fought back.

Living in Western Sydney often means that racism makes for good banter, but this banter is another way of insulting each other and revealing intolerance. So we've learnt to ignore and to walk away from provocation.

In our suffering, we've created a community where we come together, we talk and we vent. We protect ourselves, and each other, from the pain that is caused us by people who barely understand who we are. We laugh and brush off the comments.

We don't look for racism, but racism always seems to find us.

Take What Is Yours: Rihanna And Radical Entitlement

When I set out to write this article, I remembered the day the Bitch Better Have My Money (BBHMM) video was released and its immediate reception on Twitter and Tumblr. Provocative as it is, the (white) feminist reception was not surprising as they either lauded it as a feminist anthem, or discredited it for its depiction of sexual violence. It feels weird to look at the video in a measuring way. Or even to look at anything and think, "that's a real feminist thing". 'Feminist' isn't a static, unchanging quality. It's a word used to describe a kind of active commitment to a truth: that all wom*n are complex and dynamic people, despite what oppressive cultures might otherwise say.

By Tabitha Prado

Counteracting the common assumption that female performers have little creative freedom, Rihanna directed the BBHMM video herself, posting on Instagram that she was nervous before it was released. It makes it easy to take it for what it is. Living in a world that commodifies blackness into a single, essentialised blackness, we're reluctant to accept diversity of perspectives and intention from black artists. There is overlap between black artists as long as there is shared history and culture, but Rihanna is clearly uninterested in fitting a mould. Rihanna went bad in 2007. She ran out of fucks to give. To be bad is to refuse.

Rihanna refuses feminism so long as it holds her to moral standards. BBHMM is not a song for all wom*n to sing. It is a survival song for the wom*n at the bottom of the heap. It is about taking what is yours, because it was never going to be given to you anyway. It is a song about radical entitlement, to what you deserve, and accepting no less.

The white feminist gaze looks on black wom*n, black media, looks to images of black empowerment to see what can be taken. The white feminist looks to the wom*n of colour in their circles, their Facebook groups, waits for their comments, to regurgitate later without credit and with a newfound egoistic authority. White feminist attachment to black feminist politics, to wom*n of colour politics, is exploitation of labour. It's not theirs to take.

And so, this video is confronting for white feminists. While they're used to happily consuming imagery of powerful white wom*n working within the

System, BBHMM presents a fleeting image of semi-oppressive power that they can't appropriate. Rihanna offers them the position of the kidnapped wife, or the position of the henchwom*n who does a little extra heavy lifting. That's it.

Rihanna refuses to be consumed by men so long as it does not overwhelmingly benefit her. Rihanna says no to the eyes that follow her braless figure. No—unless you have something that I want. She's not looking for a man. The men look for her, but she only shows her clear latex clothed body when she kills yet another man who fucked her over. Her body is not waiting for you. It is hers, and it's covered in the blood of yet another man who fucked her over. Does that upset you?

The final image of the video is Rihanna bloodied, calm, sitting on a chest of money. The transaction is already completed—she is naked, but not selling herself as much as she is reminding us of what she is already worth. Her song 'Pour It Up' is filled with visual links between her body and the cash it commands. She strips for nobody, her nipples are pointed diamonds, a panning shot of her crotch is interrupted by a glistening Chanel logo. Accepting the 2014 Fashion Icon Award at the CDFA Fashion Awards, she wears a translucent crystal gown, and remarks later: "Do my tits bother you? They're COVERED in Swarovski crystals, girl!" No less, from Maya Angelou: "Does my sexiness upset you? Does it come as a surprise / That I dance like I've got diamonds / At the meeting of my thighs?" Coming out of histories of being sold, of being a body to be used by others, black people's relationship to capitalism is complex. Rihanna embodies her wealth in reference to those histories: she has momentarily bought her body back.

Angelou's poem 'Still I Rise' follows: "Out of the huts of history's shame / I rise / Up from a past that's rooted in pain / I rise / I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide / Welling and swelling I bear in the tide." Rihanna is rising, and very literally takes the elevator up to abduct the white wom*n. They're on the same level. She barely looks at Rihanna, a classed and racialised moment of being invisible, and a fatal mistake on her part.

The video is about race and

revenge. Rihanna reveals a man to be the 'bitch', something that might have been surprising to some unfamiliar with how the word is used in African American vernacular (AAVE). Also, the 'wife being in the backseat of my brand new foreign car' wasn't as thrillingly queer as I initially wanted to imagine.

Representations of sexualised violence are not subversive, though wom*n perpetrating the violence isn't the norm. Rihanna isn't interested in presenting an image we can all comfortably play around with. She's getting what she wants, and if white wom*n get in her way, she won't extend them the humanity that they refuse her on a daily basis. The wife is returned in the end—the ransom plan didn't work, a comment on even the value of white wom*n within white patriarchal supremacy. Rihanna shows her range of weaponry, each tool designated for a particular kind of man. Though the

white wom*n receives the brunt of maltreatment throughout the video, the focus of Rihanna's anger is pointed to men.

Cultural representation is dynamic, neither seeking the 'truth of our experiences' as Stuart Hall discusses, nor where identities are fixed carbon copies. Instead, representation is a process of exploring, of re-imagining. It can be used to humanise people, defying stereotypes and forming sites of empathy and connection. But representation also helps to reprocess and grow within our own identities. Representation can be where you see yourself for the first time. The BBHMM video and song instead have an emotional, political power. One which is not dependent on the maltreatment of the white wom*n itself, but what that maltreatment represents in a culture which necessarily places people within a hierarchy: prioritising yourself.

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Jokes I Never Wanted To Hear

"I can't come to your house," is the message that pops up on the bottom right hand corner of my desktop.

By Lamyra Rahman

It's August 2005. I am eight years old and using the family computer to do some research for a school 'assignment'. Though in reality, I was shamelessly chatting with my friends on MSN Messenger.

"Why not?" I type back. Or perhaps more accurately: "y not???" accompanied with an obnoxious number of recently downloaded glittery emoticons. The response comes instantly and with the kind of offhanded innocence that only a child could muster: "You're Muslim and my parents don't want me hanging out with Muslims. Sorry...."

It's been a month since the 7th July London Bombings. Four Islamic extremists had detonated a series of bombs in the London Underground, killing fifty-two civilians and injuring even more. The case had been widely reported in Australia. This was my

first remembered experience of Islamophobia, but definitely not the last.

Reflecting on my life since that moment, I am fortunate enough to say that my experience with overt Islamophobic statements have been few and far between. Of course, I say this with the awareness that I am a less visible target for racism than my other Muslim friends—I don't wear a hijab.

Additionally, I say this with the awareness that I have increasingly, like many other Muslims, been the target of a different kind of racism; a kind that manifests itself in casual Islamophobic jokes shared over lunch break, a kind that brings back the same feelings of shame and awkwardness I felt in August 2005.

"It's nothing," is often the response whenever I call out others on casually racist jokes involving Muslims. "It's just a joke."

The issue here is that humour is being used to hide discriminatory judgement rather than provoke meaningful thought around the issue. Humour does not just mean that something is funny or non-serious and should be taken as such; nor

does humour exist in a vacuum. Rather, humour is a form of rhetoric informed by its environment and complete with a set of purposes and effects. In many senses, humour is also a science—the reason we find something funny is very telling of our own biases and attitudes and has been the subject of much psychological and philosophical research.

As Thomas Hobbes suggested, we tend to laugh at others because we think we're superior to them and their faults. In the case of jokes that demonise Muslims, and are made by non-Muslim 'progressives', this appears to often be true. Humour is a tool they wield to express, and simultaneously conceal, bigoted outlooks.

However non-Muslims making these jokes have consistently reassured me that it's not the case. They aren't laughing because it's reinforcing their superiority and their ego. They're laughing because, apparently, this type of humour functions as a form of satire that points out the absurdity in racism. And because of that, this type of humour is okay.

My main qualm with this line of argument is that casual racist humour,

even when defended as a form of 'satire' by non-Muslims, is still fundamentally useless and damaging.

It's useless because it allegedly works on raising awareness for the 'absurdity of racism' when in reality, the Muslims who are the subjects of these jokes are already aware of the racism towards them. In the end, it doesn't add anything to their cause, doesn't tell them anything they don't know, and only results in them having to sit awkwardly and uncomfortably as the joke continues. As Saladin Ahmed says, "In an unequal world, satire that mocks everyone equally ends up serving the powerful. And in the context of brutal inequality, it is worth at least asking what pre-existing injuries we are adding our insults to."

It's damaging because, as research has shown, these kinds of jokes have serious negative consequences on both an individual and macro-sociological level. At the individual level, these jokes reinforce negative stereotypes and attitudes towards the targeted group. At the macro-sociological level, they work to maintain the racial hierarchies in society and act as a means of social control.

On Being An Artist Of Colour

Fatima: As sad as this is for me to admit, I've realised that I pretty much only draw white people.

Steph: Me too! I regularly draw for *Honi* and this question always comes to mind. Last semester, I pitched a cover that required me to draw a person. My thoughts during the art-making process included: should this person be a person of colour (PoC)? Then, when I finished it—leaving the skin blank—I wondered why did I assume that it was finished, when I hadn't added any colour to my person's skin? That's when I realised that I feared that drawing a PoC, because I thought it would be seen as some kind of a political statement.

By Fatima Rauf & Steph Barahona

Fatima: Yes, it's really upsetting that we view white people as the default and then if we do end up drawing PoC, it's not seen as a neutral decision but rather a radical statement of some kind.

Steph: Exactly! When I looked at the finished product of the *Honi* piece, I thought to myself: would people have assumed that there was a deeper or hidden message if I had drawn a PoC? This applies to drawing cartoons as well. It is really troubling since PoC I know are severely underrepresented in the media

and art.

Fatima: What makes it worse, I think, is that artists of colour themselves don't draw PoC due to a fear of backlash or questioning of motives, which in turn makes it even more difficult for PoC to be represented in art.

Steph: I guess we have unconsciously accepted that white people have become a template

for artists and this is something that doesn't get discussed at all. I have just ended up drawing dark hair for all my cartoons; it is the only thing that I think I can get away with without being questioned.

Fatima: Exactly. I used to draw a lot of portraits in high school and they were all of conventionally attractive white celebrities. I don't think I ever drew a person of colour. It's especially sad



draw PoC but it's a very conscious decision. And it is still something that I have to remind myself of each time I draw.

In the creation of art, comes the cliché that 'a picture is worth a thousand words'. The truth of this statement echoes in the process of the artist becoming race-conscious, and the effort to decolonise the mind. Through this process of cultural and mental decolonisation, we're striving towards a de-centring of the unconscious practice of privileging whiteness in art.

Illustration: Fatima Rauf



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President's Report

Kyol Blakeney

A few editions ago I reported on the existence of the Simple Extension. I said that they were important to those in the student body who rely on the face to face relationship between staff and student and those who may have anxiety when dealing with University Administration teams in the formal process of applying for Special Consideration.

Last week the Academic Board met to debate the new Assessment Procedure

Policy, including the policy on Simple Extensions. The proposal was to remove all reference to it entirely. Before then, I had students messaging and emailing me asking that I argue the value of the Simple Extension to the Academic Board, which myself and representatives from SUPRA did. Following the debate, I moved an amendment to the proposal to keep the policy around Simple Extensions. Unfortunately the vote narrowly lost. These changes are set to come into play

in January 2016 but there is still time to discuss this further with University Management and save Simple Extensions.

Throughout the next month I ask that students continue to send me their thoughts on Simple Extensions to help me gauge what the Student Body is thinking and structure an appropriate debate that would benefit the students of our University.

I would also like to take this time to congratulate our Education Officers, Blythe Worthy and David Shakes, along with the Education Action Group (EAG) for organising a brilliant National Day of Action last week in the name of Free Education. I encourage everybody to use the NDA to keep momentum up in the campaign against the threat of Education Minister, Christopher Pyne's deregulation bill.

Wom*n Officers' Report

Subeta Vimalarajah

It's an honour to write for ACAR Honi, as feminist spaces have a long, toxic and continuing history of championing the voices of white women at the expense of women of colour. This is a reality that our own Wom*n's Collective has not been immune to. We cannot understate the struggle and persistence of the amazing women who took (and take) the time and emotional energy to educate others and in doing so helped the Wom*n's Collective to be a space that now practices intersectionality.

Wom*n's Honi, despite being the source of many conservative tears (sorry not sorry Mon Droit and Nick Cater), was a tribute to this.

From critiques of Patricia Arquette's white feminism, to analyses of race and emotional labour, the prison system and the role of photography in decolonisation, there were pages of articles that centred the experiences of women of colour. In spite of this, we recognise that the Wom*n's Collective will never be a "safe space" for women of colour, as the world is not a "safe space" for women of colour.

Every day there are stories of women of colour being bashed, beaten, harassed and murdered. Just this year, we heard the horrendous story of Sandra Bland, an African American woman who was found

dead in her jail cell, after an unwarranted arrest. We especially remember the trans women of colour who have been murdered this year. In the USA, of the 19 that we know the names of, 13 women were black and 17 were women of colour. Australia is not separate to these systems of violence, but implicated in them. We must never forget the colonial legacy of sexual violence and exploitation of Aboriginal women that defined and persists in defining our nation.

To end more optimistically, things are starting to change. Whether it's the number of #teamnicki tweeters doubling the number of #teamtaylor tweeters, or the response to

the whitewashing of the new Stonewall film, white feminism and white-centred politics are being dismantled with greater vigour every day. We can only attribute this to the centuries of activism of women of colour. We quote the words of women like Audre Lorde, bell hooks and Gayatri Spivak (and the countless others) often, but today we take a moment to truly and graciously thank them. It is the activists of the past that have given us a liveable present, and who provide the foundations for our continuing fight to smash the kyriarchy.

Indigenous Officers' Report

Georgia Mantle

Is it possible for a country founded on racism to ever move past its history to accept not only this country's Indigenous people but people of every race?

Last week on my facebook Newsfeed Amnesty International Australia posted the iconic image of Gough Whitlam as he poured a handful of Daguragu soil into the hand of Gurindji elder Vincent Lingiari as a symbol of the land being returned to the Gurindji people. As I looked at this powerful image for a fleeting moment, I was empowered by this historical step in the Land Rights movement, however this feeling left as quickly as it came when I realised that not much has been done since then. Land rights are still a fundamental issue for Indigenous people as we fight for the right to something that was taken away

from us. This is most clearly seen down at The Block in Redfern where Auntie Jenny and the whole mob down there are facing eviction from their land as they demand the basic human right of affordable housing. It seems that in the face of 'progress' and development human rights get left behind while racism prevails.

Human rights seems to be all but forgotten in the Northern Territory as the NT Intervention continues with little protest from the wider Australian community. The Australian government have restricted individuals rights and freedoms but have done so purely based on race. The measures introduced within the Northern Territory communities only apply to Aboriginal people, this discrimination and stigmatisation of the Indigenous people

has caused the United Nations to openly condemn the Australian government actions, yet still nothing has been done. With little to no improvement in education and literacy rates within these communities it seems that even the so called 'positive' aims of the Intervention haven't been made, so why are they still there?

The Paternalistic approach to indigenous issues has prevailed since colonisation and reinforces the idea that we are not able to help our self. That some how we are different from non-indigenous Australians and that we need the government. This idea is rooted in racism that allows the government to exercise control over the Indigenous population under the guise of helping.

In looking at the issues Indigenous people face today has there really been progress? Yes we are now counted as citizens, a momentous step in the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people but citizens of what? A country that still vilifies a whole race? A country that still refuses to accept the true history of colonisation? A country that counties to break international human rights laws? Has anything really changed? Are we not still the victims of extreme discrimination and prejudice in our own country? Until Australian truly addresses the history of colonisation and its past and current treatment of this country's Indigenous people we will always be living in a racist country.

Queer Officers' Report

Joshuan Han

Hilary Clinton once said that "being gay is not a western invention." In many ways, she is wrong. Western society establishes heteronormative social relations, so that "being gay" (or lesbian, bi, pan, trans*, non-binary for that matter) has to be labelled and marked, to indicate that our identities fall outside of socially constructed norms. There are many non-western cultures that

recognise and celebrate sexual and gender diversity in ways that western society does not, however western cultural hegemony white-washes this, with the extreme cases of this hegemony being in the form of colonisation. This is certainly the case in this country, as non-binary gender identities are a norm in many Indigenous cultures of Australia. Decolonisation of concepts of gender and sexuality is crucial if

we are to have queer liberation, with this in mind, the Queer Action Collective strives to be intersectional. Although my own experiences as a queer person of colour in queer activist groups (including this one) as well as those of other queer people of colour have often found that these spaces are white dominated and erase our experiences, we are all learning to be more respectful of other voices and aware of the diversity of

experiences that we bring together. This is a difficult yet empowering process, as we are all socialised to be racist, sexist, ablist and queerphobic.

International Officers' Report

He Lu

Hi, I am He Lu, the International Student Representative in Student Representative Council (SRC) of the University of Sydney. This is the first report I made for this new semester. Semester 2, 2015 (July) will be the second semester we work as International Student Representatives in SRC.

Last semester, International Student Office created an event for international

students and local students as a welcome party for the new semester. Free drinks and foods were provided at the time. New ideas and questions were shared during the meeting. We also made the language exchange sessions. Additionally, problems about International students' visa were talked with councilor inside SRC and Honi Soit. Working visa and jobs will still be our focus this semester.

In this semester, welcome party has been

considered to be held for sharing problems and gathering advice. Language exchange programs are still welcoming all students who are interested in. Also, connection has been made between International Student Office of Sydney University and the councilors in UTS. More events have been planned in order to work united. More events and information should be released during this semester. We strongly hope more students can give us more feedback

or any idea you would like to share. The collectives of International Student Office would always like to help you with the problems and also welcome any of your idea. Please do not hesitate to email international.officers@src.usyd.edu.au, if you have any concerns of your university life.



Ask Abe

SRC Caseworker HELP Q&A

Abe,

I am very confused about what the census date is. This is my first semester. Do I need to do anything or is it all automatic.

Cen-suss.

Dear Cen-suss,

The census date is always the 31th August for semester two (31th March for semester one). It means that whatever you are officially enrolled in on that day, you will be billed for. This is for local students with HECS or for international students. The census date is approaching now, so look carefully at all of your Units and make sure that you are happy to be doing the ones you are enrolled in.

Remember: if you are receiving Youth Allowance or Austudy you will need to maintain a minimum full time load, which is 18 credit points or more. If you have a "temporary incapacity" such as illness or a longer term disability that prevents you from studying full time then talk to SRC Help to see if you can get Centrelink on a lighter study load.

Abe

Abe is the SRC's welfare dog. This column offers students the opportunity to ask questions on anything. This can be as personal as a question on a Centrelink payment or as general as the state of the world. Send your questions to help@src.usyd.edu.au Abe's answers can provide you excellent insight.

DID YOU KNOW?

Withdrawing from a subject before 31st March SEM 1 August SEM 2 avoids a FAIL on your transcript & HECS*

**International students should seek advice about their fees from the International Office or the SRC.*

Need help or advice? Your SRC is here to assist you.

The service is FREE, independent and confidential. Phone for an appointment: (02) 9660 5222

We are located at: Level 1, Wentworth Building (G01)

help@src.usyd.edu.au | src.usyd.edu.au | facebook.com/src/help





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It is not altered, edited, or changed in any way by the Honi editors.



Student Organisations and Student Advocacy Services

Adrian Cardinali, Student Advice and Advocacy Coordinator

The purpose of this article is to introduce a series of articles on stigmatized or under-discussed issues affecting postgraduate students. The series is going to be written by staff from the Advocacy and Legal Services of SUPRA, as one part of our commitment to delivering multidisciplinary professional services appropriate for an independent student organisation. In order to properly get to the rationale and general outline for the series, I detour through two related claims about the multidisciplinary model of service introduced by Hayley Stone last week. The first is that the character of our services can be best understood with reference to the evolution of the student movement and student organisations. The second is that our multidisciplinary model of practice is well suited to the generalised nature of what it is like to be a postgraduate student right now.

In relation to my first claim, insofar as student organisations are the institutional embodiment of the student movement, understanding their character should help to make sense of the nature of the services we provide. Such organisations may at various times be more or less progressive or conservative, or may be felt to be anathema to the spirit of the contemporary student movement or else its living and breathing manifestation. Whatever the case for any particular organisation or organisations and at any particular time, there is a certain centre of gravity or touchstone to which they often relate. Generally that centre of gravity goes back to the emergence of the modern student movement in the 1960s. One prominent way of understanding the nature of that movement is as a more or less self-conscious though decentralised and global refusal of hierarchy. This particular vein of thought arises in all manner of writings, though Herbert Marcuse's work on liberation is arguably the most influential in contexts such as the United States, and mushrooming from there it has been influential across the world.

What makes Marcuse's insight particularly helpful is that it explains the kinds of issues the student movement was interested in and catalysed its growth. Marcuse's own work emphasised the role of the Vietnam war in removing faith and hope in American capitalist

democracy and radicalising students around the world against imperialism, racism and hierarchy in all its various forms. He conceptualised the student response as the expression of a kind of innate impulse for freedom. In the 1980s George Katsiaficas released the first history of the student movement from this global Marcuse inspired perspective. He emphasises the way in which the student movement was a genuinely global force. Of particular interest in his work is the account of extraordinary bravery of students in their protests right throughout the then first, second and third worlds. In the end Marcuse and Katsiaficas convincingly argue that the student movement was strongly and characteristically marked by refusal of hierarchy and desire for freedom from the strictures of both American capitalist democracy and Soviet style socialism.

Interesting from today's perspective is that the emergence of the student movement was during a time of early massification of higher education. Somewhat similar to today, increased enrolments were to deliver economic benefits as industrial societies shifted towards post-industrial economies. It was not anticipated by capital that students would rebel against their presumed role as technocrats and administrators of decentralised and global production. What is arguably different now, is that immaterial labour of the kind University students are trained and skilled up to do, has become ubiquitously required right throughout material and immaterial production processes. At times it seems like one needs a masters degree to get more or less basic entry level jobs. We have gone through well over a decade of accelerated and renewed massification of higher education driven partly by this context.

All of the above leads me to a discussion of my second claim about the suitability of our model of multidisciplinary practice for postgraduate students. I can't make good on that claim without a generalised comment on the nature of postgraduate study. And here I want to say that if there was any general student type that embodied all of the pressures and complexities and ambiguities of the new student situation, then then I believe it would be the postgraduate student. Using the University of Sydney as a case study there are presently over 19,000 postgraduate students, with approximately

4600 of those being research students and the rest enrolled in coursework degrees. There has been a dizzying proliferation of postgraduate coursework programs over the period under consideration. The 2016 edition of the University's Postgraduate Program Guide tells us that there are more than 450 courses on offer at postgraduate level. The vast bulk of those are coursework. For comparison consider that the strategic planning process underway internal to the University wants to leave postgraduate offerings untouched, and reduce undergraduate degrees to about 20 courses. Implied in there being so many postgraduate course offerings is that the spectrum of demands on immaterial labourers has broadened in our more globalised information age. Within degree programs that can all translate into intense demands and self-expectations on postgraduate shoulders.

As grass roots evidence for the kind of intensity I hypothesise, I am struck by three experiences of the recent past. First is our self-experience of casework with postgraduates. I do advocacy casework as does the whole team of 5 advocacy staff I coordinate, as does our Legal Service solicitor. As a consensus generalisation across a large number of cases, we observe an internalised intensity of commitment to and need for postgraduate education that we don't quite see replicated at undergraduate level. In turn that plays a part in generating complicated and multifaceted cases that are intense and demanding for caseworkers. It seems to be intensifying year by year and that's likely to be reflected in an extraordinary jump in our 2015 statistics. Second and related was an excellent workshop given by one of my colleagues, Senior Student Advice and Advocacy Officer Margaret Kirkby, on the topic of "Does Postgraduate Study Make You Sick". Born out of a lifetime commitment to the student movement and having worked extensively with undergraduate and postgraduate students over the years, her working hypothesis was that this described intensity is having a substantial impact on the health and well-being of postgraduate students. The seminar was delivered last year and was part of a national conference of workers of student organisations. The observations offered by Margaret resonated strongly with the whole room.

The third and final thing that has focused my attention on postgraduates as a kind of embodied exemplar of the impacts of our digitised and globalised age, was a seminar I organised earlier this year from the NSW Ombudsman for student advocacy workers across NSW. Without prompting the staff member who came to see us asked to talk about handling of postgraduate student cases, and in particular he wanted to discuss the Ombudsman's independent observation that they were the most intense and involving and strongly felt. The NSW Ombudsman is looking to develop their own work approaches to better address postgraduate cases, as well as make recommendations to Universities over how they can do better. I will be talking to them again this week over our input on this topic. One of the things I will be saying is that the intensity they observe and that we see at much closer quarters, is manifested in a certain proliferation of the kinds of issues students need to address. In turn that does mean having teaching and support services in place that can adequately address those needs.

All of that brings us back to SUPRA's services and the reason for writing this series of articles. If we share an organisational genealogy that stretches back into the student movement of the last several decades, then we share a genealogy of refusal of the status quo. We share a genealogy of refusal of dominating hierarchies. Our postgraduate student members are a group that are literally living the intensity of the immaterial turn in production and all of the lived issues that come with it. In that context and in differing ways issues like violence and bullying on campus, the stigmatization of postgraduates who do sex work, and use of drugs and drug problems amongst students, all come up but find no resolution. These are just some of the topics we will write on this Semester. By writing about these issues we make a contribution to letting students know they are not alone in facing them. We also do our bit to make it that little bit easier to talk about them and challenge the prejudices and hierarchies that keep them in place. And that is very much in keeping with the spirit of the organisation we work for.

A Welcome to the Sydney Medical Obstetrics & Gynaecology Society

Trang Vo

The Sydney Medical Obstetrics & Gynaecology Society will be launching in the near future, here to promote all things women's health related. This society was established by medical students to educate and raise awareness of women's health issues and also to foster the interests of medical students towards this career path. Through this society, we aim to be the voice of women's health through policy and advocacy and also through giving back to the community. This will take the form of seminars and forums for the wider community to connect and to learn from each other and from health professionals.

Later this year, we are hoping to run a sexual health forum open to all SUPRA members. Research has shown that most university students do not have

an advanced sexual education level and often can rely on friends and the internet to inform them. We encourage as many people as possible to attend and learn about sexually transmitted diseases, different types of contraception etc. This forum will be interactive and we encourage audience members to get involved and ask the speakers questions. This event is pertinent to everyone, regardless of faculty, as there is knowledge that every person can gain that can affect their lives and their community.

We are also hoping to run an event on reproduction & infertility with age to education postgraduate women about their fertility going into their future. There are a lot of misconceptions regarding the ability to have children later in life, as this becomes increasingly difficult with age. This session aims to inform postgraduate

women and men so that they can make the best decisions regarding the timing of starting a family, whilst balancing their careers.

While issue of women's health concerns us all on an individual and communal level, it is also something that, from a global perspective, is in dire need of our attention. One of the most prominent issues that come to mind is the inequalities and inequities that exist between the developed and developing countries, with regard to maternal and infant mortality rates. Interest and awareness of these matters is something that is reasonable to expect from postgraduate students, as a sense of social responsibility will be demanded by future employers regardless of the fields in which we'll work.

As a medical student, my initial hopes with regard to starting this society were geared around finding ways to break down the barrier between doctors and students, on issues pertaining to women's health. It quickly became apparent, however, that issues of women's health are wide-spanning and pertinent to us all. Our society hopes to bring the postgraduate community together, regardless of educational backgrounds, to stimulate discussion and find common ground on issues that affect the women in our lives and the women of the world.

Look out for our soon to be up and running Facebook page, where you can find the details of our future events.

TPP: Perfecting trade in an imperfect system?

Michael Player

The United States is only a few months away from reaching agreement on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) according to diplomat, Kurt Tong. At a recent United States Studies Centre (USSC) lecture, Tong, who has been an economic affairs diplomat for the US State Department since 1990, said 30 chapters of the historic regional trade pact had been basically finalised, with the remaining wrangling over market access to be resolved between trade ministers.

The controversial trade agreement, which stalled at the latest round of talks held in Hawaii, has divided opinion. If successful, the TPP will more closely integrate and align 12 Asia Pacific economies that account for 40 per cent of global gross domestic product and generate productivity gains in supply chains across the region. The principal objective according to Tong is to create a "common set of rules and practices" to govern labour and environmental standards, investor protections and market access enabling "faster, more inclusive growth".

For those opposed to the trade pact, the most troubling feature is the Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) provision. Basically, the ISDS provision provides

foreign investors access to international arbitration in cases where they believe the host country has taken actions that breach the State's investment obligations. The frequent line of attack is that the right to compensation threatens national governance and weakens the State's ability to regulate or legislate decisions in the public interest. Australia's Trade Minister, Andrew Robb, has roundly dismissed the claim, but ISDS does raise some interesting questions about the balance of investor and State rights.

In defending the provision, Tong argues IDIS has been "egregiously mischaracterised" in media coverage, highlighting that historically international tribunals have only been used in cases where a State has expropriated investor property. He points out that the ISDS provision in the TPP is narrowly designed to ensure corporations cannot sue States over appropriate actions that protect the public interest and that if such cases were brought to an international tribunal they would be thrown out in the first order.

The investment obligations under the TPP also extend multinationals the right to freely move capital relating to their investments. This commitment exemplifies

the shift to a market state order in an era where economic activity has become detached from national boundaries and hyper-mobile capital is the norm. There is a much more legitimate concern of curtailment of state power here, as the commitment may severely limit the ability of Australia and other member nations to impose capital controls and protectionist industry policies in times of economic crisis.

For now, the focus of President Obama will be on passing the trade deal through Congress before the 2016 presidential race stymies the legislative agenda. But for Tong the longer-term strategy of US economic engagement in the region is just as immediate. Like many in the State Department, Tong recognises the challenge the rise of developing economies in the Asia Pacific present to the establishment of regional trade rules and practices.

As an extension of foreign policy, Tong argues the TPP is not about containing the rise of China or any one nation. With the Doha Development Round stalled, the United States is left to pursue regional trade agreements to institute "fair and transparent arrangements" before

the opportunity for broad cooperation is missed. Read – before China dictates its own regional terms that sit in opposition to the US.

In this regard, the TPP is less about levelling the playing field and more about a shift in the strategic posture of the US as an enduring Pacific power. This view is given further credence when you consider that the proliferation of preferential bilateral and regional trading agreements is actually creating a 'patchwork' of different rules that compete with rather than complement the WTO's multilateral regime.

Given there is no effective international mechanism to harmonise national institutional differences the broader effect is to entrench an asymmetry in trading relations. This unfairly penalises developing economies like Malaysia and Vietnam and strengthens the position of more developed economies like Australia and the United States. While Tong acknowledges the risk of a fragmented trading system, he sees no other alternative to perfect trading relations in an otherwise imperfect system.



Earth's Sun Finally Admits It's Racist Against White People

Naaman Zhou defeats all spellchecks

In a move that has stunned astronomers, the Earth's Sun, a thermonuclear star measuring 1.4 million kilometres in diameter, has declared in a press conference that it considers itself proof of the controversial concept of "reverse racism".

The Sun, best known for its constant provision of heat and light, fiery demeanor and pivotal role in the 1996 Bond film *The World Is Not Enough*, spoke to an attentive audience, breaking its silence of millions of years.

"I've got a pretty good view from up here", it said, "and I've seen a lot of white folks copping a raw deal. I feel it's time to speak up."

"Sure, I've seen years of imperialism and decades of history and heaps of videos of abuse on public transport. But I've read a lot of interesting stuff on the internet and I've realised that small slights to a person's feelings are the same as like, legit murder right?"

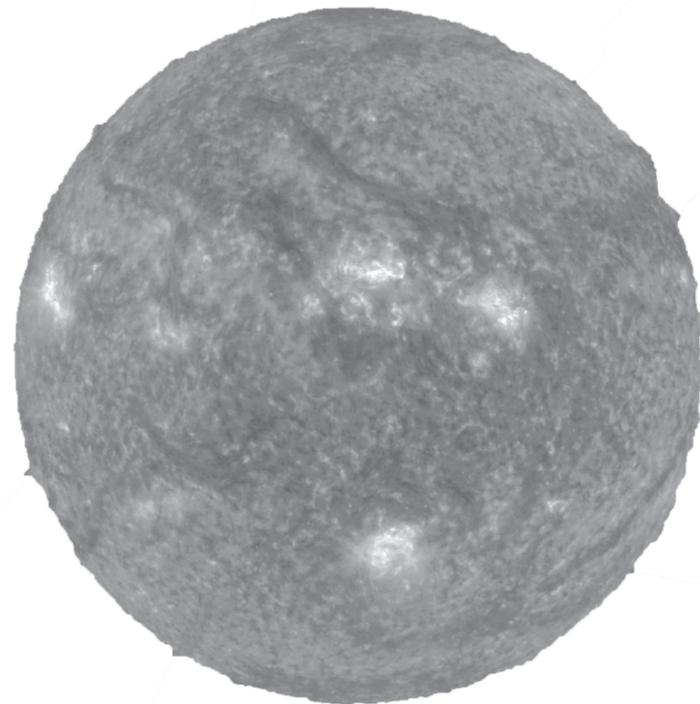
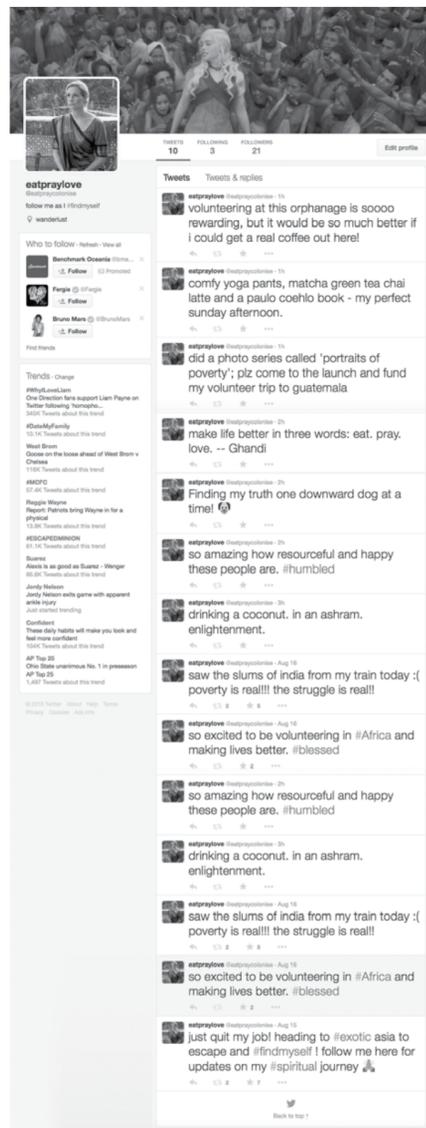
"People of colour struggle with casual racism, but white people experience guilt and have to be more careful when re-applying sunscreen. We all have our crosses to bear."

When questioned on its views, the Sun reacted belligerently, asking why there wasn't a 'White History Month' and repeatedly using the phrase "ANZAC

legend" to justify its points.

"Oh I'm not a racist," the star said. "Some of the closest planets that orbit within my gravitational sphere of influence are black, or at least appear that way to the human eye under certain ultraviolet spectrums."

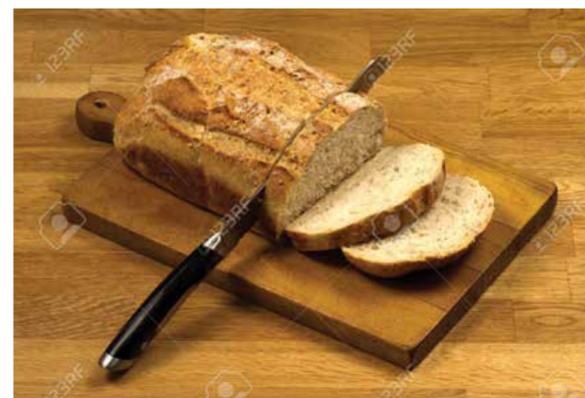
"At the end of the day, the only reason I'm telling you #AllLivesMatter is because I'm just a roiling ball powered by miniature explosions, sending cancerous rays down on you all. Unless you are a plant I will fuck you up."



10 Make-up essentials for that timeless white privilege look



Congratulations, You've Got An All-White Panel!



Dear Dr. Spence,

We write to express our grave concern regarding some of your comments at the Academic Board meeting on the 19th of August, 2015. In a robust debate regarding the continued survival of simple extensions in University policy, you, intentionally or otherwise, cast aspersions upon the sincerity and integrity of students requesting simple extensions due to adverse circumstances. Your pejorative tone, and the remark that simple extensions would go to they 'who [are] the best actor' betray considerable disrespect and contempt for the entire student population. To make matters worse, you did so in the name of fairness.

Is it fair that a student who is too ill to leave the house to secure a doctor's certificate be denied just a couple of extra days to polish off the final proofread of a major assignment when their head cold has cleared? Is it fair that a student, gripped by the darkest hour of a depressive episode, is unable to cover the cost of \$20 for an already subsidised appointment with a psychiatrist, and the \$5 to get to the clinic, and thus unable to secure a certificate? Is it acting when a student requires an extra day to recover emotional stability to fill out the conclusion of an essay after hearing a family member or partner has been diagnosed with life threatening illness? Is it falsehood that a student may request an extra weekend on an assignment while they fulfil the traditions of mourning when a relative passes away?

Further, your sarcastic comment that a lecturer would offer a student simple extension to a student based upon the 'colour of their jumper' betrays the lack of faith in your staff members to make prudential, ethical judgements concerning the needs of students and their circumstances. It also speaks of manner in which you regard students as little more than liars and children who do not take their studies seriously and are unable to make mature decisions about their academic progress. It is, frankly, an open handed insult that must not be countenanced.

That you would cast aspersions upon the entire student body, disregarding any possibility of adverse circumstance to which one would require only a handful of days to adjust, and upon the capacity of your staff to make sound, reasonable judgements free of favouritism, is disgraceful. This sentiment is unbecoming of one in the position of Vice-Chancellor. To have heard you imply such a sentiment fills us with both dismay and disgust.

You are hereby offered the opportunity to apologise for these remarks by 5:00pm on Friday the 21st of August. This letter shall be published in *Honi Soit* the following Monday, with or without your response.

Yours sincerely,

SUPRA Presidents
Christian Jones
& Kylee Hartman-Warren

SUPRA Vice-President
Thomas Greenwell

SRC President
Kyol Blakeney

Dear Mr Jones, Ms K Hartman-Warren, Mr T Greenwell and Mr K Blakeney,

Thank you for your letter, delivered by hand yesterday, regarding the Academic Board meeting on 19 August. It is sobering to read your interpretation of my remarks, which were not intended to cause offence. Rather, I was trying to emphasise the gross unfairness of the current practice of informal applications for special consideration.

I am concerned that the uncertainty and variable nature of the current process for granting extensions across the University is not equitable or transparent. I have received advice on this issue from many quarters, including directly from students who have expressed concern that practices vary so widely (from no extensions are allowed as a matter of principle, with a mark of zero for any minute over the due time, to sometimes many weeks extension for no documented reason, and with no penalty applied).

The current informal process is dependent on the faculty in which the student is enrolled; the size of the cohort of students; the individual tutor's views on the granting of informal extensions; and the student's own level of confidence in asking for an extension. It unfairly privileges the confident students. I passionately believe that this inequitable system lacking certainty for students should not continue.

That said, I understand the concern in your letter and the value of simple extensions. This is why I proposed in the Board debate that all students should have a normal grace period of a few days that they could claim without documentation beyond the online form. This would mirror the practice of most employers in requiring a medical certificate for illnesses of say, three days duration, but no less. Unfortunately, the Board did not take up my proposal and I am told that it would be unlikely to be popular with academic staff who stress the importance of meeting deadlines.

As you are aware, following the discussion, the Academic Board adopted the new policy. The chair of the Academic Board, Associate Professor Peter McCallum has agreed to meet with each of you to discuss any concerns.

I apologise for causing any concerns through my tone or demeanour at this meaning. It was unintended.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Spence