

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY AUTONOMOUS COLLECTIVE AGAINST RACISM PRESENTS:

ACAR HONI

WEEK 6, SEMESTER 2, 2020



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PAY THE RENT

Grandmothers Against Removals (GMAR) was started in 2014 by First Nations community members who are directly affected by forced child removals. They are a community group that works to stop the ongoing Stolen Generations.

Please donate to help them continue their work!

Grandmothers Against Removals
BSB: 082-628
ACCOUNT NO: 53-662-9528

EDITORIAL

Ahoy! Thank you for picking up (or clicking on) this edition of Honi, the annual edition put together by the Autonomous Collective Against Racism. We'd like to thank our writers and artists for their amazing work, as well as the tireless efforts of our editorial collective.

This year has been one wrought by difficulty and disaster - the COVID pandemic has pushed our society to its very limits, and those limits are starting to tear. If one looks hard enough through these cracks, other worlds, better worlds, may be found, created, dreamed of. These dreams loosely characterise our edition, as reflections on the past, meditations of the present, and hopes for the future are explored.

On the side of material reality however, course and job cuts threaten the very reproduction and longevity of tertiary education - classes on colonialism and the history of racism are not exempt from the government and university's relentless attacks. Simultaneously, as the ice of quarantine unthaws, one reason to don facemasks is replaced by another. The fire season approaches and we are once again reminded of the disregard for the impending climate catastrophe, destruction of sacred land, and of environmental action and justice. Finally, it is our imperative to not let the voices of those who carried the torches of anti-racism & anti-imperialism be drowned out by media cycles, the spirits of struggle and revolution must live on. One thing becomes quite clear - it is not enough to merely dream, we must fight in the present to live up to the past and as Thomas Sankara once said, "invent the future."

In solidarity, love, fury, & relentless hope,
Altay, Anie, Kedar and Kowther
ACAR Convenors 2020

WHAT IS ACAR?

ACAR is an autonomous space open to current University of Sydney students who identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, or who come from a minority ethnocultural background, or who are marked or marginalised by white supremacy, or who identify as a 'person of colour'. We are staunchly anti-racist, anti-colonial, and anti-capitalist in all our work.

This, however, does not exclude white people from getting involved with our work, as we actively encourage those who benefit from white supremacy to help out with our campaigns and events. In the spirit of intersectionality, many of these will be run collaboratively with other identity-based collectives. If you are hesitant or unsure about these terms, please feel free to contact one of the current ACAR convenors.

In 2020, we will be organising around issues on and off campus, including Indigenous justice, refugee rights, international students' issues, international solidarity actions (e.g. Palestinian liberation) and any other anti-racist activities.

You can find us online at:
Email: ethnocultural.officers@src.usyd.edu.au
Facebook page: [facebook.com/usedacar/](https://www.facebook.com/usedacar/)
Facebook group: [tinyurl.com/acargroup](https://www.facebook.com/acargroup/)
Instagram page: [instagram.com/usedacar](https://www.instagram.com/usedacar/)
Twitter page: twitter.com/acarusyd

COVER ARTIST RATIONALE

My vision for this piece is inspired by women of colour radiating power, grace and beauty in divine realms. I wanted to showcase a utopic space of their own making, something that is not grounded in this reality but rather dreamt up by them, a symbolic envisioning of a better world. It is a space that feels light and ethereal, as though floating on clouds, where women of colour can express their divine selves freely without fear of oppression or constraints. Vibrant colours and natural imagery are elements I strongly incorporated as part of this concept of the 'divine'. I wanted to communicate that the flourishing of nature is an inextricable part of this ideal, in stark contrast to its deterioration under our current neoliberal capitalist climate. Above all, I desired for it to represent women of colour reclaiming the 'divine' by being in this world of mystique, resistance and hope. Hope for structural dismantlement and hope for a land in which to dream in.

- Emma Pham

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The University of Sydney Autonomous Collective Against Racism meets and organises on the sovereign land of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. This land was never ceded, bought, or sold.

The creation of this autonomous edition, the meetings of the Autonomous Collective Against Racism, and our learning as students, all take place on stolen land. We acknowledge First Nations sovereignty across the continent, and stand in solidarity with dispossessed First Nations peoples.

Invasion has never been a single event. It remains a structure.

Since the arrival of white colonisers in 1788, Aboriginal peoples in this country have been subject to dispossession, cultural extermination, and genocide. Beginning with the Frontier Wars, white Australia has always considered the existence and survival of Aboriginal people to be a threat to the emergent settler colony. The Stolen Generation and other attempts to extinguish Aboriginality are a testament to this fact.

Since the Royal Commission into Indigenous Deaths in Custody in 1991, there have been almost 450 Indigenous deaths in custody, with not a single one of their murderers held accountable. Indigenous people continue to be one of the most highly incarcerated peoples in the world; as of 2016, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people made up 27% of incarcerated people in Australia, despite constituting just 2% of the total population.

This year, we saw demonstrations across the world in support of the Black Lives Matter movement, spurred by the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, and Australia was no different; Indigenous peoples across the land mourned the countless deaths of Indigenous people in custody and at the hands of police officers.

There is a reason there are such stark similarities between the treatment of Black and Indigenous peoples across borders - these settler-colonial systems are built on a foundation of forced occupation and violent genocide. Police in so-called America originate from slave patrols of the south in the early 1700s that crushed revolts led by enslaved people, whilst police in so-called Australia originate from a similar force used to keep First Nations people under colonial control in the late 1700s. These institutions of law enforcement, as they stand now, only serve to actively uphold and exacerbate the deeply unjust conditions of the exact marginalised peoples that they were created to subjugate. Black and Indigenous peoples continue to be re-traumatised by racial injustices and continual violence in their communities, while the state protects the perpetrators.

Police brutality and state violence is not an insular event, but a result of a system aimed to actively fragment Indigenous and Black communities in order to keep its power and dampen the voices of dissent, and that dismantling of these systems must be done by any means necessary. We cannot sit idly by while these injustices happen, nor can we rely on the government to hold themselves accountable - this is why we fight for justice.

This year marks 250 years of continuous resistance by Indigenous peoples against colonial violence on their land. This is a fight that is ongoing to this day, not a relic of the past; settler-colonial violence is central to every aspect of so-called Australia. Rates of Indigenous deaths in custody are exceptionally, horrifyingly high. Sacred Indigenous land continues to be exploited by colonisers for its natural resources; forced adoptions never ended; Indigenous families continue to be torn apart by the system at an ever-increasing rate, with First Nations youth making up almost 40% of those in the out-of-home care system. First Nations communities are being hit the hardest by COVID-19, and resources are scarce. A new Stolen Generation is currently being perpetuated under the guise of child protection only twelve years after the Apology.

The ongoing effects of colonialism manifest in the day-to-day realities of lower life expectancy, higher rates of homelessness and disproportionate rates of incarceration for Aboriginal people.

By participating and benefiting from the institutions built on stolen land, all of us share some degree of complicity in colonialism.

But as people of color, our relationship to this colonial apparatus is not so straightforward. Colonial violence has set the stage for the virulent xenophobia, racism and Islamophobia that threatens our safety in this country. At an international level, it is the same European colonizers that displace Aboriginal people who systematically underdeveloped our homelands, forcing us to migrate in search of "better opportunities". Anti-colonial struggles around the world are interconnected and we stand in solidarity with all people who fight for their liberation and self-determination.

We pay respects to Indigenous elders past, present and emerging. As writers, artists and students, we acknowledge that Indigenous knowledge, art and culture has existed on this land or tens of thousands of years. As editors, we acknowledge that our contributions are not enough to compensate for the lack of Aboriginal voices in student activism and in this university more generally. As a collective, we recognise that true anti-racist activism must firstly be anti-colonial. Thus we end by recognizing:

*Always was
Always will be
Aboriginal land.*

POLICE POWERS AND PROTEST

Ranuka Tandan interrogates the changing use of police powers under the pandemic

Police repression of protests has escalated in Sydney in recent months, an intersection of tactical and ideological factors making way for a heavy-handed response that has been largely unchallenged by the public. This lack of public backlash against repressive police behaviours has been disappointing but unsurprising. The police force is itself a racist institution, one that exists in Australia to protect colonial peace and capitalist prosperity, two constructs which the vast majority of Australians believe are deserving of that protection.

Following the hugely successful Black Lives Matter (BLM) rally in Town Hall on the 6th of June, which saw tens of thousands of protestors turn to the streets despite New South Wales Police taking the matter to the Supreme Court, other events in solidarity with Indigenous deaths in custody were organised to capture the momentum of the movement.

Police at this first large scale protest coming out of Sydney's lockdown were simply outnumbered by the sheer mass of people in attendance. Once the gathering was authorised by the Court of Appeal, they could only stand by as marshals. As though scorned by their loss of power and lack of control, their tactics evolved dramatically and immediately after this. Police have since made less effort to hide the intentions behind their actively racist tactics. This wasn't unknown before, but should be given more spotlight considering not only the absurdity, but the danger of tactics such as bringing out sound cannons, and galloping horses to intimidate activists, which have been used at recent protests.

The 12th of June BLM protest saw over 600 police, including riot squads, mounted officers and vans filled with police dogs ready to shut down the action. This heavy handed approach was justified as being necessary for 'public health' in order to win favour from the media and broader public, despite the hypocrisy of their own lack of distancing from each other and from protestors.

By the time the David Dungay Jnr and BLM protest came around on the 28th of July, police were interpreting the Public Health Act differently. 20 person groups were no longer allowed within larger gatherings, even if those groups weren't interacting in a way that could lead to the transmission of the coronavirus. It became ideological; it allowed police to break up actions which had multiple groups of less than 20 people if they were there with a 'common purpose'. This new interpretation of the Public Health Act was handed down to police by New South Wales Police Commander Mick Fuller, specifically in order to break up the BLM rally on the 28th of July. In turn, protests that have had an active anti-police stance such as the BLM protests have been targeted more heavily.

Activist Padraic Gibson helped the family of David Dungay Jnr organise this action, which was the first at which protestors received fines for breaching the Public Health Order. "The persecution of Black Lives Matter protestors is very closely bound to the

persecution of Aboriginal people," Gibson told Honi. When it became clear that the police were going to shut down the protest in the Domain, there was a large focus on making sure that the Dungay family and other Indigenous protestors weren't targeted or arrested.

"It was quite deliberate, the way we approached the police in the Domain. [There was] a determination on the part of the protest organisation that we didn't want members of the Dungay family arrested. I think that they would have quite liked to grab Paul Silva, David's nephew, who is quite outspoken, but he left the scene very quickly, as soon as the police attitude became obvious. They have given him an enormous amount of harassment travelling to and from demonstrations."

"All left wing protests are now being policed with that very heavy handed interpretation, that it needs to be said, hasn't yet been tested by a court. So that is the interpretation now of senior police command, and it means effectively a ban on any political demonstrations in Sydney," said Gibson.



Art by Sonya Thai

The way in which protests have been reported on in the mainstream media has additionally had significant impact on the power which police have gained. The widespread misinformation traced back to the Police Commissioner, but disseminated widely and uncritically by the media, that BLM rallies in Melbourne were responsible for the second wave of coronavirus was immeasurably damaging. It cut off tens of thousands of people who were interested in fighting against Indigenous deaths in custody and institutionalised racism from a movement that needs mass power now. It also justified, to some sections of the wider population, any amount of police repression, arrests or fines. This argument, while delusional, was easier to make when funeral numbers were still below 20, but is waning now.

Activist Seth Dias believes that "the media interest has definitely resulted in the extra police powers we are seeing at the moment." The amount of media

attention and the number of people who turn up to protests are also important factors in the way police approach the situation. In order to avoid criticisms from the wider public, the police have held back from repressing large actions, as these gain significant attention. However, it's become very clear that they have no qualms with going hard at actions which are organised and carried out by students. At the University of Sydney Women's Collective National Day of Action rally against fee hikes and job cuts on the 23rd of September, police command were heard saying "get every last one of them, don't let any of them get away." 21 students were fined.

In the past two weeks, the mainstream (non-Murdoch) media has become more sympathetic in their reporting on student protests. "I never think it's the media that won that for us, though it is a tool that helps us reach others," said activist Dashie Prasad. "It's been activists continuing to fight and point out absurdities in the law that has brought some journalists on side."

In response, the tactics of protestors are evolving in order to outsmart police in novel ways. Decentralised actions with different purposes are allowed to go ahead, which can be used to our advantage. Having a large number of protest contingents meet at separate locations and then join together to march with mass numbers is becoming both more popular and successful. Police shutdowns of this nature are far less justifiable, and mainstream media have become more sympathetic to protests in turn.

There is a clear racial element to this police repression. Dias told me that this has a lot to do with the fact that there was "a perceived threat of violence due to the instances of rioting seen in the USA following the murder of George Floyd" from the start which has been spurred on by racist narratives in the mainstream media. Notably, one of the most obviously racist tactics is the change to the 20 person rule made specifically to target the BLM rallies. Prasad, when being fined at the education protest on the 23rd of September, was asked if their 'stop black deaths in custody' shirt was the reason they were at the protest. Project Odin letters – which single out individuals as being on a watchlist, and tell them that they will be fined or arrested if they're seen at another protest – have been sent to activists who have attended BLM rallies, to make them feel watched and in turn, scare them out of future attendance.

The 28th of July was a turning point in the police repression of protest, and the new interpretation of the 20 person rule was a specific attack on the rally organised by David Dungay Jnr's family to bring attention to his case. The way policing protests has evolved over the past few months has been actively racist, but we can't let it deter us. Rather, it is more important now than ever to be pushing back against police repression of protest, to be supporting Indigenous rights movements, and to be coming up with new tactics that undermine police authority.

Watch This Space: Spectacle and Speed on the Internet

Amelia Mertha reckons with the digital sublime.

From Me to Everyone:

Spectacle is a necessary condition for white supremacy. When it does not manifest in covert forms, white supremacy is the most emphatic and twisted stage show of all. As Ashlee Marie Preston writes, "the consumption of Black pain is as American as apple pie... sharing images of Black death on social media won't save Black lives". Various US news reports of George Floyd's arrest and murder in Minneapolis are archived on Youtube, ranging from 100 thousand to over 2 million views. With traditional television news subsumed into social media practices (and vice versa), footage of Floyd's murder was inevitably threaded globally into millions of feeds, including my own. This happened immediately, alongside the massive uptick of Black Lives Matter and "allyship" social media posts by non-Black people. But anti-racism does not require the reproduction of Black trauma. This especially includes visual reproductions. Henry Giroux describes this as "the neoliberal dystopian dream machine" where "war, violence, and politics have taken on a new disturbing form of urgency within image-based cultures". [2/5]

To: Everyone

Type message here...

From Me to Everyone:

Zoom Group Chat

From Me to Everyone:

After the Beirut explosion in August, my friend L made an Instagram story observing how grief and trauma in marginalised communities and developing nations lasts far longer—generations, even—than the support and attention that is often paid by the "Global North". I believe we cannot always bear the blame of our own ignorance but L's post resonated with me, especially in the context of social media and how we try to use it to craft a tool for caring and community.

I was reminded of Rob Dixon's idea of "slow violence", which I described in an *Honi* article last year as the normalisation of incremental violence and trauma in the absence of immediate horror and critical shock value that usually compels sympathy and brief action. Dixon writes within the context of environmental and climate catastrophe but race and technology are inextricably linked here, too. Without an immediate object of spectacle, the attention paid on social and public media is selective and often quite niche. [1/5]

To: Everyone

Type message here...

Zoom Group Chat

From Me to Everyone:

4:09 pm

According to Lisa Nakamura, the "digital sublime" is created when "technologies [are] mythologised as both convenient and infallible". We expect the infrastructure of the internet to be perfect — or at least optimised. When our initial reactions to seeing harm and violence on the internet are negative, the digital sublime is the way this expectation spurs us towards neutralisation and normalisation, towards feeling better about the questionable ways we as a society use technology. In Franny Choi's poem "Catastrophe is Next to Godliness", she confesses "I want the clarity of catastrophe but not the catastrophe. / Like Everyone else, I want a storm I can dance in, / I want an excuse to change my life." The clarity but not the catastrophe itself. It is this want for incandescence and lucidity, in the face of chaos and collapse, that seems to linger a scroll or a tap away. And when the chase for clarity over a certain event or issue becomes irrelevant, so many just move speedily onto the next thing, abandoning our responsibility to those who encounter violence. This is not sustainable and it is not, for so many of us, survivable. [4/5]

To: Everyone

Type message here...

Zoom Group Chat

From Me to Everyone:

Social media mandates spectral power through the way it continues to favour instant reactions, gratification and "share"-ability. Here, Liat Berdugo explains that spectral is as in "spectrum" — the field of colour as wavelengths of visible light — but also "specter, or ghost — the haunting that so often occurs when conflicts are visually recorded, and when recordings of violence, death, and ordinary complicity can be replayed, recirculated, relived, republished, haunting us as they search for a reckoning". How can we hold space for those holding hurt and trauma if we render everything a spectacle? What does it mean to be a witness via the digital sphere? [3/5]

To: Everyone

Type message here...

Zoom Group Chat

From Me to Everyone:

Legacy Russell's cyberfeminist manifesto *Glitch Feminism* suggests that the glitch — the malfunction and mistiming of technology — "pushes back against the speed at which images of Black bodies and queer bodies are consumed online". The glitch is a spatial-temporal disruption that acts as an intermediary allowing for visions of joy and plenitude, beyond mere survival, to rush in. It rejects, in the words of Doreen Massey, the "internalisation of 'the system' that can potentially corrode our ability to imagine that things could be otherwise". Forming a feminism around this idea critically expands upon cyberfeminism and Black feminisms in the context of rejecting codes, rejecting binaries and interrogating visibility in society. Abolitionist in tone and practice, Russell says that the "broader goal of glitch feminism is to recognise that bodies not intended to survive and exist across these current systems are the ones that will push this world to its breaking point. And that's a good thing".

Recently, I've been trying to be more intentional with what I share online, reminding myself that because the border between online and offline is now beyond blurred, ongoing care for the people and communities I love is a process that now expands onto the internet. There is productivity, and then there is pause. Anti-racism requires both from us, urgently, but then again, do take your time. [5/5]

To: Everyone

Type message here...

why speaking the language doesn't mean speaking the language

Words by Ira Patole

It is no secret that Australian universities have a high number of international students. Education is, after all, Australia's third largest export. From the sheer number of USYD rants about us to the righteous Honi articles defending us, within your first few weeks of uni you can glean that our place in the USyd community is a hotly debated topic. I realise that this article is just adding one more to the mix, but I will still take this opportunity to discuss an issue that I haven't seen being talked about openly yet. But first, let's analyse the premise.

You can probably blame this high rate of emigration on global colonial history. Had the British not colonised most of the world, their language wouldn't have become lingua franca and most countries wouldn't have exclusively taught English in school as a second language. Had that not happened, students would probably have the freedom to study the language that caught their fancy, and when moving to study abroad would have distributed themselves among a wider array, rather than exclusively preferring English speaking countries.

Had the British not colonised most of the world, their language wouldn't have become lingua franca and most countries wouldn't have exclusively taught English in school as a second language.

I flew from my English-medium school to this country, with a blind hope that I would fit in with domestic students. This assumption, that emigrating to a country with a common language would be simple is misplaced. The first few weeks at uni taught me that speaking the language doesn't really mean speaking the language.

I learnt this the day when I made a joke that I would have in a similar situation back home, but no one laughed. I learnt this when I asked a question that would have made immediate sense back home, but my tutor stumbled for a few seconds until I rephrased it. I learnt this the day I emphasised the wrong part of the sentence when telling a story and encountered expectant faces instead of comprehending ones.

Another effect of colonialism is that my English speaking skills gave me clout back home. Being fluent in the white man's tongue was considered a serious skill and indicated my place near the top of the social chain.

English skills are intrinsically tied to class and status. Private schools tend to push English skills and the undertaking of an English board of education more than public schools do, and so, English proficiency is usually a sound indicator of affluence. The idea of being a 'global citizen' is intrinsically linked with how well one fits in countries which are populated by white people.

This positive association with English proficiency means that the move to an English speaking country was a potent culture shock for me, as I was no longer treated as a smart and capable person who could articulate herself well, but as someone who needed to be accommodated. Beyond just meeting people who avoided directing questions towards me in conversations, I encountered well-meaning white people who rephrased my words so that others could understand them. I was no longer seen as self-sufficient, I was seen as someone who needed help. When I talked, instead of encountering actively engaged faces, I encountered those dreadful encouraging smiles, telling me "Yes, go on, we are making the effort to understand you because we are good, welcoming people."

Suddenly finding myself at the bottom of the social chain because of the same language skills which had previously put me on top was the biggest shock. It was a betrayal. I was left feeling defenceless, because the one reliable weapon I had always had to express myself and my capabilities was the very thing that brought negative attention to me now. I used to freely participate in conversations to share my ideas, but now opening my mouth only advertised to everyone how different I was from them. I couldn't just slide into conversations anymore; my inputs were received as clunky and awkward and my presence changed the whole vibe.

I was thrown into a trench, so I tried to rationalise my way out of it. And I realised certain things.

The culture shock I was warned about was exactly what I was experiencing right now. And I was experiencing it through the one thing I thought would mitigate that shock. Language isn't separate from culture. Language is, in fact, a medium for culture.

How you speak is a direct reflection of who you grew up with. The cultural references you use aren't even the least of it. You may learn grammar and structure at school but the words you really use are something you learn from the people around you. You pick up the sentences they choose. You pick up the framing, modulation, emphasis, and intonation they use. You use the same accent. So even when it is the same language, it evolves in different ways from region to region and into remarkably different dialects. If you use the dialect as someone else, you both immediately understand each other. Anything different from what you're used to, and it takes you time and effort to parse it, even if that time is just a few seconds.

You may learn grammar and structure at school but the words you really use are something you learn from the people around you. You pick up the sentences they choose. You pick up the framing, modulation, emphasis, and intonation they use. You use the same accent.

This creates a subconscious exclusion, that is (mostly) not done on purpose. It is a simple matter of a person having an affinity for someone who is similar to them. People didn't choose to not get on with me. They just got on much faster with others who were like them.

This is not to say it's impossible to make friends. It's not. I eventually found people who naturally looked through all this. People with whom I connected on a different level, and became close with, where language was not a barrier.

But I should also keep in mind that it wasn't just them who improved my sense of belonging here. It was also me, and the months I spent getting comfortable with myself. It was all the conversations I had with myself to reaffirm my identity and better understand my position, not just in a new country, but also in life. It was me who learnt to parse my multiple identities in multiple languages and learnt to love and be proud of all of them.

It isn't easy, it takes multiple attempts, and is still sometimes overwhelming. But that was a risk I took when I uprooted myself for a new experience. And maybe there is something to be gained from that in itself.

The Most Wonderful Time

Owen Liu reflects on family history, and beauty in the face of struggle.

My father was no stranger to booze. It sounds pretty bad when I put it that way, but he was usually responsible about it. Most of the time, he listened to one of us before it got too much for him. My sister was usually the first to speak up. I can still see her at twelve in my head; her lips pursed and eyes dark, staring at my father. Then my mother would step in, whisking away the half-full shot glass as she wiped the table with thinly veiled disapproval.

I didn't say much. Partly because as the youngest sibling, my leverage wasn't great, but also because it was interesting hearing what he had to say.

"Alcohol is the great truth-teller," he would hiccup between sips of *baijiu*, "So don't get too drunk if you need to lie."

Some nights, if he'd had just the right amount to drink, and felt charitable, he would nudge the glass towards me. I was around seven years old the first time.

"Try it."

I raised the glass to my lips, only for the full force of the liquor to hit my nose first. My father laughed when he saw my shriveled expression and snatched the glass from me.

"Why do you even like it?" I asked, clamping two fingers over the bridge of my nose. "Just to get drunk?"

He chuckled. "The taste. It's very rich."

"No, it isn't!" I said, still recoiling.

He downed the remnants and smacked his lips.

"When you get older, you'll understand," he said. "Chi ku." Quite literally: swallow bitterness.

My father's drinking habits didn't align with what I'd heard from other people. For one, he seemed to actively avoid drinking around holidays, especially Christmas. When my mother offered him a drink, he'd flat out refuse.

I never asked him about it. He was fun to be around when slightly tipsy, but blackout drunk was a different story. I could count the times he'd been wasted on one hand, and I had no desire to fill another. Perhaps I'd have figured it all out then, if I'd just been more observant.

My mother and father worked weekends, selling wares at street markets. Work would often start before the sun had even risen. They would make their way through the showground parking lot, saying hi to some of the friendlier faces before arriving at the few small squares of dirty asphalt they rented. The back of the van would come up, and they would transform that empty space into a sea of tables and racks. It started out with just clothes, but as rent hiked and the wallets of customers tightened, business expanded. Anything from nail polish to hardware to cleaning products was fair game.

It was grueling, relentless work all year round. The showground's tin roof radiated waves of heat in summer, and retained the cold from icy winds during winter.

By the time I was ten, my parents had taught me how to sell, barter, and talk to customers. While other kids went to the beach or the park over the weekend, I recounted tales of petty thieves and demands screamed by middle-aged aunts and uncles.

My sister and I used to call it the magic castle, because you could find almost anything you wanted in the endless sprawling lanes of knick-knacks. We sank our teeth into kebabs and played tag with the other kids whenever we weren't working, just happy to be out of the house and not studying.

The novelty wore off as time passed. Working weekends was especially bad when we were in high school, but my mother and father did all they could to keep us at home poring over books and laptop screens. I'm sure it was a luxury, but it certainly didn't feel that way back then.

A single Saturday evening stands out among them. My father and I had just finished a particularly grueling workday in late December, and were headed to a charcoal chicken joint for a quick dinner. My mother and sister had returned to China the Friday before to visit an ill grandparent, so I would have to pick up the slack for a good part of a month. Given the festivities and the prospect of a month-long break on the horizon, I didn't feel so bad about putting hours in at the market.

After we finished eating, we stopped in the courtyard of the local shopping mall to admire the decorations. It wasn't much — just a plastic tree, adorned with a few baubles and some careless drapes of LED light bulbs.

It was there and then that my father told me he hated Christmas.

When I asked him why, he sighed and shoved his hands into his pockets. I watched his eyes trace the outline of the tree, from the base to each extending branch.

"I came here for the first time in December," he said, "Your mother and sister still had to sort out their passports, so it was just me here for a few months."

I sensed a dam breaking somewhere inside my father. The stories spilled. Cautiously, then all at once.

He told me about the only stable job he could land after touching down in Sydney, cleaning floors and bathrooms in the high-rises along Oxford Street. He recalled the endless meals of instant ramen and stale bread — the only hearty food he could afford with what pay he could save after he wired money back home and paid rent.

I heard about his long train rides back to Cabramatta; how his knees would shake as he alighted from the train, apologising to the person beside him, who had to breathe in the sharp smell of ammonia that latched onto his overalls like parasites.

The sun had set by the time my father fell quiet, and the tree finally lit up. The wrinkles on his forehead looked like deep crevasses in the feeble white light. "Still," my father said, after the silence had become deafening. "It got better. And then we had you, and then it was a lot better."

He flashed me a smile. I tried to return it, but it came out as a grimace. I trailed him as we turned away and

headed back to the parking lot. His gait was uneven. In the half-darkness, it looked like he was staggering.

Most of our inventory came from a wholesale factory in Merrylands. My father often went there strictly for business, but he couldn't resist picking up a few things for himself or the family if something caught his eye.

When he brought in the light-up advent wreath for the first time, my mother nearly fainted. My sister launched immediately into the logistics of hanging it, while I simply laughed at how stupid it looked. After much trial and error, we decided that the best place to display it would be on the window of the dining table, much to the chagrin of my mother.

Still, it provided a nice source of ambient light as we ate dinner on Christmas Eve. My father prepared a few seafood dishes, and my sister bought a bottle of rosé from a liquor store in the city. For once, my father indulged himself on a holiday, and for the first time I was asked to join him. I swallowed a few mouthfuls with much difficulty, while he made his way through three flutes and a shot of bourbon before my mother's stare finally forced him to stop.

My father's gaze was set firmly on the advent wreath. He hadn't said much about it, but I could tell he adored it, despite how cheap it must have been. If you got close enough, each individual LED looked hideous, but from afar they came together in a fairly pleasant way.

"What do you think? Not bad, eh?"

He turned to me, his vision clouded yet decidedly clear. He could've been asking about anything at that table. Maybe he was searching for reassurance, seeking answers as to how we got this far, with the odds piled so high. I knew deep down that it wasn't my answer to give; it was his burden to carry, and it would always be impossible for me to boil it down to just one response.

Instead, I told myself to be honest, though I suspect the champagne may have played a part.

"It's beautiful."



Art by Rand Qashou



Bearing witness: On spring, jazz and writing

Kiki Amberber explores alternate worlds, and the glimmer of the everyday

Spring arrives quietly but surely, hints of its presence collecting gently on the body and the senses. I notice it one night with T after a sunny late-August day, goose bumps not rising on our arms in the balmy air. I move house and walk home often, breathing deep in new space, and am aware of all the tree smells, musky and sweet and swirling. Outside the cafe where I work, pollen begins to rain down from huge trees yawning over the footpath, falls in coffees and adorns hair; small puffed accessories.

Everyone I know creates spring-themed playlists on Spotify when September begins. While listening to my own, I watch the right-hand side of my screen, white text in motion informing me of my friends' listening activity. A, Sevdaliza, 7 hours ago; C, Maggie Rogers, now.

Along with the weather comes a sense of possibility despite a world of exposed breaks and fractures. I speak to M on the phone and we talk about intentions. "Get shit done while having fun," I frame it at one point. The trees, outlined in sharp relief against a pale sky, seem to urge us on.

To be outside in September is to be in constant interaction with all its sensory gifts. What does it mean to take pleasure in this on unceded land? Pleasure becomes a voracious form of consumption, hand in hand with a wider settler-colonial project of environmental injustice. Isn't it the nature of the settler state to consume too much, never be satiated, eat good on stolen land – smile with a blood mouth? Seasonal shifts hold violence – spring itself a colonial construct better described on Dharawal Land as cool weather becoming warm; Ngoonungi. How might settlers replicate this violence, breathing in heady on jasmine-scented streets?

For those of us who are people of colour, there's a specific tension to finding pleasure in physical space that is often alienating. When I ask my PoC friends about their definition of home living in Australia, they reply that this land is intimate to them but lacks comfort; that in response to the displacement they frequently feel moving through white spaces, they have come to see home in feelings and people more than their physical environment.

I often feel similarly. This is a country that denies justice to Tanya Day and Tane Chatfield; that has overseen 445 and counting First Nations deaths in custody since 1991. It's one built on a death-making apparatus of carceral punishment, detention and colonialism; it blinks twice and calls it justice. Wishing to disavow connection with the violence of Australia's institutional infrastructure, I dream of alternate futures, ones that sometimes do away with physicality all together.

And yet: I walk outside, and air rises fragrant in my nostrils, sky sizzles pink-orange at dusk, ocean glimmers hard crystals in the first cold dip of the season. This land keeps stretching and breathing, sharply beautiful. With pleasure comes accountability. PoC can't afford to turn away.

In her 1992 novel *Jazz*, Toni Morrison describes the arrival of spring in 'the City', a 1920s Harlem: "And when spring comes to the City people notice one another in the road; notice the strangers with whom they share aisles and tables and the space where intimate garments are laundered. Going in and out, in and out the same door, they handle the handle; on trolleys and park benches they settle thighs on a seat in which hundreds have done it too."

Reading *Jazz* as the weather slowly warms, I savour Morrison's prose; full of small thrilling images that bubble up just like the world around me. As a writer, Morrison embeds the full scope of life in the specificity of the City. She notices that "daylight slants like a razor cutting the buildings in half"; pays attention to how "the right tune whistled in a doorway or lifting up from the circles and grooves of a record can change the weather. From freezing to hot to cool."

Jazz is also full of grieving, aching people who act in cruel and unforgivable ways. Morrison turns her gaze on them and says, here they are, and here they are in this city, that keeps moving, through seasons and through time.

Toni Morrison's writing is an act of bearing witness to the world in its fullness, both mundane and in-motion. Drawing on Morrison, Christina Sharpe writes of 'residence time': the residues of black bodies, trauma and ancestry continuing to cycle in the ocean. In all of Morrison's novels, time is indeed oceanic: an always-moving presence, constantly doubling back on itself, drawing the past and future multi-directionally into the present.

Isn't this speculative and imaginative, precisely in its groundedness? In bearing witness to small and immediate environments, Morrison allows the creation of new worlds to crystallise in moments that we might not normally notice. She shows us that new worlds are always just below the surface; maybe one simply has to look.

Being a witness as Toni Morrison offers is one way PoC settlers might engage meaningfully with living on and loving unceded land. Astrida Neimanis, whose speculative environmental feminism class I was lucky to take in 2019, tells me about care and attention as ways for settlers to contend with both pleasure and harm as operating on this land.

To deeply care is to hold space for the imperfections and violences of a place: "finding beauty in the ruins of the world, but still having accountability for the damages we've caused," Astrida frames it. "Why wouldn't it be pleasurable and joyful to have close and meaningful relationships with bodies that aren't perfect, or aren't healthy, in the ways that we're taught?" It's a question that brings harm and beauty close, knowing that new textures spring up where they touch.

Right now, queer and PoC co-conspirators are thinking deeply about how to use 'this moment' to break open new worlds and possibilities. But a future-oriented politics doesn't occur in an online vacuum or in our heads. And burning racial capitalism to the ground will happen on just that – sacred, physical, ground. Settlers with investment in both this land and in building a better world need to think about who and what we are listening to as we get organised.

A politics of witnessing isn't an invitation to passivity, to let harm occur and watch on. Instead, it's an opportunity for settlers to engage with unsettlement – as Michael Farrell writes, unsettlement is a verb, a thing that is done. Unsettling becomes a process of slowing down, stepping back, and localising specific environments for which to care and fight for.

In so-called Australia, ecological poetics – 'ecopoetics' – extends the links between unsettling and witnessing through the locus of language and art. Ecopoetics positions language as inextricable from the intricacies of the physical and more-than-human. In the introductory description to the Sydney Environment Institute's 2019 symposium 'Unsettling Ecological Poetics', language is an always-actor in and on the world: "More than merely transcribing the world, [languages and literature] collaborate with it in the makings of meaning [which] shift, shudder, and shatter..."

In embracing the instability of language, ecopoetry points to new futures from a localised place of witnessing. Anne Elvey describes ecopoetry as "a process of engagement, a responsive poetry-in-becoming, a poetry-to-come." This reminds me of José Esteban Muñoz, who writes on queerness as "not yet here"; while "the here and now is a prison house," he urges the imaginative summoning of a "then and there."

Could an orientation towards 'then and there' centre witnessing as a way to coalesce harm and pleasure into a collective project of transformative care? Could writing and art open such a collective witnessing that, in unsettling, becomes a world-building strategy?

As I live and love and create on unceded Gadigal Land, I'll bear witness; keeping still enough to catch Muñoz's 'then and there' glimmering in the small contours of the everyday, catching the light, again and again.



Studio Ghibli and ecosocialism

Madeline Ward investigates the elements of ecosocialism within the films of Studio Ghibli

Art by Divya Ambigapathi

In every Studio Ghibli film runs an undercurrent of socialist ideology. It is not the most perfect utterance of such ideology, nor the most complete. But it is aesthetically beautiful, emotionally engaging and extremely popular. Where it is most compelling (and most obvious) are in films concerned with the environment — Princess Mononoke (2001) and Pom Poko (1994) in particular.

Princess Mononoke and Pom Poko are for older fans of Ghibli, bleaker than the much beloved Totoro or Howl's Moving Castle (though not nearly as bleak as Grave of the Fireflies, which is the source of much trauma). Directed by Hayao Miyazaki and Isao Takahata respectively, they are remarkable for the way in which they establish environmentalism and workers rights as inextricably linked, or at the very least able to be understood in tandem with one another.

This is most poignantly represented in the sympathetic treatment of worker characters in Mononoke. As the human and natural worlds come into conflict, we are encouraged to view the human characters of a mining settlement (Irontown) with empathy, even as their actions cause further harm to the nearby forest, and the gods and animals that dwell within.

Our understanding reflects that of Ashitaka's, an Emishi prince seeking a cure within the forest for his cursed arm. The earliest scenes of the film, where Ashitaka witnesses the massacre of a village as he tracks the origin of his curse to Irontown, informs our knowledge of the world that Irontown is embedded in. Their actions are easily understood in the context of this world, where their material conditions leave them little choice than to mine iron and produce weapons for the ominous #girlboss figure of Lady Eboshi.

Lady Eboshi is revered by her workers, particularly the women, and this too is understandable. The women of Irontown, liberated by Eboshi from their positions as sex slaves, find comfort and safety within the walls of Irontown, even as they work extreme hours of manual labour for their new master. So too do the lepers that construct weapons for the lady, and the men that occupy positions within her armed guard. Though their work frequently places them at risk of physical and moral harm, the film does not assign fault to them on an individual level, rather seeing them as victims of the same forces of militarist violence (which can easily be analogised to colonial capitalism even if unintended) that drives the desecration of sacred land.

Eboshi herself is a strangely sympathetic figure, seemingly motivated by both a desire for wealth and power and, at times, out of genuine concern for the workers of Irontown. Though this seems a contradiction of the socialist ethos of the film, it actually furthers it — rather than directing fault at the individual, we are encouraged to view the oppressive system they act within as the ultimate enemy.

Interestingly, not all human characters are afforded the same clemency, specifically the soldiers and mercenaries that enact violence upon villagers and the forest. These characters act as agents of the same system as Eboshi, and though they aren't exactly sympathetic characters, none assume the role of a singular antagonist either. Jiko Bo, who seeks to decapitate the spirit of the forest and sell its head to the emperor, is perhaps the closest thing to an antagonist within Princess Mononoke — but even he is acting to serve a greater, institutional evil.

Pom Poko is similar in this respect, with no real singular antagonist within the narrative of the film. It too is about conflict between the human and natural worlds, as a development outside Tokyo clears masses of the forest that a

number of shapeshifting tanuki (raccoon dogs) call home. In Pom Poko, it is very clear that the ultimate enemy is the New Tama development, not the humans that live and work there.

It's the more explicitly political of the two films, and easier to understand as such, being set in the late 1990's. As human settlement further encroaches on their habitat, the tanuki stage a resistance effort not unlike those performed by environmental activists in real life. Using their shape-shifting powers, they carry out a series of operations to halt the development, culminating in a grand haunting of the nearby human settlement that is ultimately unsuccessful.

Throughout the film, individual humans are portrayed as foolish and ignorant, rather than as malicious. Too distracted by the realities of modern life, they have forgotten the significance of the environment around them, with much of the tanuki's strategy relying on reminding them of its importance (and also scaring them away). Though the tanuki take great delight in terrorising the humans working and living in the development through their pranks and hauntings, they express great remorse when three humans are killed in an early action and focus their efforts on non-violence thereafter.

The Tanuki certainly resent the humans for the effects of their actions on their lives, but again, never in an individual sense — they seem to understand that there is a greater force at play. By benefit of Pom Poko being set in its contemporary context, it's much more obvious to audiences that this greater force is in fact capitalism, and that the Tanuki are conducting something of an anti-capitalist uprising.

Pom Poko is one of the more radical releases from Ghibli, as well as (in this writer's humble opinion) one of the most entertaining. Its anti-capitalist undertones are aided by its humour, as well as the fact that it is, for want of a better phrase, extremely wacky. The anti-capitalism of Pom Poko isn't even an undertone, per se — the politics of the film are on display for all to engage with, forming a central part of the narrative.

This is not to say that Pom Poko and Princess Mononoke are politically perfect — far from it. Both are infected with the hint of liberalism that plagues all of Ghibli, as well as by Hayao Miyazaki's own pacifist politics. They are also limited in some respects by their pessimistic outlook. Though both films end on something of a positive note — the forest regrows, the tanuki survive — there is so much compromise involved that it hardly feels that way at all. Surely, in a world where demons and gods live among mankind, we can imagine that things won't always be terrible?

Really, Pom Poko and Princess Mononoke needn't be politically perfect. As far as media go, they remain an important tool in imparting some modicum of socialist values to those that watch them, which is good enough for me.

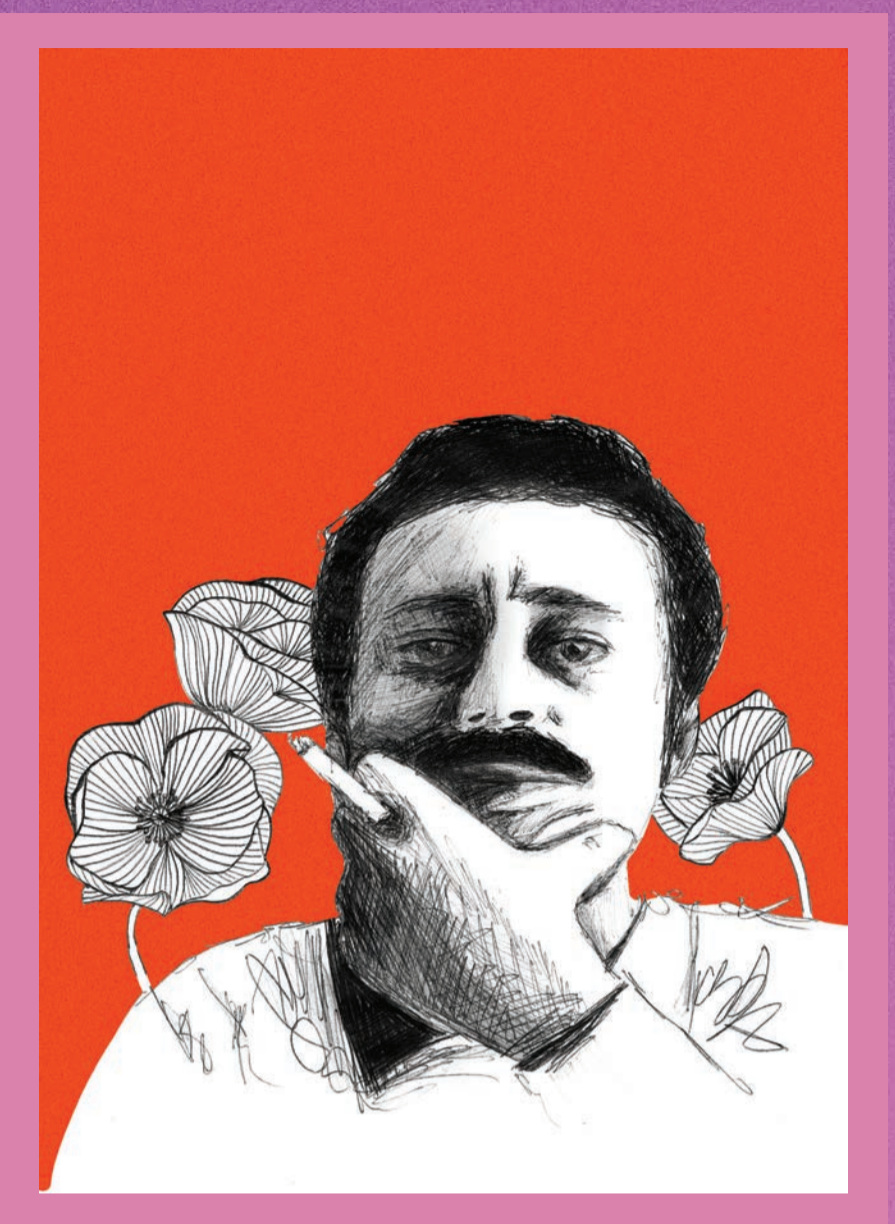


"I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change.

I am changing the things I cannot accept."
- Angela Davis



Art by Sonya Thai



Art by Jade Jiang

"The Palestinian cause is not a cause for Palestinians only, but for every revolutionary, as a cause of the exploited and oppressed masses."

- Ghassan Kanafani



Art by Altay Hagrebet

"It took the madmen of yesterday for us to be able to act with extreme clarity today. I want to be one of those madmen."

We must dare to invent the future."
- Thomas Sankara

"I am deliberate and afraid of nothing"

- Audre Lorde



Art by Ellie Zheng

grandma, braids and a night at the chinese opera

Vivienne Guo is dreaming of the opera.

I'm seven years old. I'm sitting on the floor reading a book and Grandpa is sitting on the couch, watching a Chinese opera show on our dusty box television set. The women, animated in grainy pixels, sing in keening, high pitched voices. They enchant me in their ornate gowns with flowing gossamer sleeves, their faces painted in pale white, their eyes and cheekbones dusted in scarlet rouge.

It's time to get ready for school, and Grandma beckons me over. "Hurry, Zizi," she calls to me in Cantonese, "It's nearly 8 o'clock." As I scramble to sit cross-legged on the floor at her feet, I tell her I want my hair to look like the opera maidens on the TV. Their hair is piled on their heads in elaborate braids and buns, topped with glimmering gold embellishments. They look like goddesses, I think.

Grandma laughs as she brushes my hair with a pink plastic comb. We murmur to each other about the upcoming day. Her brushwork is gentle; she coaxes out every snag, every knot with precision. "Zizi, your hair is so beautiful," she tells me, pinching my cheek affectionately. As Grandma's fingers weave deftly in and out of my hair, I think that my hair feels like silk. I tell her this as I turn back to the TV. She laughs, her breath tickling my ear.

"My little silkworm."

The songs of the opera still ring through my head, reminding me of nimble fingers and braids on a quiet school morning. Though it has been many years since I've last seen a Chinese opera, the art form has recently revisited me in dreams.

Chinese opera is a form of musical theatre with a long and intricate history, and one that has branched out into several incarnations, combining various Ancient Chinese art forms – such as song and dance, martial arts, acrobatics, costume, makeup and literature – to become a diverse, stunning form of theatre. While Peking opera is the most celebrated incarnation of this theatre, Cantonese opera was always a favourite of my Grandparents. There are two types of Cantonese opera; *Mou* and *Man*. Whilst *Mou* focuses more on martial elements, *Man* on the other hand is a gentler, more elegant opera; long lengths of silk known as water sleeves are used extensively in *Man* plays to produce flowing movements. With the tumbling movements of the acrobats, the gleam of an unsheathed blade, the ribbon-like movement of the water sleeves, it is no wonder that I thought the actresses to be goddesses.

I loved to watch Chinese opera because it was a way for me to connect with my grandparents, and reach across that great, bottomless intergenerational rift. They would sit me down and patiently explain the roles of the characters, the story, and the meaning behind it. It had long been Grandma's great sorrow that I had never learned to read or write in Chinese, and so she was always overjoyed that I wanted to sit and watch the opera with her.

Once I admitted my obsession with the operatic hairstyles to my Grandma. I could not tear my eyes away from the character of the young maiden, whose braids formed a delicate lattice that floated above a low bun, and I'd squeal with glee and clutch at Grandma's sleeves whenever the fairies, who wore their hair long and loose, appeared onstage. "I want to look beautiful like them," I would say. "You're already the most beautiful girl in my eyes," she would reply, stroking my hair tenderly.

When I remember these affirmations, I am moved to think about hair as a site of political discourse, particularly when discussing the pervasiveness of patriarchy and decolonising beauty. Women of colour are told to have less, have it differently, have it longer, have it in a certain colour, in a certain style; and this is only in the most explicit sense. The hidden, subtle ways in which Western beauty standards invade our subconscious is even more nefarious, because whiteness poisons everything. It is everywhere in this world built on the ruinous legacy of colonialism.

I was looking through some old photo albums with my grandparents the other day when we came across a photograph of me at eight or nine years old, sitting on the floor with my younger brother and my older cousin at some family gathering. My brother has stolen my cousin's sunglasses, but they are too big for his toddler head and make him look like a beetle. I'm staring into the camera, a gremlin-like expression on my face and a cheap plastic tiara on my head. The tiara pins a stretch of canary-yellow tulle to my head, a far stretch from the blonde colour that I had hoped to imitate.

I have no memory of this party, or of this photo being taken, but even still I was filled with an unspeakable sorrow. I was a child who lived with one foot in my daydreams, and yet I could not imagine myself as a princess with dark Chinese hair.

The fact that I've been ensnared by this particular memory feels a little bit silly;

undoubtedly, it is rooted in a generic sense of diaspora angst that many of my coloured friends know well. This incident is by no means the greatest injustice ever wrought by colonialism and whiteness. Yet, I cannot express the hurt that I feel as I rewind this memory over and over in my mind. It starts to make my fingertips ache.

I don't know when I started idolising Rapunzel and Goldilocks and stopped dreaming of the water-sleeved women of Chinese opera.

The contempt for non-whiteness begins like a dull ache; it begins with beauty standards and evolves into an amorphous, poisonous hate for my non-whiteness, for heritage in the colour of my hair. It took me a long time to realise that the ache was there; it became a part of me. Nowadays, I try not to think about the ache, but I know it's always there; so, I cling to the fond memories of my childhood. They stick out like so many glittering islands littering the horizon, and I am a sailor lost at sea.

I think that it's important that we work to decolonise our bodies and our minds as we work towards a more literal decolonisation of the world. We must weed out whiteness stem and root, in every corner that it resides, because I cannot accept a world where non-white children are raised to believe that they are not enough.

Looking back, the ritual of hair became a practice of love, self-care and a site of intergenerational connection for Grandma and I. With every criss-cross of the strands, she wove her love into my hair. I wish that I had those brief moments of quiet every morning, feeling her fingers run through my hair. Though fleeting, the minutes spent cross-legged on the floor, my Grandma and I whispering in each other's confidence made me feel whole.

I'm seven years old. I'm getting off the school bus. In the distance, I see a shock of silver hair; it's Grandma stepping out onto the nature strip in front of our house. She is laughing and waving at me. Clutching my school bag, I run across the road, down the grassy knoll. I run towards home, braids flying behind me like water sleeves in the wind.

Art: Jade Jiang and Ellie Zheng



Respectability is a means of distinguishing who has worth in society and who does not. It suggests that in order to gain respect, some of us have to act differently from how we act amongst our own people.

In his examination of black respectability politics in America, Herman Gray proposes that the politics of respectability "establishes normative desires and sets the preferred terms of social engagement and access to the dominant culture." To identify as a respectable black subject, Gray argues the individual must follow the appropriate morals and manners of hetero-normativity and distinguish oneself from the non-normative practices of the working class and poor. According to Fiona Lee, these normative rules that determine respectability conform to white middle class values. What is essentially a reflection of class and culture takes on the form of moral respectability. Thus, ethnic minorities, whose manner of speech, behaviour, and dress do not conform to white middle class values, are often overlooked or deemed as lesser than.

We might wonder, then, what are marginalised writers doing when they include swear words and graphic sexual references in formal writing?

In the afterword of Mercedes Eng's long poem *Mercenary English*, "Echolocation: In Conversation with Fred Moten", she is asked whether she is concerned about the formal problems presented by the use of the word 'motherfucker.' To which she replies, "I see a poeticness to the word 'motherfucker.'" In utilising expletives and vernacular in her poetry, Eng and many other marginalised writers repurpose the English language as a tool for surviving colonialism, performing what can only be deemed as an act of "creative political resistance."

Eng presents sex work both in and outside the parameters of respectability in her poem "post hooker micro.macro". She writes about her departure from sex work, and her pursuit of an education in creative writing and poetry. Under the section "II. My Affective Labour", Eng affirms the mutuality of sex work and writing by deeming them both acts of a mercenary nature, which require an exertion of emotional labour to produce or modify one's emotional experiences.

*'now my body of intellectual work
is about
the work
I did
with my body*

*so I'm selling
with my body'*

Although conventions of respectability might present this narrative as one of moral progress, where one leaves a degrading profession in pursuit of respectable work, the embodied nature of both sex work and writing in its use of the mind and the imaginary is illuminated. She validates the legitimacy of sex work as a commercial activity that is equal to writing in its mercenary pursuits.

By drawing on graphic sexual references and asking unsettling questions, Eng speaks to the manner in which respectability is also defined in gendered terms. "post hooker micro.macro" sees Eng recall an experience with a client named "Charlie" and wonder, "is it bad that I can't remember the exact alley? / Should it be burned into my memory, just like my clean date? / I can't remember that shit either." She mocks the parameters of respectability that only see sex workers as victims of hard consequences and therefore in need of saving. We are urged to ask: what are the conditions of being visible? And what does it cost to be recognised or worthy? To make visible is an exercise of power. Where the poem rejects the normative powers that determine the boundaries of what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior, it also speaks of a refusal to erase the unsettling, yet real experiences of diasporic communities.

When our erasure is lived, and our bodies are the frontier zone, what lives on from the violent loss of marginalised individuals? For ethnic minorities, the English language can be repurposed as a tool for surviving colonialism. We can re-map lost historical connections by reshaping public imagination and voice, and make visible the overlooked experiences of our diasporic communities that exist outside parameters of respectability.

For Eng and many other marginalised writers, it is in our rejection of moral respectability, formalism, and the values of dominant white culture, that we can take back our bodies. It is in our provocation of unsettling feelings, shock, or offence upon encountering expletives and graphic sexual references in our embodied work, that we can take back our visibility.

Emma Cao defies settler-colonial notions of moral respectability.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND ALL ITS FUCKERY

astrology in islam

Kowther Qashou gives you a brief overview of the history of astrology in Islam

When you typically think of astrology today, the image of you excitedly flipping through the newspaper to check your daily horoscope pops up in your head. Surprisingly, astrology's rich history dates back to centuries ago across cultures and is not restricted to the millennial zodiac sign frenzy that we are acquainted with. Religious cultures are integral to the world of astrology. In particular, astrology has for a long time held an important place in Islamic history and culture.

Whilst opinions differ amongst Muslim scholars whether it is a 'haram' (forbidden) practice or not, astrology has without doubt historically played a prominent role in the Islamic tradition going all the way back to the Islamic Golden Age (800-1258 CE).

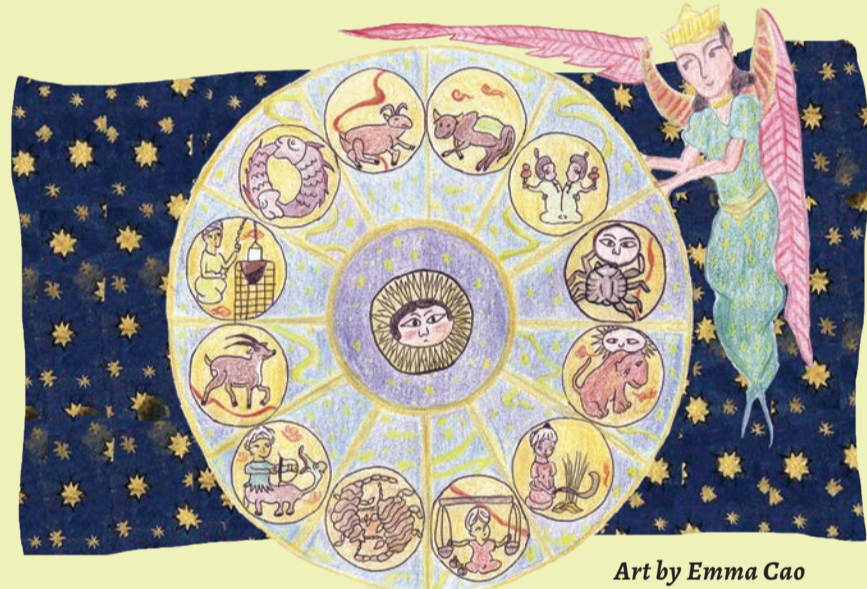
During the Golden Age, both astronomy and astrology dominated much of intellectual, political, and cultural life for medieval Muslims. Early Muslims relied on celestial bodies such as the Sun and the Moon to accurately calculate the time and direction of Mecca, determine sunrise and sunset for fasting in Ramadan, and sight the phases of the moon to mark the beginning of a new month. The practice of astronomy and astrology spanned continents, drawing on ancient Greek, Indian, and Persian traditions that influenced Arabs and Muslims. Astrological doctrines such as horoscopes, zodiacal elements, and planetary influences derived from the Hellenistic astrological tradition, while the other aspects, like the cyclical guidance of universal world events, derived from India and Persia.

Zodiac symbols and constellations were represented by animals in Hellenistic astrology. Islamic astronomers followed this tradition, using the same symbols, signs, and order of the zodiac signs. Muslim astronomers referred to the zodiac cycles as *falak al-buruj* or *dairat al-buruj*, both meaning 'zodiacal sphere'. Similar to Greek astrology, Islamic astrology was less concerned with the signs themselves and more with the particular planets that ruled them, with each sign representing a different element and energy.

Astrology took hold in early Islamic society, particularly during the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates. It was especially revered in Shi'ite religious circles where, according to Ibn Tawus, it was protected. Astrology was then perceived as a tool of foreign sciences that had made its way to the Islamic sphere through the Translation Movement and contact with the heirs of the Byzantine and Persian empire. The Translation Movement involved sustained and systematic efforts to translate secular Greek texts into Arabic during the Abbasid era and was specifically known as the Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement for this reason. As a result,

astrology was seen as an avenue to attack the imported foreign sciences and philosophies. Later on, however, Orthodox strains of Islam would interpret astrology to be associated with Shi'ism, foreign sciences, or atheism.

Many nobles, including caliphs, throughout the Islamic world employed court astrologers to help rulers make strategic and important decisions or even foretell the future of their kingdom. Baghdad was founded in 762 upon advice from astrologers employed under the second caliph al-Mansur. One influential astrologer was Abu Mash'ar who, as Hilary Carey writes, 'adapted classical Aristotelian theories of change, growth and decay in the natural world to provide a powerful validating philosophy for the theory of celestial influence.' Abu Mash'ar wrote over 40 works, including authoritative accounts of all the major branches of astrology. Astrology was also linked to medical stalwarts such as Ibn Sina, who used astrology as a part of his medical practices.



Art by Emma Cao

Zodiac symbols were even depicted on art and objects from the 12th to 17th centuries, further reflecting their importance to Islamic culture. Tessa Sarr writes, 'This development and integration through art can be seen growing and changing through uses of figural representations, content of inscriptions, overall composition, and intended uses of the objects.' One example was metalworks, which would reference texts, stories, and manuscripts from many periods of Islamic history.

Mysticism and superstition are nothing new amongst many predominantly Islamic cultures. For instance, coffee cup readings are a common practice amongst the Arab world, while Nazar (the eye amulet) and the Hamsa (also known as the Hand of Fatima) are still worn today to ward off the evil eye. Sufism is a form of Islamic mysticism which encourages introspection, ascension and developing a spiritual relationship with Allah. It is highly known for its mystical practices through poetry, romantic religious texts, rituals, and doctrines. Many Sufi works romanticise God by constantly invoking Him in their works. For example, the famous Persian poet Jallaludin al-Rumi constantly invoked Allah and the prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in his poetry, presenting his connection to God as divine—almost romantic.

Unfortunately, information about the continuation of astrological practice today amongst Muslim societies is lacking. We can assume that it is not practiced as widely anymore due to its controversial position in Islamic theology and its interpretations. However, there is no doubt that it once had a significant place in Islamic societies, including amongst the Christian and Jewish segments living in the medieval Middle East, despite their ideological differences.

THE JAZZ AMBASSADORS

Kedar Maddali interrogates the curious interseccions of jazz and Cold War propaganda



In 1956, the great trumpeter Louis Armstrong and his all-stars played a concert in Accra, Ghana, to a crowd of over one hundred thousand people. It was the band's first time in Ghana, and they were amazed at the incredible reception that they received. This exact concert could not have been played in Armstrong's home town of New Orleans. At the time, racially integrated concerts were banned and Armstrong's all-stars included two white musicians. Armstrong's story is a part of a broader culture war waged by the United States against the Soviet Union; a tale of how the United States (US) used its black artists and musicians to showcase a façade of American homogeneity at a time where it could not have been more divided. This was the story of the Jazz Ambassadors.

Conception

The United States of the 1950's was a hugely divided country. Racial tensions were as high as ever as a state-mandated apartheid between white and African American populations was maintained. The USSR, seeing a chance for effective propaganda, often highlighted the hypocrisy between the US' international promotion of democracy and the violent oppression of minorities domestically. This propaganda was effective at winning over post-colonial countries in Asia and Africa. They were sympathetic to the plight of African-Americans in the US and saw it as a colonial oppressor not at all dissimilar to the ones that they had overthrown.

American policymakers saw race as their Achilles heel on an international stage. However, the success of Armstrong's concert in Ghana renewed hope for US foreign policy and policymakers saw an opportunity to win the culture war over the USSR through exporting jazz music. The recently created United States Information Agency (USIA) jumped at the chance to showcase cooperation and friendship between white and black artists.

The jazz musician ultimately chosen to represent the US as a jazz ambassador was Dizzy Gillespie, who to this day is considered one of the greatest trumpeters of all time. Gillespie's job was simple: he was to tour the globe and win the hearts and minds of the people who he performed to.

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The Tour

The tour was a smashing success on all fronts. Gillespie himself stated that it was the single best tour of his life. The reception that the band received in each country far exceeded the expectations of both the band and the USIA; they were receiving standing ovations wherever they went.

The band was often asked their views on the racial segregation that took place in the US. In bold defiance of the orders they had been given by the USIA, they responded with a frank condemnation of the racial segregation that took place in the US. If the USIA had done any prior research on Dizzy Gillespie, they would have known that he was a card-carrying member of the Communist Party of the USA and an outspoken activist in the field of black rights. It was this honesty that Gillespie and the band displayed that endeared the audiences. It was also this honesty that brought the first president of Ghana Kwame Nkrumah to tears when Louis Armstrong's all-stars performed 'Black and Blue' when they returned to Ghana this time as jazz ambassadors.

Present Day

Fast forward to the present day and we quickly realise that nothing has changed in the terms of the exportation of black culture by the US to peddle the image of American homogeneity. We do not have to look far back into recent history to see this, with the most pertinent example being hip hop and rap music. Now the largest genre in the world, rap music is arguably the single largest cultural export of the US and like jazz music, it is deeply rooted in the African American experience. Both have very much been exported to the world as a cultural "white out" to obfuscate the deep tensions that exist across racial lines in the United States. Although there is no longer an overt state-mandated push to export culture in the same sense as the USIA's attempts, the US still continues to reap significant cultural capital from the exportation of black culture.

KUMKUM

கம்கம்

Isabella D'Silva

சுஹானா இம்மானாவலே மதாரே

You wanted it all;

Forced that sweet chakkarai out – broken.

Wielding a sword is not power when it is to a peafowl.

Is this the culture?

Looking around it chokes her lungs.

So to escape she chose to run, to fly;

But voices echoed it was worst than living in that cage.

You were darkness;

Hiding behind an angel – a verse.

**Behind a storm cloud of whiskey, rocks and culture;
Pitied you were.**

She freed herself from that blade;

She chose life away from the custom kumkum stained forehead – does that haunt you?

As the years pass, your shadow hides in our soul;

Forgotten – a living ghost;

And as I look into the sorrow of mirrors past;

I wonder, if you see it too.



“Slum Women” is a performance poem expressed using gothic literary and performative expressions like eerie head tilts signifying slow guillotining actions (noted between brackets), child-like voice emulations when talking about the rich, and Indian funeral dance actions.

“Dig the ground, dig it deeper, Mehmood, make the ground ready to eat her with the hunger of a hundred Caterpillars death. Dig it faster, Mehmood, her lips are turning purple.”

I hear my father say these, mutter these, shout these words at my aunt’s funeral.

Corpse of a mirror, reflection lying there with a stomach inflated like she is birthing another death which none of us want to see, for it is going to be –

the death of us. [head tilt]

She was a Woman of Death, but called the Woman of Slums. Woman of the slum not just because she lived in slums but because her tastes were slum-like too.

She always said – “Misbah, I dream of wearing lips so purple one day that they will finally know I am a Skyscraper Woman. Puckering lips like a dream beyond this mauve, burgundy, brown; they say our dark lipsticks come out of the mud we eat, their clothes that we iron, which burn our lips, bloody bastards, look at what power they think they have on us.”

From then on, we both started calling ourselves Slum Women.

Buying the darkest two-dollar lipsticks with our monthly savings, my grandmother used to tell us we looked like pigs with dark lips and you are right, Grandmother –

We are the slum pigs, oink oink look at us asking you if your money wants to come to our slum beds for a night.

We aren’t whores for your love, slum women like us don’t wear dark lipsticks for love –

We wear them to call death hide it in our stomachs

one... two... feel its legs growing in my upper rib

three... four... ouch!
Death has legs that extend to my thighs.

We are vindictive witches about to purge death on your fields death will look like an enigma of purple lips –

Purple is the colour that holds sunshine, sings it a lullaby, and then chokes it to a moonlight sleep.

Sunshine is a foe of moonlight, an obstruction for the moon, to hell with your scientific idea that the moon reflects the light of the sun –

It does not.

Moon stealthily poisons the sun, and steals its light. We are telling you, the poison will build so aggressively one day that

the sun will soon be dead.

Sun will be dead but we will birth things looking like it, And they will wonder – where did all the light go?

For people living in mansions, the sun is the everyday morning sex alarm: an invitation to kneel in front of god’s Gucci bags and bask in golden filth.

They will talk to their hundred-dollar per appointment therapists about how the light went grim they sleep more than required

an elitist sadness looms over them.

There will be a battleground, my aunt will wake with purple lips of the blood of bugs that she ate in her grave and say –

“Hello, you. Your sun has left. [head tilt] Children, this is the era of Slum Women.

Your pink, nude, light lips of elegance cannot stand in the way of our – what you call poverty-stricken cheap dark lips. Dare you touch or spit on our two-dollar lip pouts, for then you will know what we plan – the death of you.” [head rises from the tilt back to a normal position]

Slum Women

Misbah Ansari

In *Prison by Any Other Name*, Maya Schenwar and Victoria Law warn of the creeping expansion of the prison-industrial complex, moving beyond bars and cages into our communities. This process of extension has been aided by technology, with the use of bracelet monitors worn on the wrist or ankle being a particularly unsettling example. Indeed, after decades of dissent, there have been several other ‘alternatives to incarceration’ that have been hailed by governments and corrective services as effective ways of ‘managing’ our rapidly growing prison population.

Measures such as Intensive Correction Orders which see people placed in home detention, to psychiatric hospitals that detain people experiencing mental health crises, are often perceived to be a compassionate, more desirable alternative to incarceration. In reality, they are punitive measures that *extend* systems of incarceration under the guise of compassion/conditional freedom.

In 2019, 157 people in NSW were subjected to electronic surveillance in an effort to divert people from the prison system. However, as *New York Times* columnist Michelle Alexander writes, “you’re effectively sentenced to an open-air digital prison.” Stringent restrictions on mobility as well as stigmatisation of bracelet monitors make it nearly impossible for wearers to attain employment or housing, attend school and maintain a connection with social networks.

Electronic surveillance disproportionately impacts Indigenous Australians, reproducing the racialised outcomes seen in prisons and custody services, including deaths in custody. Thus far, there have been at least three cases wherein an offender has died while being monitored, including an Indigenous man who died in 2011. An inquest found that out of fear of being reincarcerated, he began to inhale butane as a way to conceal his substance abuse.

Ankle monitors are one of many indicators of the growing trend of ‘e-carceration’ — intensifying state punishment through the use of new technologies. However, this shift has largely escaped public scrutiny. Ruha Benjamin explores this phenomenon in her book *Race After Technology* (2019). Labelling it the ‘New Jim Code,’ she observes how technology works to reinforce and reproduce racism while posing as neutral tools of progress. “The desire for objectivity, efficiency, profitability and progress fuels the pursuit of technical fixes across many different social arenas,” she writes. “[But] tech fixes often hide, speed up, and even deepen discrimination, while appearing to be neutral or benevolent when compared to the racism of a previous era.”

Indeed, we are seeing a wave of technological solutions that purport to address various issues with our criminal justice system, such as the less documented use of predictive policing in Australia. Introduced by the NSW Police in 2005, the Suspect Target Managing Plan (STMP) uses an algorithm to calculate how likely a person is going to offend, categorising people as either low risk, medium risk, high risk or extreme risk. This information is used by police to intervene even before a crime takes place.

Although police have been secretive about what

information and criterion are used to classify people, similar technologies are based on indicators such as historical criminal activity, age and postcode. Such data reinforces existing racial hierarchies and frequently directs police to neighbourhoods with high Indigenous populations. A report by the Youth Justice Coalition of NSW found that out of the 213 people subject to an STMP nomination in 2014-15, 44% identified as Aboriginal.

In one instance, David, a 15-year old Aboriginal young person, was singled out by the algorithm. Police cars routinely parked outside his family home, knocked on his door to question him and his family, and criticised his whereabouts. This caused ongoing problems for his family. One of David’s siblings developed an anxiety disorder and was unable to complete his HSC. His mother also reported that the constant police presence and stigma led to their lease not being renewed.

James, another young Aboriginal person who was also put on the STMP despite having no criminal record, was also subjected to repeated police attendances at his home. Justification for his searches often included the time of night and his location. One afternoon after being stopped, James questioned the police’s power to stop him. The police proceeded to capsaicin spray and arrested him. In both these cases, predictive policing would have resulted in these young people being placed in a higher risk category for recidivism.

Despite being championed as preventative measures, there is little evidence that prison populations are dropping as a result of these punitive technologies. The number of prisoners continues to grow, Indigenous people remain over-represented, and it was found last year that in NSW, 50.6% of all people released during 2016-17 returned to prison within two years. Additionally, young people who are experiencing targeted policing experience distress and are finding participation in therapeutic justice and diversion programs like the Koori Court difficult.

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Notably, the police target a person, they are not formally notified that they are on the list, there is no way for them to confirm their place on the list, and they cannot appeal their classification. This creates a new form of incarceration, one based on the presumption that one has already committed a crime and subsequently, the intrusive regulation of everyday life. In his book *Discipline and Punish*, Michel Foucault writes that such asymmetrical surveillance measures are modern iterations of the ‘panopticon’ — 18th-century prisons designed to allow a single guard to observe all prisoners at once, without inmates being able to tell they were being watched.

Such regulation is now being extended beyond law enforcement, with the ongoing trials of the Cashless Debit Card (CDC) employed to restrict people’s

economic freedom. After its introduction in 2016, people under the CDC will see 80% of their welfare payments quarantined to a debit card, which cannot be used to buy alcohol, gamble or withdraw cash.

Although then social services minister Paul Fletcher argued that the card has the potential to “provide a stabilising factor in the lives of families with regard to financial management,” this outlook masks the card’s long-term harms and punitive nature. This form of income control is yet another technological fix that adopts a carceral logic, essentially trapping people into poverty. For a majority of people on the card, their existing financial challenges are exacerbated. Another independent study has found that participants often do not have enough cash for essential items, are unable to shop at preferred outlets or buy second-hand goods, and are having cards being declined even when they are supposed to work.

Furthermore, the Government has indicated that the card is selectively being rolled out in locations where there are high levels of both welfare dependence and drug and alcohol abuse. Once again, this disproportionately targets Indigenous people in remote areas. Before trials were extended last year, at least 78% of cardholders identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and this number is expected to increase as the program continues to be extended.

Social awareness about the carceral system is growing, particularly due to ongoing protests in the Black Lives Matter and Indigenous Justice movements. As people search for more humane or compassionate alternatives to physical imprisonment, technological solutions may seem enticing. But incarceration in itself does not work to stop crime, and technologies that are designed by and operate within the prison-industrial complex will only serve to strengthen carceral systems. As these technologies permeate more and more aspects of society, from the tracking of movements to restrictions on debit cards, their uses become more covert, entrenching state punishment as part of the architecture of everyday life.

We must not only be critical of our justice system, but also the ways it strives to expand its reach in new and horrifying ways. Technology has never been scientific and objective; in the context of carceral technologies, its design is inherently encoded with the oppression against black, Indigenous and people of colour. Rather than imposing more control, technologies should be utilised in areas where it has the potential to be emancipatory rather than punitive, including restorative justice and community services. But without dismantling our focus on retribution and punishment, no device or algorithm can slay away centuries of injustice.

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HOW TECHNOLOGY IS USED TO EXPAND THE CARCERAL STATE

Deaundre Espejo and Shania O’Brien explore the insidious transmogrification of a physical carceral system to a technological one.

Vignettes from Okinawa

Karen Tengan Okuda recounts her experiences of Okinawan culture

The three hour plane ride from Tokyo down to Okinawa always feels longer than the nine hour ride from Sydney to Tokyo. I'm greeted with thick air as soon as I get off the plane, and the gentle, tinny strums of the *sanshin* echo endlessly throughout the terminal. I read and re-read the signs that warn me of accidentally smuggling out Okinawan potatoes as I wait for my luggage.

As I step out of the gates, *yōkoso* is replaced with *mensōre*, *rāmen* with Okinawa *soba*, and a horrifyingly efficient train system with Route 58 and backed up box cars.

I've never technically lived here, but coming back is always comforting. The sky feels lower and more vast here. I'll reach up and fluff the clouds. I'll drive alongside the ocean with all my windows rolled down whatever season it is (except for typhoon season). Sydney is physically my home, and in mainland Japan I'm just another small human within millions, and a tourist at that. But being in Okinawa with my family is something very precious.

My mum always taught me that we are *uchinanchu*, and that means we're different to mainland Japanese people. I grew up immersed in Japanese culture, but my mum made sure to teach me about our Okinawan heritage too—that it's important for us to understand and honour the past.

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In 1879, Okinawa was annexed by the Japanese. Before it became incorporated into Japan as a prefecture, it was the Ryūkyū Kingdom. A tributary state to China, the dress, language, and culture was distinct to the tiny island. As soon as it was annexed, policies were put into place to assimilate the people into Japan, with the main focus being the eradication of the traditional language. My great-grandma could only speak Okinawan, my grandma is fluent in both Okinawan and Japanese, and my mum is only conversational in Okinawan. I can't speak it at all. The disappearing language from our communities is one of the biggest ways that the younger generation are detached from older generations, and how traditions get lost in the past. Revitalisation efforts within the community have sprung up since the late 1990s, but with the teaching of it still banned within schools by law, most of the younger generations cannot speak it at all.

Okinawa's relationship with Japan, and more recently the US, is complex and hard to know if you're only looking at the surface. Okinawa is now a popular holiday destination for Chinese, Korean, and mainland Japanese tourists, and its modern rebranding as a resort getaway hides the often painful history. But once you venture out of places like *Onna Village*, where streets are lined with hotels and scuba diving agencies, or the shopping strip of *Naha city*, it becomes hard to ignore all of the fences.

Fences line many of the main roads, separating locals from American military bases. They remain on the island, even after the end of the US Occupation of Okinawa in 1972. Despite being less than one percent of Japanese land, over 70% of American military bases in Japan are located in Okinawa.

These camps are closed to locals except for holidays like the 4th of July and New Year's Eve, and loud rumbles of military planes are the norm. My little cousin likes to point out the Osprey planes from our balcony. My mum always sighs, and tells me the situation is so complicated.

Okinawa was the only inhabited place in Japan where battle took place during World War II. A quarter of all Okinawan civilians lost their lives during the three month battle between the American troops and the Japanese Imperial Army. Many of the civilians evacuated into the jungle, and whole families hid inside of traditional tombs, as well as in deep caves throughout the island. Not only were they caught between the two powers, but imperial propaganda encouraged local communities to commit mass suicides before they could be captured by American forces, in honour of the Japanese emperor. The role of the army in these mass suicides has not been acknowledged by the Japanese government, and these events are erased from school history textbooks.

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Feelings towards Japan and the US vary throughout the generations, but my elders remind me not to forget these events in the past, and to recognise how they still manifest in our communities today.

A few weeks ago I talked to my grandma on the phone, and asked her how she would describe Okinawa to someone who has never visited. After a moment of thinking, she replied that she thinks it's a good place. It's close to the ocean, and quiet for the most part. When I asked my mum the same question, she replied in almost the exact same way. Her memories of running through sugarcane fields, climbing banyan trees, and living by the ocean contrast so greatly to the world she found outside.

When I think about what Okinawan culture is to me, I also think of the landscape. The castle ruins atop the many mountains. The narrow alleyways of homes with protective *shīsā* out the front. The road signs with place names that mainland Japanese people can't read. While many things change, some things also stay the same. Pieces of Ryūkyū are still left in Okinawa in both big and small ways. I'm especially reminded of this during *Obon* festival in the summertime, when our ancestral spirits visit us for three days. This year my auntie sent us photos of the family shrine and the traditional feast that she had prepared. She told us she had done *ūtōtō* for us too. I saw my cousin post videos of *eisā* passing by his house, and it made me miss how the streets rumble as people sang and danced and drummed into the early hours of the morning—a steady heartbeat carrying the past, through us, into the future.

Photography by Karen Tengan Okuda



Floating (漂浮)

Words by Yang Wu

今年一月，中国爆发新冠疫情，我决定提前回澳洲。通过两次机票改签，我买到了一月底从上海飞往悉尼的机票。我的父母开车三小时把我送到上海的机场。因为在上海住旅馆会增加感染的风险，他们又要连夜再开三小时的车回家。妈妈在离开之前哭了：“你每年只有暑假回来几个星期，现在居然又提早过去！”，但她也知道这是更稳妥的选择。我成功来到了悉尼，准备完成我最后一年的大学学业。

降落在悉尼机场之后，两名检疫人员上机检查。他们穿着全套防护服，但没有为我们测体温或者进行其他的检查，只是询问乘客和机组人员有没有人不舒服，然后给每个人发了一张COVID-19防治海报。随后我们进入机场，和平时一样，我刷电子护照自助入关，在行李转盘处提了我的行李箱。我并没有带需要向海关申报的东西，所以进入了无申报通道，径直出了机场。在中国被肃穆，悲伤和严阵以待淹没的我仿佛进入了时空隧道。冠状病毒似乎在这个世界里并不存在，我又回到了几个月前我离开时的澳洲，这里看起来没有任何变化，除了飞机上发海报的检疫员。

但是，在我到达的一天之后，澳洲政府突然发布了对中国的“禁飞令”。滞留国内的中国留学生们，只能选择在国内交同样的学费远程上课，或者花费更多的时间，金钱和承受路途上的感染风险从泰国等地中转，又或者准备休学，等待禁飞令的结束，而谁也不知道会等多久。在电话中，妈妈对我说：“还好你已经到了，我们选的时间真是太对了！”微信朋友圈里，还在中国的朋友们写着各种愤怒，伤心，求助求建议的话。

经过两周的自主隔离，我迫不及待地走上街头，准备去我最喜欢的寿司店。三个孩子骑着儿童自行车从我身边过去，一个孩子突然停下来，指着我说：“哇，快看她，她是病毒！她是病毒！”已经骑远的两个孩子发出夸张的，惊恐的叫声，随后三人一道骑走了。整个过程中我难以动弹，甚至话也说不出来一句。他们身上穿着的衣服是我家附近学校的制服，这些孩子最大也不会超过十二三岁。在我住在这个街区的三年里，我们曾经有多少次的擦肩而过？而现在的我在他们面前连一个人也不是，只是一个遥远的国家送来的，病毒的具象化。而在朋友圈里，我的三个朋友已经结伴到了泰国，入住了曼谷的酒店，等待着十几天后踏上澳洲的土地。

来到澳洲的几年间，我越来越觉得，这里的“中国人”是一个抽象化的整体：有了疫情，我们要禁飞“中国人”，这样我们就会万无一失。因为病毒是中国的。而个体的中国人则不在关心的范围之内：如果你在禁飞前进入澳洲，那么没关系，这个中国人不是威胁的一部分。如果只差一天，没办法，这个中国人就来不了。这种抵制或欢迎抽象化的中国人的话术我已经听了太多遍：我们应该让中国人到澳洲旅游买东西，上学，因为他们很有钱。中国人即使移民了也不是澳洲人，因为他们语言文化不一样，这是对澳洲的入侵。“中国人”是一个遥远的符号，所象征的东西从上世纪的陌生的口音，“落后”的文化，变成了穿戴奢侈品的移动金库，再到现在的中国的病毒，但却从来不是一个活生生的人。我们是被打包送上澳洲“文化多样性”（multiculturalism）货架上的巨大而面目模糊的商品，唯一的商标是我们的“原产地”。我们向周围望去，周围其他“商品”的包装上有“传统文化”，“历史溯源”，“考古发现”，而人却是失声的。新冠疫情中，这种话术失效了，因为病毒攻击的正是个体的人，病毒不区分这是被他者化的中国人 / 亚裔，还是其他的种族，国籍。讽刺的是，只有这种漠视让整个社会付出巨大代价之后，一部分人才能惊醒：原来我们都是人，我们都活在此刻，活在这里。这也许映射了更深的攻击：在没有病毒的世界，被这套话术操弄和攻击的并不是抽象化的“中国人”，“有色人种”，“少数族裔”的概念——一个概念永远不会受伤。被伤害的我们，这些活生生的人，则是难以动弹，静默无声。

President

Liam Donohoe

With the Senate Inquiry into the Higher Education Amendment Bill 2020 formally recommending the Bill, and pork barrelling making its passage likely, higher education in Australia is poised to receive one final fatal blow. But rather than copping the destruction of our education, the SRC has led the fight against cuts on-campus and Morrison's fee hikes Bill. This week was no exception, with the usual operational demands of the Presidency trumped by a memorable education protest on Wednesday.

To that end, the battle for the future of our education yet again dominated my time, expressing itself once more in protests which unapologetically defied the Police's repressive enforcement of public health orders. Motivated by the success of last week's Day of Action, a number of activists in the Education Action Group pushed for a repeat one week later, on Wednesday the 23rd at 1pm. With the support of the Women's Officers, who had already called a National Day of Action highlighting the gendered impacts of the Higher Education Support Amendment Bill, organisers quickly moved motions, stalled, and organised decentralised actions. In addition to broader building, I also personally organised an action for Philosophy students.

Despite the small size of the actions and their general legal compliance, protesters were once again met with a large police presence. Concerned by the threat of further repression, a number of staunch staff allies organised an education event, 'Higher education and democratic society: perspectives on dissent', on the law lawns around the

same time. This incredibly informative event not only attracted students otherwise uninvolved in the Day's actions, but was also given official sanction by the Arts faculty and so became a complex matter for the police. As such, the event later became a safe haven for protesters as their respective actions were shut down by Police, with the various contingents converging, angrily, on the law lawns. The chanting mass, at least 200 strong, marched into Victoria Park before breaking into a spontaneous sprint as it became clear they could beat the police to the corner of Cleveland Street and City Road. The sight of a couple hundred students militantly careering to claim one of Sydney's busiest intersections is the most compelling image of student rebellion I've personally witnessed in my 5 years on campus.

Our march down City Road was soon intercepted by riot squad and mounted police, with protesters reversing their trail and frantically racing the cops back to the law lawns. While many students managed to outrun them, galloping horses cut a number of students off at the Victoria Park gates, kettling the unfortunate students stuck in the park. In the end at least 21 \$1,000 fines were issued, with students holding placards or megaphones arbitrarily arrested. Once again, the police stopped at nothing to prevent public dissent, aggressively targeting vulnerable attendees to prove a point and save face after initial embarrassment. Not to be deterred, the attendees regathered in the Seymour Centre plaza for an incredibly positive post-rally meeting, which even featured legendary members of the Chasers', Charles Firth. Many thanks to Dr. Nick

Education Officers

Jazzlyn Breen and Jack Mansell

Short of the long, and in character for this truly wild year, we've been busy.

Last week on September 23, we scored a victory against the cops that will hopefully go down as an important moment in the development of an enduring, combative student movement. Trying to build on momentum from the previous week's action, where we were broken up by another large-scale police mobilisation, we resolved to keep fighting and to push the boundaries even further by trying to march on the road.

We went into last Wednesday armed with a plan to converge and a spring in our step. We won, and were able to have a disruptive action that brought City

Road to a standstill. Hundreds turned out in a display of staff-student action, and took to the streets in defiance of the police. It was an enormous step forward for both the campaign for our education, drawing unprecedented numbers of students, media and public attention, but also for the campaign for the right to protest.

The police remain an ongoing obstacle. Last Friday police were sent to campus to disperse an organising meeting against the cuts. Activists were told that the presence of megaphones, despite being in a group of less than 20 at the time, was "reasonable suspicion", and warranted police harassment. This is a dangerous escalation that must be

Women's Officers

Vivienne Guo and Ellie Wilson

WOCO NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION: FEMINISTS AGAINST THE CUTS

On Wednesday 23 September, the University of Sydney Women's Collective (WoCo) gathered at the University of Sydney to protest the education funding cuts and fee hikes announced by Education Minister Dan Tehan. This action was one of several in a National Day of Action called by WoCo, for which WoCo also ran a panel to highlight feminist perspectives of the cuts.

The recently proposed changes to

higher education will disproportionately disadvantage women, First Nations people and students from low-SES backgrounds. Women make up 67% of students in the worst hit subject areas, including arts and social sciences.

In particular, the upcoming changes to HECS-HELP will mean that students who fail 50% of their subjects will be cut off from accessing the HECS-HELP scheme. Victim-survivors of sexual and domestic violence are significantly more likely than other students to struggle with university

Riemer and all the staff for their support, and contribute to the GoFundMes assisting protesters with repayment of fines if you have the means.

With the Morrison government's fee hikes legislation likely to coincide with their imminent budget, and Uni management revealing a 2020 surplus, the fight for our education is only going to escalate. This Wednesday we are hosting a staff student assembly to organise the October 14 action, which will be taking place in conjunction with staff and the NTEU. In preparation for that, I attended an Education Action Group meeting on Thursday afternoon, where the assembly was finalised. Disgracefully, another organising meeting for the October 14 action, which was scheduled for Friday through the Staff and Students Say No Cuts (SSNC) groups, received a visit from the Police, who harassed protesters and suggested that they might be breaking the law by carrying megaphones. The SRC condemns this outrageous intimidation of meeting attendees, and believes this harassment is a new low in the NSW Police's race to the bottom of the draconian wellspring.

The Climate Strike I attended on Friday, just before the SSNC meeting, faced similar difficulties with the police. The Environment Collective's action at Hyde Park fountain enjoyed an impressive turnout and a diversity of interesting speakers, but quickly attracted the Police's scorn, with riot squad members issuing aggressive move on orders when the action separated into two small marches on either side of Elizabeth street. Many thanks to the Environment Officers for reintroducing

resisted.

Our victory against them on September 23 was an important step in galvanising a fighting student left that is willing to confront the draconian behaviour of NSW police, and to establish a combative movement that attracts students into the campaign to defend higher education. Now is the time to join the campaign. Only increased numbers of students will be able to repel the onslaught on our education and on democratic rights.

We are heartened that the first Democracy is Essential campaign organising meeting drew over 100 participants, and has resolved to support

performance and fail subjects while studying. It is abhorrent that the government continues to punish victim-survivors rather than support them. The apathy of the LNP government is painfully clear as the higher education bill reaches the Senate, one step closer to passing into law.

As Women's Officers, we condemn the higher education bill; education should be free, accessible and cause no disadvantage to those who are undergoing struggles beyond their control.



environmental issues to a crowded political agenda, and congratulations on the successful action.

After all the week's tomfoolery with the Police, Friday evening was a fortuitous time for the inaugural Democracy is Essential organising meeting, in which I proudly participated. The meeting was incredibly well attended, with over 100 at its peak, and engaged a broad segment of people. I look forward to building this campaign in the coming months so that we can restore and expand on basic civil liberties after decades of subtle erosions. Aside from activism, the usual Presidential duties beckoned. The Days surrounding Wednesday's actions saw extensive media work. Tuesday saw a relatively uneventful admissions subcommittee meeting. Thursday saw a staff committee meeting where, among other things, we began considering what a return to in-person operations might look like. Through it all, case work and legal continued their dependable hum, helping students through their most challenging circumstances.

The week ahead is forebodingly future-oriented. 2021 SSAF plans are going to be submitted. Mass protests are going to be organised. The 2020 SRC elections are going to conclude. But as we plan and elect the future, it is essential that we assume and build on the courage and selflessness seen this week, and perhaps throughout this entire year. And that means, if nothing else, ensuring the SRC remains committed to activism and the radical action needed to defend our education.

activists from a variety of campaigns including the campaign against Mark Latham's transphobic bill that will force trans kids and teachers into the closet. Community Action for Rainbow Rights are organising a protest for 1pm Saturday October 10 at Taylor Square, we implore students to join the fight.

The next big event on the student activist calendar will be the October 14 National Day of Action. At Sydney Uni we plan to converge at a "teach-in" on the Quad Lawns at 1pm. Be there or be square! And join Sydney University Education Action Group (EAG) - Organising on Facebook. There's no time like the present to be a rebel!

SOLIDARITY WITH MACQUARIE GENDER STUDIES DEPARTMENT

USyd WoCo extends our solidarity with the staff in the Gender Studies department at Macquarie University. Gender Studies is a discipline that is predominantly studied and taught by women; the gendered impact of the cuts to courses and staff must be highlighted in our battle for the future of our education. This will be devastating to so many.

STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL, UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

SRC CASEWORKER APPOINTMENTS ARE NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE



Do you need help with CENTRELINK? Ask the SRC!

The SRC has qualified caseworkers who can assist Sydney University undergraduates with Centrelink questions and issues, including: your income, parents' income, qualifying as independent, relationships, over-payments and more.

Check out the Centrelink articles on our website or book an appointment if you need more help.

srcsyd.net.au/src-help/

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 Level 1, Wentworth Building (G01), University of Sydney NSW 2006
 PO Box 794 Broadway NSW 2007

p: 02 9660 5222
e: help@src.usyd.edu.au
w: srcsyd.net.au/src-help

f: /srcsyd
t: @src_sydney





Be an informed student!

Follow us on Twitter...

@src_sydneyuni



Interfaith Officers, Student Housing Officers and Refugee Rights Officers did not submit a report this week

BEWARE of SCAMS - Don't fall for their tricks!



Scams occur in lots of different ways: phone calls, emails, text messages, and in person. Some scammers pretend to be from a legitimate organisation like Telstra, or a government department, like Immigration or the Tax Office, and ask you to confirm your details, pay an overdue bill, or get access to a new scheme that will save you money. Some scammers will ring asking if you can hear them to get a recording of your voice saying "yes" to be able to access your accounts through voice recognition online banking. Some scams are embedded in known fraudulent practices, like buying a doctor's certificate online, or having an essay written for you.

If someone calls you, give no personal information. A legitimate caller would


already have whatever information they need. You could also ask their name and where they are from, then look up the number yourself, and call them back. Don't call them on the number they give you - sophisticated scammers will have set up a false number for you to call back.

Scamming in person can be quite sophisticated. One known scam is where someone pretends to fall over, and picks the pocket of the person who helps them. This scam is particularly despicable in the way that it discourages people to help each other.

If you think you have been scammed, or if you're not sure if something is legitimate you can talk to an SRC caseworker or go to: www.scamwatch.gov.au.

Ask Abe

SRC caseworker help Q&A



Ask Abe about Centrelink Overpayments

Abe,

Could you tell me what to do? Centrelink have just written to me saying that I owe them money. I don't have much money, which is why I'm on Youth Allowance in the first place. I don't know what to do.

Under Paid

Dear Under Paid,

The best thing you can do with an overpayment notice is to talk to an SRC Caseworker about your situation. The debt notice may be erroneous, or may have resulted from incorrectly reported

Abe

Contact an SRC Caseworker on 02 9660 5222 or email help@src.usyd.edu.au

PoC's Populi

MONDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER, 2020

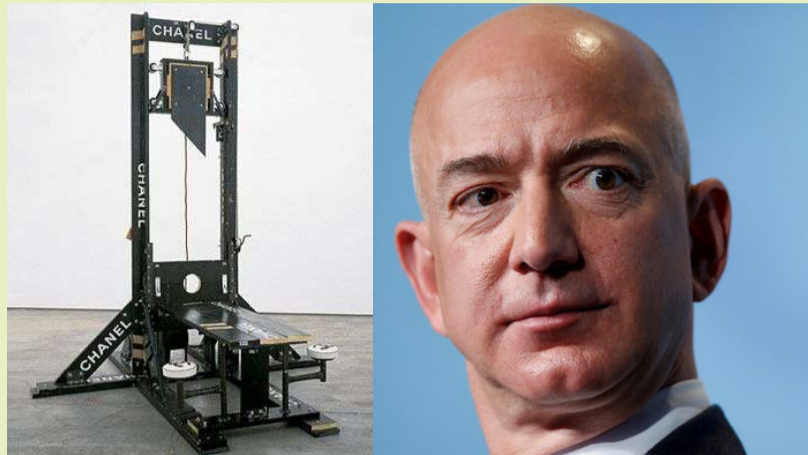
BREAKING

18,290,907 have signed. Let's get to 19,500,000!



JOE BIDEN GIVES THE ENTIRETY OF THE UNITED STATES BACK TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AFTER FLOOD OF PETITIONS
At long last, a win for democracy!

SCOOP



BILLIONAIRE COMES OUT WITH STATEMENT ON THE PROBLEMATIC USE OF THE G-SLUR

"It's not yours to reclaim," asserts Jeff Bezos, "our people have faced persecution for our wealth for generations."

EXCLUSIVE



CRAZY FROG BREAKS SILENCE AND TALKS ABOUT HIS PAST!

Famed pantless frog reveals how much help his apartheid-era emerald mine provided him with kickstarting his career, sentimentally reflects on his time in the IDF, and more!



georgie @diasporridge
POC 🇺🇸 COUNTRIES 🇺🇸 CAN'T 🇺🇸 BE 🇺🇸 IMPERIALIST 🇺🇸 OR 🇺🇸 COLONIZERS 🇺🇸
5:37 PM · Sep 25, 2020
17K Retweets 54K Likes

2020 Students' Representative Council Annual Elections Electoral Officer Report



By the time that you are reading this, voting for the election of 35 Councillors for the 93rd SRC and 7 Delegates to the NUS has commenced. This is the first time that online elections for the SRC are being held, primarily due to COVID-19 pandemic. Instead of having to attend a campus between certain days and hours, you have the opportunity to vote between now and 6:00pm AEST Thursday 1st October 2020 using any internet capable device, although due to the size of the ballot paper you might prefer to use a device with a larger screen.

Full details of the Groups and Candidates can be found in the digital edition of Election Honi Soit which is located at <http://srcusyd.net.au/elections/>

Details of the Groups and Candidates can also be found on the online voting paper, although you might find it preferable to view the Election Edition of Honi Soit.

If you have already voted, thank you, every vote counts. Historically there have been quite a few elections where one vote did make the difference. Please make the effort to vote if you have not already done so.

For those of you who registered to vote and not yet done so – voting is open until 6:00pm AEST Thursday 1st October 2020. Do not leave this to the last minute as external factors could prevent you from casting your vote.

If you have already registered to vote and you have not received your invitation to vote, please check your email including that of your spam folder. Should you have not received an email invitation you need to email the Electoral Officer elections@src.usyd.edu.au from your University email account with your Student ID number and your University first and last names.

If you have not already registered to vote, you can still do so and a provisional invitation to vote will be sent to you. **DO NOT LEAVE THIS TO THE LAST MOMENT!** Provisional means that a vote will be issued to you and will be only accepted into the counting process once your student status has been confirmed. (This process is identical to parliamentary elections, the Electoral Officer cannot view how you voted, only that you have voted and will make a decision based on student rolls provided by the University if your vote is to be accepted).

Amendments to the Election Edition of Honi Soit.

The following candidates have withdrawn since the publication of Election of Honi Soit:

Oscar Ansted (Group BF Time for Science)

The following candidates were not listed in the Election Edition of Honi Soit:

Fengwei Yu, FASS, Second year (Group AT Phoenix for Student Service)

Scholarship: 2019 Vice Chancellor's Global Mobility Award

Exchange Experience:

London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE Summer School) July 2019, Courses: Consumer Behaviour: Behavioural Fundamentals for Marketing and Management

Université Jean -Moulin -Lyon -III December, 2019, Course: French Language

Project Experience:

July 2020 Boston Consulting Group - Strategy Consulting Virtual Experience Program via InsideSherpa

June, 2020 King & Wood Mallesons - Global introduction to Law Program via InsideSherpa

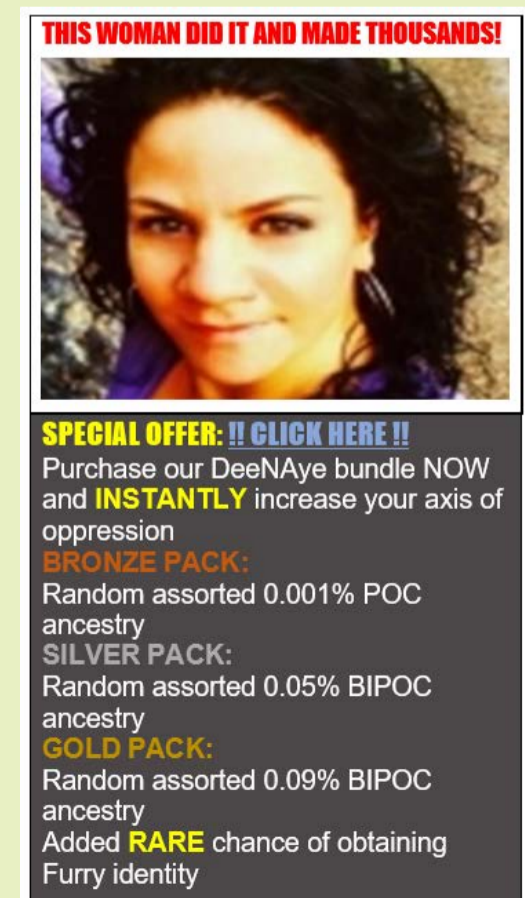
Skills/Certificates:

Skills: Excel, PowerPoint, Word

Language: Mandarin (Native), English (Proficient), French (Beginner), Japanese (Beginner)

Interest: Reading, Current Affairs, Finance

Authorised by G.Field, 2020 Electoral Officer, Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney
p: 02 9660 5222 | w: srcusyd.net.au



BOPS OF COLOR (BOC)

the official soundtrack to ACAR Honi 2020

Dynasty Rina Sawayama	Miss Shiney Kaiit
Power Joy Crookes	January 26 A.B. Original
The Death of Neoliberalism Lowkey	Police State Dead Prez
VRY BLK Jamila Woods ft. Noname	Shook Tkay Maidza

for the full playlist, scan below or follow the link!
tinyurl.com/bopsocolour

Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney
Elections 2020



POLLING: Tuesday 29th September
to Thursday 1st October 2020

**TO REGISTER TO VOTE
AND FOR POLLING INSTRUCTIONS:**
go to: srcusyd.net.au/elections

ALREADY REGISTERED?
Check your Sydney Uni email

