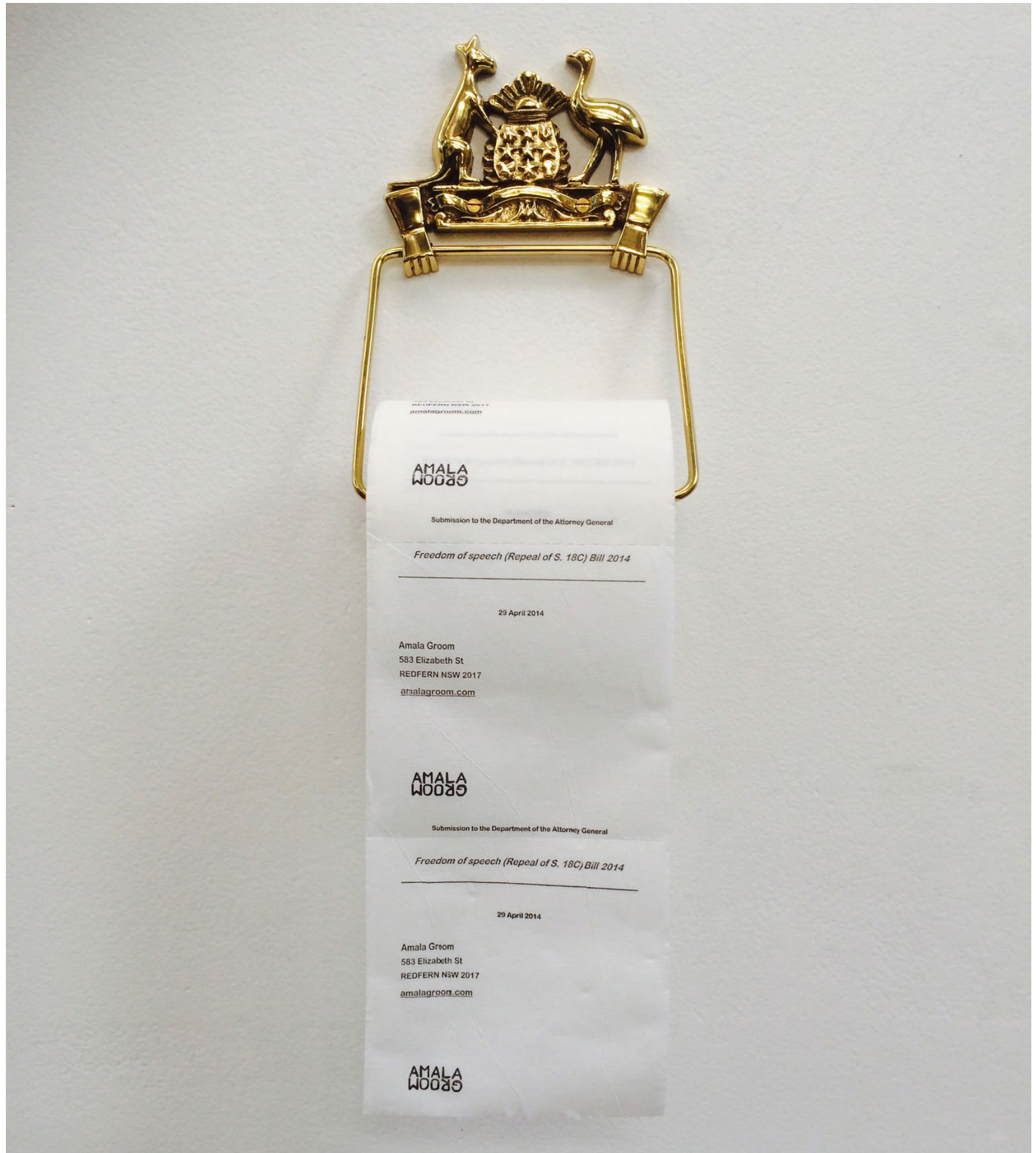


THARUNKA



..... The Inaugural Indigenous & Intercultural Issue!



EDITORS' NOTES

This year hasn't been a great year for Indigenous Affairs, with over \$500 million worth of cuts to its budget.

That's why, in a year like this one, it is especially important for the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to be heard.

This issue covers a lot of heavy and important topics, such as deaths in custody, increasing incarceration rates, cultural history, the referendum, cuts to education and racism.

These issues have a direct impact on the lives of Indigenous people, and we thank the Tharunka team for helping our voices to be heard.

I am sure this is the start of a beautiful partnership between Tharunka and the Indigenous students of UNSW – a legacy to be continued for years to come.

I hope you enjoy.

Rebekah Hatfield, Indigenous Student Officer, UNSW SRC

2014 is a year of national achievement. Australia has weathered attempts to water down the seldom-applied Racial Discrimination Act. Simultaneously, the Australian government has solidered on amidst the persistent

international condemnation of its 143 human rights violations of persons seeking asylum. It would appear that the old adage of "you win some, you lose some" could definitely apply to the current cultural climate of the fair nation that our bountiful university is situated upon.

However, it's not all doom, gloom and marginal gains! It is with great pleasure that Bek and I write to you in this very first edition of our student newspaper which is to be comprised – in its entirety – by students of culturally diverse backgrounds. The provision of such an outlet allows us to continually challenge, explore and celebrate the cross-cultural similarities and unquities that define us as individuals, and as members of the broader UNSW community.

As one of our contributors exclaimed, "It would mean so much to be published!" – and on behalf of the Intercultural Collective, I'd like to express to those who have picked up this issue, that it means so much that you're taking the time to read **and actively listen** to us.

Much love,
Rachel Lobo, 2014 SRC Ethno-cultural Officer

COVER ART STATEMENTS

Front Cover: Comfortable Submission by Amala Groom

In early 2014 the Federal Government circulated the Draft Exposure Freedom of Speech (repeal of s 18c) Bill 2014 as an invitation to the public to present submissions to the proposed legislation. After authoring and co authoring numerous submissions and legislative reviews, Amala was critical about the submission process remarking "We have heard it before, why write submissions when the state shelves them or worse, just wipes their arse with them" said Groom. *Comfortable Submission* is the artist's response to the proposed bill and was featured in in 'Lawful & Permissible' at Damien Minton Gallery in July 2014.

Amala Groom is a multi-disciplinary artist whose creative practice is informed by Indigenous methodologies. As an activist, Groom's practice reads as a social and political commentary on contemporary politics and race relations. Groom has advocated passionately for the rights of

Aboriginal Peoples both at home and internationally, including participating in eight United Nations Forums. Art-making is an extension of her work as an activist and a platform for speaking out about the legacy of colonialism. Groom's art is also deeply informed by her Wiradjuri culture. Groom is currently completing a Bachelors of Fine Arts and Law at the University of NSW.

Back Cover: Untitled series by Brady Prescott

This series of works explores and embraces my cultural experience and identity, being Aboriginal. My tribe, Ngiyampaa Wangaaypuan NSW, my heritage and the memories of my people are of great importance to me and inspire me to be a better Aboriginal. The work involves traditional techniques and materials, such as dot painting and using natural pigments but can also be seen as challenging the idea of Aboriginal Art by placing it into a contemporary time.

Short List

ILC funding cuts

The Indigenous Law Centre (ILC) is the only centre of its type in Australia, yet the current government has decided to cut all of its funding.

The ILC, which was established in 1981, has played a crucial part in Indigenous legal academia, and soon, it will be left to fend for itself, with funding ceasing at the end of the year.

The Abbott government cut over \$43 million from its "legal policy reform and advocacy funding", unfortunately leaving many legal and policy community organisations in the lurch.

The ILC, which produces the Indigenous Law Bulletin and the Australian Indigenous Law Review – the only two journals dedicated specifically to Indigenous legal issues in Australia – has not given up and will continue fighting these cuts, but they still need your help.

There are many things you can do to keep this important centre around, like making a donation or writing a letter to your local member of parliament explaining why you think the ILC is important.

If you would like any further information, please check out the centre's website at: <http://www.ilc.unsw.edu.au/>.

How Racist Are You? Test yourself and find out!

Most individuals within the 18 – 24 age range would credit themselves as holding progressive, anti-racist attitudes. Care to find out?

If you had the opportunity to experience a snapshot of seven days as an Indian international student, Indigenous man or Muslim woman, would you? The Everyday Racism app, launched earlier this year and promoted on our campus during O-Week, provides the chance for participants to engage with scenarios over seven days. When players choose the character of "yourself", you will be asked to respond from the perspective of a bystander.

The Everyday Racism app was created by a coalition of universities – the University of Western Sydney, Deakin University and the University of Melbourne – partnering with the anti-racism, not-for-profit All Together Now. It allows participants the opportunity to explore the concept of subtle racism or racial microaggressions – an indirect or covert form of racial discrimination highly prevalent in Australia and globally.

The project placed second in the United Nations sponsored competition for the 2014 Intercultural Innovation Award, which cred-

its grassroots projects that "encourage intercultural dialogue and cooperation across the world". Eleven finalists were drawn from 600 entries from over 100 countries, with the app being described as a "world first".

It's FREE and is compatible with both Androids and iPhones – so there's not much of an excuse not to download when you're in between lectures or waiting for public transport.

Altering the right to respond to free speech

The Attorney-General's department has proposed modifying the funding and service agreements of community agencies. In effect, these changes would limit the freedom of Community Legal Centres (CLCs) to advocate for legal reform. In 2012, Senator George Brandis, the self-proclaimed freedom fighter of Australians' right to express themselves, stated, "The measure of a society's commitment to political freedom is the extent of its willingness to respect the right of every one of its citizens to express their views, no matter how offensive, unattractive or eccentric they may seem to others." Those without the financial means to access legal representation outside of CLCs are often marginalised in one way or another. As a result, CLCs tend to be in a position to advise the government of unfair impacts of legislation.

The People's Champion, demonstrating with effortless tact his commitment to free speech, continuously challenged the right for the Race Discrimination Commissioner, Dr Tim Soutphommasane, to convey his views on the changes to the RDA during mid-year Senate estimates hearings. Yet another contradiction in an old white man's endless quest for "freedom". One skim of the applications of defamation laws in this country and the question arises, "Whose freedom is being defended exactly?"

Solidarity in life and death

Hamid Khazaei, a 24-year-old Iranian asylum seeker who contracted a skin disease on Manus Island, resulting in his passing on 5 September 2014, will be honoured with an Aboriginal passport. Organised by the Indigenous Social Justice Association (ISJA), and in agreement with Hamid's family, the gesture was in recognition of his unlawful suffering at the hands of the Australian government, and his parents wish to donate their son's organs to Australian citizens. ISJA sees the passport as an expression of solidarity from the traditional owners to new arrivals in Australia.

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Tharunka acknowledges the Bedegal and Gadigal people, the traditional custodians of the land on which the University stands.

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CALENDAR 2014

INDIGENOUS SOCIETY EVENTS 2014

O Week Day

24-28 January

SRG Stalls Indigenous student's invited others to come and participate in Indigenous painting and beading along with face paint!

Close the Gap Day BBQ

20 March

Reconciliation Week Celebrations

27th May - 3rd of June

Reconciliation Week Launch

27th May

Reconciliation Week BBQ

Thursday 29th May

Recognise Trivia Night

Thursday May 29th

Mabo Movie Night

June 3rd

ETHNO-CULTURAL PORTFOLIO

EVENTS 2014

Pictured:

Cross-Campus Protest for Queer Refugees in support of Ali Choudry
January 7th

Harmony Day BBQ

April 1st

Drinks at the Roundhouse

May 7th

Collective meeting in the old Activists Space, Blockhouse

Tuesday August 12

UPCOMING EVENTS

Week 9

Tharunka Launch Party
End Colonial Mentality Campaign

Week 10

Refugee Week
Intercultural/International Student

Lunch Monday 1-2PM

Week 11

Critical Race Discussion Group on Race, Poverty and Wealth

Week 12

Movie Screening

Week 13

Critical Race Discussion Group on Cultural Appropriation
Society Sucks Party - Thursday the 30th of October

End of Exams

End of Year Exam Party and Zines Launch
November

Licensing huge factor in Indigenous incarceration rates



Dayne Syron

It goes without saying that living in a rural area doesn't exactly offer you the same level of access to services that living in the city does. More importantly, these services are usually an essential part of everyday life.

Imagine not being able to get to the supermarket, or even the hospital. Imagine not being able to get to work.

Having been out to a few rural areas myself, I couldn't imagine how difficult it would be to live with-

out a license. It would be really difficult to get from place to place, especially when these distances are over several kilometers.

In an article I read by NITV's Tara Callinan, I was astounded to find that "of the 14 people convicted of drink driving in Moree - half were put behind bars - while all 124 people convicted of the same offence in Northern Sydney escaped jail time".

Callinan also stated in her article that the main reason for the high imprisonment rate of people from Moree, NSW was because they didn't have a license.

So it's no surprise that Aboriginal people in rural ar-

reas are getting caught driving without a license. What's even worse is that this is leading to high numbers of Indigenous people behind bars.

Evidence shows that, generally speaking, these drivers were not able to obtain a drivers license because they simply could not get their I.D., or they did not have the sufficient funds available to apply for their L's. On top of that, they found it hard to get someone to teach them.

Unfortunately, this problem is not only confined to the town of Moree - this is a similar story throughout the rest of NSW.

It was reported that 1,000 Indigenous peoples are currently serving time for offences relating to unlicensed driving. This is such a problematic situation, and one that I assume would have already been considered by the courts in sentencing.

Personally, I do not see the justice in sentencing someone to jail because of the disadvantaged position they are in. If anything, it is counter productive in doing so - and it's not rectifying the situation at all.

This is an even bigger problem when we look at the fact that Indigenous Australians are already overrepresented in the gaol system. If we want to prevent this problem from continuing, something needs to be done about it.

For there to be real equality, measures need to be put in place in order to address this issue. Otherwise, Indigenous people living in these communities, like Moree, will continue to be disadvantaged. Programs need to be created in order to enable Indigenous people living in rural areas to obtain their license and further prevent them from committing traffic offences, especially when they lead to a term of imprisonment.

Not only would it help in addressing the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples, but it would also improve their quality of life.

ITAS disbandment another setback to Indigenous higher education

Joshua Preece

When the Prime Minister announced that he hoped to be a "Prime Minister for Aboriginal Affairs", I was optimistic that Indigenous university students could look forward to progressive, or at least not regressive, Indigenous policy.

The Prime Minister's gaffes have been worrying enough. From his likening of Australia's British colonisation as "foreign investment...[in] unsettled or, um, scarcely settled" land, to his most recent argument that the arrival of the First Fleet was the defining moment in the history of this continent, one would hope that a PM for Aboriginal Affairs would have at least attended a cultural competency course. But it is his government's Indigenous policy direction that is most concerning.

For twenty years, the Indigenous Tuition Assistance Scheme (ITAS) has supported Indigenous undergraduate students throughout university studies. On Septem-

ber 1, without consultation or notice, it was announced that ITAS would be scrapped. Universities will now have to compete for grants. If Indigenous support units, such as UNSW's Nura Gili, receive less funding under the new funding arrangement, the consequence will be Indigenous support units having to choose which of their students are most in need of academic support.

The likely outcome is that Indigenous students who are achieving passing grades will be left to fend for themselves while those students "on the cusp" of passing are given priority. The great thing about the current ITAS arrangement is that by catering to all students, those who are achieving credits or distinctions can receive the academic support they need to do even better, while those students who are struggling can be given academic support that focuses on the basics. If stripped of the opportunity for academic support, there will be less high-achieving Indigenous university students and we will lose the opportunity to have more Indigenous thinkers and academic leaders.

Most Indigenous university students rely on ITAS to excel (and in many cases to pass) our subjects. But most of all, I have personally valued the mentoring that ITAS offers. There is a clear academic benefit to having high-achieving students check our assignments and help us with our exam preparations. But it is often overlooked that for many Indigenous students, our ITAS tutors are the most academically successful and ambitious people we know. Having people (especially those who are around our own age) who we can look up to and ask for advice is a benefit of ITAS that doesn't show up on our academic transcript.

I do not expect the disbanding of ITAS to be the last threat to Indigenous higher education. If deregulation of university fees proceeds, Indigenous students will have another obstacle in our pursuit of higher education. We can't cut our way to Closing the Gap, and the Prime Minister must be willing to match his pro-Indigenous rhetoric with Indigenous spending. Only then will we have a Prime Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.



Cindy El Sayed

i remember when i was 5
and my dad was reading me a book
it was about dinosaurs
and i had to help him with the words
because he could not wrap his soft syllables
around the hard angles of a new language

the first time I noticed someone being rude
to my mother, because of her english
i held her hand tightly
she didn't notice the lack of respect
that anglo australians gave her
but i shed angry tears
without letting her see

me and my mother at my parent teacher
interviews: I am 14
I notice the way some teachers
slow down their words when
she opens her mouth

my mum is driving me and some girls
that I am trying to be friends with
she makes a joke and I look at the two girls
in the back seat exchange a mocking glance
I never try to talk to them again

it is my sisters birthday she is 16
my dad has paid for a huge tent in the yard
a cake with striped pink candles and there is no
alcohol allowed
my dad tries to take a kids beer away
the kid laughs and says
'your parents can suck my dick'

to you people who see imperfect English
and think it means someone is stupid you
don't fucking understand anything
do not dare to disrespect them
for trying to learn a language
that has been used as a tool
to destroy

to that student who told my father to
go back to his 'fucking country'
I want to break you
and your colonial language
to pieces

HOW TO DESTROY A PEOPLE

How to destroy a people?
How to recreate history?

Convince them they are subordinate

The colour of their eyes, hair and skin
The shape of their lips and nose

The way they interact in their primitive, unsophisticated tongue
Their over-reliance on non-verbal gestures to communicate seemingly mundane messages

Make them less than what YOUR society consider to be human

Create legislation, doctrines and treaties
Detailing how "a foul race protected by their pollution from the doom that is their due"
can strive to be educated
and on the inside, become useful for the likes of you.

"They are a beastly people with a beastly religion."

Plunder their homes, natural resources, sacred sites

Save them.

Force them to convert to the one true religion,

Follow **Christ**.

Spread this all-saving, all-forgiving faith through the demonstration of contradictory virtues

Violence

Cruelty

Rape

As many methods to **Subjugate**, wherever possible.

Enlighten them

to the fact,

Their pain **isn't real**.

No sympathy, empathy or compassion is considered worthy

Of any other humanising characteristics

Reserved For Whiteness.

Divert their grain towards your more deserving civilisation

"They breed like rabbits... why isn't Gandhi dead yet?" said the ever-revered Churchill.

"4 million, what's another few dead?" says the white soldier striding pompously, well-fed.

Still Now,

the British-speaking elites are beholden to thee,

Forgiveness too easily played as their card,

Ignorance is synonymous with their advancement,

A pat on the head, a rub on the belly

Rewards not passed down to those snuffed out

Nor their families

Permanently scarred

And further insulted

by the **Manipulated**, White-Washed History.

No Reparations,

No Records of the truth.

Although you could not physically hold us for long,

Your ideology has won,

Your Imperial Romance,

Everlasting.

31 Famines, 120 Years of Rule!

Why not celebrate these Sub continental achievements?

Oh, great massacrists of the 20th century.

By Rachel Lobo

The above piece was inspired by the often forgotten 1943-44 Bengal Famine, which occurred under British Colonial Rule. Rakesh Krishnan Simha, New Zealand-based journalist and foreign affairs analyst, recently wrote an article titled "Remembering India's Holocaust", which would be a great place for one to start their reading if they'd like to delve further into educating themselves on this often overlooked atrocity.



INDIGENOUS CULTURE IS HERE AND NOW AT UNSW

Text & photography by Bronte Sevil

Here on Kensington campus, we are surrounded by many hidden histories, native flora, nearby rock engravings, as well as Nura Gili; the Indigenous programs unit. Because UNSW is home to over 50,000 students from more than 120 different countries, learning about Indigenous culture is important for fostering an understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

Despite Sydney's urban presence, the city is home to a rich Indigenous culture. Ben Kelly, Nura Gili academic and lecturer at UNSW, offers his thoughts on Sydney as an Aboriginal place.

"The city in which we live has a cultural heritage that stretches back for tens of thousands of years – through ice ages when the shoreline was several kilometres out and the harbour wasn't there, right up to today where it is a site of Indigenous en-

gagement with global intellectual, artistic and political movements. Being able to appreciate the Aboriginal dimension of our city makes it a more interesting place to be."

The Aboriginal dimension of Kensington campus began long ago, but we can only discern Indigenous peoples' way of life since the last Ice Age (around 6,000 years ago). It is likely that up until the mid-nineteenth century Indigenous peoples continued to use the land we now study on, the Bedegal people's land of the Eora nation (also referred to as Darug). This region was characterised by a complex wetland-sandhill system and was a key resource area for Indigenous peoples. Native flora and fauna was and still is used for food, tools and medicinal purposes and can be found at UNSW today.

25 different types of native flora grow

on Kensington campus. The Burrawang, found next to Sir John Clancy Auditorium, was traditionally used to make cakes from the pulp of its seeds. The Native Mint can be found on lower campus and was used to cure colds and headaches by crushing the leaves and placing them on the temple, or by infusing them in hot water as an inhalant. Nearby is the Prickly Paperbark, impressively used for roofing, blankets, canoes, baby slings and rafts to name a few. The downloadable app 'UNSW Green Trail' provides maps and interactive audio describing the native flora on our campus and is a great way to gain knowledge of Indigenous plants around UNSW.

Aboriginal rock engravings also form an important part of Indigenous culture and are not far from Kensington campus. Most engravings in Sydney today have been done by the Eora, Darug, and Darkinjung

peoples, but some have controversially been re-grooved by local councils. Just three kilometres from Kensington campus, Aboriginal rock engravings can be found along the coastline from around 5,000 years ago. A shark engraving can be seen on the East Tamarama to Bondi coastal walk, and further along at the Bondi golf course there are many engravings of marine life, men and creation ancestors. These engravings were and still are of great importance to Indigenous peoples, as they hold knowledge of Dreamtime stories and instructions on seasonal use of resources.

Nura Gili, the Indigenous Programs Unit at UNSW, takes these histories and maintains the livelihood of Aboriginal Sydney. Its name, which means 'place of light/fire' was inspired by an Aboriginal campsite found nearby at the Prince of Wales hospital that was buried 8,000 years ago.

Ben Kelly explains how Nura Gili embodies Indigenous culture today.

"Culture consists of the shared learned beliefs, practices, and styles of expression and interaction of any identifiable group, so besides the 'cultural' events that we hold throughout the year, it is expressed every day in the behaviour of our Indigenous students and staff. I think the most important way that we maintain the livelihood of Indigenous culture is by providing a space for its everyday expression."

Tyrone Kelly, an Indigenous student at UNSW agrees: "it really is exceptional to see that even after tens of thousands of years Indigenous traditions are still being embodied by Nura Gili."

Exploring the Aboriginal dimension of Kensington campus allows us to gain a greater understanding of Aboriginal Sydney today.

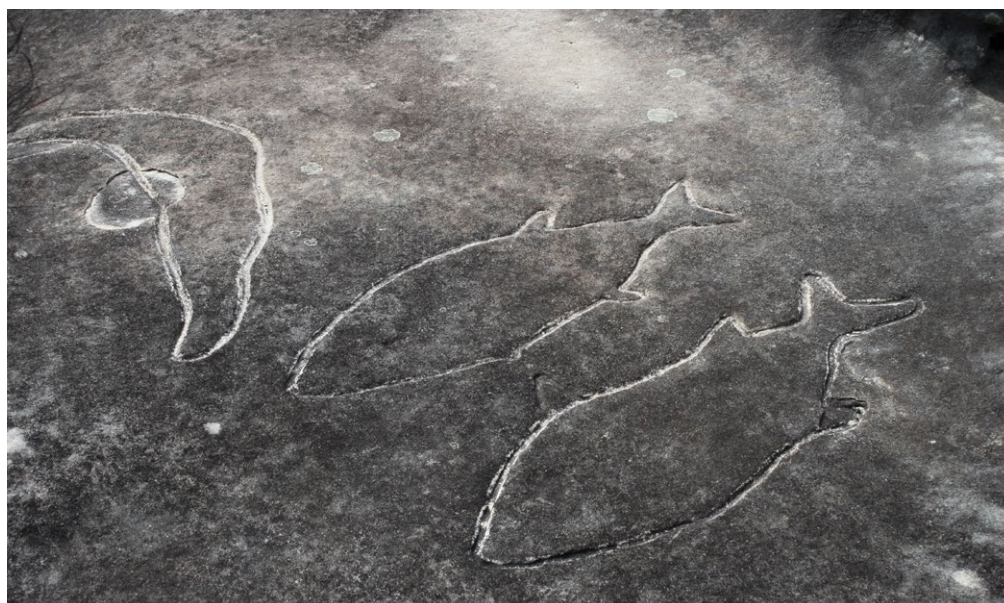
Ben Kelly believes that "there is a widespread tendency for non-Indigenous people to imagine that 'authentic' Indigenous people only exist in the past in a way that we don't do with English or Greek or Chinese or any other non-Indigenous identity."

Fortunately, though, he believes this attitude wears away with the help of relevant courses such as ATSI1012: Aboriginal Sydney.

"Our Indigenous Studies Major and Minor are available to students studying in most degrees at UNSW and are tailored to allow students to reflect on the intersection of the other disciplines they study and Indigenous people. This is especially useful for those students whose professional life after university might involve working with Indigenous people or organisations. Most of our individual courses are also open to study as general education electives."

Learning about native flora, rock engravings and Nura Gili allows UNSW to be seen

in a new light. When we sit in the seats of our lecture rooms, we should remember that this is Bedegal land and that Indigenous culture forms an important part of our campus today.



Top to bottom: **1.** Aboriginal rock engravings of two fish and what may be a boomerang. **2.** Tamarama to Bondi coastal walk: Aboriginal rock engraving of a whale or shark. **3.** The Burrawang pictured next to Sir John Clancy Auditorium. Opposite page: Aboriginal rock engravings at Bondi golf course. Photo: Bronte Sevil

PAN-AFRICANISM IN THE AUSTRALIAN WORKPLACE IS A FAIL



Josephine Omashaye Itsheye Ajuyah

Pan-Africanism in the Australian workplace is a FAIL – I found this out the hard way when two of my placements for my degree in Social Work failed last semester. There were many reasons why my placements did not work out, but a major reason, and the one I shall be exploring here, was related to the issue of my appearance. Simply put, my body modifications (that is, tattoos, piercings and scars) were not seen as “professional”.

The reason I have body modifications is because it is who I am. Body modification makes me feel more present in my body, from the actual process which causes pain (and nothing puts you more in the present than physical pain), to the result, which reaffirms the possibilities that is my body. Body modification is control over my body, hence over my life; it is me reconfiguring normative standards of beauty. For me, body modification and my blackness are interrelated, because all my life I have felt shame for my dark skin, flat nose, big lips, bum and afro/nappy hair. Body modification has been a way for me to accept my body, to love it, and hence, by default, to embrace my African features – that is my blackness.

I identify as an Australian-Canadian of Nigerian descent. This is because my parents are from Nigeria, but I was born in Canada and raised mostly in Australia. My body modifications, as an acceptance and expression of my blackness, do not come solely from Nigerian culture. Instead, my piercings, tattoos and scars are appropriations from a variety of nations from all over Africa, such as the ear and lip stretching practised by some Ethiopian women, nose piercings popularised by the Berber and Beja peoples of North Africa (Agboh-Stroude, 2013, Body piercing: evolution or revolution, para. 1-3), and the “geometric facial features” of the Nuer people of Sudan (Greenberg, 2010, Scarification, para. 3) to name a few. In fact, it can be argued that the most popular form of body modification in Nigeria is skin lightening, where a 2012 World Health Organisation (WHO) report found that 77 per cent of women in Nigeria use skin-lightening products – “the world’s highest percentage”, according to the Economist (G.P, 2012, para.2). It can only be surmised that this popularity of skin-lightening products among Nigerian women is a manifestation of their want to appeal to Eurocentric ideals of beauty. However, I am done with the perpetual self-loathing that comes from wanting to look European. I want to embrace my body, my blackness.

It is because I have been raised in Canada and Australia, and by parents practising mostly western ideals, that I have very little insight into Nigerian culture.

Thus, I have formed my own African/Black identity, one that homogenises cultures and aesthetics from all over the African continent and from African Americans. This identity can be referred to as a form of “Pan-Africanism”, a movement which calls for “African unity, nationalism, independence, political and economic cooperation and historical and cultural awareness”, according to African history academic Alistair Boddy-Evans (Boddy-Evans, 2014, What is Pan-Africanism?, para. 2). Hence, my appearance is a combination of the aesthetics and cultures from all over Africa, including from African Americans, and it is not specific to a particular country or tribe – only to Africa.

Within Australian society, however, it does not matter that my body modifications are an expression and acceptance of my blackness. Australia is a western country, and in the West, piercings, tattoos and other body modifications are stigmatised. There has been very little study within Australia on the impact of people having body modifications in the workplace, with the last national study occurring in 1998 through a National Drug Strategy Household Survey, which found that 10 per cent of Australians had tattoos (Urban, 2010, para. 4). According to Dr Mair Underwood from the University of Queensland, this percentage is “conservative by today’s standards” (Urban, 2010, para.5). Therefore, an inference on the treatment of people with body modifications in the Australian workforce must be taken from American research.

American research shows that people view those with piercings and tattoos less favourably than those without, even if said people have body modifications themselves. For example, a Forbes 2001 study found that college students with or without body modifications of their own viewed themselves as “being significantly different” from other bodily modded individuals “in all big five personality dimensions” (Digman 1990 in Miller, McGlashan Nicols & Eure, 2009, p.623). Hence, people with body modifications are very “othered”. In this same study, subjects also rated individuals with body modifications as being “lower in extraversion (enthusiasm, assertiveness etc.), openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness (thorough, careful, vigilant traits, in Miller, McGlashan Nicols & Eure, 2009, p.623). Similarly, Chen (2007) found that even though 44 per cent of managers have tattoos or body piercings (other than in their ears), 42 per cent still said that their “opinion of someone would be lowered by the person’s visible body art” (cited in Miller, McGlashan Nicols & Eure, 2009, p.626). Also, within this study, 81 per cent of respondents thought piercings in places other than the ears was unprofessional, with 76 per cent saying the same about visible tattoos – therefore, 67 per cent of employees reported concealing their tattoos or piercings when at work (Chen, 2007, cited in Miller, McGlashan Nicols & Eure, 2009, p.626).

There are many theories as to why people in the western workforce do not like those with piercings and tattoos, with one of them being that people prefer to work with those they perceive as having “affiliative personalities” (Tett & Murphy, 2002, p.238, cited in Miller, McGlashan Nicols & Eure, 2009 p.627) – that is, people who are “friendly, sociable, helpful, skilful in dealing with people and open about their feelings” (Mehrabian,

Affiliative Tendency Defined, para. 1). However, people with piercings and tattoos for whatever reason are stereotyped as not having affiliative personalities.

This is not just bad news for me, but for people of colour in general who have been found to have more body modifications than their Caucasian counterparts. For example, in the United States, 47 per cent of Hispanics, 33 per cent of African Americans and 28 per cent of Caucasians “currently have or have had tattoos or body piercings in the past” (Laumann & Demick 2006, cited in Miller, McGlashan Nicols & Eure, 2009, p.623). This means that people of colour are at greater risk of being discriminated against in the western workforce. Such discrimination can take the form of “biases in performance evaluation”, only being offered “dead-end or low level jobs”, “lower pay and benefits” and “lower promotion rates”, to name a few (Ilgen & Youtz, 1986, cited in Miller, McGlashan Nicols & Eure, 2009, p.622).

So what is a person of colour such as myself to do but to take all my body piercings off so I have a chance in the Australian workforce? Of course there are jobs out there that permit body modifications, but the one for which I’ve spent all these years studying for – Social Work – has proven to not be one of them. My Pan-African identity disadvantages me in the Australian workforce, yet I refuse to give in to its demand that I take on a more Eurocentric appearance. There has to be another way, because I refuse to hide my blackness – I refuse to go backwards.

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By Roydon Ng

BEING ASIAN-AUSTRALIAN IN AN ARTS DEGREE:

EXPERIENCES AND THOUGHTS OF AN ASIAN-AUSTRALIAN ARTS STUDENT AT UNSW

Me: "Hi ..."

[Person looks away]

Class then begins with "introduce yourselves" and "what do you hope to achieve from university?". Person says meet new people. Tutor tells class to shake hands and say hi; person greets everyone but me.

At the poster sale, whilst flipping through the display, person pushes me away and looks at the poster. Not once, but twice. Person calls his mate over who says: "Good on Ya". People notice, but say nothing.

During class discussions, I state my opinion in light of my ethno-cultural background as the majority of classmates stare shocked that I can speak. Person every time submits counter argument laden with subtly racial put downs.

Lecturer asks for the name of students, who give answers and engage in small conversations. I give answer, lecturer gives blunt yes, no response.

Hello, my name is Roydon Ng. I am a proud Asian-Australian arts student at the university where we are told never to stand still. And no, I am not referring to dancing on the floor of the Roundhouse, where you have to move otherwise you'll get stuck. Being a minority is a unique opportunity, and as part of probably the second-smallest niche on campus – the Asian-Australian male arts student – you tend to notice a few things (and to say every now and then would probably be an understatement).

Put simply, I am Asian in a predominantly White learning environment, thus I am often outcasted even when I attempt to engage with others. Don't even get started on asking why I am even doing an Arts degree at UNSW, as what gives you the right to criticise my rebellion against the stereotypical norm, or even suggest that I should be in the Australian School of Business instead of the Morven Brown. To me, it seems that I have adopted the modern values of Australia, such as multiculturalism and equality, to a greater extent than my fellow counterparts – who, despite their misconceptions, I continue to respect.

I must say I love it (sarcasm warning) when in history, politics or international relations, most – if not all – of the curriculum is Eurocentric. What is even better than this is the success of my peers in understanding and applying the ways of the colonial powers through their socio-cultural approaches in the twenty-first century today.

Why is it that when the colonised stand up and make polite requests, their introduction is interpreted as a declaration of war? Likewise in the classroom and society, I will continue to challenge the socio-cultural norm in our society today, where minorities are often silenced.

When people say how far we've come in Australia, I stop and think, "Really mate? Can you really say we've made progress when you've only begun to notice us?" In my opinion, minorities still continue to lack the respect they deserve. And to generalise minorities as one

monolithic collective is also of great folly.

Racism and the lack of affirming cultural diversity takes place with many in both the spoken word, subtle actions, and even the lack of words, actions and commitments. Twenty-first century Australia marks about 30 years since our country officially became multicultural, or rather, when it was proclaimed. However, even in the post-millennial decades, Australians all face great challenges in the continual affirmation of cultural diversity.

Rampant attitudes of the White Australia Policy, along with a socio-cultural hierarchy, continues to flourish in what is supposed to be a multicultural country. It strikes a saddening tone that the discrimination of persons with the use of the "I'm Australian" excuse in such a context continues to be permissible. This details in fact how "un-Australian" he or she really is. Victims of racism need not be silent, as inaction against racist attitudes and behaviours in the long run gives rise once again to the hierarchy of racial discrimination.

The term "all Australians" in the context of racial culture should be abolished, as we ought to strive to truly implement a unified multicultural nation where Australian means "all". Whether it be taking a stand and marching against racism, or being seated at an Australian citizenship ceremony, there is progress to be achieved in the affirmation of cultural diversity, the death of a hierarchy in racial superiority, and the triumph of multiculturalism over the old ways of the past – Australia not only can and needs to lead the way.

Just because I happen to have light-coloured skin, doesn't make me less Aboriginal.

A. Luxembourg

There are a few things I am proud of – one of those is my peoples continued survival and fight against genocide that has been continually, since the invasion of 1788, perpetrated against Indigenous Australians.

However, many people fail to recognise my aboriginality, based simply on the fact that my skin is, well, light skinned.

In doing this, or outright denying it, it is perpetuating the genocide – the cultural destruction – and attempting to whiteify Aboriginal people.

That, of course, is the real crux of the issue. The policies, the culture of assimilation, and "breeding it out" are so entrenched in Australian culture, that if you have light skin, your own heritage is often denied to you by others – thus continuing the path of genocide and cultural destruction that was set up by the thieving colonialist bastards.

I am a proud Guringai and Wemba Wemba woman. I refuse to be told that I am not Aboriginal enough based on my light skin. And I most certainly refuse to allow myself to be torn from my culture by the thieving colonialist bastards.

MY EXPERIENCE AS AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AT UNSW



在UNSW唸書的時間，除了學校的課業外，我也利用課餘的時間參加一些校內的活動。身為一個國際學生，因為有了這些校內社團，讓我從未感到無聊寂寞。不僅曾經參加了校園內的查經班，也跟Arc組織的海外志工隊於去年暑假在斐濟進行兩周的志工活動，更特別的是，志工們給了我一次難忘的斐濟生日派對！

除此之外，我也對美食相當有興趣！雪梨是個充滿各國料理美食的地方，不僅是在校園周遭，或是距離學校不遠的市中心都有許多令人食指大動的美食餐廳。其中在市區的Mamak是我經常造訪的一家，希望大家有機會也可以去嚐嚐看啦！

Name: Brett Lai Kuan Yu
Degree: Master of Commerce
Home country: Taiwan

姓名：賴冠宇
學位：商業碩士
國家：台灣

Studying at UNSW was lots of fun. As an international student, I never felt bored or lonely, because the university has heaps of societies and extra-curricular activities to participate in. During my studies, I not only joined F.O.C.U.S (the campus Christian fellowship), but I also went on an overseas volunteer trip with Arc – during which, I celebrated my birthday with a whole team of other students. These experiences have given me countless memories... Besides that, I also enjoyed food – LOTS of it! There are so many nice and exotic restaurants around uni, which you can easily reach. If you would like to travel a bit further, to the city, there are even more options for you! (One of my favourite restaurants is Mamak).

OUR POST RACIAL AUSTRALIA

Sonala De Silva

Racism in Australia? Many of you probably think that the levels of racism permeating society have decreased over the years. One would expect that because Australia prides itself over the fact that it is “so multicultural”, racism would slowly start diminishing along with its impact on the lives of people who have done nothing to deserve its affliction. Well, if you were like me, your assumptions were wrong.

A recent survey compiled by the Scanlon Foundation found that 19 per cent of the Australian population were discriminated against on the basis of either skin colour, religious beliefs or ethnic origin, up from 12 per cent in 2012. People focus a lot of their attention on what they think are the flaws and imperfections of other individuals, most particularly, members of oppressed groups. I personally think that everyday, more forms of oppression are being created rather than working to eliminate the existing ones. Society is creating oppressions that don't need to be made. Queer or mentally ill? These people should not be oppressed by things that they cannot control, or by things they do not want to change. As long as they are happy with themselves and not harming anyone around them, what is the big deal?

Based on what we wear, how we talk or express ourselves, the food we eat, or simply our appearance, we would be kidding ourselves if we remained under the impression that discrimination can only be experienced by a limited few. In reality, most of us either experience or participate in such acts, whether we are conscious of this or not. Personally, I know that when I am with friends, we sometimes engage in conversations that in fact do include racial slurs or stereotypes. My closest group of friends are from ethnically diverse backgrounds, and as a friendship group, we like to explore each other's cultures, and we definitely like to try each other's cuisines. If someone was to say something culturally insensitive to us, we would feel resentful towards them. At the same time, there would be no problem for us to sit in our friendship groups and hold perceptions of, and essentially judge, other people based on their backgrounds. Upon reflection, I feel a mixture of guilt and anger.

People of Colour (PoC) and Women of Colour (WoC) are considered minority groups at this university, and more broadly, in this country. Unsurprisingly, we are certainly not a minority. Students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds actually make up quite a significant part of the student body of UNSW, a little over 41 per cent.

I was having a conversation with a friend the other day and she was telling me about how she thought she was confused. Throughout the course of just one day, she heard the same racial slurs repeated by numerous people around her. I'm not saying that I am innocent and have never said anything I regret; human beings aren't perfect, and we make mistakes. We say things which can be interpreted by others in many different ways.

Has anyone been asked what nationality they are, and when you asked that person to guess, they just threw a random country's name at you because of their belief you look like you “fit” that category? I am Sri Lankan, but get mistaken for Indian or Fijian Indian a majority of the time. Apparently “they're the same thing”. They most definitely are not. Yes, the locations of these countries are within relative proximity of each other on the world map. Yes, the skin tones of our populations could be perceived as indistinguishable, however, that does not mean our values, ethics and customs are identical. Based on my lived experience, I can say this with certainty.

For instance, my boyfriend is Indian. He was born in India and migrated to Australia with his family when he was still a child. If you took one look at him, you probably wouldn't guess that he was Indian, or that he wasn't born in Sydney. He doesn't have the “stereotypical” accent, nor does he have the “stereotypical” dark skin. Place him next to me and ask a stranger who they thought was Indian and born overseas? My bet is that they'll say it's me.

My point is, embarrassingly, that many people look at a person, and in a number of seconds, have come to unreasonable conclusions. As Australia continues to embrace multiculturalism, what it fails to do is appreciate every individual and who they are as person. A lot of people are afraid or even simply unable to attempt activities they would like, as a result of either having experienced, or in the fear of experiencing, racial discrimination. I mean, if one PoC from one particular non-white culture was to do or say something, then automatically every other person also from that culture is perceived to act the same, right? So many innocent people are being excluded or treated differently solely on the basis of the colour of their skin.

I'm a Sydney-born Sri Lankan girl. I was born and raised here, exactly the same as any other Sydney-born girl, with the exception of having brown skin. So what? That automatically makes me different? Less worthy of respect? I think not. Race is not something that can be controlled nor changed, but it is definitely something that can be embraced and should be embraced by individuals and the wider society.

PEOPLE OF COLOUR COLLECTIVE

1-2 PM EVERY TUESDAY • LEVEL 2, Arc @ BASSER STEPS

INTERCULTURAL/INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SPACE



Engineer your own path



Zeina Tebbo

Engineering, as many of you know, has traditionally been dominated by the male species for years, and it is only recently women have been emerging as pioneers and leaders in the field.

Being a Muslim Lebanese girl, on the other hand, has definitely had its fair share of spotlight in the media. On the one hand, some portrayals have depicted “lebos” as raving Subaru drivers who love their kebabs with a lot of garlic. Conversely, in light of both local and international affairs, Islam has received its fair share of serious undertones. These portrayals vary from being exclusive, extreme, ultra conservative, and – the one often used – radical.

For me starting university, there was always a worry that people would judge me as an individual based on those paradigms. I was concerned that I would never be that loud outspoken girl in high school, and that I would be doomed to be lonely for the rest of my five-year course.

My first semester at uni was definitely daunting. In the first week, I recall catching the wrong bus, getting lost on my way to the Red Centre, and I could not keep up with the rambling of lecturers while trying to make notes. To make matters worse, the day I went to get my student card, my white hijab blended with the white backdrop, so my head looked like it was floating in the air.

A few weeks go by, and you realise a few familiar faces – like that guy who knows all the answers to questions in tutorials, or the girl that asks “smart-sounding” questions during a lecture, or even the person who still feels that knee-high socks and sandals are a fashion statement. Noticing these familiar faces gave me a sigh of relief that I was in the correct building for the day

and that I was starting to know my way around town.

A changing point was definitely final semester exams. Sitting in the library, you notice several students with the same workbook and stressing over the work load. That basis of similarity was a starting point. Without even asking each other for our names, we had already been talking for 40 minutes, venting about how hard the course has been, how catching the bus is not as easy as it seemed, and how MATH1131 was unlike 3 unit maths in high school. This happened during several occasions, and it was very warming to see those same faces in Semester 2, and even more encouraging when you realise those same people are studying the same degree.

Four-and-a-half years later, those familiar faces ended up becoming my friends – and they now have names. More so, it is through those friends you make more friends, who then become mutual friends. Since then, I can definitely say I found my own spot on the library lawn with my clique; study sessions have definitely become less productive, and my energy and outspoken attitude from high school is back. I also guess that after a few long years together, people learn that not all Lebanese people like kebabs, and not all are hoons on the roads, and that some Muslims do integrate and are inclusive with their day-to-day activities. And by extension, a Lebanese Muslim girl can become a pioneering engineer in the future.

My biggest advice to people about navigating their way through uni is: don’t be shy about your identity. Your culture and nationality is what makes you unique, and you will be surprised at the similarities you may share with people regardless of the depiction in the media.

Race to Stereotype

Dictionary.com defines it as a contest of speed; a competition; to achieve superiority. It also defines it as a group of persons, related by common descent or heredity. Race – it is ironic how much these two meanings overlap with each other, the quite literal transformation pertaining to its meaning. It is a global race of the races, subconsciously ingrained into the minds of the human race.

An individual will see and perceive a cultural perception first and get to know the person second.

There is this issue nowadays of cultural stereotypes. An individual will see and perceive a cultural perception first and get to know the person second. And what really sucks, is that we have come to accept it; come to accept that people will make assumptions dependant on the complexion of my skin, the colour of my hair, the size of my facial features, providing this indestructible barrier preventing successful assimilation into any apparent society.

News reports of people on public transport verbally and physically attacking people of colour, treating those who may be permanent inhabitants as pariahs. Like we are somehow infiltrating and detracting from your ideal Australia. Why does it need to be filmed in order for society to react (although not achieving anything but a few angry comments below the article)? These too-often scenarios are played over and over again, experienced on a daily basis. People are attacked

because they are not speaking your “native tongue” – these minute misalignments of culture, fundamental to oppression and hierarchical pursuits, as one attempts to reach superiority and show their dominance over other races.

Stereotypes have created a distortion of how every individual should be.

I feel that I often need to prove myself in order to gain acceptance. If I want to be perceived a certain way, I will have to put in double the effort; critical of my actions. Okay, so maybe you don’t feel this way. Maybe it’s just my weird self. However, this ordeal of racial stereotyping has played such a significant role – rooted into my personality. There is this constant barrier that prevents me from just smoothly transitioning into new environments because I must break this stereotype that is associated with my culture. She must be this... She must like that... Stereotypes have created a distortion of how every individual should be.

It infuriates me that I have come to accept this – to acknowledge the fact that I will be seen in a different perspective because of my race. Being so careful in my surroundings so as to not give someone the excuse to criticise or judge me harshly with their underlying assumption of my culture. Please, for future reference, treat us as equals, and treat me like the Australian that I am.

Why the Recognise Campaign is bullshit

Anna Amelia

By now you've probably seen the Recognise Campaign's logo – a red "R" inside a black circle.

You probably also know that this campaign is about promoting awareness of the movement to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the Australian Constitution.

Well, frankly, I find the whole damn thing bullshit; from the fact that this campaign's senior leadership is white, to the fact that the bipartisan support means nothing when these two parties have historically caused our people and communities so much damage – I think that in itself says a lot about the campaign.

The idea that constitutional recognition will help with reconciliation is bullshit without a treaty first.

We must remember that the Australian Constitution is a document that is not fit for a modern sovereign nation.



The ruinous state of Indigenous leadership: Why there may never be an Aboriginal prime minister

Blake Mooney

There is a tale many Indigenous Australians would know about two fishermen travelling down a river collecting the spoils from their respective crab traps. One dutifully locks his plunder in a large bucket with a sturdy lid, while the other stores his loot in a separate bucket without a lid. When questioned why he wasn't worried about his night's dinner escaping, he simply declares: "These are Aboriginal crabs – if one tries to lift itself out, the others will drag it back down pretty quick."

Of course, some people will take great exception to this story. These same people will realise they're the object of my article anyway – the contrarian voices of the professionally offended, desperate to destroy Indigenous leadership, while at the same time singing from a song sheet of sovereignty and exceptionalism. I gladly dedicate my ramblings to these fine men and women who, if in possession of nothing else, are flush with passion and free time.

I see a malady within our communities, and its manifestation cheapens our involvement in public discourse. Far-left fetishism of our cultures has convinced us, and the wider Australian public, that Indigenous people must forever be of the same mind. "Splitting the community" is a common accusation of treachery, as if we're all too fragile to engage in partisan political debate, lest our cultural connections simply cease to be.

Too often we respond to Indigenous opinions with racist contempt, calling Warren Mundine a lap dog for

white Australia, and Noel Pearson opportunistic and "haughty" – even Marcia Langton gets a regular spray from the anti-opinion brigade, despite being one of our most respected academics.

Over and over again, provocative ideas from Indigenous leaders are met with a maelstrom of keyboard combat with the aim of discrediting their Aboriginality rather than their opinions. These warriors, often from the utopian left, would sooner evacuate all Indigenous voices from the public sphere than allow someone like Warren Mundine to speak his mind.

Here's a dangerous idea: Mundine doesn't need the endorsement of Indigenous Australia every time he opens his mouth. To think otherwise is to insult the wealth of dissenting opinion that exists healthily in our communities. It also completely devalues his public policy experience and intellect as a person.

Another symptom of this obsessive consultative mentality is the bipartisan nature of the mellowed policy we see coming from our governments – policy devoid of enthusiasm, argument and fervour. Destined to never offend; preordained to never work. Bipartisan indifference clearly isn't working.

So, instead of trashing Mundine or Pearson for their views, let's set about offering up more. Let's demolish this fallacy that Indigenous communities only deserve one opinion on every matter. A bit of biff, in a policy sense, won't destroy our communities – indeed, it may be the only way we'll ever build them up.

Blake is a former National ATSI Officer for the National Union of Students and is the current Chair of the Indigenous Policy Caucus for NSW Young Labor.

WOMEN OF COLOUR COLLECTIVE

10-11AM EVERY FRIDAY • LEVEL 2, Arc @ BASSER STEPS

INTERCULTURAL/INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SPACE

Deaths in custody still rise

Indigenous People and the Criminal Justice System

Rebekah Hatfield

With the recent death of 22-year-old Aboriginal woman Julieka Dhu, who died while being held in police custody, the Indigenous community is outraged by the ongoing injustices they face within the criminal justice system.

Sadly, Aboriginal deaths in custody are not an infrequent occurrence, with statistics showing they are on the rise.

There have also been several high-profile deaths in custody in the last 20 years. Most notably, the death of Western Australian man Mr Ward, who died in the back of a state transportation vehicle while being moved to a correctional facility.

What is exceptionally disturbing about this case was that on being examined, Mr Ward was found to have severe burning to a majority of his body.

It was assumed that the burns were caused by the metal interior of the van, which overheated when the

air conditioning broke; the day of his death being an extraordinarily hot day in outback Western Australia.

What these two cases demonstrate is that the occurrence of a death in custody is not necessarily connected to the severity of the offences. Both of these cases were in relation to traffic offences, with Ms Dhu being held due to unpaid traffic fines.

Additionally, in a report by NITV, there appears to be a huge inconsistency between the sentencing of Indigenous people when compared to non-Indigenous people who have committed similar offences.

NITV's Tara Callinan reports that of the 14 people convicted of drink driving charges in Moree, NSW, half were put behind bars. In contrast, all 124 people convicted of the same offence in northern Sydney escaped jail time.

Could you imagine a white offender from an affluent north Sydney suburb sentenced to death because of a traffic offence? No, I'm sure you couldn't, but cases like these are on the rise in the Indigenous community.

Last year, the Australian Institute of Criminology

conducted a study on the rates of deaths in custody. This report found that although over the last decade Aboriginal deaths in custody have decreased, they dramatically increase in the years 2008-2013.

These incidents may be on the rise due to the increasing number of Indigenous people in prison, with statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics last year showing that 27 per cent of the Australian prison population identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Despite only making up three per cent of the Australian population, over a quarter of the prison population identifies as Indigenous.

The fact that Indigenous people continue to die while in custody, particularly when in relation to a driving offence, is a huge injustice.

I can only feel for the families who have lost their loved ones due to these ongoing systematic issues. I ask all Australians to demand more from our governments and police, because until something changes, injustices and tragedies like these will continue to happen.

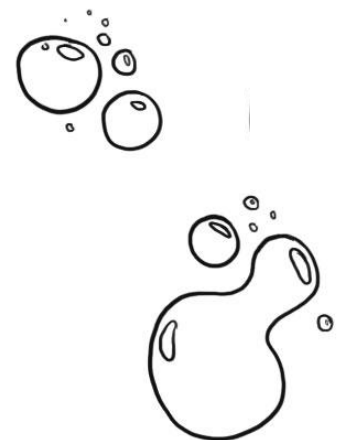
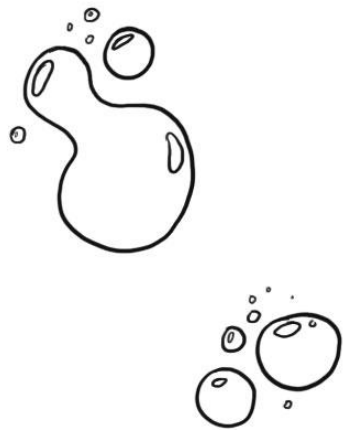
White Privilege

In early September, I went to court and watched a 21-year-old Indigenous man get sentenced for violent offences. A Facebook-stalk of him showed me how interlocked our social circles are. A peer of mine who visited court at a similar time, for a similar purpose, told me about how the judge she sat with was a family friend.

I can never forget my first few weeks of law school. The conversation that washed over me was depressingly alien to me. They talked of how high their HSC marks were and the holiday destinations they'd just come back from. Their problems were banalities to me. Their humour seemed derisive. Their laptops were incredibly light Macs.

I've worked hard over the years to not resent the bubble of wealth, opportunity and comfort that my peers are accustomed to. I remember my introduction to this world, listening to an acquaintance of mine complain about the way her friends, unlike her, had it easy. Where their parents had paid for her friends' holidays, she (the trooper) had saved the money she'd earned in a cushy retail job (which I assume she'd received due to her clearly upper class presentation) and paid for her holiday herself. What she did not or could not understand is that she was able to do this because her parents were supporting her. Just as she was able to achieve an ATAR in the high 90s because she had the capacity to study and the resources to achieve. This example could have been any number of conversations I've had with any number of my peers.

It took me a long time to realise that she could be seen as much a victim of her circumstances as I am of mine. While my journey to law school has been fraught with perils, it has definitely been enlightening and character building. I am grateful that I have been indoctrinated into worlds other than the privileged law school world. For those who haven't, I urge you to recognise that the social justice issues we learn about in law school aren't hypothetical and removed scenarios for all. If you are the privileged student of my depiction, I'm not asking for your guilt. I am asking you to acknowledge your privilege and to carry around this knowledge like you carry your incredibly light Mac.





Ugly is beautiful is ugly

Well, if you're ethnic, or something.

Was the cry that ethnic women, fat women, and the like, did not have to conform to Western ideals of beauty refreshing in the sixties? The cry is today echoed by everyone, from states, interest groups, East Asian plastic surgeons, to Chris Rock, to Meghan Trainor. The voice is unanimous: "these women are beautiful too." Heck, all women are beautiful.

My discomfort with this discourse started thanks to a high school economics teacher – he said, "The demand for labour is derived demand." McDonald's cashiers are wanted because burgers are wanted. Likewise, women with the right waist-hip ratio were desirable because fertility was desirable, and it stuck. Often women wanted light skin, because it implied their wealth excused them from outdoor work, and it stuck. For too long, Chinese women had bound feet because it indicated obedience and daintiness (well done, Men! Marked for wealth and virtue!), and it stuck too. It stuck until history changed what indicated the primordial triad of values: virtue, health and wealth.

It sounds like a paint by numbers chore now, but I am not saying a Stone Age chauvinist with an ENTP Myers-Briggs score woke up one day and said, "Right! We like them symmetrical. Big boobs, small waist, and eyes not too close together please. Shows they're healthy and wealthy, which is good for me." I believe whole villages, whole towns, whole states, whole empires of men (and women) gradually thought and bought that. They affirmed it until beauty became a value in its own right. With the advent of modern imperialism and globalisation, race got into it like never before. The range of physical

criteria to choose and craft "beauty" out of grew broader.

African American women did not start relaxing their hair, and East Asian women did not start curling them en masse in the jazz age because White was automatically beautiful. White, among other things, indicated class, power, modernity, which hangs around the "wealth" camp – and that **made** it beautiful. Herein lies the problem: Being physically beautiful only means you have something that is considered good in almost everyone's opinion. That's pretty dope; but it does not mean value, it only means acceptance.

When the chorus chants "Black/big/monolid/[insert something wrong here] is beautiful", it is not a chant of self-determination. It is a prayer to be accepted, to be included as being beautiful **too**. Pick me! Pick me! – to be accepted into that exotic/disabled aisle. The calls of "Pick me! Pick me!" will extend the aisle longer and longer, till the manager decides it is too long and they should section it off, put it back into inventory, or do a stocktake sale one day, or something.

If I could change discourse, the chant would be "___ is ugly! I am ugly" – because ugly is ok. We do not need to be beautiful – the value of beauty is just derived value.

You have every reason to judge this as too abstract, too artsy, too impractical. I'm not sure about the first two accusations, but it is definitely impractical. Corsets were impractical too. So was foot-binding. So are high heels. We recognise beauty because we bought it. Let's buy into ugliness.

by Rhoda Gao

HOW TO BE-COME COOLER THAN OTHER BROWN GIRLS:

get really into professional wrestling
 listen to post-rock
 eat lots of pizza
 have an obscure taste in comedy
 call people "mate" and "dude" and "man"
 wear collared shirts with ironic prints
 invest in cryptocurrency
 play indie video games
 have lots of progressive friends
 smoke weed
 watch documentaries
 educate yourself about state politics
 don't cry after a breakup
 wait 8 months between haircuts
 worship Spike Jonze
 drink beer
 wear the same overcoat every day in winter
 drive with confidence
 don't fuss about walking home alone at night
 buy OFWGKTA merchandise
 have a sex buddy
 boast about never attending class
 reference The Simpsons as much as possible
 start a band
 forget everyone's birthday
 make your internet presence as ironic as possible
 only move your upper body at concerts
 never clean the shower
 always wear the same eight shirts
 become cooler than other brown girls
 become cooler than other white girls
 become a white boy

By Sarah Fernandes

MUSINGS BY SONALA DE SILVA

Being a woman in today's society, there are still so many expectations and restrictions placed upon myself and others. Being a woman of colour, however, just increases these. I was born in Sydney, though my parents are immigrants. With them, they brought the cultures and values of their motherland. With them, they brought ideals and expectations they hoped that their daughter and son would take on. I consider myself lucky. Even though my parents are immigrants, they did come to this country with an open mind. Coming from a South Asian background, it is safe to say that men and women have different expectations placed upon them by their families. My brother is allowed to pretty much do anything he wants, but it is not that easy for me, because I've been told these simple words over and over again throughout my life – "you are a girl". Apart from gender inequality being a strong issue in my culture, the issue of mental health is also one that is strongly ignored. Mental illness is almost considered non-existent. It is something that is considered shameful, and one would be told to "act normal", as if it is something they are able to shut off or are purposely putting on. Although these two issues relate to every human being, I strongly feel due to stigmatisation, lack of resources and cross-cultural understanding in our society, that people with ethnic parents are more affected by them in this country.

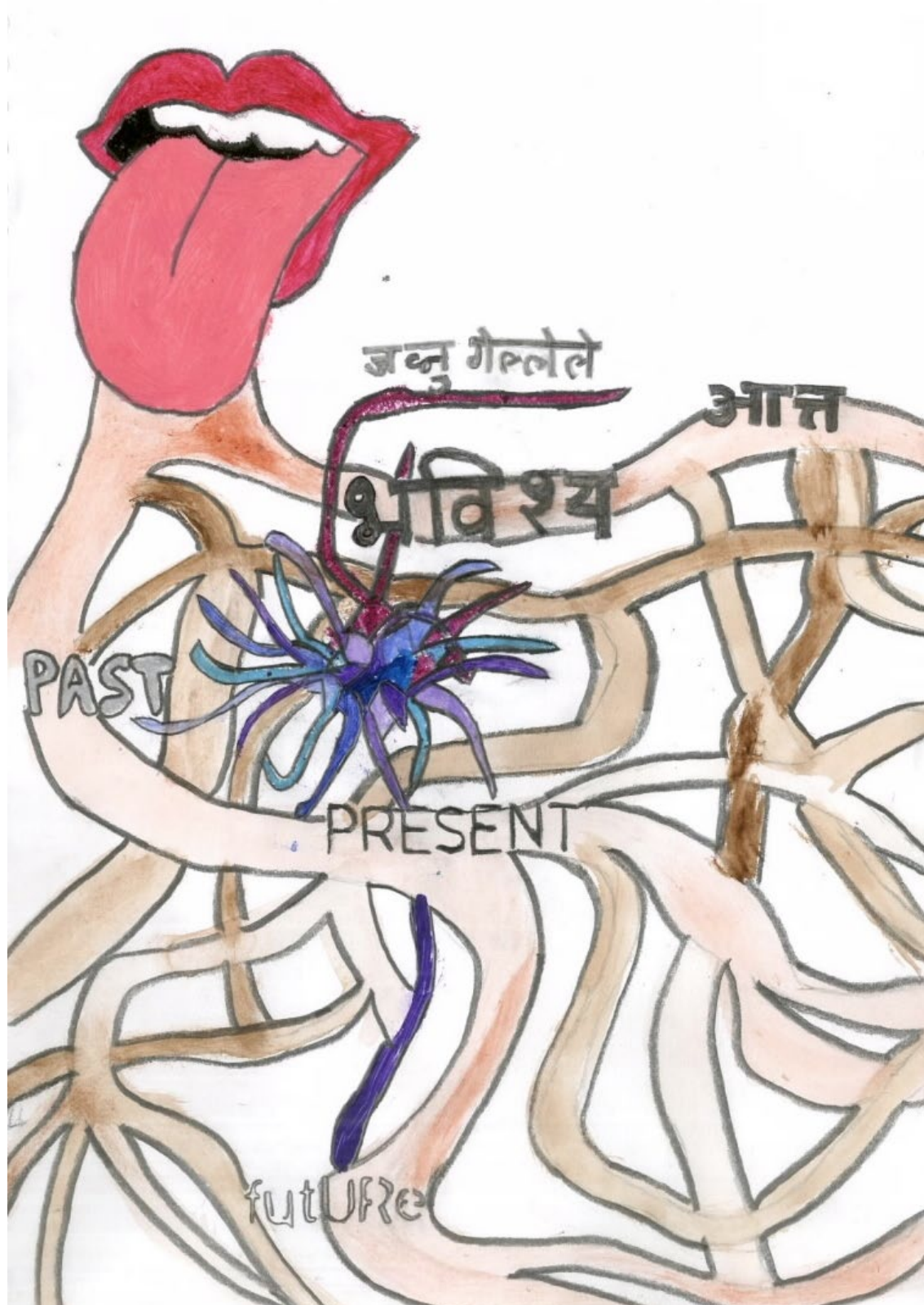


Illustration: Mothertongue by Rachel Lobo



This too shall pass

Tina Giannoulis

I grew up under my Greek grandmother's thumb, the one with the callous from years of absentminded pinpricking as a seamstress, in a duplex in Enfield. My grandmother's hands look just like my dad's but stronger and browner. When she shapes me with them, the word *lipame* springs to mind because her first grandchild is white and a girl. *Lipame*, I feel her feel, a sadness that misses something it never had. She takes me to Cronulla Beach and insists that I need colour more than sunscreen, so I cry for a week straight because I can't sleep on any of my raging skin.

I'm the first girl she's had to care for and she repeats the fact every time she draws my thick, curly hair back with a rubbery elastic band. My hair is her hair, but I don't think she remembers a time when hers has been more than three inches long, so she combs mine like hers, never expecting the tangles that catch the brush's stiff bristles. When she encounters them on the same stool at the same time of every day, she wipes away my "Ow!" before it can spill out. *Siynomi* she says, laughing. It means excuse me or sorry but she says it with the casual ease she's giving the brush, somehow stroking and striking, comforting and bruising. "Yiayia never had a girl, she doesn't know how to do these things," she explains, and I feel tired because I know, I know I've only got uncles and I can't understand why she's talking about herself like she's not there, but before I can ask, she repeats the bromide that will see me through far worse than hair tangles. "It'll pass by the time you're married." It's her version of this too shall pass, but with her expectation for me to grow up, breed and feed a family embroiled in the middle. I repeat it to myself for the next two decades anyway.

My relationship with my grandmother is based largely in silence. Or if not silence, then silencing. No, it can't be silence, because my grandmother is the sound of a hammer on a roof at four in the morning, the wooden spoon against the side of a *katsarolla*, shaking off sauce; she is winter coughs and phlegm and pointed sighs about what the "*kala koritsia*" do. But I was never one of the "good girls", and I try to explain this to her over dinner one night. I've spent years stubbing out the label like a cigarette burning too close to the filter, leaving fingertips too hot to touch anything without a trace of its ash. I finally tell

her, I'm dating an Afstralezo. After all these years of wearing pants to church, refusing to fill my father's plate for him and a quiet disdain for anyone with a name day, it feels like a cop out. I feel nothing for the Afstralezo, and the relationship is summed up when Yiayia asks, "Is he handsome?" "Very," I respond.

In four days time, I will call an end to my time with the Afstralezo. "I don't get communism," he proclaims. "What's the point in suffering through a present hell for a better tomorrow?" You don't get communism, I think, and then I think of Yiayia and the way her eyes would have shown a lesson-teaching anger that still scares my adult self. I am the point, I think. And I set him aside.

But here at the dinner table, my grandma's eyes are kind. There's a drunkenness in them even though the pinkness in her cheeks that grows from her first sip of alcohol is absent. In Greek, with no one listening and no one to perform to, she tells me that my Afstralezo is good and that I must love many men. I'll get married one day, she tells (instructs) me, maybe not to A Nice Greek Boy but to someone I have learned to love and who won't produce a child with funny eyes. I can only emerge from the cringe of her xenophobia when she tells me to Be Penelope.

Be Penelope, who rifled through and watched her suitors pile up and pass her by. Be Penelope with your boyfriends but think always of your Homer. Remember that suitors are just the padding in the story of your marriage.

When my Italian grandmother dies, Yiayia flies up to Brisbane for the funeral. She's there for her friend, my namesake, but I take shelter under her thumb once more. My mum has gone silent, so my Yiayia's hands envelope me once more and she is surrounding me at every moment. I start to cry at the service and feel her *daktyla* dig into my upper arm. "Don't cry," she whispers in our language. "You have to be strong for your mother now." I don't know where to push the sadness that's leaking up and out of my lungs, but when I drag back the tears and look at her, I realise that it wasn't a bromide. Under her thumb, I feel brown, calloused and silently strong with the words she no longer has to speak to her girl. *Tha perasi os pou na padreftis*.



ETHNIC LITERATURE: FLAVOUR – LEBANESE

(In line with all literary categories available to non-whites: successful yet bittersweet immigration story/ religion/school/family and food. Qualified and accredited by the white people for brown ethnic writers committee.)

By Cindy El Sayed

1. Successful yet bittersweet immigration

My mum came here alone and pregnant with me. She did this for each kid, and I'm glad she did, otherwise I might not be here. There was a beautiful but brief stint in what I still consider my homeland, even though I was born in Paddington, Sydney. I lived in a town outside of Beirut, a tiny but great apartment on the ground floor.

We had cherry curtains, a '90s patterned sofa, a tv, bookshelves and an office. Nearby was an apple orchard where me and my mother picked a basket full: there was also a pale-coloured horse that we gave an apple to whenever we went. A fairy tale childhood, but then here I came back to the city I was born in, Sydney.

We had to live here for a year or two without dad, but he sent us all his pay checks. I vividly remember hating our Mascot townhouse, its tiny backyard and crappy carpet. I more vividly remember not having legs on our table because mum couldn't build it herself, so we ate KFC on the flat table top. It wasn't bad. But I miss everything about Lebanon, and the little fragments I have are not enough, and I wouldn't be the same if I grew up there; I think I might have been happier some days.

2. Religion

Religion comes to me in bursts – it always has since I was old enough to know what it was.

It's always there in my mind and heart's periphery, on the edge, waiting for me. More patient, stable and accepting than any person, really.

A cool pebble in my sweaty palm, a clacking of rosary beads in busy fingers.

Islam is in my mother's voice, in my father's words. It's there in every crackling, awkward conversation with relatives that I know I love, but don't remember.

It's there in every "m'ashallah" when I do something good, in every "bismillah" before we eat.

I do find myself in a complicated relationship, and I feel like an outsider sometimes, but it's a part of me.

3. School

I am three. Tiny child. Curly hair, red coat. There are sugar cubes in my pocket. Next to the sugar cubes, tiny hands scrunched up, sweaty. They are melting the sugar.

"Sylvie, what if they make me write, I don't know how to write or read." Sylvia laughs. She turns the car into a street. We stop near a fire station and I think it's beautiful. Mum is sitting in the front seat, trying not to cry.

Sylvia is my mum's friend's daughter and my third favourite person after mum and dad. She turns off the car and says to me, "Don't be silly, they won't make you write!" She says it kindly and I'm assured.

It's my first day of preschool. I meet a girl named Layla and love her immediately because she has red hair and blue eyes. Primary school and high school were blurs of Catholicism and confusion. English was my favourite subject, and I liked art. My general maths was the worst score I got for HSC, but I am secretly proud of getting a nice, raunchy 69, which I still think is funny.

4. Food and Family

My family is a dad, a mum, an aunty, two sisters and three cats. They are all really great and I love them. I grouped food and family together because food in Lebanese culture is central to family. Obligatory ethnic food mention: tabouli, fattoush, hommous, mjadara, meat on sticks. Lebanese sweets like baklawa, znud el set, ashta and Lebanon's take on the Black Forest that everyone just calls gateaux (French colonialism mention). Ramadan is the best because it's always most of these things at once, every day. Food is emotional, spiritual even, in ethnic cultures as the stereotypes

Praise be to all Men of Colour

Praise be to all Men of Colour who stand up every day to white men, who try to bully them into submission, white men who want Men of Colour to be perpetually on their knees grateful for "letting" them into this country.

When will white people learn,

These pale faces,

That melanin is fearless,

That melanin cannot be intimidated,

Because melanin has been hardened by loss and despair,

By separation and chains,

By hunger,

and every prejudice known to man;

That melanin is bravery,

It is never ending struggle,

That melanin always has been, and always will be,

eternal.

That is,

That melanin is perfection.

by Josephine Omashaye Itsheye Ajuyah



HALLOWEEN: THRU THE LENS OF A FILM MAJOR

Edmund Cheng

It is a Saturday night in Marrickville, very close to Sunday morning. A party is going on, but without the presence of intimidating security guards, a cover charge and budget-burning \$10+ drinks. Rather, I have found an intimate venue (in fact a three-level share house, partially decayed). The atmosphere is friendly yet lively, all in the cause of celebrating a traditional pagan festival – Halloween.

Such a time of year is associated with broomsticks, witches, trolls, and Jack O' Lanterns – or just anything supernatural, fantasy themed? In certain parts of the world (United States, Germany), such a religion is passionately observed. But down under (here in Australia), we must scurry to the hidden corners of social media to gain any chance of finding a party, as I so experienced at half-an-hour to midnight (in the depths of an inner city internet café). Finding one doesn't disappoint. As a generation of young men and women (experiencing our initial years as developing adults), we were once scared of the boogeyman, ghosts and goblins.

Okay, with all honesty, we may have laughed at these representations, because of all the cheesy artwork displayed on the canvas of ghoulish rides found at the Easter Show, or at outings to Sydney's Luna Park. Now the real terror comes from the facet of reality. As I'm welcomed into the party by a guy painted with the face of a demon (a reddish version of Heath Ledger's Joker type), I happen to catch up with a mate of mine, and he ushers me into the host's bedroom (where other ghoulish creatures are gathered around a small table already clustered with beer bottles and an assortment of Allen's lollies).

A few scary masks are suspended from the wall, as well as Halloween confetti and rippled posters of dead musicians (think Elvis Presley, Amy Winehouse and Kurt Cobain). Perhaps their spirits are watching over us and are bowing their heads in shame as they witness our baby-faced generation follow in their example. Our conversations are spontaneous and somehow all loosely related to our shared angst as

newly emerged, independent individuals. Skin deep, we seem carefree, but deep inside, we are still, and just as insecure as much as we were in our childhood days (still struggling with identity and place in the world).

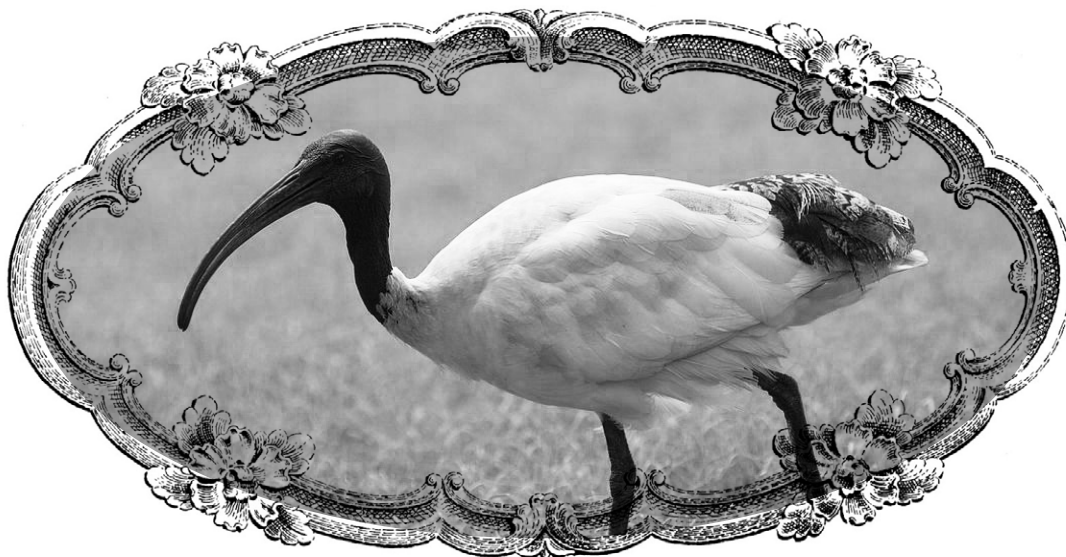
Moving around the house, there are twisted stairwells leading up to a kitchen and living room, almost completely absent of furniture apart from a couple of sofas and a CRT television rescued from the street. The tenants happen to be tertiary students working part-time just to meet the next month's rent. But I suppose it is all worth it in the end so that this party can happen, giving us the chance to let our hair down for at least once this week. The scene on the courtyard (or beer garden) is a fine example of this: Bettie Boop and Daisy Duke lookalikes feed on sticks of marshmallows over a bonfire, but the Stay Puft giant from Ghostbusters has failed to make an appearance. Perhaps 9/11 scared him off?

See... Even incarnations of Goza have their limitations. And I'm certain it would have been given a headache overhearing our ranting on about tribulations at work, issues with our significant other (or lack of), and shared tips on how to effectively avoid family commitments during the upcoming holiday season. My, my, aren't we a scheming bunch this Halloween? As the night rolls on, we happen to attract some unwanted guests (gatecrashers), but luckily we have our very own Frankenstein and his pal Michael Myers to send them packing.

And now time has flown and it's now on the cusp of dawn. Nothing to do now but lay down to sleep and avoid the rising sun – just like vampires on parole. Thankfully I have located an empty couch to rest on...

Wake up again, and it's late on a Sunday morning. What an insane feeling. The party atmosphere has long since vacated and now the house is near empty, with the exception of one of the tenants who has slept in as well. I thank him for helping me outside, regardless of the fact that he's topless (thank God that he's exposing himself to an empty street outside).

The previous night is now but a faded memory, saving face for a few photo snaps. God, I love Halloween!!



Agony Ibis

Dear Ibis,

With all these affirmative action policies giving minorities legs up and Andrew Bolt being prosecuted for speaking his mind, the world has gone over the top with REVERSE RACISM! Haven't the youth of today heard of the philosophy, 'do unto others as you would have done to you'?

Love,
Stormfront

Dear Stormfront,

I heartily agree! I always follow the Golden Rule when it comes to dealing with minorities, so it's about time they started treating us the way we treat them. Honestly, I'm sick and tired of the lack of institutionalised racism for People Not of Colour (PNoC). Where's our disproportionate police violence? Why don't we get a higher unemployment rate? When's PNoC history month? Why can't I experience the thrill of having land stolen from my people? And they say they're all about equality...

Love,
Agony

Dear Ibis,

STOP THE BOATS! These queue jumpers need to learn to wait their turn. KEEP STRAYA STRAY-AN! We don't need any more of them ruining the Australian way of life We can't let these brown people terrrk our jerrbs and leach off our already struggling, debt-ridden economy!

Sincerely yours,
The Australia First Party

Dear AFP,

In light of the Commission of Audit's report claim that it's actually cheaper for these boat people to live in the community on a bridging visa than to be held in offshore detention, I propose that we let them all in! It might sound like a radical solution to our 7th Circle of Hell Debt Crisis, Oh Gosh, We're All Gonna Die, but brown people are really great at doing jobs that nobody else wants to do, like taxi driving, cleaning, and working at Hungry Jacks. It's a win-win solution, supported by many economists around the world, and would also

keep our fair nation in line with several UN Conventions we are currently breaching ;)

Love,
Agony

Dear Ibis,

Racism is over; Why are all these coloureds always harping on about something or other? 'You wore my culture as a costume, why are we never represented on TV, don't stereotype me, you're a racist blah blah blah blahhhhhh'. Can't they just move on to something more important? It's not like there aren't children starving in Africa or world wars are being waged as we speak!

Cheers,
#1 Realist, yo.

Dear #1 Realist,

First thing's first: these ultra-PC harpies don't seem to understand that males aren't very good at multitasking. That's why in this patriarchy we live in, there exists a hierarchy of Important World Problems that can only be addressed one at a time. The reality is that addressing racism is much further down on the list than intervening in the Middle East for the sake of peace, or collecting your metadata. They'll get to it when they can. The haters should cut them some slack.

In the meantime, here are a few suggestions for working towards the things you seem to consider more important:

1. You could lend a hand to those suffering hunger in Africa by donating to charities that balance overhead costs with genuinely supporting those in need directly. (No Voluntourism in this solution!) You don't need to spend \$1000's on a holiday to mingle with the locals and poorly construct their housing or attempt to teach them with your 'skills'! If you genuinely want to help and not deflect from the very real suffering of ethnics in the western country you have chosen to maintain residence in, donate those hypothetical thousands to actively reduce hunger in Africa.

2. Lobby your governments to directly oppose sup-

porting these wars in the first place. Support those suffering from these world wars being waged by donating time or gifts (in-kind or monetary) to support the local non-governmental organisations and the international non-governmental organisations on the ground.

Sceptically yours,
Overwhelming Agony

Dear Agony Ibis,

I have an opinion on racism. I am entitled to my opinion. People need to stop attempting to silence me just because they simply disagree with my interpretation of racism. What ever happened to FREE SPEECH, or is that yet another attack on our human rights by the Efniks?

Defiantly yours,
Free Spirit

Dear Spirit,

Everyone is entitled to an opinion, you are correct. Ten points for you! However, if that opinion negatively impacts other individuals (as every action has a reaction or consequence if you will) AND it is an uninformed one (not grounded in reality, verified statistics or genuine fact) then an individual is not entitled to have this opinion heard. I wouldn't recommend you share or publicise such an opinion UNLESS you are prepared and are expecting other people to express their own opinion of your opinion. Whether or not they may disagree with all or parts of your opinion, you shouldn't morph into a whiny baby every time they attempt to speak. Open dialogue is great when it flows both ways, amirite? Freedom of speech need not only be for the bigoted!

PS: Keep your ad-hominem attacks at bay when responding to those that may dissent, it lessens the integrity of your ideology.

PPS: Being called a 'racist' is NOT an insult. It's a term defined by people that experience acts or systems of oppression based on race.

Painfully yours,
Extreme Agony



RIA ANDRIANI: ARTIST WITH DISABILITY

Ria Andriani lost her sight in early childhood. She is fluent in Braille literacy, is a Braille music reader, and a strong advocate for accessibility and equal opportunity. Ria moved to Australia in 2007 from Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. She attended Canterbury Girls High School, where her passion for music was developed. She became involved with the National Braille Music Camp – held each year in Mittagong, NSW – the annual School Spectacular and other musical activities. After finishing her HSC in 2009, she auditioned for the Bachelor of Music/Bachelor of Arts programme at UNSW, majoring in Classical voice and English literature. This is her last semester.

Ria's interest in music hones in towards the Historical Performance of Early Music: the reconstruction of Medieval to Baroque music performance practices. Her studies lead her not only to a better understanding of the conventions of Early music, but also how music is perceived across history and cultures. Although the emphasis of her curiosity lies mainly in European music, she is also interested in cross-cultural folk song performances as the music of the people. She believes that historical performance of music is a way to give audience a better understanding of peoples' histories, and can encourage them to accept more diverse genres of music.

As a student with disability, Ria has a strong passion in advocating equal access at university. Her experience with UNSW has been varied. She finds the university as a progressive, encouraging and overall positive learning environment for people with disability. How-

ever, the pace in which the university adopts new technology, coupled with outdated attitudes, has often led to challenging circumstances. On the other hand, her experiences at UNSW have given her the necessary self-advocacy, and other invaluable life skills. As a nearly graduated student, she hopes to take her skills and experiences in order to strive for equal opportunities in the Arts industry and communities.

Ria has been recognised as an artist with disability in the wider community. She is the recipient of several dedicated grants from Arts Access Australia and the Australia Council for the Arts. Her 2014 highlight has been attending the Dartington International Summer School, a renowned and progressive music community based in Devon, England. Ria now finishing her last semester of undergraduate studies, and she is constructing several performance plans. She hopes to strengthen her ties with UNSW as a professional artist, enriching cultural diversity and activities around the university.

As an artist, Ria likes to challenge her audience's perception of her and her artistic practices. Her disability provides a default challenge to her audience. Being a settled immigrant and having a focused interest in Arts ensures that Ria's life is not a dull one. In the not so distant future, she is planning to perform concerts that draw on her Indonesian heritage, as well as a Western European repertoire and modern Australian music. To stay in touch with Ria, like her Facebook page at Ria Andriani Soprano (facebook.com/pages/Ria-Andriani-Soprano/835820649766257), and follow her blog at Freeart90 (freeart90.livejournal.com).



SPORT & CLUB SPOTLIGHT



Name: Geoffrey Zhang

Degree: BCom/LLB, Fifth Year

Sport: Taekwondo

What inspired you to start?

Having just moved to Sydney from Hong Kong at the start of Year Six, and being quite overweight, I found it hard to make friends. When I made it to high school, I was determined to change myself, and one of the steps I took was to pick up a martial art. Fortunately, there was a huge Taekwondo academy close to my house!

How would you describe your first experience of the sport?

My first reason for picking up TKD was for the cardio training; I wanted to lose weight. My second reason was to learn some self-defence techniques and to gain some self-esteem and confidence. Even from my first lesson I could see the potential of TKD in keeping me fit and healthy!

What is one thing you love about what you do?

I love the fact that you never stop learning. Even as someone who has been a black belt for about five years now, every time I come to training, I learn new techniques and perfect existing ones. I love the fact that Taekwondo is a worldwide sport and that I've been able to make friends on exchange in Shanghai from chatting about martial arts! It really is a great way to make friends at uni, as well as [a way to] get fitter and more confident in yourself!

What would you recommend to others wanting to follow a similar path? Some of my best memories from UNSW have been the two consecutive years I represented our uni at the Australian University Games, otherwise known as AUGs or Unigames! Not only is it exhilarating to be competing with several national and international representatives (and obviously losing), the team bonding that goes on throughout the year and during the comp has left me with friends for life and experiences that I never would have gained anywhere else.

There's nothing to be gained from sitting at home wondering what if – just get involved! Everyone has to start somewhere, and with UNSW Taekwondo, you can gain a huge friendly family, and with the added benefit of coming to your first lesson for free! So wear some loose clothing and come on in on any of our training sessions [that] run five days a week and see what the sport is all about. Everyone welcome!



Name: Nishita Dayal

Degree: Masters in Human Rights Law & Policy

Sport: Horse Riding

What inspired you to start?

I have always been mesmerised by horses, however, I decided to start equestrian when I was training for my first degree black belt, as I knew I needed a new challenge.

How would you describe your first experience of riding? Absolutely amazing!

What is one thing you love about what you do?

I cannot pin it down to one thing. Equestrian is one of the most liberating things I have ever done. Horses are very intuitive, therefore, it is more than just riding. It is about being present in the moment and being aware of your breathing and your posture. I cannot say that there are many things I do where I forgot everything else and I am just being mindful. Additionally, equestrian compliments martial arts as it has strengthened a different set of muscle groups, which, as a result, has enabled me to gain greater stability when sparring. The adrenaline rush you get when riding a horse cannot be adequately explained through words. It is just phenomenal!

What would you recommend to others wanting to follow a similar path?

You do not have to come from an equestrian family to start riding – you just need to love horses and be willing to give the unfamiliar a go. You never know unless you try!



Club Name: UNSW Vishwaas Indian Society

Name: Abhishek Bhovar (President)

How you first got involved?

I was invited by the lovely exec members of the time to come along to their O-Week Dance workshop. I enjoyed the workshop and the people were great, so I kept going to events and became part of the team.

What does your club aim to do?

Our club aims to look at fun and meaningful ways of interacting with different Indian (and non-Indian) cultures. We organise and run activities that help students experience different festivals, games, etc., and enjoy each other's company in the process. We also strive to help people explore and express their various talents and skills, whether that be in arts, sport, leadership, martial arts, media, and several other ways.

How can other students get involved?

Firstly, come along to Fire to Earth: A Story of Rama and Sita, our theatre production on October 5 at the Science Theatre! The contact and ticket deets are here: facebook.com/events/680406028709519 and <http://www.firetoearth.com.au>

Apart from that, come along to one of our events. You don't need to be a member to join in. Check us out on Facebook: facebook.com/groups/vishwaasunsw. Also feel free to get in touch with myself or one of our wonderful exec members who'd be more than happy to chat to you about joining our society and being part of all the fun!



UNSW TOUCH FOOTY TALENT: MITCH HERITAGE

MEET MITCH "JUNIOR" HERITAGE

Mitch is the master of balancing his university studies and pursuing his sporting dreams! He's a man of many talents, who not only studies a Bachelor of Commerce, but also excels at a high level in sport – Mitch recently added the title of being selected in the NSW Touch Football Squad to his already well-established list of sporting achievements. Mitch was a key player in the UNSW touch football team that made the grand final drop off against USyd at the Eastern University Games (EUGs) held in Newcastle on 6 – 10 July 2014. In addition to this, his performance at the EUGs, Mitch has been selected to the NSW State Touch Football Squad!

So, how does he do it, you wonder?

Q. How do you balance university and performing sport at a high level?

A. It was hard...especially when I am sometimes training four – five times a week, as well as preparing for exams. It really came down to a matter of just writing down everything on a huge wall planner just so I could see what needed to be done by when, and also not being afraid to ask for help when you need it.

Q. What motivates you to play sport?

A. I like to stay active, and on top of that, sport is my down time. It's where I can just relax and not stress too much about uni or anything else.

Q. List your top three reasons why it is important to be active & healthy?

1. With Indigenous health statistics being as poor as they are, staying active is essential to not becoming another negative statistic.
2. Having an active lifestyle just helps with [my] all-around well-being as well, I feel.
3. And I just love my sport, and it's a great break for me.

Q. What do you like best about playing touch footy in the EUGs?

A. The best part about touch footy at EUGs is the mates you make and the memories.

Q. Can you share some of the ups/ downs of the touch competition at EUGs?

A. The down was definitely losing the final in drop off, but the highlight was the effort all of the boys put into the final – it was the longest drop off that I've ever been a part off, and it was just a credit to all of the boys that we were even in that position in the first place.

FUN FACTS ABOUT MITCH

Nickname: Junior

Mob/Country: Kuku-Yalanji/Goorimpul

Sportsman Idol: Kobe Bryant

Sportswoman Idol: Nova Peris

All-time inspiring sporting moment:

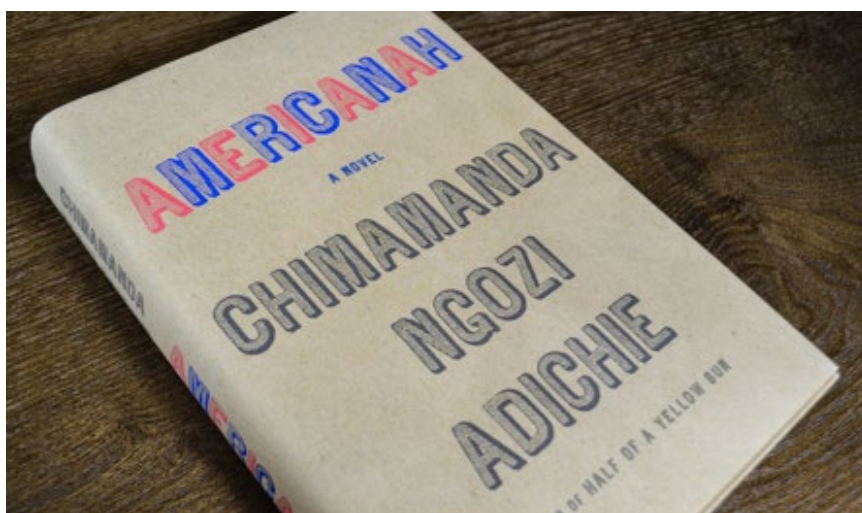
American Baseball Highlights:

- 1) Lou Gehrig's Farewell Speech, and
- 2) Jackie Robinson's Debut

Favourite Sport Team: North Queensland Cowboys

Life Motto/Quote:

"The lesson is in the struggle,
Not the victory."



AMERICANAH

BY CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE

Nigerian girl, Ifemelu, meets Nigerian boy, Obinze. They fall in love of course. Girl leverages off Nigerian unrest to build an eventually successful public life in the US of A. Boy whisks himself off to England and lives dangerously and illegally before their paths cross again. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's bestselling *Americanah* braids a tangle of narratives into a pretty good novel (after all, *Americanah* was feted as one of 2013's best by the *The New York Times Book Review*), but it's far from perfect.

Canadian author Margaret Atwood once said, "But the critic starts on day Seven" – critics have the easy job of tearing down authors' God-like creative work, but taking apart Adichie's latest piece is unfortunately too easy. Most of the plot is tethered together by Ifemelu's blog posts about race (our heroine achieves success in the US as a blogger and writer), and though Adichie herself calls *Americanah* a "love story", I'd like it better if she called (and understated) it as a blog-novel, something like a new generation, ethnic *Bridget Jones* or *Sex and the City*.

There is a purpose to my navel-gazing: Ifemelu (or is it Adichie?) uses everything as blog-fodder, from the badly dressed middle-aged white man, whom she graciously debunks stereotypes of because he offered "insight", to the delusional Senegalese braider, whom Ifemelu avoids in deed and doles charity and empathy to in word and blog. By chapter 11, despite the bouts of empathy and reflection, she is something beyond the anthropological specimens she blogs of, and she becomes like the western male scientist – faultless. Those Ifemelu does not dehumanize, Adichie does: Ifemelu's parents are the Nigerian franchise of Mister and Missus Bennett. Only one character survives the pigeonhole-ing exercise, but Obinze perspective is so sketched over that *Americanah*'s ending seems to be unfounded, and I am tempted to label him, for the lack of voice, as a weak male character.

We know Adichie can do better than this – *Half a Yellow Sun* was a searing, multi-voice epic. The insight and social commentary is good, if not a bit too much, and it reveals unintentionally, now and then, the error of over-galvanising a non-American black female hero. In one instance, Ifemelu is consoled by her unbecomingly perfect white boyfriend because an East Asian beautician refused to do her "different" eyebrows. I found myself becoming angry; East Asians themselves sometimes do not go to other salons because our eyebrows are different, but the scientifically observant protagonist (or is it Adichie?) missed this and classified it as racism.

Beyond the text-type confusion, the details are nevertheless exquisite and humorous – from Aunt Uju's ingrown hairs, to the British-curriculum-loving, nouveau-riche Lagosian hustlers. But if you thought *Things Fall Apart* was more about yams than women, then read *Americanah* if you are more interested in race than relationships.

Book review by Rhoda Gao

(Winner of the 2014 O-Week Intercultural Meet & Greet Giveaway)

There will be a place at our Launch Party, Thursday, September 25, 6:30 pm for those who would like to discuss and share their views on the book!

TO BARKER, OR NOT TO BARKER

On the balmy evening of August 28, the famous Arj Barker ascended onto the stage of the Roundhouse. His audience was entirely unaware of the raid of stitches that was about to attack them.

The show, off to a bit of a late start, was kicked off with renowned local Australian comedian Joel Ozborn. Making it relatable to a young Australian audience, Ozborn delved into his various experiences, including those with Virgin Airlines and their injurious effect on elbows. With his numerous references to Australian towns and history (Ned Kelly), he successfully won the crowd by identifying himself as very much Aussie.

Finally, after a considerable delay, Arj took the stage. Applause shook the room! Initiating his set with a piece on jet lag and the beneficial effects of methamphetamine, he then continued on an hour-long rampage of humour – true Barker style. Unlike many comedians out there, he did not rely on overdone routines or bland jokes about sexuality, racism or sexism. Instead, he brought originality to his set by integrating his experiences over different eras. Reminiscing about the late '70s, Arj effortlessly transitioned from reminiscing about *Star Wars*' indestructible spacecrafts, to a cascade of attacks on Virgin's dubious marketing claims.

Whilst touching on controversial topics such as female sexuality, Tony Abbott, Alzheimer's and gay marriage, he engaged the audience with light-hearted humour, allowing them to hold their own opinion and yet still understand the severity of the issue.

Barker had the undivided attention of the audience from the very beginning, and he held them captive until the end by using material targeted to our generation. From our over-dependence on technology, to our disconnect with social dynamics to making light of the aesthetic nature of gym culture and "getting laid", he made his audience readily aware of the cruel reality of Generation Y. Throughout the night, Barker had the ability to touch on many prominent issues whilst still sending the crowd into hysterics.

Overall the \$10 was better spent for a ticket to Arj Barker's Greatest Hits Show... even if it meant forfeiting dinner.

10/10 WouldAvoidVirgin

Comedy review by Milonee Shah and Jessica Munit

