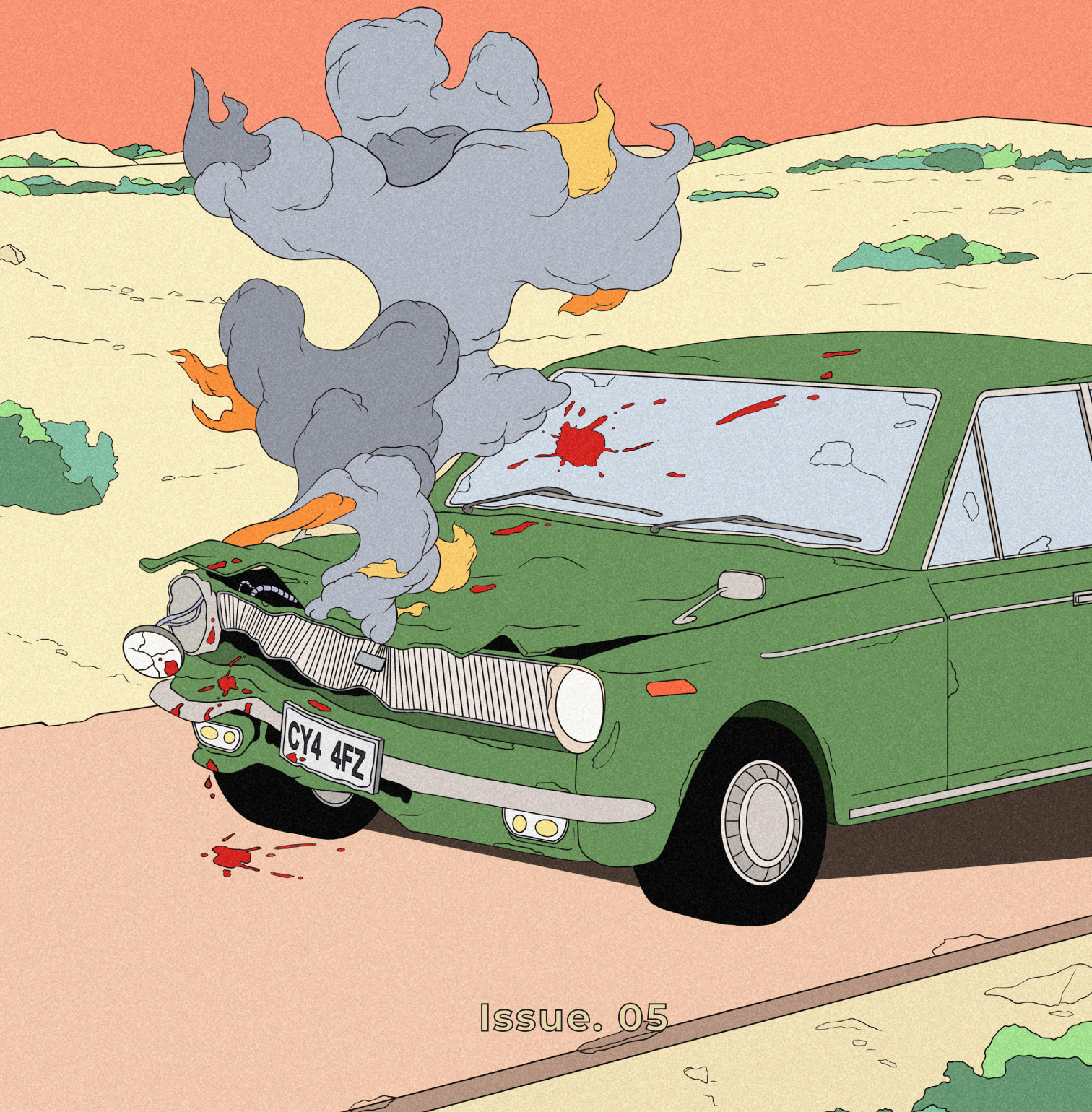


THARUNKA

Violence



Issue. 05

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*Tharunka acknowledges the traditional
custodians of this land, the Gadigal and
Bedegal people of the Eora nation, on which our
university now stands.*

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+COVER ART BY MATTHEW LIM+



Matthew is an incurable procrastinator and often spends hours illustrating or cooking when he should be working on his biomedical engineering assignments. His approach to drawing is influenced by shin hanga style and sequential art, where he uses fine linework and perspective to explore humans in urban and surreal space.

006. Carpenter Ants
Nina Greenhill

008. Writing Challenge - First Place
Winner - Issy Golding
Illustrated by Talica Gummery

010. White Noise
Humans of Hong Kong

012. Writing Challenge - Second Place
Winner - Atia Fatimah
Illustrated by Saafiyah Hussain

014. Understanding the Value of Human
Life in Australia's Colonial History
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017. Black Lives Matter
Hana Thomson

018. In Order to Help 'Third-World
Countries', We Need to Stop Helping
Simran Borges

021. Self
Casey Keung

022. Writing Challenge - Third Place
Winner - Toby Francis
Illustrated by Sandra Gunniga Thomson

024. Coronavirus, The Great
(UN)Equaliser
Mursal Rahimi

027. Hurt Him, Help Her
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029. Untitled
Gabrielle Steiner

030. The Effects of Consuming Negative
News
Nitika Midha

032. Beyond The Fires
Buffy Wu

034. [Extended Sounds of Brutal Pipe
Murder]: Representing Violence through
Audio
Defne Huzmeli

037. Trafficking in Cambodia: The Dark
Reality Faced by Adolescent Girls
Rebecca Barlow

039. Bound
Sureen Hasan

040. Hidden Ghosts: The Murder of
Transgender People in Australia
Issy Golding

043. Closer
Phoebe Au

046. SRC President Report
Manu Risoldi

047. Welfare Officer Report
Nayonika Bhattacharya

049. Women's Officer Report
Colleen Rose

050. Ethnocultural Officer Report
Dorene Shankaran

051. International Students' Officer
Report
Nayonika Bhattacharya



HENRY
Managing Editor

DEAR READER,

In this fifth issue of Tharunka, we take a step back from the quotidian student grind to reflect on what violence means in our contemporary world.

The Weberian definition of a state is probably the single most influential quote in all of social science: "a state is a human community that successfully claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence within a given territory". But what happens when a government fails to live up to this promise, and becomes a source of violence against its citizens?

Our contributors present deeply considered arguments about the nature of violence in contemporary Australia and overseas. Taken together, they underline the need for compassion, empathy and understanding in meeting the challenges of social injustice in our world today.

Turning closer to home, this term we've seen hotly contested student elections at UNSW. In this issue of Tharunka, some of the office-bearers on the 2020 Student Representative Council offer their reflections on what they've achieved in this tumultuous year.

Within these pages, you'll also find the fruits of the second Tharunka/ UNSweetened writing challenge, where students were challenged to respond to a prompt in 100 words. Sincere congratulations are due to the three winners, Issy Golding, Atia Fatimah and Toby Francis, for their creativity and originality. The next writing challenge will begin after exams in mid-December - be sure to keep an eye out!

The indefatigable efforts of our contributors, artists, editors and designers mean that Tharunka will remain a place where all student voices can be heard. Thank you to Axel, Jo, Jack and Saafiyah, for all your work in meeting the many challenges that 2020 has brought.



AXEL
Creatives Sub-Editor

It has been a pleasure and a privilege over the past months to work with Phoebe, Defne, Issy, Nina, and HoHK, exploring facets of violence from the individual to the familial to that embedded in systems of justice, politics, and law. It has also been an alarming few months in violence worldwide. In Brazil, Hong Kong, Thailand, and the US in particular, human rights violations are dystopic in scale, as those meant to uphold justice and equality abuse their power. However, as Issy's article on the homicide of transgender people notes, violence flourishes here in Australia, and it is fatal to ignore.

The significance of the right to protest can not be overstated, and it is being viciously undercut under the auspices of suppressing COVID-19. There is no democracy without protest; there is no freedom without protest; there is no confronting corruption without protest; there is no end to institutionalised violence, from cradle to coffin, without the right to protest. There has never been a dystopic narrative that 'predicted the future'. There have been thousands written by people who looked around them and saw chaos, restriction of freedom, and violations of human rights, dignity, and liberty which they then reflected in writing.

My thanks to the authors of Violence for shedding light as only the sharing of stories can, and to you, reader; here's to creating a world where 'dystopia' might truly mean fantasy.



JO
Online Sub-Editor

When I say 'violence', what do you think of? I think of the Black Lives Matter movement, of the devastating police brutality in America that is often committed live on camera, by police officers with a brazen disregard for the consequences, confident that they can get away with it. I think of how frustrating it must be for black people to only receive the appropriate level of global outrage after these traumatising videos of black death and suffering are shared across the internet. But then again, that is the tragic trade off of the digital age: without a 'viral moment' many issues are forgotten. For many, there is too much violence in the world to fit into our instagram stories, so the most visible tragedies get the airtime. It is this trade off that allows issues like domestic violence and Indigenous deaths in custody to fly under the radar.

So if the problem is ignorance and apathy, then what is the solution? Well, we at Tharunka think you can't talk about injustice unless you know about it, and that's where we come in. In our Violence issue, we invite you to read the passionate and smart writing our student contributors have come up with. We hope you learn something.



JACK
Features Sub-Editor

This year has been a year of extremes, with the ongoing effects of a worldwide pandemic, and ever-increasing political polarisation. As we crawl into 2021, we are faced with both new challenges and long-established tensions. The theme, Violence, has rarely been more prescient.

This penultimate issue of this year's Tharunka has featured both returning and new contributors. Sivaan Walker has offered a philosophical meditation on how Australia's colonial legacy has been represented in art, with reference to the works of Judith Butler and Achille Mbembe. Simran Borges has taken a critical eye to international aid organisations and their shortcomings. Rebecca Barlow has drawn attention to the issue of human trafficking in Cambodia - an issue with a disproportionate effect on girls. Mursal Rahimi has also set out to show the disparate effects of the quarantine along class and socio-economic lines, perpetuating 'structural violence'.

I would like to thank all our readers and contributors for making this outstanding issue of Tharunka possible.

There have been so many new contributors to 'Violence', making this issue the most colorful I have ever seen. Which is quite on brand for the theme.

Thank you to Matthew Lim for the gorgeous cover art and to Talica and Sandra who have contributed their artistic talents to the writing challenge. To artists Hana, Casey, Gabrielle, Buffy and Sureen who have all visualised violence in their own spectacular way, I thank you too.

Happy reading!



SAAFIYAH
Graphic Designer

CARPENTER ANTS

By Nina Greenhill

When my daughter was born, we were determined to raise her as a person. No job was gendered, none of this 'woman's work' or 'man's job' that we had grown up with. She would have the opportunity to be capable and proficient.

The thing we hadn't considered was the term 'bookworm'. The image of snuggly blankets, warm cardigans, pots of tea in cosies and all that the label entailed. We could imagine her at school, the teacher making a cosy nook so she could peruse the books after she had finished work. She would be encouraged to the library, maybe pick it up as an extracurricular - a hobby she could sit still doing.

I could see her being stereotyped, ignored by the other students, retreating to the quiet space where her mind could roam free. She might stick to reading what other girls did. Stories about keeping princesses in towers and little girls locked in gardens would make their way home, pink covers and all.

She might make it to high school with this passive personality setting in, getting frustrated at all the students pairing off and her waiting for the cute sporty student to finally notice her, living out the norm of all the teen movies. Nerd bookworms only get happy endings once they take off their glasses and scrub up nicely.

Introverts have no hope at socialising in tertiary education unless they join a club. After being shunned throughout her education, would she even consider it?

My Husband and I certainly meet the book count to be called a pair of 'bookworms'. But we are far from the image of oversized jumpers and reading by candlelight. We read books, those thin wooden vessels, the paper parcels, without a second thought. They feed our souls, not just our minds. Bookworm is too passive a term and Termites don't cover the rabid obsession. Carpenter ants do.

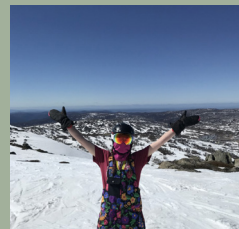
As soon as we found our daughter loved stories as much as we did, we started smashing the expectation.

Kyler was 2.

Opening a book and reading it with her calmed her down. It gave her a focus. She would point to the pictures and try to say everything as best she could. Growing up bilingual meant that at least one of us always knew what she was saying.

Kyler was 3.

We read to her every night. Not just Usborne Tales but Die Kleine Hexe and Richard Scarry. We hid yellow ducks around the house just like in the books.



+

Nina started writing when she was 8 years old and didn't really stop. Her first work was an auto-fiction series on an accident-prone girl who stood up to bullies. It will never see the light of day. What will is her writing about magical witches and mercenaries. That's what makes her happy.

We wanted her to see herself as just as alive as the characters. She found every one.

Kyler was 4.

It was book week at preschool. She dressed up as Pixi from the Pixi Bucher. Her idea, not ours. She told the tales of the books, of one long loaf of bread that circled the world, of playing with monsters, and of a parcel that went everywhere trying to find its recipient. The pre-school asked us if the books were available in English. Regrettably they weren't.

Kyler was 5.

We found a hardcover children's encyclopedia. We put it in her library for when she was ready. She had just begun learning words in kindergarten when she began to stare at the pages for hours on end, hopping up to do what the pictures were doing. She liked that her father and I pretended to be dinosaurs too.

Kyler was 6.

She helped measure out the wood for bookshelves, watching us saw each plank. We filled water balloons with paint and threw them at the finished case. She 'helped' us move it to the foyer - a 2-metre-tall explosion as soon as someone walked in.

Kyler was 7.

We had read her *The Princess Bride*, despite our own frustrations with the book. She watched her father and I duel at sabre point over who would do the dishes. We went to the toy store next and got her a plastic sword of her very own. She broke it two weeks later, so we showed her how to make a wooden one.

Kyler was 8.

We started a tradition of arguing about a book we were reading. It would take place around Sunday lunch, and it got so loud that our neighbours dropped in to see what the matter was. They had stopped asking by the time Kyler joined in.

Kyler was 9.

When we interrupted her first reading of *The Hobbit*, Kyler wouldn't talk to us for hours.

Kyler was 10.

We picked her up early home from school in tears. She pulled out her sword, waving it around and told us everything that had happened. They were learning about medieval Europe and the teacher had told her that women didn't fight in those times. When she spoke of Queen Isabella of France who had commanded armies to defend her husband's English throne, the rest of the class said she was lying and had called her names all day. She had given one of the boys a wedgie because he shouted at her 'girls can't be knights.'

That night, we gave Kyler a copy of *Alanna: The First Adventure* and told her she could be a heroine, too.

Kyler was 11.

We started taking her climbing. We took turns climbing up a rope pretending to be Andre the Giant. Kyler pretended to be Keladry, conquering a fear of heights to defend what was right.

We decided not to introduce her to fanfiction yet. We needed to have 'the talk' with her before telling her about that wild west of stories.

Kyler was 12.

We went to Bunnings. She picked her very first jack saw and hard hat - blue, like Wendy's from Bob the Builder. She had insisted on the colour. We picked up all we needed for the next project and drove home. She made her first three shelves, ripping the saw back and forth, cutting the wood to her own measurements. They were wonky, but she used my pink drill and installed them above her bed herself.

Kyler was 13.

She started borrowing technical manuals from the library. Lots of 'how to' books as well. We had purchased a book about physical transformations of growing and puberty when she was 10. It had gotten lost in the shelves. We decided to promote an open discussion instead. She found the book and promptly asked a myriad of questions. It had only been a way for her to approach the information in a way she was comfortable with. We sat her down at the table. We sighed with relief and answered everything we could. After that, we pulled out the medical dictionary from my bookcase.

From that point, we knew high school and life wouldn't break her. We had grown a resistant kid. She took Woodwork for Year 12. She was using band saws and tools we hadn't heard of. She was the only girl in her class and 3rd in the year. When she graduated, we got her a complete encyclopedia set for the castle bookcase she had made herself.

She didn't grow up a bookworm - she grew up a carpenter ant. She devoured each book she could get her hands on. She was anything but passive. She was making lightweight protest signs and commissions for local cafés and bookstores. She would join us for the occasional night of rock climbing, and she would still wear that bright blue hard hat any chance she got.

What she is now is happy. When she comes home for dinner, she smells like sawdust. Her plait has a strand of spikes woven through, 'for safety' she says, but we know the real reason; we still have the Beka Cooper series in the living room. Her father restored the handle of her first saw and it now hangs in the foyer with the paint splattered bookshelves. She brought home a partner not that long ago. We were surprised when they joined right into the debate on *Brave New World*. Most people aren't used to the lively discussions, the fierce words that are forgotten by the time dessert is ready.

But then again, we aren't really a snuggly sweaters kind of bookworm family. We are carpenter ants, devouring books one at a time.



"Don't you think they're the same thing; love and attention?" Sweat drips down, a race to the floor, the racetrack - the curves of a body on crisp white sheets. The sun sneaks through blinds, darting light across the room, shadows across the wall. Rays of cotton-candy coloured clouds christen a new day. A flustered giggle, a coy smile. A lit-up screen, the reflection a tiara, a superficiality only seen on screen. Remnants of a reality show watched from afar. "Of course not." Green eyes furrow together, as though the very question was absurd. "Attention is kept at an arm's distance, like a daydream, you only have it when you want it. Love needs to be held closer." Blood flows from one heart to another – dependent. Sweat drips down, but blood falls faster.

- Issy Golding

WHITE NOISE

By Humans of Hong Kong

The telescreen blinks in sync with the flickering street lamp outside. Sitting on the couch, I watched the News. A man - recognised as 07210, who was injured from a bloodshed and helped reporting to the police last year - was arrested for organising it.

History changes everyday.

There seemed to be rumours that the police colluded with the mobs, neglecting ten thousand urgent hotline calls during the slaying, but this was never spoken on the News, thrown down the incineration chute with all the other dissidence. Anyway. We've evolved to accept forgetting, negligence and loopholes, too, as necessary components of Truth.

I light a cigarette. The smell of bitter almonds from the kitchen drifts heavily in the smoke. Pungent. Puncturing. It is all coming back now. The smell of cyanide from tens of thousands of tear gas canisters piercing into the larynx, burning, tearing open to break out the screams of agony. Live rounds shot three centimetres from a beating heart (or was it just near the shoulder as the News said?). Another gasp followed by a loud grunt. A reporter next to me fell, covering her right eye, blood gushing out and seeping between her fingers.

A first aider rushed to her, but realised too late. He was thrown into the air by a water cannon.

Batons swinging onto peeling flesh. Skulls cracking in the distance. Viscous blood oozing out with cerebral fluid. People lay prone in this dark red pool, their necks kneeled on, their hands and legs handcuffed to their backs, and hauled a few metres across the street.

The lamp outside continues to flicker. More memories fleet by. Like rogue bulldogs, they were drooling at the sight of young girls and women, flexing their tags, labelled by their master, and the bottles of pepper spray are their empowerment and identity. Goading the literate, mocking the educated. Racing to legally abuse anyone with every opportunity they have. Lavishing the idea of Metamorphosis, diminishing what it means to be human as they repetitively stomp on the heads of those fallen bodies. And, of course, diminishing the purpose of fighting as one. All for the sake of a nation's security and peace.

And where have the people gone? The stripped girl drowning in her muffled cries; the ever-changing injury count in that bloodshed - we'll never know how many were injured, whether someone died; the detained youths by the dozens undergoing living hell; the bookshop owner down on Leis Street; that neighbour who snitched on her own son.

I must be damned. The smoke must be warping my mind. But there were putrefied, dead bodies from high above, from the sea below, whilst white handkerchiefs covered our mouths. Tightening. Choking. Suffocating. Us. Until there is only Stillness.

With one more flicker, the lamp burns out.

Darkness.

Turning on my flashlight, I open the front door and walk towards the streetlamp.

Shining the flashlight towards it, I squint, I freeze.

There on the curvature of the lamp spreads a myriad of red-eyed lenses, bulging, zooming in and out with a soft, incessant buzz.

—10191 IDENTIFIED—



“Anna, are you there?” That was a deceptively complex question. Physically I wasn’t ‘there,’ mentally I was never ‘there’ and my online presence was unapologetically superficial. “I’m here... Can you hear me? My webcam is just broken... I don’t know why... Zoom is crashing...” I could rival Jennifer Lawrence for an Oscar. My voice was laced with sincerity and incompetence; the perfect cocktail for truancy in the modern age. “Well you need to get that fixed ASAP,” he barked back, admitting defeat. I stared at everyone’s glowing faces, a collage of blank stares and vacant eyes with the occasional pet cameo. As my head hit my pillow and my eyes weighed down, I smiled to myself. After doom scrolling and binging Netflix all night, I had no desire to be a stoic spectator to an hour long lesson that was littered with technical difficulties and awkward pauses prying for participation. I had no desire to be puppeteered into playing along with the façade of normalcy. And I definitely had no desire to condone half-arsed zoom lessons as the epitome of academic rigour that I was paying thousands for. So fuck that, professor.

- Atia Fatimah

UNDERSTANDING THE VALUE OF HUMAN LIFE IN AUSTRALIA'S COLONIAL HISTORY

By Sivaan Walker

This essay explores Judith Butler's arguments on the 'state of nature' philosophical narrative in order to recognise the structuring and maintenance of valuing human life. With a specific focus on E. Phillip Fox's oil painting 'Landing of Captain Cook at Botany Bay 1770', I apply the 'state of nature' to analyse colonial justifications of violence over Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within Australia. Additionally, using Achille Mbembe and his concept of necropolitics, I argue that sovereign powers determine the varying degrees of value that lives hold whenever they act in reference to pre-existing authorities determined by their own narratives of history and identity.

Butler's work confronts questions concerning the value placed on the equality of human life through the philosophical narrative of the 'state of nature'. This narrative can provide fundamental insights into the political organisation of our contemporary condition.¹ Placing 'man' at its axis, the 'state of nature' assumes one is born free, independent, self-sufficient and peaceful until another being enters the scene. Only at this point, when another being is present, is he forced to lay claim to his territory.² If each individual only wished to seek and satisfy his wants and desires, it would appear almost impossible to maintain a non-violent social order if this narrative were true. It is out of this dilemma the 'social contract' emerges within Western philosophy, and so does the framework for contemporary political and social organisation³. The social contract requires individuals to give up their individual rights, passing them onto political organisations and state powers. This relationship, at the most basic level, claims to protect citizens from external violence.⁴

¹ Judith Butler, *The Force of Non-Violence: An Ethico-Political Bind: The Ethical in the Political*, (London: Verso) 2020, 21.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid 22.

⁴ Ibid.



E. Phillip Fox (1902), Landing of Captain Cook at Botany Bay 1770, Oil on canvas

However, giving up one's rights to the government does not immediately guarantee violence will cease to exist. Instead, governments commit acts of violence on the individual's behalf.⁵ When this occurs unopposed, we recognise their power, and sovereignty. In other words, when violence is used by governments to keep violence (perceived or real) in check, the members of that society are in tacit agreement in who the enemy is.⁶ It is also through this process that oppressive forms of biopolitical control are developed; and conditions for racism and classism are constructed. Where a group of individuals is seen as a threat to a society, forms of biopolitical control will alter their life vis-à-vis everyone else, be that through incarceration, increased surveillance, and diminished access to social services before they are able to equally participate in society to start with.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Butler, *The Force of Non-Violence*, 32.

To understand how this philosophical narrative transgresses fiction into reality and becomes utilised as a source of authority, I will use Captain Cook depicted in the painting 'Landing of Captain Cook at Botany Bay 1770' by E. Phillip Fox. Within this image, Cook's outstretched hand halts the guns of his sailors. This relationship "demonstrates the struggle between those who would champion the need for violence against Aboriginal people and those who would oppose or curtail it".⁷ The central action within this painting is built upon the contemplation of violence towards two Aboriginal men within a landscape. In this scene, Captain Cook represents both the 'man' in the 'state of nature', and simultaneously, the 'social contract'. One on hand, he is masculine and strong, independent and free. On the other, within his role as peacekeeper, he represents the advent of a 'social contract' and the state power necessary in counteracting anticipated violence. We are encouraged to think that if it were not for Cook, or colonialism, that regressive forms of violence would surface instead. This is the promise of colonial Cook, a sure guide in establishing the 'correct' configuration of Australia'.⁸

⁷ Golnar Nabizadeh, "Of Rabbits and Pirates: After-Images of E. Phillip Fox's Landing of Captain Cook at Botany Bay 1770", *Adaption* 9, no. 2, March 2015, 39.

⁸ Nabizadeh, "Of Rabbits and Pirates", 39.

I pose an additional interpretation of this scene, one which attempts to make sense of the subsequent centuries of injustice and violence Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have continued to face since this invasion. That is, perhaps Captain Cook refrains from acting violently on the basis that he does not view the Aboriginal men in the background as his equals. He is therefore incapable of recognising their sovereignty in a philosophical sense, or rather, their self-consciousness, self-capacity, and self-representation⁹. Mbembe offers us, in his work on necropolitics, an alternate explanation on the effects of refraining from violence. He argues "that the ultimate expression of sovereignty resides, to a large degree, in the power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die"¹⁰. Sovereignty, here, is developed through the

⁹ Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics" in *Biopolitics: A Reader*, ed. Adam Sitze and Timothy Campbell (Durham, Duke University Press), 161- 192, 162.

¹⁰ Mbembe, "Necropolitics", 161.

very tactile effects of violence. For Mbembe, dictating who will live, and who must die, informs and confirms the legitimacy of the state and, in turn, their survival. By not waging a war against the local inhabitants, Cook is depicted as a hero, but perhaps instead, when we think about colonisation overall, it is fair to believe that the Aboriginal men in this narrative 'pose no threat', that is, they are considered a population subject to biopolitical control, rather than humans with whom to form meaningful relationships. Mbembe writes: "a fact remains, though: in modern philosophical thought and European political practice and imaginary, the colony represents the site where sovereignty consists fundamentally in the exercise of power outside the law (ab legibus solutus) and where 'peace' is more likely to take on the face of a 'war without end'"¹¹. This 'war without end' describes the consistent and genuine acts of violence Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culture have faced. Examples such as assimilation, dispossession, destructions of subsistence, and over-policing easily come to mind.

Mbembe argues that these actions are characteristic of the complete lawlessness which colonisation adopts as it resides not only outside the moral and philosophical imagination of Europe, but by the physical discrepancy between coloniser and colonised: "that colonies might be ruled over in absolute lawlessness stems from the racial denial of any common bond between the conqueror and the native...All manifestations of war and hostility that had been marginalized by a European legal imaginary find a place to reemerge in the colonies"¹². In relation to Australia, we find a distinction between those lives who further colonial narratives of Australian sovereignty, and those who do not. To understand the authority whereby colonialism justifies itself as the convenor of life and death, we must find it in the reservoir of narratives and cultural imaginary of colonialism, such as the stories surrounding the mythos of Captain Cook.¹³ This process is twofold. Fictitious narratives which represent one particular history and identity are favoured, and, these narratives are continuously referenced in order to determine social and cultural identities which justify mechanisms of 'self defense' against the 'other'¹⁴.

When we allow a state to kill on our behalf, then we recognise this exception to the prohibition of violence as a legitimate form of self-defence not only to our individual selves, but to society, or rather, the extended region of our self. If we continue to allow authorities to curb our anticipated violence with violence, then we accept the fact that some lives are worth sacrificing in order to maintain collective harmony. Butler claims that 'if the practice remains restricted to an individual mode of life or decision making, we lose sight of that interdependency that alone articulates the relational character of equality, as well as the possibility of destruction that is constitutive of social relations'.¹⁵ By recognising that the Western philosophical 'state of nature' narrative leaves out and removes the agency of people of colour, Indigenous peoples, women, gender non-confirming peoples, people with disabilities, and children, then we can understand the shortcoming and limitations of contemporary colonial and Western political and social organisation. With this knowledge perhaps we can develop narratives which actively seek to pressure the legitimacy of colonialism and its violent mechanisms which privilege some groups of people over others.

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¹¹ Mbembe, "Necropolitics", 173.

¹² Mbembe, "Necropolitics", 173.

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Mbembe, "Necropolitics", 174.



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Sivaan Lansdowne Walker is a student within UNSW's Bachelor of Fine Arts/Arts program. Walker's written works have been published in UNSW Art & Design's Framework magazines, and her artwork has been exhibited at UNSW's AD Space, Kudos Gallery, AIRspace Projects, and Farr Side Gallery. She has upcoming work being exhibited in Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi as recipient of the Clitheroe Emerging Artists Mentor Program. Walker's writing and artwork centers itself around biopolitics, nihilism, and aesthetic.



IN ORDER TO **HELP** 'THIRD-WORLD COUNTRIES', WE NEED TO **STOP** **HELPING**

By Simran Borges

Sexual misconduct, corruption, and exploitation are words not commonly associated with international development aid. Yet in recent years, a lot has been revealed about the 'dark side of development'.

Providing aid and assistance, in whatever form, to least developed countries (LDCs) has been on the global agenda for decades. From early colonialism to current-day development, 'first-world' countries have taken it upon themselves to relieve the hardships and adversities faced by 'third-world' countries – and I use those terms very loosely. We've seen it in the way the Global North responds to international crises and also, in the billions of dollars that are spent on developing countries every year.

Organisations like Oxfam, Amnesty International, and the United Nations Development Program, just to name a few, contribute greatly to help LDCs grow and develop. They provide not only financial assistance, but also necessities including food, water, shelter, and sanitation.

Now, there is no doubt that the efforts of these organisations have benefitted those in developing nations – we’re constantly bombarded with news of development programs helping those in Somalia, Ethiopia, Myanmar, Haiti – the list goes on.

But what about when this ‘help’ does more harm than good? What about foreign aid, which more often than not, funds corruption? What about the local communities who actually suffer from international development assistance?

These are issues that have led me to believe that in order to actually help LDCs, and in order to actually make a difference, we need to pull back a little.

Foreign aid and international assistance to LDCs provide locals with education, health, and other basic necessities – I’m not arguing with that. However, what often goes unnoticed is that the billions of dollars that are spent on LDCs each year tend to facilitate and enable corruption, rather than help those who actually need it.

Foreign aid usually reaches governments before it reaches the people – unfortunately, some LDCs are hotspots for corrupt governments. Africa, for example, is one of the largest recipients of international aid. However, it is the world’s lowest ranked in terms of governance¹.

According to the World Bank, countries with low governance tend to possess six key characteristics: “arbitrary policy making, unaccountable bureaucracies, unjust legal systems, abuse of power, unengaged civil society, and widespread corruption”.² This means that in countries with low levels of governance, like some in Africa, international developmental aid programs aren’t able to be implemented to their fullest effect.

In fact, according to the UN, \$3.6 trillion are lost to corruption each year³. This means that aid is helping to fund governments who value power and money, over the lives of their people. Instead of schools and hospitals – it helps to pay for weapons, and fund militias.

In order to actually help those who need it, we need to stop helping. We need to rethink our approach and stop helping corrupted governments grow stronger. We need to correspond with the victims – not their perpetrators.

Contrary to popular belief, while development programs do increase local access to necessities (i.e. food, water, sanitation etc.), they can also be disadvantageous. Helping local communities, from an international perspective, has often meant changing the ways which they function. For example, the implementation of neoliberalism ends up increasing competition with foreign markets and leading to inflation.

Moreover, aid to local communities in LDCs comes with international aid workers, who live amongst the locals and are there for immediate assistance. However beneficial this may be, it also creates significant power imbalances, which tend to be destructive, rather than constructive.

To put this into perspective, look at the Oxfam sexual misconduct scandal. Earlier this year, it was revealed that Oxfam covered up incidents of sexual abuse by staff members. These incidents involved aid workers allegedly paying for sex (with girls as young as 14) while they were in Haiti during the 2010 earthquake.

“There were rumours on the ground about management and leaders exploiting the locals, sexually and in other ways”, according to Widza Bryant, former Oxfam project worker in Haiti.

Sadly, Oxfam’s actions in Haiti are not uncommon.

¹ J Lyons, ‘Foreign aid is hurting, not helping Sub-Saharan Africa’, Le Journal International, October 2014.

² National Party South Africa, ‘Governance barometer: policy guidelines for good governance’, Department of Strategy, Federal Council, National Party, 1994.

³ S Johnson, ‘The global economy loses \$3.6 trillion to corruption each year, says U.N.’, in Big Think. December 2018, viewed 27 September 2020, <https://bigthink.com/politics-current-affairs/corruption-costs-world-3-6-trillion>.

However, it is worthwhile to question whether it is complicating an already intricate and complex system.

Although not always recognised, these issues relating to power are significant when it comes to helping LDCs. International aid workers may have good intentions. However, it can be daunting for locals, to have white men tell them how they should be living – and taking advantage of them, as the Oxfam scandal has revealed.

Unfortunately, these issues around sexual misconduct and exploitation in international development have only become worse, especially as the world grapples with a pandemic that has not only taken lives but placed pressure on already ailing institutions.

According to Alina Potts, researcher at the Global Women's Institute, the COVID-19 pandemic is “exacerbating existing power imbalances” and making efforts to deal with international aid malpractice more challenging.⁴

“We can see a real vacuum where many humanitarian staff no longer go into communities. People can then exploit that vacuum and say, ‘I can get you access, I can get you assistance, if you have a relationship with me,” said Potts.

The issues that are associated with international aid have certainly been made worse by the pandemic. However, it is important to acknowledge that these issues have been deeply rooted in the foundations of the international aid sector for years.

Although there have been efforts made to rectify these pitfalls, the decision-making often lies in the hands of organisations and donors, instead of the recipients. For example, in 2019, the Development Assistance Committee, made up of the EU and 29 other donor countries, vowed to put an end to sexual misconduct and abuse in the delivery of international aid.⁵

From the outset, this initiative seems like a noble cause. However, it is worthwhile to question whether it is complicating an already intricate and complex system. Additional regulations and more stringent monitoring of aid programs translates to higher administrative loads and the likelihood of aid funding being redirected back to offices, instead of the front lines.

Ironically, this seems to create a double-edged sword. On one hand, the international aid community has serious issues with exploitation that need to be dealt with. On the other, the responses that are supposed to address them, may complicate the issue even further.

It might be more useful to go back to the drawing board and revisit our understanding of what it means to deliver international aid and assistance. There needs to be a shift in focus from how much aid is given, to how aid is given.

More often than not, foreign aid and assistance are looked at from a top-down approach, where internationally formulated plans are implemented into local contexts. But we need to change that. Development should adopt a grassroots approach, where locals are provided with materials and resources, but also equipped with the ability to help themselves.

Local communities would know better than anyone how they should function. Shouldn't we let them decide how they need to be helped? After all, teach a man to fish, right?

⁴ W Worley, ‘Sexual abuse in the aid sector still widespread’, in Devex. July 2020, viewed 27 September 2020, <https://www.devex.com/news/sexual-abuse-in-aid-sector-still-widespread-97730>.

⁵ L Michael, ‘Australia joins international effort to curb ‘deplorable abuses’ in aid sector’, in Probono Australia. July 2019, viewed 26 September 2020, <https://probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2019/07/australia-joins-international-effort-to-curb-deplorable-abuses-in-the-aid-sector/>.



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I am currently in my third year at UNSW, studying International Studies and Media (Communication & Journalism). Since studying International Studies, I have developed a very strong interest in the world around me. Its complexity and dynamic nature have made me all the more passionate in understanding how and why the world works the way that it does. Some specific areas I am interested in are politics and international development. I believe that the first step to making any change is through knowledge and understanding. I hope through my work, I am able to provide others with some of this, so they too can be better equipped in understanding the world around them.





Groucho, Harpo, Richard, and Karl: the Marx Brothers. Two for laughing, one for loving, and one atifor the death of the bourgeoisie. That's the order of revolutions. First you try to change the world with jokes, then you try to change the world with love, then you just say 'fuck it' and start cutting heads off people who wouldn't stop laughing. Head-cutting always comes because change never does and joking and laughing can only last so long.

You'd do well to learn the Four Marx Maxim so you know where to stand when the guillotine gets the dust blown off it. It's a waste of everyone's time if you don't know whether to put your hand on the rope or your head in the hole and revolutions are notorious for having very much to do in very little time so everyone being organised is very much appreciated. Basically, all you'll need to know is whether you were making jokes or laughing just prior to the shit hitting the fan.

But be astute.

Today you might be joking but tomorrow you'll be laughing and then, next week, you'll be dead.

Because change always comes.

For all of us.

But, personally.

- Toby Francis

CORONAVIRUS, THE GREAT (UN) EQUALISER

By Mursal Rahimi

Surrounded by rose petals in her bathtub in a £6 million Lisbon mansion where she has been self-isolating, Madonna proclaims that COVID-19 is the great equaliser. In a now-deleted video she posted to her Instagram account she said: "What's wonderful about it, is that it's made us all equal in many ways". The video is one in an obscure series she dubbed 'Madam X's Quarantine Diaries' and uploaded for her 15.5 million Instagram following in March of this year. At that point, COVID-19 had caused over 14,500 deaths worldwide.¹ Eight months later, the global death count stands at 1,038, 254.²

While the pandemic is still developing, early research has mapped out trends that indicate how COVID-19 has not been the 'great equalizer', but instead exacerbates existing inequalities within our society.³ In the US, Black and Hispanic Americans constituted two thirds of the deaths recorded between February to May 2020.⁴ Financial instability from job losses has triggered a housing crisis and mass evictions, leaving those in the lowest income brackets without a home and vulnerable to exposure to the virus.⁵ Johan Galtung introduced the concept of 'structural violence' which

¹ "COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic", October 4 2020, <<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>>.

² Ibid.

³ CDC, "Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report", Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, July 17 2020 <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6928e1.htm?s_cid=mm6928e1_w>.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Deena Zaru, "Mass evictions' on the horizon as US confronts coronavirus housing crisis", ABC News, May 1 2020, <<https://abcnews.go.com/US/mass-evictions-horizon-us-confronts-coronavirus-housing-crisis/story?id=70367541>>

can be used to understand the disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 across ethnic and low income communities.⁶ Structural violence draws attention to how interactions between political, economic, social and cultural structures can cause and further human suffering.⁷ All individuals exist within these structures, but some benefit from them while others sink further into disadvantage.⁸

The experience of COVID-19 is distinct if you are poor or ethnic. According to Kimberlé Crenshaw's 'intersectionality' thesis, those structural conditions often overlap,⁹ compounding the suffering of already disadvantaged communities. In this way COVID-19 both acts as a threat to public health as well as an accelerant to existing structural violence arising from racism and classism.

So when celebrities pledged that 'we're in all this together' and demanded that we stay at home, they could not have been further from the point. As people flocked to supermarkets wrestling over pasta and toilet paper, celebrities with a net worth of millions of dollars were urging their followers to donate to food banks. If you were able to sit through the entirety of the three minute long cover video of John Lennon's 'Imagine' orchestrated by Gal Gadot and featuring a slew of her celebrity peers singing off key and grinning at their iPhones - firstly, congratulations. Secondly, I am sure you too noticed that the response in the comments represented an overwhelming consensus: we're not impressed. There's something so obviously painful and wilfully ignorant about asking people to 'imagine no possessions' from your home in the Hollywood Hills. Formerly an emblem of meritocracy, celebrities were champions of the belief that with hard work and talent you could succeed. They floated between the elite and the ordinary person, with rags to riches stories that encapsulated the neoliberal fantasy: you too could one day rise to the top if you just put the effort in. Now celebrities are no longer relatable, aspirational or endearing to an audience that has been traumatised by the realities of a global pandemic.

While the actions of these celebrities are well reported by Twitter or TMZ, much more sinister is the unseen class of the uber-wealthy who have been able to thrive under the conditions of COVID-19. In the US alone, billionaires' wealth ballooned by \$845 billion within the first six months of the pandemic.¹⁰ With courier services in far greater demand than ever before with purchases inspired by quarantine boredom, Jeff Bezos became the first person in the world to amass \$200 billion.¹¹ At the same time, over 13.5 million Americans remain out of work and struggling for their lives.¹²

However, we do not need to look across the ocean to see structural violence arising from this pandemic; the disparate experiences of COVID-19 along lines of wealth are apparent in Australia.

⁶ Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research" *Journal of Peace Research*, no 6(3) (1969): 167-191.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Kimberlé Crenshaw, "The urgency of intersectionality" TED, 2016 <https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality/discussion>.

¹⁰ Saloni Sardana, "US billionaires' wealth grew by \$845 billion during the first six months of the pandemic" *Business Insider*, September 18 2020 <<https://www.businessinsider.com.au/us-billionaires-wealth-net-worth-pandemic-covid-billion-2020-9?r=US&IR=T>>.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

“ ...COVID-19 has not been the ‘great equalizer’, but instead exacerbates existing inequalities within our society. ”

Some of Sydney's most affluent suburbs in Waverley became early hotspots during the city's first wave of the virus. Despite Bondi, Bronte and Vaucluse representing a majority of NSW's cases, only two of 151 public health order fines issued by NSW Police by April were in Waverley.¹³ One-third of these fines were issued predominantly in South Western Sydney including the suburbs of Canterbury, Bankstown, Liverpool and Fairfield.¹⁴ Murray Lee, Professor of Criminology at the University of Sydney Law School, suggests that this illustrated a map of disadvantage where those in low socioeconomic areas - despite there being a lower incidence of COVID-19 cases - were more likely to be policed and fined.

The aggressive lockdown of nine public housing blocks in North Melbourne further speaks to how structural violence unfolds in Australia. Although the Victorian Government failed to quarantine travellers returning from a ski vacation to Aspen who did not self-isolate, it was the residents of these public housing estates who were before plunged into a hard and heavily police enforced lockdown with no notice.¹⁵ In response to mismanagement of food supplies by the Department of Health and Human Services, it was the young African, Muslim and migrant residents who mobilised and ensured families weren't left hungry or confused about their current condition.¹⁶ The #freethe9blocks hashtag on Twitter tracked the efforts of these residents to coordinate an effective response to the lockdown and disseminate vital information about their treatment at the hands of the state. Scheherazade Bloul considered the lockdown of the towers and the police response as embedded in the colonial legacies of this country, dating back to its origins as a penal colony.¹⁷

Race and class have fundamentally shaped both the experiences of and responses to COVID-19. While it is nice to entertain the idea that the white and wealthy have espoused - that "we're all in this together" - it is unfounded to believe that the disparate experiences of COVID-19 are not directly linked to how we benefit from the same structures that disadvantage others. Despite what Madonna may believe, COVID-19 very much cares about 'how rich you are, how famous you are...where you live' and is a far cry from being the 'great equaliser'.

¹³ Pallavi Singh and Laura Chung, "Police issue \$165,000 in COVID-19 fines, but only two in Sydney's worst-affected area" *The Sydney Morning Herald*, April 9 2020 <<https://www.smh.com.au/national/police-issue-165-000-in-covid-19-fines-but-only-two-in-sydney-s-worst-affected-area-20200409-p54ik3.html>>.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ David Mjia-Canales, "Public Housing Residents are Being Punished For the Victorian Government's Mistakes" *Junkee*, July 8 2020, <<https://junkee.com/public-housing-victorian-government/260997>>.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Scheherazade Bloul, "No room to breathe", *Institute of Postcolonial Studies*, September 12 2020 <<https://ipcs.org.au/no-room-to-breathe/>>.

HURT HIM, HELP HER

By Defne Huzmeli

I let the tears out because I want to hurt him
To show the pain he causes me
Don't be fooled
Sometimes I do know how to control them
To use them as a tool, wield them as a weapon

But I know it just makes him think I'm weak
I never grew up, a child throwing tantrums
graduated to manipulation
I learnt from the best but I confess
She was still better than me
At least I could tell how much she affected me

I trip up in guilt tripping
He says I cause him pain
which causes me pain
and I want to show him this pain
so he can feel more of the same
like clockwork, my tears and his shame
Why is my life full of endless cycles
aside from life itself?

Don't begin children
if you're not prepared
for them
to end up as their own person
Just teach them to be a good one
that itself is a job well done and
you did that

Give yourself more credit
 so you can stop being aggressive
 in your attempt to be protective
 I do not reflect bad parenting
 am not an extension of your being
 Stop letting your insecurity interfere with me living
 I call bullshit that
 “parents just want their children to be happy”

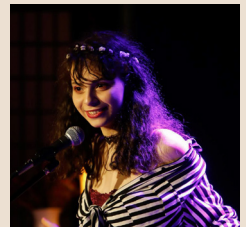
They want them happy but on their terms
 even if it means they're less than
 what they could've been
 if they had followed their dreams
 Do not use a fear for my future
 as an excuse for your past behaviour
 I do not need a slap to act as a wake-up call
 Trust me, I am scared enough already

You've never given me a fair chance
 to prove you wrong
 I'm always running from a clock
 towards freedom to make my own path
 Rolling downhill, arms outstretched
 till I have to tell you what I have to show for it
 None of which you'd consider an achievement

You cannot claim to know what is best for me when
 You don't even know me
 My little brother thinks you can fix anything
 but every time he says “fix fix fix”
 I hear “break break break”
 “Useless useless useless”
 This word is my new aesthetic
 I've been branded with

My mind speaks in your voice
 Sometimes I'm scared you are my excuse
 Your words wouldn't stab as much if I was already happy
 If I had already made myself happy

But it is hard enough to build a house
 without a wolf always blowing it down
 I cannot afford to build brick by brick
 So watch me write these walls of words
 you cannot break with a fist
 I will no longer see your glass ceiling
 I will break through it



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Defne aims for a style that's definitely hers and a creative career. She studies a Bachelor of Arts (Creative Writing & Theatre) & Fine Arts (Photography & Graphic Design). Defne also performs West Side Poetry Slam in Parramatta, was a 2019 Australian Poetry Slam Sydney finalist, and has been published in the 2019 UNSweetened.



THE EFFECTS OF CONSUMING NEGATIVE NEWS

By Nitika Midha

This year, I found myself addicted to the news. I refreshed my feed god knows how many times a day to see the latest information about COVID-19, protests, police brutality cases, environmental disasters and politics in general. This overflow of news did take its toll on me.

I started feeling hopeless about the world and found it hard to focus because I would always be thinking about the impact of the news that I had just consumed.

It isn't that negative news-induced stress is new; we have been confronted with intense news stories, graphic images and videos in the past. But, the recent shift in how we consume our news and changes in the style of news can negatively impact our mental and physical health. Historically, news that incorporated heavy content was disseminated through the radio, TV or newspapers; channels that could be turned off easily. The rise of social media has made that choice harder, as we are regularly exposed to a never-ending supply of material.

This means we can never really escape from negative news online. We could unexpectedly encounter

a tragedy as we log onto Facebook to see that video our friend tagged us in. Social media also makes it easier for us to compulsively scour the internet when we are confronted with a tragedy. We can find ourselves going down deep rabbit holes as we search for the latest news reports or that one more status update when news of tragedy reaches us.

Today's news is also "increasingly visual and shocking" according to Dr Davey, a psychology professor at the University of Sussex. The accessibility of mobile phones and social media has made access to bystander-captured media simpler. This means that we can easily access and watch unedited videos which show violence and brutality. We have seen this again and again with the videos of police and military violence against citizens that have emerged this year alone.

This high-level of exposure can have traumatic effects on us as audiences. A 2015 study conducted by Dr Ramsden, a psychology lecturer at the University of Bradford, concluded that close to 25% of participants who viewed images and videos from disturbing news events, such as school shootings or suicide bombings,

on social media reported symptoms consistent with PTSD.

A 2017 survey by the American Psychological Association also concluded that those who kept up with the news reported negative mental health symptoms, including higher levels of stress, anxiety and fatigue. These mood changes, according to Dr Davey, can exacerbate our own worries and can also result in serious physical health problems related to increases in cortisol, a stress-related hormone.

So, why is it that although the news causes us stress, we continue to seek it out?

According to Hans Rosling, this occurs because of our “negativity instinct”. Our brains are programmed to seek out information that indicates threats. That is why we are more likely to pay attention to unsettling or frightening news instead of positive news. High engagement on serious news stories has meant that we often don’t hear about when things are getting better, and this gives us the impression that the world around us is just getting worse.

While completely tuning off from the news is difficult, we can become more mindful about how we consume news.

Dr Gallagher, a psychiatrist at the Ohio State University, suggests becoming mindful of how the news makes you feel. Do you feel empowered with this information, or do you end up feeling more pessimistic or stressed out? If it’s the latter, then you should consider taking a break by listening to your favourite music, going for a walk or talking to a friend.

“ **Do you feel empowered with this information, or do you end up feeling more pessimistic or stressed out?** ”

If you also find yourself always thinking that we are living in a time where we are surrounded by war, violence, corruption, disasters, you should try to take a more realistic view of history. Yes, there are still tragedies which confront our world today, and a lot of work still needs to be done. But, we also need to remember that step-by-step and year-by-year, the world is making social and scientific progress. Rosling suggests that remembering more news doesn’t necessarily equal more suffering and that good news and gradual improvements made globally are almost never reported.

Understandably, turning the news completely off may be extremely difficult for you. If that is the case, you should consider limiting your news consumption to one block of time during the day. Maybe it’s 20 minutes before lunch, or as you have your morning coffee. At the very least, you should avoid the news right after you wake or before you go to bed.

You should be informed about what is happening around you. But, that desire to stay updated shouldn’t harm your sanity or health.

**Beyond the Fires**

Buffy Wu



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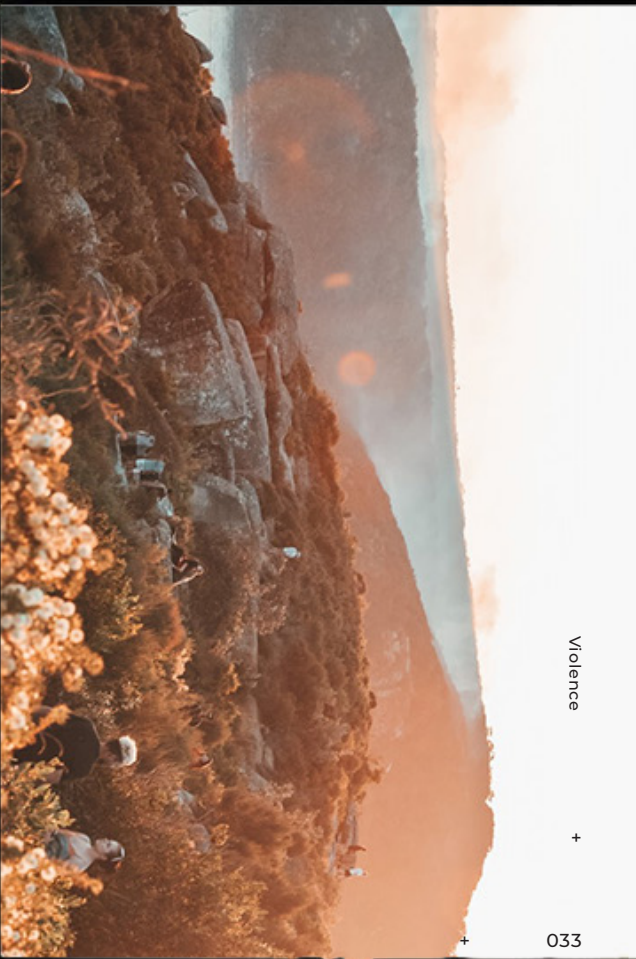
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[EXTENDED SOUNDS OF BRUTAL PIPE MURDER]: REPRESENTING VIOLENCE THROUGH AUDIO

By Caoimhe Hanrahan-Lawrence

In an era when everyone with access to GarageBand has thought about starting a podcast, there has been a rising popularity in fiction podcasts. In particular, I have noticed a large number of horror and science fiction shows. There are many thematic comparisons between podcasts and films within these two genres, but one major departure is the way that they present fight scenes. The iconic lightsaber sound is ubiquitous in the Star Wars franchise, and is considered a pioneer in foley work. However, without the well-choreographed battles and neon laser beams, the audio of these films is not particularly inspiring. How, then, do you translate these fights to an audio-only medium? I took this as an excuse to re-listen to some episodes of my favourite podcasts to identify some of the different techniques.

Sound Effect

Of course, there are a number of zappy blasters and rumbling chainsaws in podcasts. There are a handful of websites that provide royalty-free sound effects that can soundscape a fight scene using even the most rudimentary of mixing skills. However, a sound effect is not always as effective than it would be with accompanying visual. Gunshots provide a particular difficulty, in that you do not want them to be deafening, but you also don't want them to sound like a cheap pop gun. The Penumbra Podcast is quite effective in their use of sound effects in their film-noir inspired Juno Steel series. With the less serious tone of their show, the sound effects can be a little cheesy without taking away from the tone of the show.

Reactions

The thing that really gets my heart racing in horror films are the screams. You can probably picture it – there is a close up on the face of some innocent young thing as the killer approaches her, and then it cuts away to an exterior shot as we hear a chilling scream. In shots like these, you don't even see what she's so frightened of. Horror is useful like that – what you're imagining is often much scarier than anything a SFX team could put together.

I would be remiss not to mention that screaming is a significant undertaking for voice actors. Prior to industrial action from actors' unions, actors would frequently be required to record screams back to back until their throats bled. But in moderation, a scream can stand in for more complex soundscaping.

The main character of cult horror podcast The Magnus Archives is subjected to a great number of injuries at the hands of supernatural monsters. There are sometimes added sound effects, such as sizzling as his hand is burnt by a wax monster, or a squelch as a corkscrew is plunged into his leg to retrieve a burrowing worm. However, the most important sound is his reaction to these events. We don't need to hear the knife breaking skin to know he has been cut – his pained yelp is enough of a signal.

Gamified Battles

Different volumes and pitches of wailing aren't always an indication of how badly a character has been hurt. That's why I'm particularly fond of gamified battles. This occurs in actual play podcasts, which are recordings of a group of players playing TTRPGs (Tabletop Role-Playing Games) like Dungeons & Dragons and Pathfinder. These podcasts are heavily story driven, albeit in a non-traditional way. Popular D&D podcast The Adventure Zone is now producing graphic novel versions of their first campaign, two of which have become New York Times Bestsellers. However, battles are a key part of TTRPGs, and I appreciate the numerical value of an attack. If I hear a gunshot and a cry, I know a character has been hit, but have they been hit in the chest or the arm? Are they moments from bleeding out? The stakes need to be clarified by the following dialogue, whereas in actual play podcasts, we know how bad the hit is as soon as it lands. A 2 point attack is less serious than a 22 point attack, a character on 1 hit point is in substantially more danger than a character with 10, and so on.

Reporting

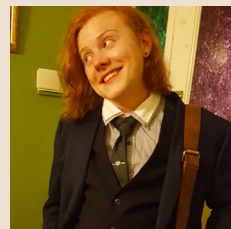
The final representation of violence I've come across is reporting after the fact. This is similar to an audiobook in some ways, but the use of first person and epistolary format make it feel much more realistic. The *Alice Isn't Dead* podcast is presented as a series of audio diaries from Keisha to her missing wife, Alice. In the first episode Keisha describes seeing a man eating another man at a truck stop. Even though this has already happened, the outstanding quality of the writing, soundscaping, and voice acting make it much more immersive.

These types of reports are usually in a broader frame narrative, and more direct forms of audio violence occur at other points. The first episodes of *The Magnus Archives* consist of the main character reading statements of people who have had an experience with the supernatural. As the story progresses, the frame narrative becomes more prominent, and other techniques are introduced.

One notable exception is the genre-defining podcast *Welcome To Night Vale*. In its eight year run, all attacks, battles, and fights have been reported. This is because *Welcome To Night Vale* presents itself as a radio broadcast, and the main character is reporting the goings on in his town as they happen.

Broader Definitions of Violence

As you will no doubt read in other articles in *Tharunka* this month, violence is not limited to the kind dispensed at gunpoint. Podcasts often deal with explicitly political concepts of the kind that would see a Netflix series cancelled after the first season. Some podcasts take a directly allegorical approach, as we see with the final season of *The Magnus Archives*. The characters enter an apocalyptic domain that is heavily inspired by the immolation of the Grenfell Towers in 2017. These tragic deaths were the result of chronic negligence on behalf of the landlords, even though they were not the ones who set the towers ablaze. Themes such as government corruption, police surveillance, and systemic poverty are common in other podcasts. Though this can lead to more direct violence, they are sometimes present on their own, manipulating and destroying the lives of characters in subtle but pervasive ways.



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Caoimhe Hanrahan-Lawrence is a 23-year-old non-binary lesbian writer based in Sydney. They are of Wiradjuri and Irish heritage, and currently live on Bidjigal land. Their work explores gender and sexuality, trauma, indigenous diaspora, and disability. They are currently undertaking a Bachelor of Arts at UNSW.

TRAFFICKING IN CAMBODIA: THE DARK REALITY FACED BY ADOLESCENT GIRLS

By Rebecca Barlow

The year is 2015. Bopha lives in a rented single-room house in Phnom Penh. She shares the space with eight of her family members. The owner could force her family to leave at any time. Her father and three older brothers work in poor conditions at a nearby sewage construction site. None of her brothers have ever gone to school. Despite their hard work and multiple incomes, Bopha's family can barely cover basic living expenses like food or clothing.*

¹ Winrock International, 2012. 'Research Report on Sex and Labour Trafficking Network and Pattern in Cambodia', December, p. 1.

In 2019, the Sydney-based organisation AusCam Freedom Project conducted an independent investigation into the factors that rendered girls most vulnerable to human trafficking. Dropping out of school was identified as the leading indicator of a girl's risk of becoming a victim of trafficking¹. AusCam also found that access to educational support and legitimate job opportunities are key to mitigating a girl's risk of trafficking.

For vulnerable girls in Cambodia, the promise of an adequate job with good pay is as glorious a prospect as the promise of eternal youth is to the world's wealthy. Sadly, many girls who attend what they believe will be a job interview never return home, and those who survive human trafficking face a life traumatised by those experiences.

Despite recent economic growth, Cambodia remains one of the poorest countries on Earth, suffering from endemic corruption within the government which also permeates every level of Cambodia's education system. The result is a high percentage of students, particularly girls, failing their exams and dropping out of school.

According to the ASEAN Post, Cambodian teachers are required to pay facilitation fees to schools in order to receive their salaries. However, low salaries motivate Cambodian teachers to charge students additional money for classes which are essential for passing their exams. This unofficial system of education discriminates against students from families with a low socio-economic status. For

financial reasons, these students are barred from accessing the classes where their peers are taught content that is crucial to prepare for the exams.

Bopha's father wants a better future for his daughters than for them to end up like his sons- working hard for very little money. He took out a \$2,000 loan from the local bank so that he could send Bopha and her sister to school. Already struggling, and now burdened with the commitment to pay back a high interest loan, Bopha was on the verge of dropping out of school to find work; and finding work would likely mean exploitative work or worse... trafficking. Her school director heard about her plans to drop out, so he advised her to contact AusCam Freedom Project.

In late January this year, Cambodian student Kong Bunrith posted a video on Facebook in which he claimed that senior officials in the Ministry of Justice had accepted bribes of up to US\$150,000 from students who were desperate to pass their exams. The consequences of such corruption have a greater impact on girls than on boys. This is because Cambodian social norms place a higher value on the education of boys. Boys are more likely to remain in school regardless of their academic performance. Comparatively, girls and women are expected to complete household chores and financially support their families. A woman's role in Cambodian society is largely defined by the Chbab Srey; a code of conduct for women. The Chbab Srey upholds problematic gender roles and was formally taught in schools until 2007.

Girls in Cambodia face a multitude of barriers to receiving an education and the outbreak of COVID-19 made a bad situation worse. In an interview with the Development Director of AusCam Freedom Project, Jessie Teerman, COVID-19 was described as the greatest challenge AusCam has ever faced in its eight years of operation. The organisation previously operated through partnerships with

government schools, but when COVID-19 reared its ugly head, schools across Cambodia closed almost overnight. However, Ms. Teerman has said that she believes AusCam's greatest achievement came as a direct result of the crisis: AusCam have 'decided not to give up' and 'achievements are measured against the greatness of the challenge'. Instead, AusCam is launching the country's first anti-trafficking hotline for adolescent girls called the 'Freedom Line', which is now a permanent feature of AusCam's operational strategy.

“ Girls in Cambodia face a multitude of barriers to receiving an education and the outbreak of COVID-19 made a bad situation worse.. ”

Since then, Bopha has been enrolled with AusCam Freedom Project and received psychosocial support, educational support, school materials and rice support for the whole family. Her barriers to education have successfully been removed so she can realise her full potential. Bopha is now pursuing a Marketing Degree at the Cambodia National Institute of Business. When she graduates, Bopha will be the first university graduate in her family, realising both her father's and her own dreams of being educated and having professional opportunities.

Human trafficking in Cambodia is preventable. According to Ms Teerman, the majority of trafficking networks in Southeast Asia prey on girls 'without resources, opportunities or a support network' - that is why AusCam's approach is all about providing girls agency and choice. I asked Ms Teerman how, if they chose to, UNSW students could support the anti-trafficking work of AusCam. She replied, 'if they have time, we will be hosting a one-hour virtual tea on the 25th of October where they can learn more about the organisation and the launch of our new Shine Centre. If they have money, they can join a committed group of monthly partners through our website. If they have a birthday (which most of us do), they can pledge their special day to support anti-trafficking efforts and ultimately change a girl's life forever.'

*Bopha's real name has been changed for protection and privacy reasons.

Please visit auscamfreedomproject.org to learn more about AusCam's vision to sustainably prevent human trafficking in Cambodia.



Rebecca Barlow is currently undertaking an internship at a non-governmental organisation which works to protect adolescent girls from human trafficking and exploitation. She is currently in her third year of a politics and international relations degree and is interested in pursuing a career in human rights journalism or within an intergovernmental organisation.



HIDDEN GHOSTS: THE MURDER OF TRANSGENDER PEOPLE IN AUSTRALIA

By Issy Golding

Trigger Warning: Transphobia, Homicide, Suicide, Sexual Assault

'The machinery of discrimination that they assembled to fight us in 2017 was not destroyed in the armistice. They are still in place.' - Eloise Brook (*Queerstories*, 2020)

In March 2020, Eloise Brook, a transgender woman and LGBTQ+ activist, said that there is an ongoing war against LGBTQ+ Australians. For many, the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey (and the subsequent 2017 amendment to the Marriage Act 1961 legalising same-sex marriage in Australia) marked the utmost victory for LGBTQ+ people. However, the community still faces disproportionate rates of violence in Australia.

The International Trans Murder Monitor ('TMM') has recorded only three deaths in Australia in the past 12 years, most recently Mheldoy Bruno in September 2019 in regional New South Wales (TMM, 2019). Within six months of Bruno's death, another trans woman, Kimberly McRae, was found murdered in New South Wales, in January 2020; a 20-year-old suspect was extradited from off the coast of Venezuela but has not yet faced trial (Hirst, 2020). The current statistics on transgender lives and deaths in Australia do not represent reality, according to Victoria University academic Eloise Brook. Australian media and police have not effectively reported and investigated deaths as part of the violence enacted onto trans people in Australia (Brook, 2019).

Transphobic violence within Australia is often misunderstood as we look abroad to the 'killing fields' (Brook, 2019) of the US and Brazil, viewing ourselves as a comparatively tolerant society. This is a flawed comparison. While Australia may think of itself as tolerant (Law, 2020), the bureaucracy of the Australia justice system often does not consider issues of gender variance within their investigations (Brook, 2019). Victims being posthumously misgendered (treated as their assigned at birth gender) by authorities may result in their case not being statistically considered

as violence towards a trans person. Many media reports, especially older reports through the 1980s to 2000s, misgender the victim, not respecting the victims even in death.

The absence of data about the Australian transgender community is summarised best by UNSW academic Andy Kaladelfos: 'if we don't have baseline data, we simply don't know the level of victimisation' (Kaladelfos in Brook, 2019). Much information about the trans community in Australia is estimated. According to Brook and the Sydney Gender Centre, an educated guess suggests 1% of the Australian population identifies as transgender or nonbinary. Despite the lack of statistics, it is clear that 'violence is rife' (Brook, 2019), at rates 25% higher for transgender and gender diverse people, and 12 times higher than that of the general population (Brook, 2019). This is further heightened for transgender and gender diverse BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour).

The accumulative factors of gender and race increase the discrimination and violence against these groups (LBT). A study conducted by GLAAD found that more than 87% of victims of anti-LGBTI murders are POC in the USA, and similar patterns can be assumed in Australia. In Australia trans women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are 20% more likely to experience multiple instances of sexual harassment. Compared to other women, trans women of colour are twice as likely to experience sexual assault 10 or more times. (Feng, 2020).

In her podcast on the underreporting of transgender deaths in Australia, *Counting the Dead* (2019), Eloise Brook presents that coroners have an informal duty both to the victim and the family of the victim. Anything that may be distressing to a grieving family, meaning any information that implied the victim was LGBTQI+, may be disregarded as to fulfil the coroner's duty of care to the family. But prioritising the living family's needs by failing to conduct due diligence following a trans person's death means murders are often not reported or understood entirely.

Discrimination in Australia is not limited to violence - it includes the 'soft discrimination' which catalyses violence. Soft discrimination refers to discrimination not acted out through illegal means such as job discrimination, but through things such as microaggressions and social exclusion, further isolating people outside of accepted society. LGBTI+ youth are at the most at risk for homelessness in Australia (Sainty, 2017), which according to *Street Smart Australia 2018* largely results from 'running away' due to fear of rejection or violence, or being kicked out of home.

While many services are available to trans people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, these services are often flawed and therefore not fully engaged with by those most at risk (Robinson, 2018). This can result in couch surfing, rough sleeping, and boarding houses, which can be dangerous situations with increased risk of violence and abuse, especially for

a community which already faces disproportionate levels of violence. Trans youth face further issues when engaging with the support systems available, facing discrimination when engaging with these services, which results in many transgender homeless people avoiding refuges due to having previously been turned away and discriminated against by staff, and/or having been forced to use services and facilities that do not align with their gender identity. One homeless trans youth reported having 'call[ed] one service provider' but found

[t]hey didn't seem to understand that transphobic abuse is a form of abuse, basically saying, 'You should work it out, you should go home... After that, and having heard a lot of horror stories from other trans people who had tried to go to other services, I didn't go to any other services. - Kochava (Wahlquist, 2017)

Discrimination towards the transgender community further heightens the prevalence of suicide, another form of violence which is not acknowledged in Australian society. When discrimination rates are lower the consequences of such follow, meaning that suicidal thoughts, actions and completed suicides also go down. The LGBT Health Alliance states that between the ages of 16 and 27, LGBTI people are 5 times more likely to attempt suicide than non-LGBTI people. Transgender people over 18 are nearly 11 times more likely. LGBT young people are at higher risk of attempting suicide when they have experienced abuse and harassment (LGBTI Health Alliance, 2020). The LGBTI community, and especially those who identify as transgender, are more at risk of untimely death in Australia through the discrimination and harassment perpetrated by intolerance.

That's the paradox of trans representation. The more we are seen, the more we are violated ... the person on the screen incites rage into the viewer, but the viewer doesn't have access to the person on the screen, they have access to the person on the street - Chase Sirangio, Disclosure

The broader Australian community is more aware than ever of the transgender community, in both non-fictional and fictional representations of transgender people. But both the statistical flaws and violence continue. The increased, though still limited, portrayal of trans people through media created by cisgender, or non-transgender, people, often perpetuates misinformation such as that trans identity is temporary, or more harmfully, that trans people are a risk to society. The idea that trans people are 'faking' or performing their identity increases when cisgender actors play transgender characters, fuelling the idea that trans identity is temporary or a costume - an idea used to justify anger and fear.

The progress of the LGBT+ community, such as the right to marry no longer being determined by sex or gender, is overshadowed by the ongoing prevalence of violence and discrimination which can eventuate in

an untimely death. Violence in Australia is often hidden behind statistical curtains as cisgender Australians look abroad at places such as the US as an example of what Australia isn't. To witness violence in Australia, it is assumed one must look into the past where violence is more prevalent. This is a consequence of complicated legal systems which disallow publicly reporting on ongoing criminal cases, meaning all information about current events are sparsely reported on, giving a false impression of less violence.

However, the violence on our shores had no end date. It continues across the country and we should not disregard transphobia within Australia even if it is comparatively less extreme than other countries - something we cannot assume without proper data. The transgender community and their allies in Australia cannot continue to be let down as they mourn and remember those who have not been respected in death. The deaths of those not remembered for what they are haunt a community in mourning. The trans community is haunted by a violence that the national and international community fail to see, perpetuating false realities of tolerance in Australia and minimising the experiences of trans individuals and our trans community.

The transgender community in Australia experiences violence and discrimination to a degree faced by few other communities, and silence and misinformation mean that it cannot be effectively challenged in modern Australia. More research must be undertaken and transparent information made available, or the haunting of people forgotten in death will continue.

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'Issy is a non fiction writer with a focus on Australian social politics and post-soviet feminism.

She also has a niche passion for surrealist poetry. Loves collecting too many houseplants and dismantling the patriarchy.'

CLOSER

By Phoebe Au

Content warning: fetishisation of women of colour, alcohol

It was the way Sam's gaze fell which made me nervous.

The way she gazed at me from halfway across the humid nightclub, the scent of tequila and cologne diffusing into the dark, unnaturally cold air, her soft brown eyes locking onto mine.

She held my gaze, her lips curling into a roguish smirk.

"I used to think I only liked curry girls," drawled Eddie, interrupting my thoughts, "but Asians... oh boy... when they're not selective school nerds, they can be really fucking hot. Ethnic girls in general. Fucking majestic."

I raised an eyebrow. I am Asian. Just as I was about to respond, he spoke again,

"Sometimes I wonder what I'm doing wrong. Whenever I try to get a girl, they misread my signals and whenever I'm just trying to be friends, they think I'm flirting. I keep accidentally flirting with girls. It's so frustrating."

Wow! I really wonder what you're doing wrong, I thought. The urge to shoot that snarky comment in his direction tugged at me. Let it slide, commanded the other, more sensible, voice inside my head. It's nothing.

Eddie sighed. "I feel like I'm the gay best friend a lot of the time. Just too good at friend-zoning girls. That's why I'm so unlucky in love." I looked back at the bar stools. Sam was sitting there alone, quietly sipping her drink.

"Yeah I get what you mean, Ed." I sighed. "That must really suck."

Sam shot me a mischievous grin. "Come over," she mouthed.

"Hey, I think Sam wants to talk to me," I said. "I'm gonna go." I didn't wait to see him react.

"How on earth did you withstand more than ten seconds of drunk Eddie whingeing about his non-existent love life?" Sam exclaimed. Her breath smelt of long islands and mint.

I shrugged. "Well, Eddie is Eddie."

"Oh my gosh. Do you like him, Rachel?"

"No," I said, a little too defensively.

A silence hung between us. I opened my mouth, unsure of what to say to fill the empty space, all too aware of Sam's averted gaze. The coloured strobe lights darkening her face made it difficult to tell whether she had actually wanted to talk to me or if she was simply rescuing me from Eddie and his ideas about 'ethnic girls'.

He appeared behind us. Sam's rescue mission had failed.

"Ladies!" he announced. He sidled up next to Sam on the small leather bar stool. "More drinks are here! On me tonight!" I couldn't decide whether I was more annoyed he'd returned or more annoyed he'd caught me off-guard; caught me sitting stiffly next to my female friend, the stilted conversation dying between us like a candle slowly going out.

I downed the rest of my Newtowner as Sam and Eddie's muttering voices melted into the background, the rumbling chatter and house EDM all blurring into one homogenous drawl.

Anyone who didn't know us probably thought we were the most unlikely pairing. Sam was snatched, healthy, and beautiful. I was not.

The first time I met her, I disliked her. Disliked the way she strode into my cabin on the first day of first year camp, her dark, wavy hair caught beneath her canvas bag straps, her multiple piercings swaying as she swung her gym bag onto the bunk bed next to mine.

"Hey there," she breathed out in a charming American accent that I instantly hated.

Over the next two days I mostly ignored her. The last night of camp found me lying in the dark with her on the floor of our cabin, talking about everything and nothing as a bottle of vodka emptied in our hands. I stared at the stars through the skylight, wishing we

were the only two souls in the entire world.

Then we woke the next morning and pretended we were too drunk to remember the night's conversations. I watched as she climbed on to the bus with a brooding guy in a denim jacket. It's probably nothing, I told myself. But I felt the bubbling dislike rising in my chest once more and suddenly wished I'd never spoken to her at all.

For months, I'd replayed this fantasy: we'd wake from a luxurious slumber, still foggy from last night's hangover. Then, once the fogginess cleared, I'd take her to my favorite spot, a hill overlooking the city. We would see everything. Tiny boats drifting in and out of the harbour. A network of vein-like streets, crossing and recrossing paths like figure skaters. Two tiny glass highrises glistening in the afternoon light like star-crossed lovers amidst the vast grey oceans surrounding them.

"It's... breathtaking," Sam would whisper. "I can't believe you're only showing me this place now." I'd place my hands firmly on her shoulders. I'd feel the warmth of her back, her hair swirling in the gentle breeze. "I don't want to leave," she'd say after a long pause. She'd turn, gazing deeply into my eyes. "What if..." she'd begin with a wicked smile, "What if you followed me back to the States? Booked the next flight. Cancelled your subjects for the next term."

I'd study her closely, trying to determine how serious she was. Then I'd stop myself, too afraid to entertain the thought. Too afraid of myself.

That's where the fantasy would end.

As I drove her to the airport, I found myself replaying it. I glanced at Sam in the rear view mirror, her suitcases piled high beside me.

She beamed. "Thanks for everything. The BnB, the clubbing. Honestly, thanks. I'm so lucky to have you. You're amazing. I love you."

I love you. "You're welcome," I replied, hoping Sam couldn't hear it in my voice. I love you. I was glowing inside. I love you, the words still ringing in my ears.

"I'm really glad you enjoyed it," I said.

In that moment, I was floating. She was mine. Nothing else mattered.

"Ugh, I just hope that things aren't, you know, weird between me and Eddie when he sees me off at the airport."

Her words hit like a kick in the guts. I froze. A storm of drunk memories from last night flooded me. The smell of vodka. Eddie's laugh. A door slammed in my face. The disgust rising in my throat. Why him?

My knuckles blanched on the steering wheel. I willed myself to blink back tears, myself to stay silent, to stifle the scream rising in my throat. It's nothing, the voice inside my head screamed. It's nothing. It's nothing.

"RACHEL!" I slammed the breaks. My heart raced in my chest. An old woman crossing the road scowled at me, centimetres from the windshield. "Is everything alright?" asked Sam's voice through the fog between my temples.

I took in a deep breath and exhaled. "Yeah," I finally muttered. "It's nothing."

Finally we arrived at the airport gates. Eddie and the others were already there, hungover but smiling.

"Remember to call me, Sam."

"Hit me up if you ever come back to Sydney."

Their voices echoed around me. But as I watched Sam depart into the boarding gates I said nothing. I felt nothing. Because I'd learned to feel nothing. It's nothing, I told myself as Sam eyed Eddie, not me, from across the humid nightclub, her mouth curled coyly at the corners. It's nothing, I told myself as he led her slowly into the empty bedroom, dusk forming a slither of honey between their shadows. It's nothing, I told myself as I drove her to the terminal, the precious seconds alone with her slipping through my fingers like grains of sand in an hourglass.

It's nothing, because for too long I'd believed that was what I was. You are nothing, I told myself when what I longed for in my heart was wrong though every sinful impulse in my body told me it was right. You are nothing, I repeated to myself, because it was fine. Because I was fine being alone. You are nothing, I screamed at the voices inside my head because who could ever love a girl who'd made herself so small that there was nothing left to love?

As I watched her plane soar into the clouds, I felt myself shrinking smaller and smaller beneath her.

You are nothing, I repeated to myself like a mantra because being nothing felt safe. It was a room so warm and blood-close I'd learned to mistake its walls for skin.



To Phoebe, writing has always been an important creative outlet and medium for self expression. Her work is heavily inspired by paintings and personal experiences.

SRC PRESIDENT REPORT

By Manu Risoldi

The last year on council has been really enjoyable but also incredibly confronting all at the same time. I've been privileged enough to be on the SRC for the last two years, but this year we were met with the most unique challenges, the liked we hadn't ever seen before.

COVID19 upended the higher education sector and placed it under the most intense financial pressure it has ever been under. This year has highlighted the inherent issues built into the higher education system in Australia, while also demonstrating just how reliant our universities are on international students. This year also saw some of the most blatant undermining of our tertiary education sector by the current Liberal Government.

It has been a difficult year to be a student!

Putting this all to one side there have been tangible improvements I endeavoured to make to student life this year. My focus has undeniably been on academic policy. It was an area of interest for me going into this role, and I honestly believe that if academic policy could be crafted appropriately and better enforced, students at UNSW would be having a vastly different university experience.

Over the course of this year, I undertook research, presented, and wrote a paper to Academic Board alongside the Chair of Arc. Together we recommended some key changes to lectures at UNSW, class attendance, and closed captioning of all recordings. Since undertaking the research and presenting to Academic Board we have passed all our recommendations.

What does this mean for students going into 2021?

UNSW will be shifting to a **universal lecture recording design** even after COVID-19 no longer affects our education. This will boost the accessibility of classes, allow for the greater engagement of international, regional, and students with disabilities, and ultimately signifies the first step of our university maintaining their virtual 'online' learning spaces. We are still currently ironing out the finer details with UNSW, but we hope to ensure all lectures can be downloaded and stored on students' devices to be accessed at any time and anywhere!

Another recommendation to Academic Board was to **scrap arbitrary lecture attendance**. It did not make sense to enforce strict lecture attendance requirements when lectures will be available online going into the future.

Aside from the recommendations passed at Academic Board I also played a role in the **flexibility given to special considerations** during T1 and T2. This saw the need for medical certificates relaxed and allowed more students to access special considerations and have their applications seen to and actioned faster. My thought process behind this was students should not be burdening the medical services at a time like now, and also potentially further putting themselves in danger of getting COVID. Alongside the special consideration changes, I assisted hundreds of students to complete the universities' financial hardship grants in T1 and T2. Over 4000 students utilised these grants, ranging from food vouchers to rent assistance. Many students struggled with the wait time to receive the grants and I assisted at-risk students to have their grant applications approved by management promptly.

The **move to Pass/Fail grading**, as controversial as it was, happened to be another academic change I helped facilitate to management. I stand by suggesting this to management and pushing so hard for it. There was a large, vulnerable cohort of students whose academic transcripts would have been severely impacted by COVID19 and this policy ensured they were protected. It absolutely should have been communicated better to students and if in the future it ever had to be used again I would hope it would be an opt-in or opt-out option for students to decide across all faculties.

Finally one of the achievements I am most proud of is UNSW's move to 24-hour exams rather than proctored examinations throughout this year. It could not be achieved across the university, the accrediting bodies of many business and economics courses made sure of that. However, across a significant portion of the universities, other faculties' 24-hour exams were used successfully and will continue to be used for the foreseeable future. This was a commitment made by the university and saw UNSW depart from proctored examination use, like many other universities.

WELFARE OFFICER REPORT

By Nayonika Bhattacharya

It was definitely a very tough year for a lot of people coming to the Welfare Collective this year. I wouldn't label anything we did as an achievement, because I think it was the bare minimum that we were doing. The Welfare Collective took a huge responsibility this year in responding to a lot of these issues.

We provided over 400 welfare packs to students from April to July, between South Sydney areas, Eastern areas, and North-western areas as well, where a lot of the international students and students with disabilities were. We had students from regional and rural areas, and we also responded to a lot of students on campus.

We pushed for a lot of academic support – making Special Considerations broader, financial assistance and things like that, which we really started pushing for in April. The process became quite streamlined, which was quite nice. The university realised that we needed it because we kept pushing for it.

We pushed for a lot of crisis accommodation as well. We have a few arrangements with homestay networks in surrounding areas. We ran a lot of sessions with tenancy networks, Redfern Legal Centre and Kingsford Legal Centre, so people would understand how they could ask for help. We did try and assist a lot of people with rent reductions, writing those letters, having those conversations.

Then we helped set up the Food Hamper Hub that Arc runs every week. We helped Food Bank and we got in touch with OzHarvest, which Arc helps organise. So we pushed for that from the welfare collective side, because we realised we had a lot of international but also domestic students coming through who didn't have that help.

We pushed for college residents who were going back home, to have their rent frozen, and not to be charged, and their contract paused until they could come back. Or if they weren't coming back, the money returned to them because of that condition.

We tried transport concessions, but again, it was a hard year. So that's not something we could push for a lot.

We're currently setting up a lot of electronic welfare packs – pamphlets and posters for people to access in case of an emergency. That's a list of domestic violence contacts, emergency contacts, emergency housing, food and tenancy, crisis housing, shelters and things like that.

We are currently assembling emergency packs as well. So if people need to be home for emergency conditions, we have about 20 packs at any given point. We are still trying to work out logistics and how to store them, but we might have them in the Arc office or the welfare room. So while people are looking for crisis accommodation, they can have basic things like items of clothing, food, and a bookshop voucher. We've got food packets and fashion packs as well with non-perishables.

On the quarantine and pandemic fronts, we helped organise a bunch of online sessions for international students who came here early in the year, as well as local students coming back from exchange and quarantining for two weeks. We did welfare checks with them every three days. If they wanted messages, food packs and things like that, we tried to do that as well.

Apart from that, we ran a lot of events on sexual health and consent this year – it sort of came to everyone's notice that safe sex and that sort of stuff is not discussed actively. We discussed that from a college perspective, we did a lot of events with international students as well, a lot of events with students from UNSW Global including foundation year students. We're currently running very successful online sessions and discussing consent in the workplace, what consent is, from a male perspective and female perspective, consent and having a discussion with your friends, consent and dating. We're currently doing consent and a queer perspective in the next fortnight.

We are going to be publishing – and it's currently being designed as we speak – a lot of resources on how to deal with anxiety, and university stress, and where people can seek resources outside of university. We've had a chat with headspace, Beyond Blue, Lifeline and a lot of multicultural organisations to help organise these things and share their resources. We've done a lot of work with multicultural, hepatitis and HIV services, in delivering a lot of these services to LGBTQI students on campus, as well as other students.

We're also currently waiting for an order of sanitary and hygiene products. We'll be making these available as well for people if they need them on campus, because that's something that you don't easily get. And if you have to buy it on campus, I'm conscious not everyone is always in the financial position to do that. So we'll be having a lot of these items available in the welfare room as well.

We've brought this up with the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) team – sanitary items and hygiene products not being there for young parents or people with caring responsibilities coming to campus. Your period could come at any time; people who menstruate don't necessarily identify as female as well, and a lot of these things are quite complex and intersectional. So we want to make sure that we cater to people's different basic needs.

We were supposed to do sessions throughout the third term with Student Academic and Career Services (SACS), but because of the restructure, that's something that had to take a break. We were going to do a more professional, employment and personal branding of angle. Towards the end of the year, students are graduating and moving towards summer jobs, internships, clerkships and placements. They'd need to be prepared for, you know, how to set up your resume and CV and things like that, they'd be prepared for that. So the plan was to deliver that during the week, but because of the restructure, that's something that we missed out on. But we'll be sharing resources in Week 8 on that.

Around the end of Week 9, we'll be sharing more resources on executive dysfunction and neurodivergence and raising more awareness on that for students with ADHD, ADD, autism, other neurodivergent conditions, dyslexia, dysrhythmia, and stuff like that. And also highlighting that we have Equitable Learning Services (ELS) at UNSW so before exams, if anyone needs help, they can definitely approach them.

It's been a good year but it's been busy. I definitely wish I could do more. I feel like it would have been easier to deliver a lot of services earlier if we were on campus, because I'd have the opportunity to actually interact with people, hear what they have to say, and acknowledge what they're going through.

As much as I do hear people who send messages and send me emails and reach out to me, I really appreciate that people put themselves in that spot. I'm conscious that it's not easy to do. As I always say, my emails are always open. I am happy to like jump on a call and have a chat with people and remind them that you know, we do care about you. And no issue is too small. And if you have an issue, literally hit us up and I will be there.

WOMEN'S OFFICER REPORT

By Colleen Rose

At the end of July, I was elected as the new Women's Officer taking over for Stella Babidge. As a first year JD student at UNSW, I hadn't been very aware of the Women's Collective and as Women's Officer it was incredibly important to me that the Collective be a stronger presence on campus again. In my time as Women's Officer, I have been thrilled to see UNSW WoCo grow as a community and find ways to engage through the difficulties brought on by COVID-19.

There have been two projects that have been central to the strengthening of WoCo's community through COVID-19; Pandora's Box and the development of the WoCo website. The long desired return of the WoCo magazine Pandora's Box will soon be fulfilled, with its first edition Oasis: Surviving and Thriving scheduled for release at the end of Term 3.

Additionally, Term 3 marks the start of the Women's Collective Website. The website acts as an educational tool on women's issues with informational pages written by members, dedicated to issues they are passionate about. The website also provides easy access to important resources regarding student wellbeing and safety e.g. information regarding sexual misconduct on campus.

Watching the Collective come together to work collaboratively on these two projects, and seeing individual members step up, assert their own ideas and take ownership and leadership within this space has been incredibly gratifying and has been the greatest joy of my term as Women's Officer.

It has also been a true joy to be able to meet with staff and other students to work collaboratively to address issues such as racism (in collaboration with the POC Collective) and Gendered Violence (in collaboration with Arc). Below are just some of the collaborative projects I've been honored to be part of over my term as Women's Officer:

- POC Collective Collaboration: Talk on White Feminism
- Involvement in Arc's Be A Better Human Campaign through:
 - First Responder Training
 - Active Bystander Panel
 - Back to Basics Panel
 - Gendered Violence Panel
- Participation in UNSW Athena SWAN and its ongoing development of an Inclusive Leadership programme and communication plans
- Participation and promotion of The Network of Women Students Australia (NOWSA) conference
- Participation and promotion of the Reclaim the Night Rally where one of 20 in-person participants will be a UNSW WoCo member
- Involvement with the Women's Wellbeing Academy's goal to create positive impacts nationally and globally, in key areas of women's wellbeing.

As Women's Officer, one of my greatest desires was to ensure WoCo was a safe environment for women-identifying students to learn, grow and find a sense of community. Seeing the teamwork of the Collective in the development of our projects and the keen involvement of our members in events over this year has made me feel like we have achieved this. I am so grateful for and have truly enjoyed my, albeit short, time as Women's Officer and I am very excited to see what incredible things our new Women's Officer in 2021 will achieve.

ETHNOCULTURAL OFFICER REPORT

By Dorene Shankaran

I'll be frank. I had no idea what I had gotten myself into when I became the Ethnocultural officer. I barely understood how student politics operated and spent a lot of time sifting through emails from seemingly important people. My first few months were riddled with meetings with university management and working groups who all claimed to be concerned with student interests. It felt very performative at times and left me feeling aimless, with little desire to commit to the role.

However, I am grateful I had a collective that helped create a sense of direction. With a blank canvas we planned speak outs on racial discrimination and educational workshops and had a vibrant vision for the year. We even rebranded from the Ethnocultural collective to the People of Colour collective to help nurture a safe haven, a community. Unfortunately, before we could breathe life into these ideas, Covid-19 hit and I found myself back at square one. We fumbled a little throughout the transition and it was quite discouraging trying to host events online. It took time and a lot of persistence, but we eventually found our feet.

My favourite achievement was hosted in collaboration with Arc in Term 2. We facilitated online discussion panels on the Black Lives Matter movement in Australia, anti-blackness in communities of colour, environmental justice and white feminism. We created safe spaces to educate people on social justice issues beyond a myopic lens. These talks also gave us the opportunity to highlight how these fights are intertwined and to fight for one means to fight for them all.

Although, my proudest achievement has been the curation of a mental health zine. The collective wanted a project with longevity and with mental health gaining prominence in the public discourse due to Covid-19 we jumped on the opportunity. The way people of colour experience mental health is quite nuanced and this is often overlooked when we have these conversations. In creating this zine, that also includes a nifty resource guide, we want other people of colour to know that they're not alone in their struggles and there is support

beyond our immediate communities.

Alongside the above we've curated a cultural awareness training module for student leaders, translated a domestic violence resource guide into Indonesian and helped the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) board create a student advisory panel to facilitate student input in programs that directly affect us. We launched our own website, ran script-readings with NUTS and hosted professional development workshops for women of colour. We've also helped organised solidarity contingents to numerous rallies such as BLM and deaths in custody and fee hikes in higher education.

I share these achievements with several wonderful people. Firstly, to UNSW Grassroots (RISE UNSW), thank you for being an unrelenting force on campus and for introducing me to this role. Also, a big thank you to Jessica Huang and Lungol Wekina for nurturing the People of Colour collective with me. None of our achievements would have been possible without your commitment, ingenuity, and sheer grace. Finally, to my partner who pestered me into taking up this challenge, thank you for believing in me amidst all my breakdowns. Salamat mahal ko.

It's been a whirl wind of a year, but it's also been my proudest so far. To the next Ethnocultural officer, I leave this marvellous collective in your hands. Nurture it well.

This piece was written on stolen Dharawal land in South-West Sydney. I pay my respects to the Traditional Custodians of the land and extend those respects to Elders of past, present and emerging. As a child of immigrants, I acknowledge that this land is soaked in blood as the colony still stands and sovereignty was never ceded. With rising deaths in custody, destruction of cultural heritage sites and continued institutional violence inflicted upon First Nations people, it is our responsibility as settlers use our privilege to join the fight. This always was and will always be Aboriginal land.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' OFFICER REPORT

By Nayonika Bhattacharya (on behalf of Tanmay Manchanda)

The International Collective had an officer at the start of the year, then they resigned. Then a second officer was supposed to come in, but then they didn't come in. And then I think eventually, towards mid-year, we had the officer (Tanmay Manchanda) come in.

The International Collective did take a bit of a tumble and a toss, because of how many officers changed. As last year's International Officer, it was a bit of a baby for me, and the people I've met through it are amazing. So I wanted to make sure that I could keep it on.

So I was sort of managing the Welfare Collective and the International Collective for a bit. But then, so basically what the international collective has gone through so been a lot of events for the International collective through the International Student Experience unit, Kingsford Legal Centre and Arc Legal.

I organised a bunch of events revolving around tenancy agreements, tenancy rights, working rights and things like that. So events involving the Fair Work Ombudsman, and things around workplace safety and harassment.

We've been pushing for employability and putting yourself out there as an international student, getting your first work experiences, and how to seek placement or internships if that's necessary for your degree. We've worked with Student Job Australia and the Council of International Students Australia (CISA) to push for that.

We've pushed for concessions in terms of financial assistance. In my capacity as an international student, we pushed for that and Study NSW came through with that. We had agreements with homestay networks, and a lot of other community organisations.

We had a lot of conversations with embassies on how they could assist students. We set up a lot of support groups for students from different regions and their embassies, as well as community organisations and support networks here. For instance, if you are a Malaysian student, we set up communication between the Malaysian Students Organisation and Malaysian organisations in Sydney.

And then we tried to organise a number of online events for people catch up. So we set up a lot of catch-up, games night events, movie nights and things like that, so that students that were still here, had a way to be connected.

We set up internal conversations amongst student society executives, so they could chat about who the students were staying back were, how they put support them and how we could support student societies through the pandemic as well. So whatever they were organising, we could reach out to international students to have a chat with them as well.

And then we did a lot of work with the International Experience Unit. And we kept in touch with all of the students who were enrolled, but were overseas. So we'd organise events with them and cultural mentors, and run online events every fortnight so people knew what was going on.

MEET OUR ARTISTS



Pg. 008

Talica, from a poor translation of 'Талица' the name of a random Russian town, is a disillusioned International Studies & Media student, who draws to fill time. She hopes to one day get a job that pays money but, then, don't we all?



Pg. 021

Casey Keung is a first year Design student with hopes to become her cat's personal maid whilst trying to determine an art style for herself. If not at uni, Casey is often buried in webtoons and food. She enjoys trying new mediums in art and hopes her works can encourage a space to express.



Pg. 022

Sandra Gunniga Thomson is a third-year Media Arts student specializing in drawing and animation. She mostly enjoys illustrating the surreal and is very interested in moments that can be equally grotesque as they are endearing.



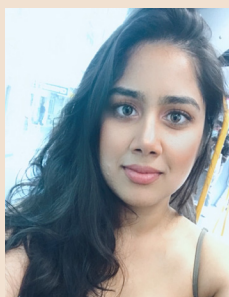
Pg. 032 - 033

Buffy Wu is a 3rd year student at the University of New South Wales studying a Bachelor of Science and Business majoring in neuroscience. Outside of her studies she is passionate about many creative extracurricular activities such as photography, music composition and design.



Pg. 017

Hana is an illustrator with a background in psychology, as well as a current student of design at UNSW Art & Design. She is passionate about mental health, the Japanese language and culture, and rabbits. Check out her engaging, fun, and thought-provoking illustrations on Instagram at @hanaunderthetree.



Pg. 039

Sureen has two degrees in Public Health and Psychology, passionate about destigmatizing mental health. She is a self taught watercolorist and believes in capturing the light and fluidity of colours and hues from nature.

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