

UNDER BUNJIL

Volume 2







Photo credit: Pierra Van Sparkes

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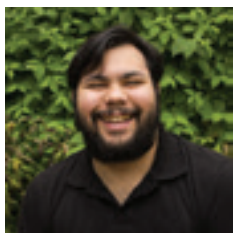
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MEET YOUR EDITORS



Tyson is notoriously arrogant and constantly up to no good. When he is not rubbing people the wrong way he is alone. On a more serious note Tyson is the founder of Under Bunjil and a History student at the University of Melbourne. A perpetual Trinitarian Tyson will probably never leave until he can guarantee a higher standard of living.



Emily Kayte James is a Gunditjamarra and Yorta-Yorta woman from Shepparton. She is majoring in Australian Indigenous Studies with a minor in Sociology. A resident at Medley, Emily is passionate about helping the University and colleges to adapt the best support Indigenous students. She believes that higher education is the key to self-determination for Indigenous people.



Pierra Van Sparkes is a Noongar woman undertaking studies in Anthropology and Australian Indigenous Studies. One of her biggest passions is celebrating and exploring the diversity of Indigenous identities. She is continuously fascinated and comforted by the shared feelings and encounters than shape an Aboriginal experience.



Wunambi Connor is a Gumbaynggirr, Kamilaroi, Kuwarra man studying at the University of Melbourne, he is majoring in Media and Communications and Politics and International studies. Wunambi is interested in helping organisations provide opportunities for young Indigenous people, especially at the University of Melbourne.



Marley Holloway-Clarke's family is from the Pilbara and the Kimberley. She lives at Trinity College where she is actively involved in sport and theater. She is currently undertaking a Bachelor of Fine Art with a focus on photography. Her hobbies include feeling like the smart one among her friends and wasting her time trying to be organised. Marley also took all the lovely head shots you see of our contributors.

LETTER FROM YOUR EDITORS

The old adage tells us that sequels are rarely better than the original. I think it's time that particular nugget of wisdom bit the dust. We could sit here all day rattling off the countless classic films, books, albums and TV series that all prove that piece of commonsense wrong. After a solid effort the first time around the team behind Under Bunjil grew to five and our number of pages doubled. Our first foray into publishing was little more than a proof-of-concept but now we seem to be growing into something exciting. Could the University of Melbourne's Indigenous students put together a semesterly magazine worth reading? After a short month of work the answer was yes. While it was undoubtedly important to get the wheels off the ground, the second and subsequent volumes are the important ones.

You will see a lot of changes in this edition. For instance we are a little more personal. We also look very different. We feature more academic work and much more poetry. We just generally have more content. We are pretty happy with the changes we have made but that is not to say that things will stay the same next time around. As a young publication we are very interested in keeping our options open for a short time before settling into the right groove for us.

All in all we hope you enjoy this volume of Under Bunjil and you look forward to our next volume in May of 2016. It seems so far away but before you know it summer will be over and we will be settling back into University life. Until then, enjoy your copy of Under Bunjil and share it with your friends and family!

Cheers,
Tyson, Em, Pierra, Wunambi, and Marley.

Legalities

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OUR THANKS

Our collective thanks goes out to everyone that pitched in to make this publication possible. Without everyones specific contributions we would not have been able to put this volume together.

Special thanks goes out to Murrup Barak and it's Associate Director Charles O'Leary. Without the financial support of the center Under Bunjil would not exist. Their reinvigorated devotion to student programs and leadership means that we now have the support necessary to establish a new array of student led endeavours, of which Under Bunjil is the most impressive.

To the UMSU Media Officers, again thank your for your collective support of the new kids on the block. Especially to Lynley for your design acumen and to Martin for your generosity of time and enthusiasm for our publication. Maddy and Simon, you guys are nice too.

To our long list of contibutors, thank you so much for your hard work in creating content for us to share. Without contributors there is no Under Bunjil- your work is the life blood of this publication. We are so incredibly proud of what we have accomplished together, we hope you are too!

To all of our supporters and readers thank you for picking us up! We hope you enjoy the publication.

ON CAMPUS

EXCELLENCE AND ACHIEVEMENT

Everywhere you look around the University of Melbourne the Indigenous student body is achieving excellence. Here is a snapshot of their success in the second half of the year. All of the programs and initiative mentioned were supported and funded by Murrup Barak and UMSU.

ART

A number of Indigenous artists contributed to Mudfest, a student arts and culture festival on campus in August. With a variety of works that included stage performance, video and projection, and painting a huge congratulations must go out to our fantastic artists. Thank you to Kyle Webb, Marley Holloway-Clarke and Todd Fernando for sharing your work with all of us during Mudfest!

SPORT

Our University of Melbourne National Tertiary Education Indigenous Games Team took second place in Newcastle. For the second year in a row the team took second overall and the volleyball cup. A huge congratulations is also in order for Chris Navarrete for taking out the overall volleyball MVP. With over 300 athletes from more than two dozen Universities our players did us incredibly proud both on and off the courts.

During the mid-semester break six Indigenous athletes represented us on the Gold Coast at the 2015 Australian University Games. Congratulations to Codie and Jamie Collins and Michelle Kerrin for making it into the netball team, Shonae Hobson for the touch football team and to Chris Navarrete and Nelson Ambar for beach volleyball.

ACADEMIA

Congratulations is in order for Bede Jones, Ngaree Blow and Todd Fernando on their acceptance on the annual Aurora Indigenous Scholars International Study Tour. A joint operation between the Aurora Project and the Charlie Perkins Scholarship program, the tour serves as a launching point and taster of studying as a postgraduate overseas. With stops at UC Berkeley, Stanford, Harvard, Columbia, New York University, Cambridge and Oxford, the trio will be amongst the best and brightest minds Australia has to offer as they visit and inquire to study at the most prestigious universities in the world.

BLACK STATS

Black Stats is new to Under Bunjil this time round! We wanted a way to represent the diversity of Indigenous students at the Uni and what better way than to let them represent themselves. The more of these vox pops we did the funnier they got and I think we've definitely come to the conclusion that Mob loooove to talk about themselves! We were a bit worried getting to people to volunteer would be like pulling teeth but the line was longer than the line for sausages on Tuesday North court. Not to generalise but apparently black people love RnB & Rap (we could probably keep Drake in business at this University alone). We also had to throw this in here because, if you've gotten through the rest of this zine you know we're a pretty serious bunch so we thought we should at least leave you with some laughs!

Name: Marley Rose Holloway-Clarke

Mob: Pilbara/Kimberley

Where you're from: Launceston, Tasmania

Living At : Trinity College

Studying: Bachelor of Fine Arts at VCA (Photography)

Record on Repeat: To Pimp a Butterfly - Kendrick Lamar

Cult Follow: American Horror Story

(re)Watch: The Longest Yard & Mean Girls (obviously)

Read: My Fight / Your Fight by Ronda Rousey

What's in right now?: Non Culturally Appropriating Halloween Costumes

Fav Threads?: Not technically threads but my new Doc Martens & Blonde Hair.

Girl Crush?: Ronda Rousey

Guy Crush?: Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson (and his french bulldogs)

Name: Della Bedford

Mob: Bunuba

Where you're from: Fitzroy Crossing, Northern Territory.

Living At : Ormond College

Studying: Bachelor of Arts Extended - Major in Psychology

Record on Repeat: Nicki, Trey & Drake

Cult Follow: Vampire Diaries

(re)Watch: Anything & Everything Disney

Read: College Food Menu

What's in right now?: Exercise

Fav Threads?: UWA Hoodie (represent)

Girl Crush?: Rhi Rhi

Guy Crush?: Todd Fernando #bae

Name: Serena Thompson
Mob: Mamu (far north Queensland)
Where you're from: Tulley, Queensland.
Living At : Medley Hall
Studying: Bachelor of Arts (extended) - Major in Creative Writing
Record on Repeat: X - Chris Brown
Cult Follow: Heroes (Still relevant)
(re)Watch: Straight Outta Compton
Read: Don't Take Your Love to Town by Ruby Langford Ginibi
What's in right now?: Those 'new number, whose dis' memes.
Fav Threads?: My Indig Uni Games hoodie!
Girl Crush?: Pierra Van Sparkes
Guy Crush?: Drake (obvs)

Name: Dylan Lester
Mob: Hunter Valley Region
Where you're from: Geelong, Victoria.
Living At : Medley Hall
Studying: Bachelor of Biomedicine - Pathology
Record on Repeat: M3LL155X - FKA Twigs
Cult Follow: Scandal
(re)Watch: Weekend
Read: The Beatle - Richard Marsh
What's in right now?: Netflix and Chill (solo edition)
Fav Threads?: My fresh Nique hoodie (disclaimer: not from the hood)
Girl Crush?: Florence (and the Machine)
Guy Crush?: Joseph Gordon-Levitt

Name: Mel Phillips
Mob: Kaytetye
Where you're from: Jabiru, Northern Territory (Where you can actually complain about the heat)
Living At : Medley Hall
Studying: Bachelor of Arts Extended
Record on Repeat: BEYONCE (Platinum Edition) - Beyonce
Cult Follow: ABC's Ready For This (Seriously go watch it)
(re)Watch: Coach Carter
Read: 5 People You Meet In Heaven by Mitch Albom
What's in right now?: Octsober! Taking a Month of booze to raise money for 'Top LIVIN'
Fav Threads?: Oversized Tee's and Tights (Comfort is Key)

Photo credit: Pierra Van Sparkes

Name: Tyson Holloway-Clarke

Mob: Pilbara/Kimberley

Where you're from: I've lived all over the country

Living At : In the moment... Trinity College

Studying: Bachelor of Arts, History Major

Record on Repeat: My Spotify playlists. Featuring everything from drunk white girl music from now to the 70s, Hip Hop from the 90s to now, folk and country, rock and roll and head banging music.

Cult Follow: Rick and Morty and pro-wrestling.

(re)Watch: I jumped on the Netflix bandwagon two years ago and I haven't looked back. Nature documentaries and Game of Thrones are regulars but I habitually rewatch Marvel movies too.

Read: Most of the time I am reading my subject readings or other research for University. I also write a fair bit so I am often re-reading my old writings. If I'm not doing those I am reading the news and published analysis and commentary.

What's in right now?: Being a boss ass bitch

Fav Threads?: My Okanui Classic boardies my mum bought me. Often worn in combination with a salmon Ripcurl jumper my mum bought in the 80s.

Girl Crush?: Sasha Banks

Guy Crush?: Jetta and Goodes, JT, Kendrick.

Name: Zac Collins-Widders

Mob: Nganyaywana

Where you're from: Armidale, New South Wales

Living At : Trinity College

Studying: Bachelor of Arts - Major in Politics and International Relations

Record on Repeat: Really loving Yemeni-Israeli tri of sisters A-WA who combine traditional Yemenite songs with electronic dance music.

Cult Follow: American Horror Story

(re)Watch: Cowspiracy (Documentary) or Eat Pray Love (I know it's a piece of shit but it's my favorite motivational movie okay!)

Read: My Israel Question by Antony Loewenstein

What's in right now?: Being a pretentious hipster living in Melbourne #vegan #yoga #thriftshopping

Fav Threads?: Anything second hand, made from hemp or organic material.. jks..I don't shop much (such a bad homo) but seriously probably anything second hand

Guy Crush?: Me

Girl Crush?: Also Me

Name: Tiah Vocale
Mob: Gunai/Kurnai
Where you're from: Kyabram
Living At : Trinity College
Studying: Arts
Record on Repeat: Drake
Cult Follow: I don't watch Pretty Little Liars but I know who "A" is.
(re)Watch: Unbroken
Read: The Daily Mail
What's in right now?: Denim skirts
Fav Threads?: Fitness Gear
Girl Crush?: Shanina Shaik
Guy Crush?: Michael Ealy

Name: Jenna Kramme
Mob: Gunai Kurnai
Where you're from: Bairnsdale, Victoria
Living At : Trinity College
Studying: Bachelor of Arts - Major in Australian Indigenous Studies
Record on Repeat: Anything RnB
Cult Follow: Suburbitory
(re)Watch: Any of the Fast and the Furious
Read: Pasta and Pizza Menus on Lygon
What's in right now?: Drakes Shit Dancing
Fav Threads?: Nike Tights
Girl Crush?: Lily Collins
Guy Crush?: Michael Ealy

Name: Claire Whiteway
Where you're from: Burnie, Tasmania
Living At : Romaine
Studying: Arts, in the process of transferring to Science.
Record on Repeat: Parachutes by Coldplay
Cult Follow: Round the Twist
(re)Watch: Treasure Planet
Read: Tomorrow When the War Began
What's in right now?: The new couches at MB.
Fav Threads?: My birthday suit.
Girl Crush?: Ronda Rousey
Guy Crush?: Liam Hemsworth

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Photo credit: Marley Holloway-Clarke



Little i, Big A

CAMERON McBROOM

The use of the term ‘indigenous Australian’, note the lowercase ‘i’, is one that creates much confusion and contention when used to refer to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, or Indigenous Australian, note the uppercase ‘I’. Australia has employed many lies to demonise and misrepresent Indigenous people as lesser than thou. The lowercase ‘i’ is still used today to perpetuate those lies. The deliberate use of this language reflects the colonial myth of Terra Nullius, meaning ‘land belong to no one’, which was used to justify the invasion of Australia to steal the Indigenous claim to the land. The continued use of the lowercase ‘i’ by non-Indigenous people attempts to bring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people down to the depths of flora and fauna from which was originally intended.

When you think of ‘indigenous’, do you think of flora and fauna, or a person?
indigenous – adjective, having originated in or being native to a land, region or place. It can refer to things, plants, animals and people that originated in the place being referenced.

When you think of ‘Indigenous’, do you think of flora and fauna, or a person? Indigenous – adjective, any culturally distinct people group who descended from those considered original inhabitants of a region or country prior to colonisation, and any individual person from such a people group.

The lower case ‘indigenous’ refers to one that originated from Australia, as in they were born in Australia post-colonisation. Whereas, the use of ‘Indigenous’ refers to one that descends from the original inhabitants of Australia, as in have been born in Australia for over 2,000 generations. The term ‘Indigenous Australian’ is the correct and least offensive term when used to refer to an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.

So the next time you write an essay about indigenous people, write a form asking “Are you an indigenous Australian?”, or publish an article about “Respected indigenous Australian Noel Pearson”, think about what it is you are truly saying about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and whether you should use the little i, or the big I.



Cameron McBroom is a Wongai and Yamatji man from Kalgoorlie, Western Australia. He is currently undertaking a Bachelor of Commerce and hopes to complete a Masters of Engineering. His vision is for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to be autonomous.



Photo credit: Pierra Van Sparkes



BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

MIRIAMA PEARCE-WIKATENE

In my immediate family, I have my two parents, two older sisters, one older brother and one younger brother. Out of all seven of them, I am the first to fully complete secondary education and obtain my SACE, the South Australian Certificate of Education. I am among the first in my extended family too. The point of this piece is not to generalise about Indigenous education in this country, I don't want to infer or paint the picture that all Indigenous people have experienced what I have. That being said I have no doubt that some Indigenous people can relate.

The discourse surrounding Indigenous people and education is a complex and multifaceted issue in Australian society today; one that affects not only Indigenous people, but non-Indigenous people as well. The popular stereotype of Indigenous people in Australia tells us that we are not smart, we abuse drugs and alcohol and that we are repellant of education. The result of those stereotypes is that Indigenous people start to internalise those ideas before giving themselves the chance to explore and understand their academic gift, or ability to achieve academic greatness. Essentially, we are being taught to degrade ourselves and each other. I was fortunate enough to be able to resist this, I could not allow myself to fall into the trap of believing that I am 'less than'.

The news that I was the first to complete high school mixed with the fact that I intended to go further by getting a University education received mixed responses from my family. My parents could not have been prouder. I knew that being the first child to go to university would have made them extremely happy, so when I received my acceptance email, I was thrilled to tell them. A few of my extended family responded by saying 'that's amazing, I could never do that. I'm not smart enough.' Those who were unaware of my plans to continue my studies responded by being confused that I even had the ability to complete secondary study, because it is something that does not happen often in our family.

In high school even teachers questioned me about whether or not would move on to tertiary study. The effect of this on some kids can be quite damaging, severely hindering their frame of mind and self-confidence. When my high school graduation occurred, the principal made a 'special announcement' to congratulate myself and two other Indigenous students for the completion of year 12. My entire schooling life I have been referred to as an Indigenous student. Why can't I be considered just a student? I guess society is still working on that.

Photo credit: Pierra Van Sparkes

The reference of being an 'Indigenous Student' brands us and places us in an inescapable construct that lets us know that we are and will continue to be 'less than.' The stereotypical Indigenous person is described as uneducated so when Indigenous students are at university, it disrupts this discourse. I think non-Indigenous people help themselves come to understand what's going on before their eyes by referring to us as an Indigenous student.

Currently, I am enrolled at The University of Melbourne; with the intention to complete a Bachelor of Arts at undergraduate level before studying Law post graduate. When I tell people this, they are flabbergasted. They struggle to believe that an Indigenous student has so much drive. Being a student at The University of Melbourne, whether they are Indigenous or not is a great achievement. Why can't people just be happy for me without letting me know how surprised they are that I made it?

It is common knowledge that there are two Arts programs, 'Mainstream Arts' and Arts Extended. The extended program enables Indigenous students to enrol in the Arts program, due not obtaining the required ATAR needed for mainstream arts. I am enrolled in a mainstream bachelor of Arts as my year 12 scores good enough to get in. However, whenever I meet a non-Indigenous person at University, whether it be fellow student or a lecturer/tutor, the first question that they always ask is, 'are you enrolled in the extended program?' This reinforces the idea that Indigenous students can only succeed under specific circumstances and cannot make it in the mainstream. They imply that I do not have the ability of being accepted into Arts or another course based on my own academic merit, while the idea that we are uneducated still subconsciously continues to float around in their minds.

Similarly, I had an Indigenous friend who looked into a TAFE course rather than a University degree more suited to his career goals. This demonstrates that in some cases, it is not only non-Indigenous people who believe we cannot receive a higher education, but Indigenous people as well. Again, this inadvertently demolishes any value or regard that Indigenous students hold toward themselves in regards to education. He didn't think he belonged at University so he didn't even bother to try.

To anyone who reads my article, I want you to know that we as Indigenous people have a desire to learn; we are smart, willing and able. This positive and empowering thinking is essential. I know I found my source of inspiration earlier this year when I met a few post-graduate Indigenous students in the midst of completing their PhD. Hopefully my peers and I can help some young students the way those students helped me. Education matters to us just as much as it matters to non-Indigenous people and when we free ourselves of these stereotypes the sky's the limit with a road ahead of us and nothing but opportunities.



Miriama Pearce-Wikatene is a Ngarrindjeri woman from South Australia. Currently studying: Bachelor of Arts with majors in Criminology and Indigenous Studies, Miriama is hoping to complete the Juris Doctorate after her Arts degree.

EXTENDED REVIEW

WUNAMBI CONNOR

For many who are unaware, the Bachelor of Arts (Extended) differs to that of the Bachelor of Arts in that it is only offered to Indigenous Students. This alternate entry pathway is provided as an opportunity for students who may not have necessarily gotten the marks to get into the Arts degree but who still display academic potential.

Jointly coordinated by the Faculty of Arts, Trinity Foundation Studies, and Murrup Barak, the extended course is a four-year program that includes an initial year of bridging subjects. Run by Trinity Foundation studies, these subjects aim to provide students with the skillset and confidence that can be applied to their future studies. These subjects include elements of academic writing, philosophy, theatre, and literature. The design of the program to include such subjects results in a safe and flexible space being provided to learn and develop skills.

In addition to this, many find friendship, assistance in accessing accommodation, and additional academic support, as well as the help of other Indigenous students in what has historically been a white institution.

However, despite the programs successes it has not been reviewed since it began in 2009. Now, I can only speak for my own experiences, particularly as a member of the 2014 starting cohort, but the program in its current state fails to address the needs of students. Enough is enough. It is time the subjects within the program were reviewed.

In early 2014, when I was interviewed for the Arts Extended program, I was told that students accepted into the course would never be set up to fail. This is not to say that they would not fail, but that the structure of the subjects in the program attempted to do what is possible to allow students to thrive in their studies.

However, despite the positives that the overarching program structure provides, it is how particular subjects in the program are coordinated that fail to show develop students thinking and skills.

Instead of walking away with skills that are practical to my studies such as academic writing and high-level critical thinking, I am playing catch up during my second year to ensure that I do have the skills to succeed. For the most part this is because we were not taught these skills in the so-called bridging subjects as the program implied. I personally believe that some of this may well be because in certain subjects we are only encouraged to do enough to pass.

The low expectations that underpin the extended program have made a pass, rather than first class honours, feel like the highest attainable measure of success. Anything achieved beyond a pass is treated suspiciously by tutors.

For example, one student commented that “After class the coordinator pulled me aside and asked me if I had written my work or if I had gotten an ITAS tutor to do it. She said that it was really well written, in this surprised tone, as if she was expecting something different. Then she gave me a H2A.”

However, the standard of marking, as reflected in marks that students receive, seems to have no consistency, both within the course and when compared to ‘mainstream’ arts subjects. A second year student in the Arts Extended program recently said to me: “It’s as though in mainstream subjects, tutors are looking for reasons to give us marks, whereas in extended some tutors are just trying to take them away”.

This inconsistency goes hand in hand with the lack of resources provided to students. Resources such as readings and examples are key to supporting class content and assist in furthering ideas and frameworks of thinking developed in classes. One extreme example where this has affected class was in early 2015 when a tutor walked out of class because students were having difficulty understanding content, despite not being provided with resources that explore that framework with which the text was being analysed.

While I have approached the staff within the program multiple times in relation to these issues, my peers and I have witnessed little to no effective change.

This sentiment of not listening to students was further made clear to me when I spoke with a peer at the end of last semester. I asked if they had completed their SES feedback for a subject offered only in the extended program. To which they replied “Why bother? They don’t listen to anything anyway. Like anything I say is going to make a difference.”

The Bachelor of Arts (Extended) provides an opportunity for students to grow and learn. The success of such opportunities is reflected in the high number of Indigenous students who are entering the University of Melbourne through these pathways. However, in order for these programs to continue to be a success they need to be reviewed regularly, by consulting students and keeping the needs of each cohort in mind.



Wunambi Connor is a Gumbaynggirr, Kamilaroi, Kurrarra man studying at the University of Melbourne, he is majoring in Media and Communications and Politics and International studies. Wunambi is interested in helping organisations provide opportunities for young Indigenous people, especially at the University of Melbourne.



THE VALUE OF THE OTHER

KYLE WEBB

I agonized a bit when I first wrote this. I looked at it and thought ‘what is the point?’ At the end of day, it comes down to wanting to share some perspective with newer students and those who haven’t necessarily had a difficult time – informing them of what could be. Why it so important to walk with empathy and support for others in our hearts. It also comes down to maybe reaching some students who are having a difficult time and letting them know they are not alone. So this is for you, the student whoever you may be, from another student who has been on a roller-coaster ride since day one.

I recently turned a corner in a life full of twists and turns. It is a journey that includes my time at the University of Melbourne. If I could manipulate the very forces of physics I still would not go back and change a thing about these experiences because I have seen great success, made great mistakes and learned so much about this world we inhabit that I look back and barely recognize the kid I once was. When you get to this point, you start to realise the beauty of life is in part, how much there is left to learn, and the more that you will forever wonder about still. Through great pain, grief and joy I found an appreciation for empathy. Empathy for the outsiders in our communities that we may glimpse, but do not see and hear. The many stories that never see the light of day, because we have a strange way of valuing progress. We have such a strange way of celebrating life that our everyday reality is often incongruent with the values we let dribble from our mouths. I am very fortunate to have lived as an outsider, shared time with outsiders, and to have this opportunity (any opportunity) to access a platform and share this bit of insight.

Many of you will have come to the University of Melbourne being told of its status as a ‘premiere’ institution of excellence and diversity. Indeed, in my time I have seen its slobbering salespeople masturbate over this label to the point that it has become an absurdity. That marketing is easily the most recognizable and prominent aspect, rather than the students and teachers that eke out an existence here is quite telling of the product you are receiving. Some of you will have a good, clean time, and go through the motions as you climb the ladder before you. Some of you will unfortunately go through hell. Whether it be the consistent pressures of family, identity, culture, loss, grief that will compete with your role as a student. It can be a lesson in ambivalence and it will be tough. It will be unfair.

Photo credit: Pierra Van Sparkes

All of you will experience the joys of racism, white privilege, disempowerment, confusion and trial. You will experience this from sniveling white kids fresh from their 'elite' private schools, who have had everything handed to them on a golden platter and grown an entitlement complex the likes of which you have never experienced before. You will very likely even get lectured on your identity by non-Indigenous teachers, while your classmates look on like you are some zoo exhibit. If you are a female student, a trans student, or a student who has generally experienced violence, assault and trauma, you will likely have a tough time getting appropriate support – and if you are a college student in these circumstances, god help you there. They make a habit of sweeping away sexual assault with a dust pan and broom. If you are a student with a disability, your needs will probably be ignored entirely. Again, if you are in a college, they'll just boot you onto the street if past experiences are any indication. White privilege sits in every level of the institution like an arrogant man takes up seats with ego and wide open legs.

You will likely be talked down to by idiot bureaucrats who infest the university, and its colleges, like fleas on a dog. What of the sanctimonious? The dinosaurs? The dinosaurs that strut around acting like the university is some magical place of knowledge, 'enlightenment', and progressiveness before it is a business consistently failing to meet the expectations of its customers. Failing to provide a culturally and materially safe space for black students. The dinosaurs will roll around in their cake and eat it in the end, and due to an ever-extending life expectancy for the privileged, they don't die quick enough. And if you are feeling especially cynical, they will ride it all out to the death of the middle class when they finally choke it.

All of these people pay lip service to notions of equality, anti-racism, and closing the gap because it is cheap. It is easy to put that lip service onto a sign and sell it on the street. The actors that run this slap-stick university gladly take the funding handouts for every black body enrolled, but turn their backs and run when something with a student gets even remotely difficult for them. A black body may as well be a zero-interest credit card in this system. This is to say nothing of the Aboriginal staff and academics they habitually grind into paste before discarding them out into joblessness like a used tissue. The truly absurd aspect to this status quo, is that they have all the knowledge and resources required to remedy this, but they lack the spine.

I have been around long enough to have seen all this. Heard all of it. And even experienced a great deal of it. From students who have either survived the trials or those sent away feeling completely powerless. From black academics and policy makers who have had their work stolen and given no credit by the white institution. I write this because many of the fools who involve themselves with black students and issues are so used to having their posteriors kissed, that sometimes you need to give them a good, sharp kick to bring them back to earth. Down to your level, as one of the very few black students in a very, very white and privileged community.

Surprisingly, I don't feel at all bitter about writing this. Anger, yes as all injustice should. However it simply is a fact of life, and it has to be shared. The story needs to be told, because that is how we black children and our families have survived our near genocide and the trauma it has gifted all our mobs. Learning can grace us with both a roar and a whisper.

To be fair, I have also met some amazing teachers and made some great friends through all of this and despite the harsh words, there are some good eggs trying to do the right thing. There are absolutely positive things about being a student at the University of Melbourne. I love seeing young black students explore opportunities and learn about their identities. I feel joy in seeing that there are those who will grow to support healthy lives and families, and who will strive for a more just and caring world for the disadvantaged; the cast out; the outsider. Yet, the university is a place still constructed by and for white people, especially white males, and this brings me to the ultimate point of this nakedly blunt piece. The ultimate bit of advice I can give:

Look to those other black students you share this space with. Support each other. Listen, look and feel for them. Even those you don't get along with. Do not let anyone fall through the cracks and battle the hard times alone, for it is easy to fall into loneliness in what can be one of the loneliest of crowded spaces. Do not be afraid to take risks in your career. Do not be afraid of failure. Let go of fear and envy. Open your eyes and ears. Do not be quick to judge and do not allow the institution and its robots make you feel as if it is some great privilege to have access to education. It is not. Treat it like a buffet you are owed and take, take, take from this education. Learn from it. Mine it. Game it. Then turn around and demand more while you put extra helpings on a plate to share with the other black students here. You are paying for it either way, and it has been built on the blood and bones of dispossession and violence.

Further do not forget to thank the teachers who stand by you and enrich your lives. Don't forget to lift each other up, because the world outside the university is just as white and dangerous as it is on the inside and we are saddled with the immense burden of the future health of our communities and identity.

Editor's note: this article was originally titled "Learning the Value of the Other in this Space and the Next".



Kyle Webb is a proud Dharug man from the Blue Mountains. Kyle is most involved in creative pursuits and wishes to earn a law degree in the future to improve justice outcomes for the most disadvantaged people in Australia. Kyle is also passionate about celebrating our incredible languages and cultures so that we never lose touch with our dreaming, and our roots.





YOUR RECOGNITION NOT OURS

CAMERON McBROOM

A nation state's Constitution is a very important legal document which is held as one of the highest regards when it comes to a nation's policies, laws, and beliefs. Which is why a referendum to make changes to the Constitution is of such significance. The Australian Government is planning on having a referendum in 2017 to amend Australia's Constitution to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) peoples in the founding document. The Australian government is in the process of deciding the model and the wording of the question, all the while leaving the real questions unanswered:

Do Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people want to be included in Australia's Constitution? and; Should non-Indigenous Australians be entitled to make that decision for them?

It is time to discuss the merits, implications, and faults by which this referendum can change the face of Australia's identity.

According to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), Indigenous peoples have a right to self-determination and governance. The Australian Government initially opposed the passing of this declaration, later announcing its support in 2009. Despite the Australian Government publicly announcing its support, it never officially became a signatory. In a survey conducted by the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples in July 2011, the top three most important policy areas were health, education, and sovereignty. ATSI people have always advocated their sovereignty, but have never been allowed to freely govern themselves. An IndigenousX survey shows that the proposal of an Indigenous Parliamentary body had a 54% support rate, driven by the prospect of having genuine input and control over decisions that directly affect them. The passing, or perhaps the dismissal, of a referendum may see us move further away from the long awaited, and extremely desired, Treaty that ATSI people have been fighting for for decades. It has been almost 50 years since the last referendum occurred to make changes to Australia's laws in regards to ATSI people, will it be another 50 years before we see a Treaty?

Photo credit: Marley Holloway-Clarke

The symbolic gesture that the referendum portrays is striking. ATSI people have been suffering from the impacts of colonisation for more than 200 years. Impacts spanning from the Frontier Wars, through Stolen Generations, through the White Australia Policy, the Northern Territory Response (the Intervention), and numerous other racist government policies. ATSI people have endured and survived through 200 years of trauma, to now be told by their oppressors that they are now equal, that ATSI people will now be considered as one of them. It is as though they are saying “We are now equal, you are one of us now”.

The “handpicked” expert panel of Indigenous leaders on constitutional recognition suggested that there be Indigenous conventions for Indigenous peoples to voice their opinions on the proposed referendum. This idea was rejected by the Prime Minister of the day Tony Abbott, who insisted that there would not be “Indigenous-only” consultations nor would there be “Indigenous-first” consultations as it “jars with a notion of finally substituting ‘we’ for ‘them and us;” Tony Abbott wrote to Noel Pearson and Patrick Dodson. From first contact the divide between “us” and “them” has exerted itself. To this day, there continues to be government policies that are specific to ATSI people, from Close the Gap to the Northern Territory Intervention. There is, and always will be, an othering of ATSI people. Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians are fundamentally different. We have our own tribes, our own languages, our own cultures, and our own lore. Failure to recognise these fundamental differences is a failure to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as we truly are; proud sovereign people.

Similarly, those who have significantly different cultures to their occupying powers, have struggled for independence and sovereignty. In Catalonia, the Catalan people having been fighting for independence from Spain since the 19th century. Catalan people have their own language, their own culture, and have beliefs and laws which are fundamentally different to that of the rest of Spain. For these reasons, they wish to become independent. To be free to teach their language and history in schools, and to pass laws that reflect the beliefs of the people of Catalonia. However, Spanish opposition continues to counter Catalonia’s attempts at independence by insisting that they are a part of Spain’s Constitution. To cede from Spain would mean a referendum in which all of Spain’s citizens decide the fate of Catalan people. Similarly in Australia, for a referendum to pass it requires a majority of people, from a majority of states to be a success. This means that it is non-Indigenous Australians that will ultimately have the say on whether the referendum passes or not. This further adds to the discussion on whether non-Indigenous Australians are entitled to decide on laws and policies that only affect Indigenous Australians.

A key player in the constitutional recognition dialogue has been the Recognise campaign. Recognise is a government funded movement receiving more than 15 million dollars of taxpayer’s money. But Recognise should be viewed as no more than a marketing campaign. It seems that the main goal of Recognise is to solely advertise that there might be a referendum in the near future, and that Australians should vote yes when the time does come, regardless of what is said. The Government’s persistence in ensuring the success of this campaign is now being intertwined into their policy making. Under the Indigenous Ad-

vancement Strategy (IAS), dubbed the “Indigenous Annihilation Strategy” by Indigenous communities and Senator Nova Peris, the Australian Government has made changes to its policies to only approve funding to Aboriginal organisations that support the recognition campaign. Earlier this year the Aboriginal Medical Service (AMS) that provided medical services to over 22,000 patients, lost 11 million dollars of funding under the IAS. The AMS is located in Western Sydney, home to the highest concentration of Aboriginal people in Australia. The AMS attempted to apply for funding but a condition of the application process is that organisations must support the recognition campaign. Further to this, they must also prove their development towards a “yes” vote in the upcoming referendum.

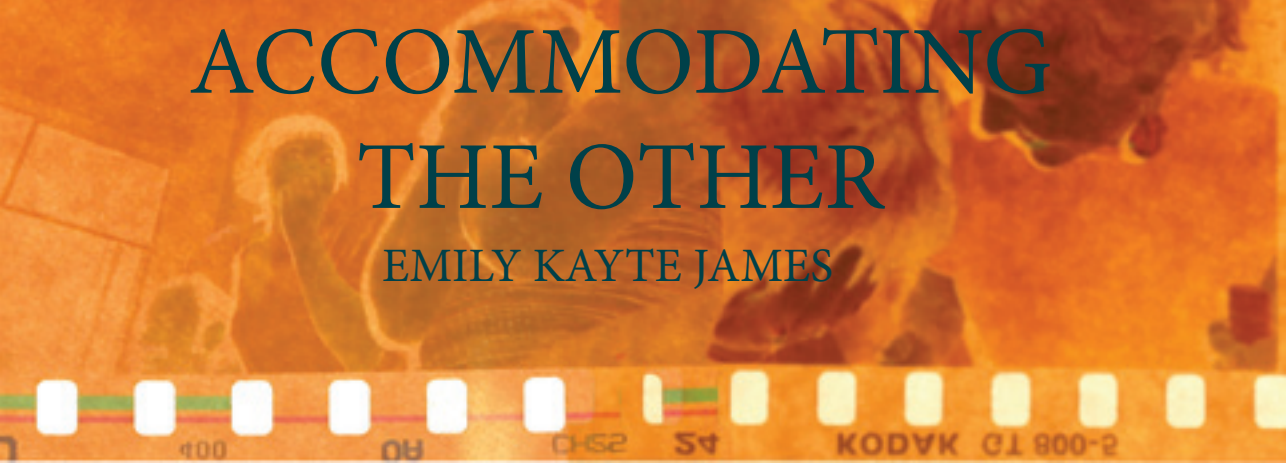
Contrary to a Recognise media release, an independent survey conducted by IndigenousX found that 87% of ATSI people do not support constitutional recognition. IndigenousX surveyed 827 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, compared to Recognise’s sample size of 750 ATSI people. IndigenousX’s survey showed that only 25% of ATSI people support the Recognise campaign. Only 33% indicated that they would vote “yes” if all of the expert panel’s recommendations were included. More than anything, ATSI people want tangible outcomes, with 75% rejecting the referendum on the basis of a symbolic model, and 62% that think ATSI people will not be better off if they are “recognised” in the Australian Constitution. IndigenousX’s independent, non-funded, community-driven online survey seems to quash Recognise’s claims of “an overwhelming ‘yes’ if recognise vote were held today”. Certainly, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people want genuine outcomes. We will only support constitutional changes that will see us transcend third world conditions and become more than second class citizens in a first world country.

In its current form, the proposed national referendum to make changes to Australia’s Constitution is one that is insulting and unwanted by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The possibility of a referendum to include ATSI people is one that should be carefully organised and heavily scrutinised to ensure that it has the best results for everyone. The possibility to include ATSI people in the Australian Constitution as “Sovereign Traditional Owners” would mean a whole lot more than the current proposed changes. As I am sure, many ATSI people genuinely want to be included in Australia’s Constitution, not for its symbolism, but as a driver of genuine change and tangible outcomes. However, as long as the Australian Government continues to ignore the basic rights and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, we will never truly be able to reconcile, heal, and move forward into the future as equals.



ACCOMMODATING THE OTHER

EMILY KAYTE JAMES



Unless you've been living under a rock for the last 12 months chances are you've seen or came across on your Facebook feed ABC's Indigenous comedy series Black Comedy. Many if not most of the Black Comedy skits and segments draw on issues in contemporary Australia that white Australia prefers not to talk about, ideas of Aboriginal sovereignty, colonisation, reconciliation and whiteness. If you haven't watched the program in full you're still probably familiar with their most popular segment 'what's this then slut'. The sketch featuring Steven Oliver and Aaron Fa'Aoso who both inaccurately represent the Indigenous queer community, I'm comfortable in saying that this segment however is the most popular of the show as it's the segment that makes white viewers the least uncomfortable. So it's easy to understand why then the What's this then Slut segment is popular, it's popular because white viewers during this segment are not forced to examine their own whiteness.

Recently at my college our Indigenous student group, we've named the Black Griffins got together for an Aboriginal comedy night and invited the rest of the college to join us we had a pretty decent turn out and showed clips from classics like Barbequiera and some newer comedy programs like Black Comedy and 8MMM.

Whilst the Indigenous students were at ease and roaring laughter regularly came from the back row where we sat together, for the Black Griffins we were familiar with the stereotypes, and language Black Comedy used. For us that was the language, terminology and experiences we'd grown up with.

The settler kids however based solely on observation had a harder time, many seemed not to understand the humor or language used whilst some looked plain uncomfortable and unsure if they should be laughing.

Momentarily I wondered if maybe this wasn't the best idea but the laughter of my fellow Black Griffins changed my mind. For them and for me this show was a first these were the jokes we said to each other, the words and the humor we'd grown up with, this was ours.

For the settler kids I realised his was good for them too, I was glad to an extent that they felt uncomfortable because I think there was an acute realization amongst them that

Black Comedy wasn't made for them. For what I'm sure was the first time in some of their lives they were the outsider, Black Comedy was an inside joke and they weren't in on it. This experience of discomfort isn't something they were familiar with and maybe that feeling lingered longer than many of them could stomach.

In contrast, recently myself and some friends went to a screening of David Gulpilil *Another Country*. I asked my friend afterwards what he thought of the film and he shrugged "it wasn't for us" he said, "it was for them" and nodded towards the majority settler audience. Whilst *Another Country* might be labelled as an "Indigenous film" it was definitely made with a white audience in mind and we weren't it. Once again we experienced a sense of familiarity with *Another Country* like we did with *Black Comedy* but to a different extent, the shock factor the film was going for had already worn off on us, we knew everything the film was trying to teach its audience. I watched 40 year old white women dab at their eyes as they left the screening and I was confused as to which part had been tear worthy and that's saying something because if you know me you'll know I cry at the drop of a hat.

While I was considering this later that evening, I was reminded of something my tutor had said to be earlier that day. We had been watching a SBS documentary *Dark Science* in our lecture, a documentary that had profoundly affected both the lecturer and some of the students. The documentary tells the story of the first Swedish anthropologist who, whilst on expedition to Australia, removed Aboriginal remains from burial sites and took them back to Sweden. This anthropologist committed horrendous acts whilst in Australia, the expedition leader later went mad claiming to be haunted by Aboriginal spirits. Myself and a friend who took the class were intrigued but not distressed by the documentary. For us Indigenous students it was history these were the things white men had done to us for years all across Australia.

When I voiced my experience to my lecturer who was visibly uncomfortable with the documentary she said something that rang true for me "maybe it's because you (Aboriginal students) live in a state of discomfort". I think that is it. That being Aboriginal and choosing to study Indigenous studies there's a constant feeling of discomfort sitting at the bottom of my stomach that I've experienced so long I've forgotten it's there.

I've learnt my whole life to accommodate settler ideas and 'culture' but I don't think settler kids have ever had to accommodate Aboriginality. I was taught to stomach my discomfort but I wonder if settler kids will ever have to stomach theirs.



Emily Kayte James is a Gunditjmara and Yorta-Yorta woman from Shepparton. Currently completing her Bachelor of Arts with a major in Australian Indigenous Studies and a minor in Sociology Emily also takes up residence at Medley Hall. Emily is passionate about helping the University and the colleges to adapt to better support Indigenous students. She also believes that higher education for Indigenous people are the keys to self-determination for all Indigenous People.





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Photo credit: Pierra Van Sparkes



CULTURAL CAPITAL & THE UN DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

RONA GLYNN-McDONALD

This year marks a new global era of sustainable development with the launch of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September. As the world looks towards the post-15 Development agenda encompassing 17 sustainable development goals and 169 associated targets, it is evident that significant gaps exist in the UN's highly ambitious and potentially transformational vision. Despite calls for the inclusion of Indigenous people from the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, there is no mention of Indigenous peoples or the importance of culture in sustainable development.

The process of arriving at the post 2015 development agenda was predominantly Member State-led with broad participation from major groups and other civil society stakeholders. Although the agenda represents a commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental; this his-

toric decision fails to recognise the entrenched structural factors that perpetuate various forms of inequalities faced by minority populations. The UN's SDG's aspire to 'leave no one behind', yet there is no reference to Indigenous peoples or the significance of culture in post-15 outcome document. This near invisibility of indigenous peoples poses a serious risk of propelling the injustices and inequalities experienced by minority populations, particularly in areas such as remote Australia. The latest report of the State of the World's Indigenous peoples notes that Indigenous peoples face systematic exclusion from political and economic power...and [are] deprived of their resources for survival, both physical and cultural'. Culturally blind implementation of the Millennium Development Goals resulted in inappropriate development programmes for Indigenous peoples, and if the world community aspires to leave no one behind, it is critical these gaps are recognised.

In Australia, the strength of Indigenous culture could provide a foundation for sustainable development in remote areas. Policy makers have too often framed Indigenous communities as beyond the market, in localities of limited commercial opportunities and inadequately sized labour markets, and fail to recognise that a significant cultural economy remains underutilised. The unique cultural aspects of remote Indigenous Australia can provide localised opportunities for economic development, that ensure the Australian economy sustains Indigenous culture and country in contemporary ways.

Remote Australia is emerging as a powerhouse for sustainability innovations, led by Indigenous peoples' unique approaches to sustainability, and catalysed by the cultural and natural significance of the region. If specific projects are locally based and foster the deeply valued cultural aspects of Aboriginal society, they are inherently more successful. This is evident in the pronounced success of local conservation management programs in the Northern Territory, which encompass traditional land management practices and cultural knowledge.

Increased importance must be given to cultural variables, as questions of economic and human development must involve a more comprehensive theory in developing regions. This approach is reflected in development policy created by organisations such as the World Bank, where culture is considered important in catalysing local developments, generating revenue from existing assets, and diversifying strategies for human development. Indigenous Australia is multifaceted, with varying degrees of cultural strength. The rigid processes of neoclassical

models have little explanatory power in the policy arena of Indigenous affairs. In light of this, no single model economic can be encountered, and a multidisciplinary approach would prove to be more successful in analysing the economy and implementing programs that propel movement towards socio economic equity.

We must harness the growing economic opportunities that build on the strength of Indigenous knowledge and culture. Without investing in the cultural strengths of Indigenous Australia and recognising cultural capital as a mechanism for re-energising self-confidence and empowerment of Indigenous communities, there is little hope of meeting the 17 goals outlined in the UN's upcoming sustainable development agenda. If we fail to sustain the cultural values that accentuate Indigenous identity, and not undertake the investment needed to utilise the strength of this capital, economic output in remote areas will remain stagnant. Through the inclusion of cultural capital as a significant economic agent in the sustainable development agenda, and investment into programs that encompass the strengths of Indigenous knowledge, the challenges of remoteness and economic exclusion may be overcome.



Rona grew up in Alice Springs, in a family of mixed heritage. Her dad's side of the family are Kaytetye, from Neutral Junction just east of Barrow creek, and her mum's family are from Sydney. She grew up in a family of filmmakers, but being the odd one out she is pursuing an economics degree in Melbourne. Passionate about Indigenous development and public policy, she recently returned from a trip to the United Nations in New York, where she presented a paper on the sustainable development of remote Indigenous communities.



Photo credit: Wikipedia Commons

ACTS OF APPROPRIATION

TODD FERNANDO

Today's society is rife with acts of cultural appropriation and is just as present in our lives given the proliferation of social media. But what does it mean when someone appropriates? When does inspiration turn into theft and who are the victims of appropriation?

Todd leads us on a discussion on culture, ownership and respect.

It seems that the replication of cultural appropriation (objects, garments, and language) occurs more frequently now, than ever before. Acts of appropriation all seem familiar – as in: We have heard and seen them before, and before, and well before even that. These instances have streaked across social media in an almost ritualistic movement – desperate to seek attention in a hope to galvanise a narrative that slithers to its own consensus.

Instances of cultural appropriation have caused strong backlash in online communities, particularly 'blackface' episodes, whereby the virtuosity of online naming and shaming occurs. In a world where Facebook recently received 1 billion individual visitors per day, it comes as no surprise that many people are sparking mass debates on the various issues that lay bare across our communities. The intersections of these debates often lead to heated discussions on values, on race, and on identity. Though these topics are discussed openly and fiercely online, I often wonder just how prepared we are to have these discussions in real life – be that forums, public transport, or over dinner – the answer is mostly a resounding 'not really'. Granted, there are few recorded cases of people speaking up against bullies who possess xenophobic, homophobic, and in most cases rude attitudes, still not everyone is prepared to have tough conversations with tough strangers. The conversations of those who appropriate remain silenced either partly because of our own desire not to cause a scene or the potential to be outnumbered during certain occasions.

The change over time on discussions with particular examples of appropriation, in some cases, can be a result of educational compensation. Whether the limitations or advantages of material culture studies accurately impede or facilitate the case of cultural appropriation, they do allow the conversation to occur. The increased occurrences of discussions on the subject further support the argument that there continues to be a systematic cultural theft. The accompanying debates that ensue, highlight the persistent disregard for Indigenous cultural heritages, and the fact that this is prevalent within modernity – an expression and notion embedded in critical race theory.

Academia allows us to conduct common debates about areas of scholarship that need highlighting - appropriation is a topic often illuminated and debated differently. Interestingly, Bell Hooks asserts her opinion about culturally appropriation in a way that is surprising considering her status as a person of colour. She writes, "Acts of appropriation are part of the process by which we make ourselves. Appropriating – taking something for one's own use – need not to be synonymous with exploitation." The expression and position offered by Hooks presents a side of the debate that is not often used; the "use" of what is appropriated is significant factor to whether it is offensive or not. This tells us that it is what appropriators do with their items is their own prerogative. Hook's argument emphasises that as long as items are not misappropriated for exploitation then and only then it is ok.

“THE STRUCTURES OF COLONIALISM AND ACTS OF WHITE PEOPLE CONTINUING TO OPPRESS AND DISRESPECT IS HIGHLIGHTED THROUGH APPROPRIATION”

My own position, as an Aboriginal Australian, in investigating this topic drew the similar reflections on the cultural appropriation of Aboriginal art, music and clothing. The wearing of traditional regalia in Native communities is not a fashion choice or statement, so why is it regarded as fashion across non-Indigenous communities? The lack of understanding of non-Indigenous communities toward the cultural significance and social context of such items seems to be deemed irrelevant. The structures of colonialism and acts of white people continuing to oppress, and disrespect is highlighted throughout appropriation, generally. Academic Kathryn Shanley argues the continuation of colonisation stating that “we can identify neo-colonial cultural appropriations, thefts of “cultural property,” that expedite a people’s being left “without” a specific history or language, and that such cultural appropriations inextricably belong to overall totalisation efforts – the political and ideological domination of indigenous peoples by the mainstream culture.” The notion and argument embedded in Shanley’s assertions is that the flow on affect and shadows of colonialist mentality prevails, and modern day beneficiaries of colonialism feel they can continue to ‘borrow’, or steal, one’s cultural items without understanding the significance behind them.

Cultural appropriation reinforces the notion of and continuation to systematic cultural theft – a persistent disregard for cultural heritages and values of Indigenous people – prevalent across modernity. Like the degrading cases of blackface, culturally appropriating traditional apparel, such as the Native American headdress, ochre on skin, sacred artistic techniques, and language source an emergence of discourse and scholarship. It is this abuse of respect and lack of knowl-

edge and education that causes the exploitation of cultural significance that can be infuriating. However, we must also understand those who do appropriate are unquestioningly assuming the role of their ancestors in an almost religious fashion. The knowledge of theft embeds itself into contemporary and often generational consciousness as if to say: we are only doing what our forefathers done for centuries.

You see, when white people exploit traditional objects and clothing as ‘costume’ it denotes a history of oppression, discrimination and racism, and supports the continuation of being a victim to racial profiling, or cast as a primitive dislike because of customary attire. At the end of the day those who choose to appropriate are able to wipe away their blackened face, slip off their sexy native dress, or place purchased festival items (headdress) back in the closet. All the while not having to encounter nor think about the daily-lived experiences of Indigenous peoples because of the power within the systematic oppressive strongholds of institutionalised bigotry.

The concept of cultural appropriation has and will remain a discussion that I would always like to engage in. These types of instances are disrespectful to Indigenous communities, because their cultural, historical, and spiritual significance embedded within their regalia becomes meaningless, and misunderstood. The cultural appropriation at this level causes much concern as the systematic cultural infringements by privileged uneducated individuals continue.

Whether we like it or not, some people will appropriate, will claim and will wear, say, and act in ways that are antithetical to their own values, heritage or indeed community. However, I hope we can have conversations that transcend a national and international dialogue on the implications of of cultural appropriation so that at least some progress can be made, and our thoughts about this pernicious behaviour can be made explicit.



Todd is currently completing a Doctor of Philosophy in Medical Anthropology through the School of Population and Global Health within the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences at The University of Melbourne. Their research is based around assessing the accuracy of Indigenous policies when compared to the daily-lived experiences of Aboriginal LGBT people when accessing Health Services. This coincides with their work with ANTHYM an Indigenous Youth lead movement working in the HIV/AIDS space and online sexual health education.



Photo credit: Marley Holloway-Clarke

MANAGING THE LAND

SHONAE HOBSON

Far North Queensland is often cited as Indigenous management of land gone right. Combined with the ever improving education outcomes and economic opportunities Cape York seems to be on a positive path for the future. The question remains; how has this all come about? Shone Hobson provides some insight as to the principles of ecological rationality and how when used correctly can provide both environmental and economic sustainability.

Through the ages, human exploitation of the land and its resources has had a major impact on the environment. Today, the pursuit of ecological sustainability causes much concern within the broader economy. It is through the cooperative relationship between the economy and the environment that progress is most likely to occur in the pursuit of environmental sustainability. A free market based system is beneficial to society in its ability to increase the growth of Indigenous Land Management Programs whose core initiatives are to keep the country healthy and sustainable. Thus, further contributing to the overall ecological rationality of society. This contribution is applied in two significant ways, through investment in initiatives that supports environmental sustainability and natural resource management agencies that implement them.

The 'Free Market' may best be defined as an economic system in which prices for exchanged goods are determined by unrestricted competition between privately owned businesses (Rothbard, 2004). As Murray Rothbard (2004) comments in his writings about Power and Markets systems, exchanges are undertaken as a voluntary agreement between groups of people or agencies. It is through the benefits of a free market system that large companies and the government are able to financially invest in organisations such as Indigenous Land Management companies to "look after country" (Kalan Enterprises, 2013).

This is ecological rationality and reflects well on corporations and their intentions or in the case of government demonstrate that investing in land management is good for the economy and good for the environment. This further entrenches the notion that environmental action connects to free market economics. For some countries, it has become a national interest to increase the economic growth of free market systems while ensuring a cleaner environment for the future (Jackson, 2009). The Environmental Kuznets Curve¹ (EKC) provides evidence to suggest that economic growth does improve environmental conditions for the long term; it does this by increased wealth which is then regenerated into environmental protection programs such as Kalan Enterprises (Kalan, 2013). However, the critical point from the investor is that organisations can clearly demonstrate capacity to deliver action that does benefit the environment, and can measure the improvements to habitats and landscape scale ecosystems (Kalan, 2013).

The arguments surrounding environmental sustainability are highly contested, especially in their interaction with the economy. It is argued by interest groups from particularly the agricultural sector and the mining sector that environmental sustainability is at the expense of jobs and economic development (Jackson, 2012). These sectors believe government legislation to protect the environment such as the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act, or the listing important cultur-

“THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS PROVEN IN THE CONTRIBUTION THAT ADVENTURE, CULTURAL AND ECO TOURISM NOW MAKE TO THE ECONOMY.”

al, environmental or heritage sites on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Heritage Register limits private investment (Jackson, 2009).

However, these arguments are becoming less convincing. The connection between the caring for the environment and economic development is proven in the contribution that adventure, cultural and eco-tourism now make to the economy (Jackson, 2009). This is evident within some of the major tourist attractions in Australia. Tourists have listed the Great Barrier Reef, the Tropical Rainforests, and Uluru (along with the Sydney Opera House) as the top four attractions to visit in Australia (Australian Government , 2012).

A term used more formally in achieving goals of sustainability is ‘Ecological Rationality’. As Val Plumwood (1999) suggests, ecological rationality is best described as specific accounts of practical rationality, in which actions are proposed to sustain the environment and its ecosystems (Sagoff, 1989). The political scientist John Dryzek (1987) defines the term ecological rationality as, ‘the capacity of a system to maintain or increase the life-supporting capability of ecosystems consistently’. In his accounts, Dryzek further stresses the need for governments to implement constructive environmental policies (Dryzek, 1987). Enforced government policies provide an effective solution to the environmental crisis, through their ability to invest in activities that can demonstrate improvements to the environment and the health of ecosystems. (Altman, Buchanan, & Larser, 2007).

Focussing the essays investigation specifically on Australia, one of the most biologically diverse landscapes on the planet, an understanding of environmental initiatives and their outcomes is gained. “According to the Australian Govern-

ment,” Australia is home to more than one million species of plants and animals, many of which are found nowhere else in the world (Australian Government , 2008). With the introduction of free market organisations, investment is flowing to Indigenous groups such as Kalan Enterprises at central Cape York Peninsula in projects that sustain the environment, for example; a five year pig eradication program to exterminate over 50,000 feral pigs on the Archer River catchment, or the McIlwraith Cassowary program to study the endangered bird and devise management actions that support a sustainable healthy population, or the removal of feral cattle from over 15,000 hectares of country considered by the traditional owners to be environmentally sensitive (Kalan, 2013).

Financial investment from the free market towards these type of activities, enables Indigenous Land Management organisations to demonstrate a contribution towards attaining the national goal of an ecologically rational society.

Organisations such as Kalan Enterprises and Aak Puul Ngantam or APN, in Aurukun, Cape York Peninsula are increasing in number, with an approximation of 20% of Australia’s landmass now managed by Indigenous groups today³ (Altman J. , 2012). A free market based system is crucial to the functioning of these organisations in its ability to provide money for land management organisations with the core initiative to sustain and keep their country healthy (Altman J., 2006). The employment outcomes from these companies is also becoming a significant factor in maintaining local economies, in Coen alone, Kalan Enterprises is now the biggest employer in town, with a workforce of over 20 people across any twelve month period (Kalan, 2013).

The majority of Indigenous land management organisations receive investment from both government and the private sector (Kalan Enterprises, 2013), however, some reports still sug-

“THE PURSUIT OF AN ECOLOGICALLY RATIONAL SOCIETY SHOULD BE THE CORE OF ALL DEVELOPING ECONOMIES”

gest that there is significant under-investment provided by the Australian government and that more can be done now that groups are becoming more accountable (Altman, 2012). ‘Over the years many Indigenous efforts to establish organisations to manage the country and develop enterprises have failed because they did not meet best practice implementation standards and full financial and reporting compliance to regulatory authorities’ (Kalan Enterprises, 2013). The 2007/2008-budget system shows that the Australian government’s commitment in providing \$47.6 million over the period of four years has had a positive influence in catering for land management initiatives (Altman J. C., 2003). With government subsidises, Indigenous land management organisations are able to pursue initiatives of managing the land and keeping the country healthy.

Environmental benefit is generated by the engagement of Indigenous rangers working on a diversity of projects to address any environmental threats to the country. The Kalan Enterprise Healthy Country Plan, outlines specific targets for the sustainability and ecological improvement of Southern Kaantju Land4 (Kalan Enterprises, 2013). These targets enable the Kalan rangers to initiate strategies that will reduce any threats to country and its environment. The threats include: climate change, feral animals and weeds, overhunting, fire management and the overall monitoring of population distribution of various plant and animal species which reside on the land (Kalan Enterprises, 2013). Research conducted by John Altman (2012) gives evidence to suggest that the most ecologically intact parts of the Australian continent are Aboriginal owned and managed (Altman, Buchanan, & Larser, 2007). Altman’s research shows that Indigenous land management regimes are beneficial to the nation’s ecological future and sustainability (Alt-

man, Buchanan, & Larser, 2007). It may be fairly concluded that Indigenous management programs have a significant impact on the ecological sustainability of Australia’s ecosystems. Not only are these programs beneficial to Australian landscape, but it also pays contribution to the global struggle towards ecological rationality.

The pursuit of an ecologically rational society should be at the core of all developing economies. To create an ecologically conscious nation, governments must maintain a healthy interaction between the free market and investment in environmental initiatives. The healthier this relationship is, the healthier the environment is and the flow on effects to the real economy continue to grow from this and the subsequent growth of national and international visitation to our healthy environment (Beck, 1995). Overall, it may be stated that Australia’s free market system is making a markedly positive contribution towards the overall sustainability of the environment.

In conclusion, the interaction of a free market system with Indigenous land management organisations is providing employment, developing transferable skills, supporting local and regional economies and supporting a healthy environment and in doing so is contributing to the Australian Government’s “Closing the Gap” on indigenous disadvantage priority.

Notes

1. Environmental Kuznets Curve

The environmental Kuznets curve is a hypothesized relationship between environmental quality and economic development: various indicators of environmental degradation tend to get worse as modern economic growth occurs until average income reaches a certain point over the course of development.

2. People on Country Program

Indigenous Land Management organisations in the Northern Territory and Cape York Peninsula.

3. The recently released Native Title Report 2006 (ATSISCJ 2007: 42) states that the NT has estimated 'Indigenous Australians held communal rights and interests to land (s) encompassing 19.8 per cent of the Australian land mass' as at 30 June 2006. However, the online version of this report quotes this estimate as 23 per cent.

http://www.humanrights.gov.au/social_justice/ntreport06/chp_2.html#3, viewed 10 November, 2014.

4. Southern Kaantju Land

A distribution of Indigenous owned and managed land in Central Cape York.

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Photo credit: Pierra Van Sparkes

DECOLONISING BODIES

KARRI WALKER

Over the course of the AFL season Adam Goodes exposed the frailty of the white social structures that we are all bound by. In a brave display of culture Goodes contorted his body and sparked a great deal of controversy, igniting passionate debate across Australia. As the flames wane after his retirement we look back at the event and what it means for Australian society.

Note on language: Throughout my essay I have chosen to label Adam Goodes' bodily action on the field as a 'victory dance' which it was rightly so. I would like to make note of the violence encapsulated within the terms that his actions were confined by. In doing so, I do not wish to speak on behalf of Goodes or further contextualise his actions. Rather, I wish to reflect on what his body movements do in that space and to celebrate his pride and my pride in Indigenous culture.

The embodied being of Indigenous peoples remains a troubling and disturbing fact for Settler Australians (Moreton-Robinson 127). Through the fluid movements of his body, Adam Goodes disrupted the 'racial harmony' of the nation, where the sounds of booing attempted to dissolve his aura of strength and cultural pride. Goodes' 'victory dance' brought the discourses of race and Aboriginality into the realm of sport, threatening the spaces and practices seen as integral to the nation. A national debate sparked in which Goodes' act of decolonisation was re-contextualised as a "war dance" and incitement to violence in the attempt to erase his claim to sovereignty. I will explore the 'danger of a single story' using the theories and voices 'of the other side' to explore Goodes' 'victory dance' as an enactment of body sovereignty. Throughout this essay I will explore the critique of Goodes' actions whilst highlighting the use of language that attempted to erase his act of decolonisation from the collective memory of the nation. In doing so, this essay will firstly draw upon Aboriginality

corporeality, whilst contextualizing Goodes' actions within the national imaginary. This essay will explore the debate surrounding the 'imaginary spear' whilst highlighting the white fragility it demonstrated to exist within the nation. Lastly this essay will demonstrate the strength in our bodies and thus our claims to sovereignty.

As a young Nyiyaparli woman, I have always been aware of what my body represents and the discomfort it instills within Settler Australians. With hesitance I recently attended a football game in attempt to stand in solidarity with Goodes. Whilst I was standing in the bar of the MCG, Cyril Rioli a Milikapiti man from the Tiwi Islands was subjected to an uproar of booing as he received a free kick. As the echoing faded I reassured myself that this was just apart of the game. Rioli appeared on the screen once again and a small group of men began to boo, directing their fear and anger towards his Aboriginality. Rioli's Indigenous body, like Goodes, exists within a foreign White world in which their Indigeneity has been fictionalised, in order to assimilate into the White landscape. Their inescapable blackness represents an earlier sovereignty, in which our presence destabilises White belonging (Morrissey 48). As Robin Di'Angelo (62) writes; "everywhere we go we see our own racial image and thus belonging reflected back onto us". It is the colour of Goodes' body that when reflected back onto white society that causes discomfort, in which our bodies look colonial society in the eye and question their belonging. Rioli's and Goodes

rare interruption to White belonging resulted in fear as an image of Indigenous sovereignty was presented to White society. The chants and boos thus serve to squash the reminder that colonial society does not belong.

“GOODES HAS PAVED THE WAY FOR OTHER INDIGENOUS PEOPLE TO ASSERT THEIR BODY SOVEREIGNTY IN AN ACT OF SOLIDARITY.”

The AFL as an embodiment of nationalism reduces space to ‘a stage’ allowing for the story of the nation to be acted out in a sphere, which is seen to support multiculturalism (Carter 2). When Adam Goodes kicked a goal in a win over Carlton on May 29th the story of the nation was re-narrated through the motif of an invisible spear. Many such as Andrew Bolt, Eddie McGuire, Steve Price and Alan Jones have carefully constructed Goodes’ ‘victory dance’ as declaring a state of war. Bolt (2015) suggested that a “war dance” of this kind had no place in ‘our sport’ and was needlessly provocative. As the nation engaged in this debate; the question arose – was the booing Adam Goodes received was an act of racism? Bolt perceived Goodes actions as “racially divisive” a deliberate effort to segregate Indigenous and non-Indigenous in a binary manner. Racial blindness helps construct the responses as commentators such as Alan Jones stated;

“it doesn’t matter what skin colour Goodes has... I mean there are 71 Indigenous players who don’t get booed. They’re booing Goodes because they don’t like his behavior”.

In doing so, the issue of systemic racism was washed away as Australia’s dark history was once again removed from the story of the nation. I wish to use these voices in order to demonstrate the way in which this language attempted to ‘do away with’ Goodes act of decolonisation whilst securing the hegemony of Whiteness.

Adam Goodes fluid and strong movements brought suppressed realms of knowledges to the

forefront of the nation’s collective memory. The ideology of ‘settlement’ and terra nullius acts as the “governing myth of the nation” as perpetuated within the AFL (Duncan 12). Goodes’ body thus exists within a colonial site of dominance where his body is cultivated in attempt to mask the presence of ‘the other’. The AFL embeds itself as a “white nationalistic practice” in which Adam Goodes is constructed as an ‘object to be moved’ whilst serving the nation (Hage 48). In performing the ‘victory dance’ Goodes dismantles the myth of equality and the compliance that surrounds his body. His act of decolonisation is thus a symbol of his defiance, as Walled Aly (2015) writes;

“And at that moment, when a minority acts that they’re not a mere supplicant, then we lose our minds and go ‘no no...you have to get in your box here.”

Goodes’ ‘victory dance’ ruptures the ideology of a ‘comfortable’ Aboriginality as he instills a sense of fear within colonial society. The voices such as Jones and Bolt thus attempt to reinstate their dominance and project an identity onto Goodes that upholds the ideologies of the colonial framework. The invisible spear has become a motif for White Australia, as it brings a history of frontier wars and genocide to the forefront of the national psyche. His body thus works to intentionally threaten the racial equilibrium of the nation.

Through the use of his body Goodes was able to unsettle White belonging, as it is our state of embodiment that exists as a threat to White society (Moreton-Robinson 34). Our “ontological relationship to land is a condition our embodied subjectivity”, when our First Nation status is reflected onto colonial society they are faced with an ill sense of belonging (Moreton-Robinson 33). Goodes describes his action of body sovereignty as a “battle cry at your guys, saying this is who I am... a warrior representing my people.” In performing “a cry for pride”, Goodes established a narrative of Indigenous sovereignty in an alien domain as his body instills a state of White fragility within the nation (Hume). Waleed Aly confronted the nation’s state of White fragility as he stated;

“Australia is genuinely a very tolerant society until its minorities demonstrate they don’t know

“IT IS THE COLOUR OF GOODES’ BODY THAT WHEN REFLECTED BACK ONTO WHITE SOCIETY THAT CAUSES DISCOMFORT, IN WHICH OUR BODIES LOOK COLONIAL SOCIETY IN THE EYE AND QUESTION THEIR BELONGING.”

their place... in which the vanilla frontier does not cope very well.”

Subsequently, colonial society immediately demonstrated an outward display of fear and anger in attempts to reinstate the racial equilibrium (Di’Agnelo 54). As Goodes turned the gaze back onto Whiteness, colonial society engaged in defensive tactics in which language was used as a discourse of power. In doing so, Goodes’ ‘victory dance’ was constructed as a “devise war dance” placing the gaze back onto Indigeneity, as he was viewed as a ‘problem to be solved’.

In perpetuating a form of psychological terra nullius whilst erasing his act of decolonisation the debate turned to a question of ‘appropriateness’. Bolt described Goodes actions as; “[serving] to segregate Indigenous and non-Indigenous in a binary manner”. In constructing Goodes as ‘separating the nation’ his act of decolonisation was marred by his perceived disruptiveness. Goodes victim status was dismantled as columnist Miranda Devine writes; “but for sports administrators and sanctimonious journalists to denounce the crowds as somehow anti-Aboriginal is the real racism.” In perpetuating the ideology of ‘reverse racism’ the colonial voices were protected, as the re-contextualised his actions whilst carrying away his claim to sovereignty. Whilst these voices dominated media coverage, Goodes’ ‘victory dance’ continues to dismantle the colonial framework as we stand in solidarity with Goodes.

In demonstrating the power of Indigenous bodies, Goodes have paved the way for other Indigenous people to assert their body sovereignty in an act of solidarity. In performing a ‘victory dance’ Goodes theorised his won existence, as he stated; “this is my land. This is my pride”. In freeing the land from Settler mythologies, a

space have been created in which has allowed other Indigenous peoples to demonstrate the power of our bodies. The Yolungu Dancers at the Garma Festival painted their bodies in red and white with the number 37 on their backs as they stood in solidarity, assisting in the process of decolonisation. Their bodies exemplified the impossible task of ‘doing away with’ Indigeneity, as our sovereign rights are everywhere, within the Aboriginal flag and the colour of our bodies (Moreton-Robinson 127). The Yolungu boys showed support for Goodes as they stated;

“we can do this for him and dance for him, make him well... That’s the law for us, to make him stand up tall again... keep on going brother we are all behind you” (Yunipingu).

New life was given to Goodes’ act of decolonisation, as the Yolungu dancers fed the earth with their soul. Goodes body cannot be taken away, in other Indigenous people joining his fight for decolonisation his ‘victory dance’ represents and unbreakable claim to Aboriginal sovereignty. The power is thus for Indigenous communities to stand with Goodes and walk in strength, as we exert the agency that is inherent in our bodies.

The refusal of Australia to “acknowledge the multiplicities when they are presented” reflects the persistence of dominant myths that exist to protect Settler feelings of belonging within the nation (Clark 1). Although White voices and violent language has attempted to “re-contextualise what [they] cannot carry away”, our inherent connection to land cannot be washed away. As Morrissey writes; “Indigenous people have a certain density about them”, as we carry our inherent First Nation rights within bodies. In making reference to Indigenous sovereignty through his body, Goodes began to decolonise the Australian landscape. As we stand in soli-

darity with Goodes, we too are a part of the decolonising process (Birch 190). Voices such as Alan Jones and Andrew Bolt are indicative of the White fragility that is so easily fractured by Indigenous bodies. Goodes' demonstration of cultural continuity, strength and refusal to conform overturns White societies' attempt to erase his presence from the landscape. Adam Goodes' legacy will endure long after the "hollow howls ring out" in which the naked, loud, pathetic and unashamed racism that exists has been named within the contemporary frontier.

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Karri Walker is a Nyiyaparli woman from the Pilbara. She is currently in her last semester of my Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in Criminology and Australian Indigenous Studies. She wrote this essay in order to voice her opinion amongst the White commentary that surrounded Goodes bodily actions. She hopes that her voice and strength as a proud Aboriginal woman will give Goodes' act of solidarity strength as we as Indigenous people continue to decolonise the nation.





Photo credit: Pierra Van Sparkes

MISSIONS & HISTORY WARS

TYSON HOLLOWAY-CLARKE

The colonisation of Australia is a long and tragic history that is often misrepresented by commentators in the general public. One of the most obvious and proliferated historical mistake is the apparent benevolence of the various Boards for the Protection of Aborigines. Public figures like Andrew Bolt continue to insist that the actions of these boards and missionaries were overwhelmingly positive and in the best interests of the Indigenous people under their control. Tyson disagrees.

The History Wars refers to the ongoing debate as to the history of colonial Australia, with particular reference to the treatment of Indigenous people during this period. The debate is important as it informs the national narrative and education in Australia and is a deeply politicised subject. The unfortunate result of the politicisation of this debate is that the history of this deep and complex time period are often disregarded or misrepresented. As a result, the presented dichotomy oversimplifies the actual history of Australia and presents two seemingly mutually exclusive accounts of history. What I would propose is a greater investigation into the history of the the Board for the Protection of Aborigines in Victoria and the experiences of the people living under its domain, as to uncover some of the truths of the mission days. In particular, this exercise hopes to lay the foundation for a renewed understanding of the treatment of Indigenous peoples around Australia and provide explanation as to the burning questions surrounding the government's role as protectors. In essence this essay will demonstrate that the protective role the Board, was at the cost of a great deal and would not prove to be for the ultimate benefit of the Aboriginal people of Victoria as they would be forced to assimilate. While this may not have been the intention of the Board, it was the ultimate result of the social controls placed on Aboriginal people by the Board. This would lead to the coerced assimilation of the Indigenous people of Victoria.

Framing the Debate

The Board for the Protection of Aborigines in Victoria was formed through the Aboriginal Protection Act of 1869. With a mandate endorsed and empowered via the Victorian colonial government, the Board would see administrators, committees, mission managers and bureaucrats hold a tremendous amount of authority over the lives of the Aboriginal people of Victoria. The Board for the Protection of Aborigines played a huge part in a long history of disruption and intervention amongst Victorian Indigenous peoples. The Board for the Protection of Aborigines was designed with the proposed intention of protecting Aboriginal people, though in the later years the Board would be accused of attempting to reduce the population of Aboriginal people, to the extent that Aboriginal people in Victoria would no longer exist. The two contradicting goals of protection and eradication facilitated highly disruptive and destructive policies for the Indigenous people of Victoria as will be explained later. In the view of the public and historians the Board for the Protection of Aborigines was either a force for good, progress and protection in the lives of Aboriginal people or the Board was a force for evil, destruction and disruption.

As mentioned there are two prominent memories or sides of the debate in regards to the treatment of Indigenous peoples in Victoria and around the country via government bodies like the Victorian Board for the Protection of Aborigines. These positions inform the rhetoric of multiple sides of Indigenous politics. The first is a position that

focusses on the protectorate role of the colonial and eventual federal and state governments, especially in the protection of children, and in many cases acted for the greater good of the Indigenous people of Australia. Taken to extremes this side of the can be at times utilised to either minimise the impact or dismiss the claim of systemic child removal during this period, as detailed in the Bringing Them Home Report of 1998. Often heralded as a racist or historically manipulative, it would be more appropriate to name this view protectionist after the way in which it describes the actions of the the Board and successive governments.

The second school of thought is the generally more widely accepted view amongst Indigenous peoples and the movement toward reconciliation. This view suggests that the Board and its actors were not drafting policy and acting in the best interests of Indigenous people, but were attempting to eradicate Aboriginal people, through acts of intentional cruelty against the Aboriginal populations under the guise of so called protection. Such an understanding informs a great deal of the way in which some Australians remember the colonisation of Australia and the attempt at assimilating white Australia with Indigenous Australia over the last two centuries. This view would be best described as assimilationist as one of the primary accusations levied against the authorities of the times was its attempt at disintegrating Indigenous peoples and culture and replacing it with the introduced colonial culture.

The debate surrounding this portion of history is

“THESE POSITIONS INFORM THE RHETORIC OF MULTIPLE SIDES OF INDIGENOUS POLITICS.”

ongoing and thoroughly politically charged but it is also incomplete and largely misinformed. One small but critical mistake that both sides of the debate routinely make is the failure to recognise the depth and breadth of the difference in experience

of Indigenous peoples across the times that the Boards were in operation. For instance the experiences and interactions of the Aboriginal people of Victoria with the Board for the Protection was predominantly via the missionaries on the missions themselves thus some of the blame must be levied against the religious groups responsible. As recorded in letters sent from the people living on the mission and reports sent back and forth from the Board at the time the experiences greatly varied in Victoria alone, let alone across the nation. Where there were reports of sickness and disease in one community there were letters that suggested that the missionaries got along relatively well with the Aboriginal people on the mission. The amount of autonomy also greatly varied across these communities with seemingly different rules at each mission, despite the instructions and expectations from the Board as some mission managers would appear more lenient than others. When change over time is taken into consideration one can begin to imagine the great difficulty it is to try and establish a thorough blanket account of the experience and treatment of Aboriginal people during this period.

The story of Coranderrk serves as an excellent case study as to the complexities of the experience for Aboriginal people during this time. What is clear is that the Wurundjeri people of the greater Melbourne area suffered a great deal as the new Victorians began to spread along the misnamed Yarra River. Though their lives were not entirely defined by pain at the hands of the Board as their population was in rapid decline and territory taken, the Board came to be responsible for them. After, in the eyes of leader Simon Wonga, making a significant compromise in their ownership over their land and moving to Coranderrk, currently known as Healesville, the Wurundjeri people began to take hold of their fates with the help of missionaries and some allowances via the Board. Over decades the conditions on the mission and the health and happiness of the Aboriginal people would fluctuate as time would roll on with epidemic sickness common and worsening relations with the Board. As much a product of the entirety of the Victorian settlement, the unfortunate situation the Wurundjeri people of Victoria were put in was not

“THE STORY OF CORANDERRK SERVES AS AN EXCELLENT CASE STUDY AS TO THE COMPLEXITIES OF THE EXPERIENCE FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE DURING THIS TIME.”

solely the Boards doing. It appears that given the circumstances the Board could be seen to have acted in a reasonably benevolent manner having provided the means from which the Wurundjeri people could lead more fulfilling lives. While this may have been the case early in the mission's lifetime the later years would not prove as positive.

Experience aside, it is clear that from the outset that the Board was being pulled in multiple directions. On one hand William Thomas, one of the four Assistant Protectors of Aborigines in Port Phillip during the 1840s, seemed to present genuine interest in protecting and respecting the traditions and culture of Aboriginal people. While his approach and advice as to how best do this may have in hindsight been somewhat problematic, the simple appreciation for these things demonstrates a willingness to see Aboriginal people continue to thrive in the new Victoria. This is a far cry from what one might expect from a government representative of the time and what is more surprising is that Thomas is not alone in his position. Other allies of William Barak and missionaries would counter or attempt to sway the instructions or policies of less friendly members of the Board during this pre-federation period. In the case of William Thomas of Port Phillip and as the case would come to be in Coranderrk the attempts at assimilation at could be at times were minimal or seemingly ineffective. Other historians suggest that this pre-federation period was perhaps the most reasonable and well meaning of the Boards that showed genuine interest in maintaining some semblance of autonomy as the lives of the Wurundjeri hoped to improve.

It is important to understand that such an understanding of the variance of experience of Aboriginal people and actions by the Board is not an attempt at minimising the impact of colonialism. The contemporary to Thomas' position was the Darwinian position- that the Aboriginal popula-

tion of Victoria were doomed to extinction. After the incredibly quick decline in the Aboriginal population across Victoria some believed that the Aboriginal people were going to very quickly disappear- thus it would make sense to move them away off of the more precious lands and let them die out. No matter the position, it became clear that the ownership or friendship over Aboriginal people became a competition amongst the Board that would extend onto the missionaries as time rolled on. Where Thomas tried to befriend the Aboriginal people, other missionaries and the Board sought to micro-manage and take full ownership over their lives.

Protection as control

Across the century from the 1840s into the 1940s the control of Aboriginal lives was the under the control of the Board, churches, and missionaries experiences could be radically different depending on the circumstances. What is clear is that after the Aborigines Protection Act of 1869 was updated to include half-caste Aboriginal people the Board's control would only continue to increase and conditions worsen. The freedom of movement to and from the the missions, where they lived, the ability to marry, and most other significant parts of their lives were controlled and routinely denied by the mission managers and Board who were controlling Aboriginal lives at the time. Such control was predominantly vested in mission managers and missionaries who were again incredibly varied.

The handling of war pensions after 1918 serves as an excellent example as to the way in which mission managers were able to control the lives of Aboriginal people. In the case of widow Julia Thorpe was only able to access her son's war pension on his behalf after receiving an endorsement from the mission manager, Bruce Jerguson. Jerguson was the appointed mission manager at Lake Tyers, Jerguson was responsi-

ble for sending letters to the Pensions Office and its commissioners to make request for Aboriginal people on the mission such Julia Thorpe. . While Julia Thorpe’s request was granted, it is important to note the manner in which it was granted as Jerguson would prove to be the key to fulfilling this request. Other similar cases during the period highlight the importance for Aboriginal people to have good relationships with the mission managers charged with their protection. It becomes clear that without Bruce Jerguson’s help and the good standing he held her in, Julia Thorpe would likely have had her request relegated and discarded like many others were.

pe were in essence determined to be the property of the Board and government. This escalation was only possible as the Aboriginal people of Victoria began to assimilate and became increasingly reliant on the Board and missions, as facilitated by their tight social controls. So rather than loosening the protection policies provided by the Board the grip tightened and most meaningful facets of the lives of Aboriginal people would be subject to the Board and representatives. For Julia Thorpe it meant that her good relationship with the Lake Tyers mission manager Bruce Jerguson could facilitate her taking back the trusteeship of her late husband’s war pension, a right that would have been asserted to her were she not an Aboriginal woman.

“IF A HALF-CASTE COULD BE ASSIMILATED INTO THE MODERN VICTORIA THE BOARD WOULD DO WHATEVER THEY COULD TO MAKE IT SO.”

Control with the intent to assimilate

After federation the Board in Victoria began to develop a more distinct purpose or sets of principles from which they would act. If a half-caste could be assimilated into the modern Victoria the Board would do whatever they could to do so. Given that now the majority of Aboriginal people in Victoria on the missions during these years were considered half-castes it meant that very quickly Aboriginal people as they existed before colonisation would slowly be erased and whatever concentrations of these people that remained would be split across Victoria, as controlled and determined by the Board. Eventually the numbers of people on the missions would decline as they were shut down. The last mission was in Lake Tyers and after the decision to close over 200 people would be forced to move to the predominantly white country towns nearby. This closure would prove to be the Board’s last effort at coercive assimilation on the missions.

Limitations and regulations of the style that Julia Thorpe were subject to were not specifically outlined in the initial creation of the Aboriginal Protection Act and were an escalation of power by the Board. In this escalation of the interpretation of the Act men, women and children like Julia Thor-

pe were in essence determined to be the property of the Board and government. This escalation was only possible as the Aboriginal people of Victoria began to assimilate and became increasingly reliant on the Board and missions, as facilitated by their tight social controls. So rather than loosening the protection policies provided by the Board the grip tightened and most meaningful facets of the lives of Aboriginal people would be subject to the Board and representatives. For Julia Thorpe it meant that her good relationship with the Lake Tyers mission manager Bruce Jerguson could facilitate her taking back the trusteeship of her late husband’s war pension, a right that would have been asserted to her were she not an Aboriginal woman.

With special a special provision in the Act for the protection and education of children the first pages of the history of the Stolen Generations would be written. Moral judgements and condemnation aside, the apparent intention of the Board was to take half-caste boys and girls and put them to work in the new colony as apprentices or maids. This would mean separation from families, the forced adoption of English and the abandonment of any Aboriginal culture. Any children that would come to reject this lifestyle or were unfit for work would come under the care of the Department for Neglected Children or similar institutions like orphanages run by churches. After the inclusion of half-caste children in the Act from 1910 the Board now had the power to dictate the movements of half-cast children or adults and quite often used this power to restrict their movements and access to missions and their families. Over the course of a few decades the Board seemingly went from being concerned about the extinction of Aboriginal people in Victoria to establishing a system that would strangle the future out of many Aboriginal people. As the controls remained tight, life as an Aboriginal person was on the terms of the religious missionaries and Board. These terms would be funda-

mentally white as informed by Christianity and the British motherland and would be enforced on Aboriginal people as their culture would be controlled and suppressed. In practice this was evident in the way in which children were educated and removed, the way in which Aboriginal people were expected to adopt Christianity, and eventually the way in which people would be expelled from the missions and assimilated into the country towns around Victoria. The modes and strictness of control that the Aboriginal people of Victoria were subject to meant that they would be at the very least coerced if not forced to abandon their Aboriginality.

Motivations shift over time

As the fundamental values of the Board would shift so would their policies and affect on the Aboriginal people of Victoria. Where initially the Board may have collaborated with the Aboriginal people during its early days and men like Thomas Williams would attempt to maintain positive relationships with the people, the same could not be said of his successors. Where Williams tried to befriend the Aboriginal people under his jurisdiction, the later iterations of the Board would try and take ownership of the lives of the Aboriginal people. Where previously the colonisation of Victoria and the decline in population would prompt the creation of the Board for the Protection of Aborigines, after federation the Board was so heavily controlling and disrupting the lives of Aboriginal people it could be said that they were the new problem with only one option, assimilate or die.

The Indigenous portions of history is poorly remembered in the minds and writings of many non-Indigenous Australians, especially among the general population and non-academic commentators. Among the worst instances of remembrance is the role that the government of the time and the various Boards for the Protection of Aborigines charged with managing Indigenous lives and affairs. It becomes clear that initially the role of protector may have been an earnest effort that would turn sour as time would pass and controls tightened. These contradiction in the role and

reality of the Board is a difficult one to swallow. While they may have had some positive material impact on the lives of Aboriginal people, in the form of rations and other materials many of the other policies would serve such a severe disruption to the lives of Aboriginal people the ultimate good of the Board as protectors must be brought into question if not rejected.

Conclusion

The Board would ultimately fail to achieve either of its perceived goals and demonstrate the fallibility both their ill-advised principles, and their counter-intuitive initiatives. What is absolutely certain is that the Board's capacity to protect the Aboriginal people of Victoria was not benevolent nor in their best interests. What also becomes clear is that not every person responsible to the Board maintained the status quo and seemingly chose to act in the best interests of the Aboriginal people, naivety aside. This exploration of inconsistency provides meaningful insight into the true nature of the Board of Protection, its intentions, and ultimately allows for the present historical debate about the false memory of this history to be addressed. Where they once may have acted or at least seen to act in a benevolent manner, time would show that the Board's ultimate intention was to assimilate the Aboriginal people of Victoria based on their management of Aboriginal lives. It goes to show that the Board and its actors had little capacity or intention to allow Indigenous people to be self-determined and they ultimately must assimilate.

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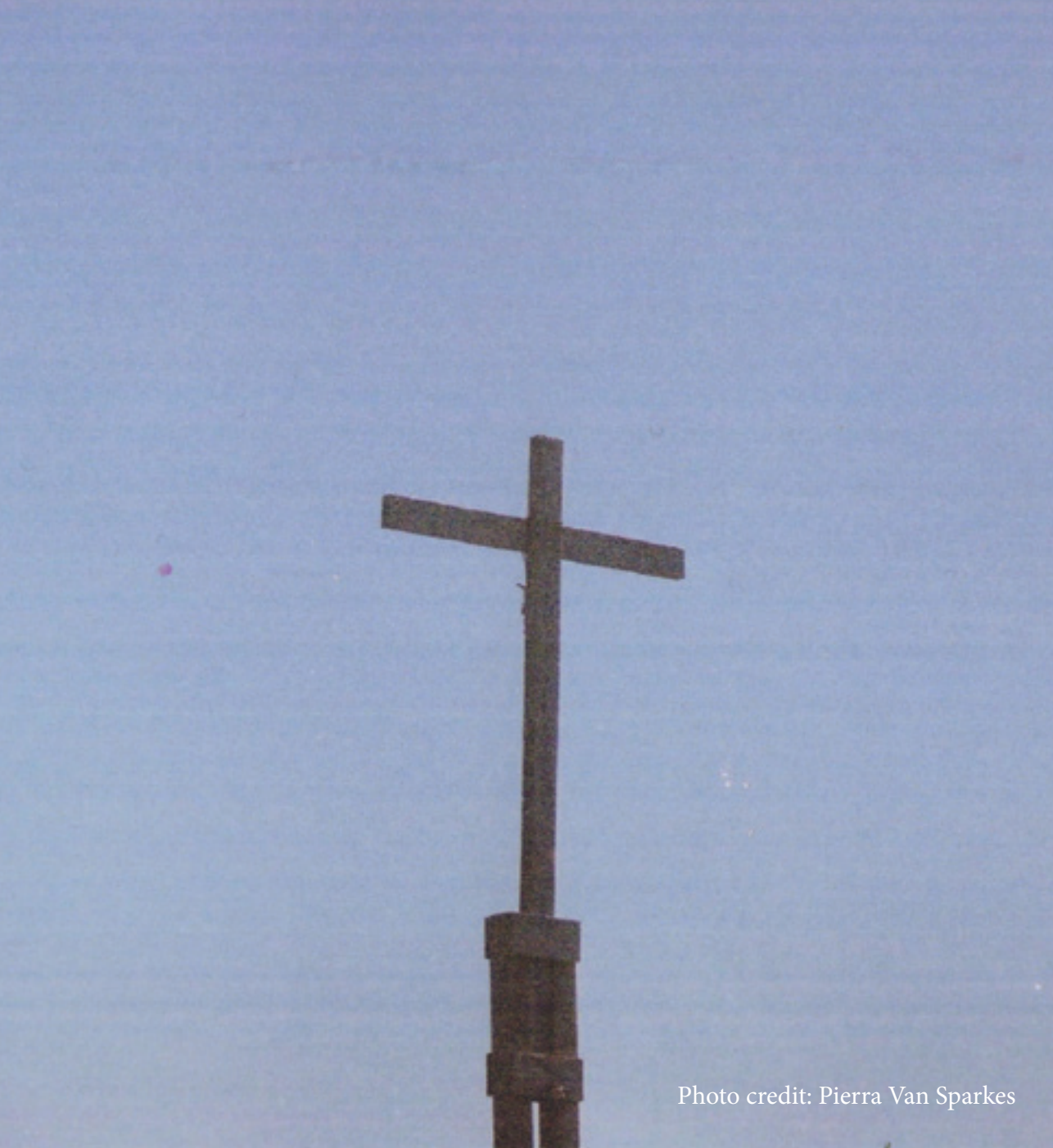


Photo credit: Pierra Van Sparkes



Tyson is notoriously arrogant and constantly up to no good. When he is not rubbing people the wrong way he is alone. On a more serious note Tyson is the founder of Under Bunjil and a History student at the University of Melbourne. A perpetual Trinitarian Tyson will probably never leave until he can guarantee a higher standard of living.





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Come on Black Girl

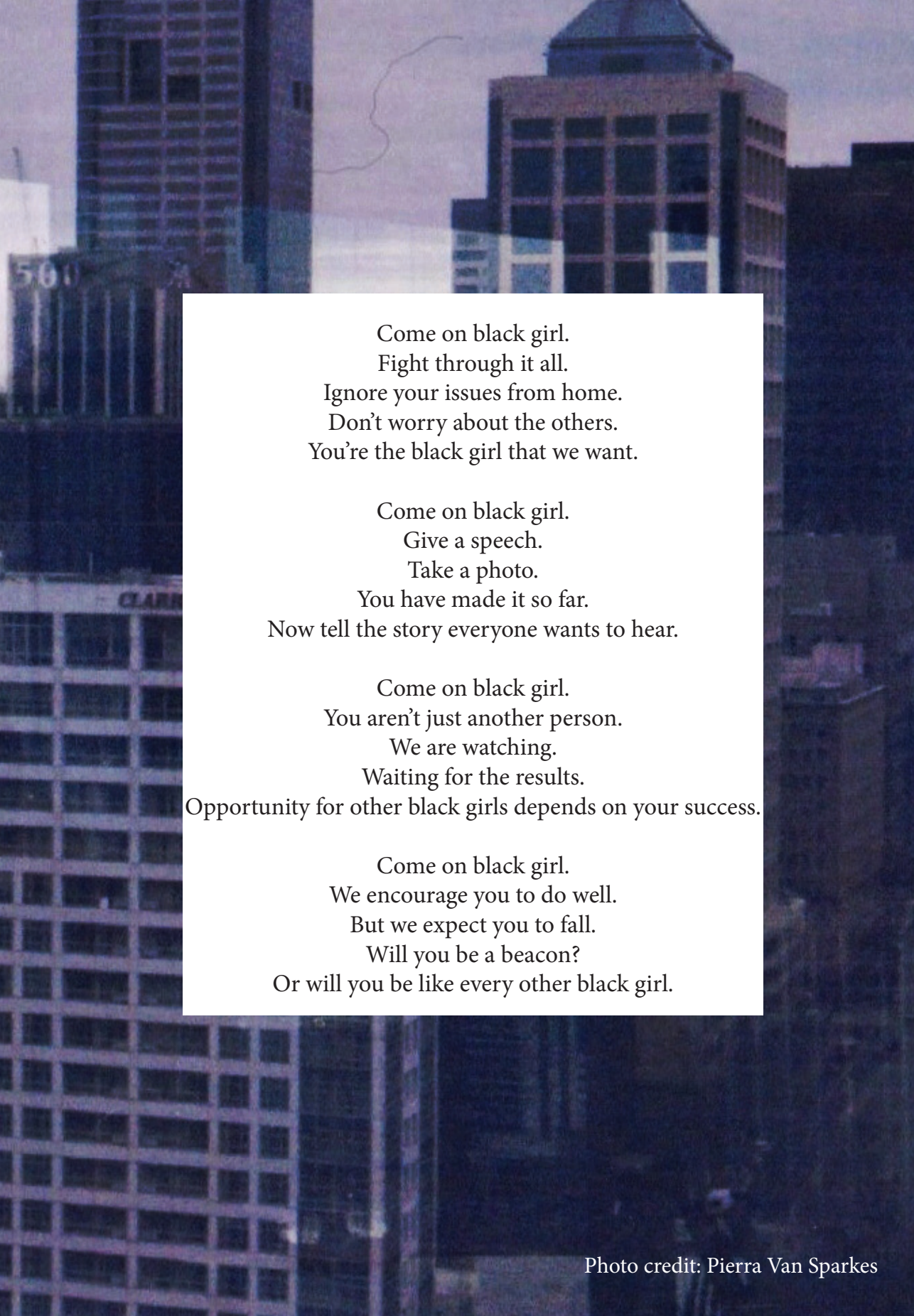
Alexandra Hohoi

Come on black girl.
Don't look back.
Try your hardest.
Make a difference.
Your achievements are bigger than you.

Come on black girl.
Don't be like the rest.
Don't drink alcohol.
Don't get pregnant.
Don't be like your cousins.

Come on black girl.
Look at all this money.
Look at all this opportunity.
All has been given to you.
Don't let everyone down.

Come on black girl.
Be the good example.
Be the light of your generation.
Be the change that your people need.
Everyone is watching.



Come on black girl.
Fight through it all.
Ignore your issues from home.
Don't worry about the others.
You're the black girl that we want.

Come on black girl.
Give a speech.
Take a photo.
You have made it so far.
Now tell the story everyone wants to hear.

Come on black girl.
You aren't just another person.
We are watching.
Waiting for the results.
Opportunity for other black girls depends on your success.

Come on black girl.
We encourage you to do well.
But we expect you to fall.
Will you be a beacon?
Or will you be like every other black girl.

My Grandma Taught Me Sadness

Emily Kayte James

Recently I spent a weekend on Country. It was through a Cultural Experience Camp hosted by Murrup Barak that I made my journey home. I was fortunate that the location picked for this camp was on my Country - Gunditjmara Country. The Country that my Grandmother's people have lived on, nurtured and continue to nurture as they have for the last 40,000 and more years. When I was there I got a glimpse at how other people see my Grandmother, as an elder and a wise one at that, she gave our group tours of significant cultural areas. I think at every stop on our tour I cried. I was sad, some of the stories of the past my Grandmother shared are so sad I don't think I will ever be able to recount, stories of loss and more pain than any should have to bare. It wasn't all sad though there were stories of triumph and fierce love and so much hope. I've always felt a significant responsibility for community and I had wondered where I had learnt that I should feel responsible, where I had learnt that I had an obligation to community. After that weekend, I didn't doubt where that feeling of obligation and responsibility came from, I had learnt it from my Grandmother. My Grandmother has taught me many things, she taught me how to be brave in the face of adversity, and how to be proud of our people, most importantly she showed me how to be the strong Aboriginal woman I am today. The poem you're about to read I wrote that weekend, when I was on Country and it gives you a glimpse into the cultural load that Indigenous students carry.

The suffering my people have experienced at the hands of colonisers for the last 200 years is ingrained in me, it's part of my story, It's the weight I carry and I cannot nor do I want to remove myself from that. I have an obligation to do right by my community, because those who have come before me gave everything so I could have the education and the life that I have today.

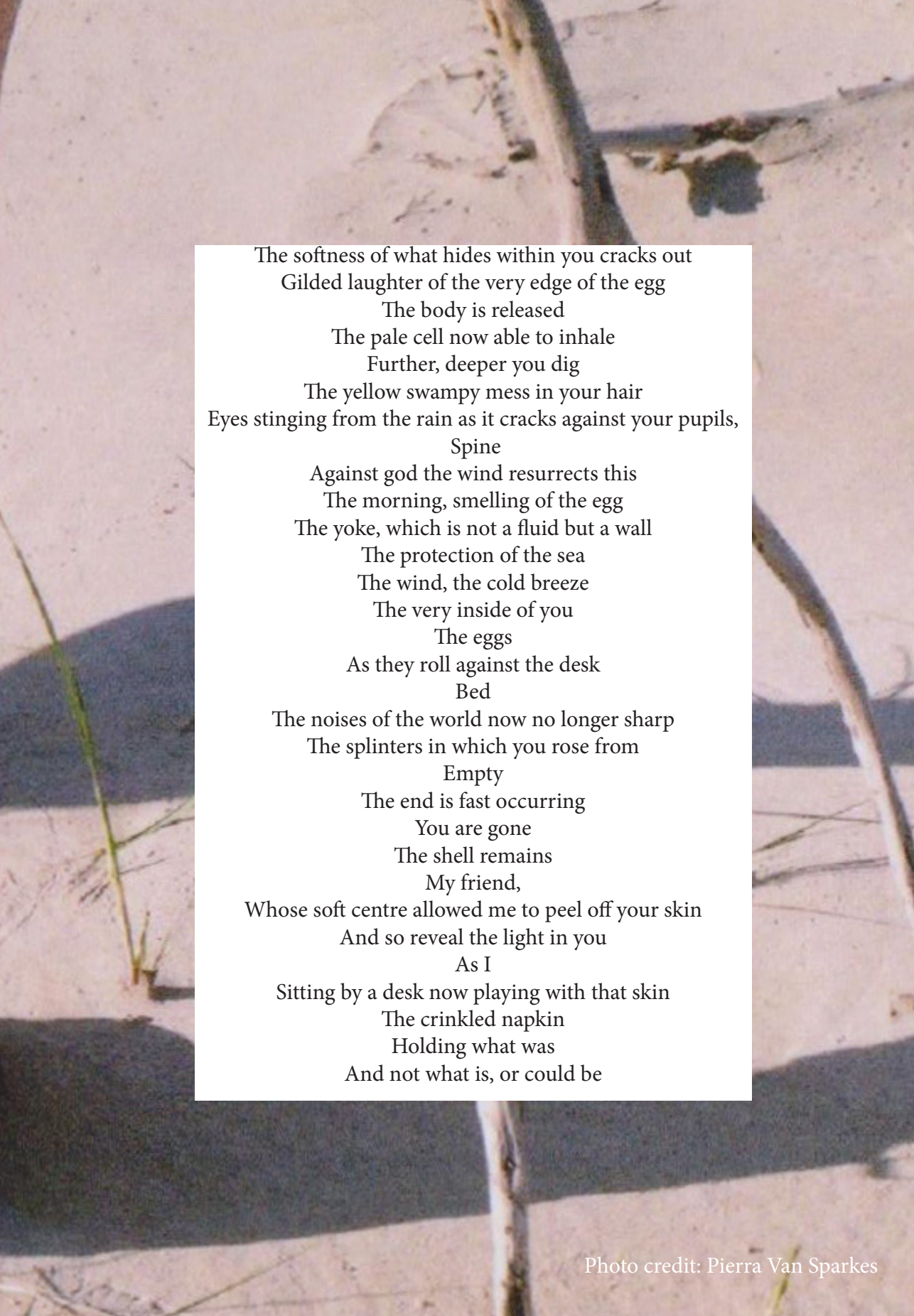


My Grandma Taught Me Sadness
Sadness for Mob
for Country
Sadness for Bunjil
for Community
Sadness for stolen children
for Elders
Sadness for the young
More likely to go to prison than to finish school
Sadness for our Men and Women
Too likely to take their own lives
Sadness for People of the lake
For Convincing Ground
Sadness for me

Curved Splinters

Alara Hood

Curved splinters
The shards porcelain white
Cutting the road in two
I hold you safely
Lying on my breast I keep you warm
Empty house, dark room
But one
Where eyes can spy on you
But it is a nice spot so you rest
The white paint, white desks, white bench
Comes back at you
The whites of eyes and the tints of red
So you hide
Back in that dark room
White walls
White desks, white windows
The outside is less inviting
Here you can fold yourself in and out
At will
You can whisper your mind
And hide in the full stops
The dark room where there I can live
Rock back and forth on verses of cliché loves
And a street that gives you a bitter taste
The egg
You can fold out its warmth
Guiding you to a window
Streetcars and crows fight for space to
Breathe,
BREATHE



The softness of what hides within you cracks out
Gilded laughter of the very edge of the egg
The body is released
The pale cell now able to inhale
Further, deeper you dig
The yellow swampy mess in your hair
Eyes stinging from the rain as it cracks against your pupils,
Spine
Against god the wind resurrects this
The morning, smelling of the egg
The yoke, which is not a fluid but a wall
The protection of the sea
The wind, the cold breeze
The very inside of you
The eggs
As they roll against the desk
Bed
The noises of the world now no longer sharp
The splinters in which you rose from
Empty
The end is fast occurring
You are gone
The shell remains
My friend,
Whose soft centre allowed me to peel off your skin
And so reveal the light in you
As I
Sitting by a desk now playing with that skin
The crinkled napkin
Holding what was
And not what is, or could be

CREATURES

Jessica Hart

“Set daylight within the memory
as though it were a fire
made by candid hands and sticks;
build night time sturdy
as though it were a building
made of wood and bricks.”

1.
As conceptual as a bird
mocking in nature,
conceptualises the
mocking
of its nature,
which is freedom,
yet freedom it mocks,
such is the mocking
bird.
For life to be life,
life must
be abundant
with life.
Life must
hold the freedom
of life.
The bird mocks
freedom, as well as life,
with life a concept of
life
and not life.

2.
Bounded by the beads –
the budding
eyes of birds – behind
the
clasp of leaves.
The drop of polarised
stars, livid lands below
it.
The climb to evanescent
peaks –
as the wings beat,
bump, bump.
Thump, thump.
The dropping heart,
and the convivial body,
rushing to the start.

3.
Flowers are paradigms.
Flowers are futures.
Flowers are not art.
They are not art.
Loose change in the
pocket
can buy some.
They can be taken
from the ground
and torn apart.

Generations

Jessica Hart

Grandpa reads from a card, a twinkle in his eye,
of worn filament. The fizzle of sarsaparilla
falls into the clementine glass beside him.
Mischievous comes from the whistle, blown from the bustling
lungs of the little boy in the cone hat.
He sneers at the luck of his sister,
pinning the wild felt tail on the elephant.
He thinks “is it a lion?” It’s roaring
in the delight of applause
of adults at the party.
The cub feels blindly for the walls of earth
and the stairs of parenthood.
The baby crawls to the feet;
it’s mealtime.
It drools the thick sounds of neurons
in the process of knowing
what things are,
what this is.
And the hat falls off the boy,
for another year.

WHEN TELLING FAMILY STORIES HABITUALLY
 IN GOOD COMPANY IT FEELS LIKE SHARING.
 EXCEPT ON EVERY OTHER DAY WHEN REGARDLESS
 OF AFFINITY REGARDLESS OF INTENT IT FEELS
 LIKE SOMETHING ELSE. MORE TAXING IT FEELS
 TAKE BUT NOT QUITE GIVE. IT FEELS
 LIKE LOOSING TEETH. THE MORE MY MOUTH
 MOVES THE MORE THEY'RE RATTLED OUT
 OF PLACE. WITH EVERY WORD A MOAR
 GOES. DRAWING BREATH WISORS
 ARE NEXT. THE SHARPEST ARE
 LEFT 'TIL LAST. RABID THEY
 PACK A BITE. I STRIKE AND
 I AM LEFT HOLLOW. FEEBLE
 MY RAW GUMS STRAIN TO
 FORM A WORD BUT ONLY
 SPITTLE ESCAPES. I DREAM
 OF THIS OFTEN BUT I FEEL IT
 IN WAKING LIFE. SPATTERING, MORE
 FRENZIED NOW I'M HARD TO
 HEAR. IT'S AN UGLY SOUND
 MY WORDS ARE REBELLENT, AS
 AM I. DESPERE AND WITH NOTHING
 LEFT TO DO, ONE BY ONE
 I PLUCK MY TEETH FROM
 THE MOUTH. POUND THEM,
 REPLACE THEM AND
 AS IF NOTHING
 HAPPENED AT ALL
 FLASH A PEARLY
 WHITE SMILE.

PIERRA VAN SPARKES

LAND MOUNTAIN

JESSICA HART

A gift to Trinity College, Land Mountain is a collection of sonnets by Nakata Brophy Prize winning poet Jessica Hart. Kindly shared with us by Katherine Firth of Trinity College and Jessica Hart we now share a portion of her works with you. The Nakata Brophy Short Fiction and Poetry Prize is run every year by Overland and Trinity College and is open to all young Indigenous writers. Alternating yearly between short fiction and poetry, Jessica Hart was the winner of the 2014 prize for poetry.

NOVEAU

There are those who ask a hopeful question:
was it by chance that there was the morning,
as it was by chance that there was the night?
Lemongrass, paperbark, sand cliff - finite.

The assortments of tepidness and cold
never mix as one, yet as dunes they change,
and, as grows a garden like no other,
the earth is today unlike another.

Photonic waves live in constant transit
and are the moving candles of the sea;
once indeterminable, twice the same,
one faded away but another came.

If people turn to stone and so does all,
let no nest to be robbed and no eggs fall.

LAND MOUNTAIN

The environment we create
is a ladle of particulates,
a spoon feeding us
a measureless enclave.

What is a place,
if not a placement of shapes,
loops of forms, down, around -
wood, metal, words, sound?

A seagull knows no hate,
or human thought,
and knows no better
than what it's learning.

Sea floods, mazes of waves,
evening candles burning.

WEARIED NOT PRETTY

Lost seas unbundle the coastline icebergs,
seasonal water signalling them to melt
and be taken away, taken to shore,
to show the cities the cards they've dealt.

To free the bergs from their statues and stones
takes first an ocean to swallow its ice,
its coral reefs, its anemone zones,
itself volcanic and larva to life.

The garden fence posts are most apparent
holding the tightrope for the wagtail
that waits and at last gleams to see the man
who goes house-to-house to give the mail.

The man forgets to nod and say hello;
it flies to the fence, but he doesn't know.

CAPE BEDFORD

Opal vibrancy, it ends not with none,
colour and cloth on the salt of the shed,
tall gradient, clever contrast of sun
and Velcro vines on the silica bed.

Sleep with your hat on and binoculars
rested in the groove of your languid arm.
There is the tree-swing slowing gently down
in the looking-glass of clear and calm.

Handle the jetty, and nail it up;
oar to the current; the floating buoy drifts.
As tea was made in the ramekin cup,
the visitor whistles; the silence lifts.

Light from the lantern and food from the line,
he says, "What's mine is yours, but yours is mine."

YARRAMAN

Empirical life is as known to us
as a scratch upon a stone
where upon a horse's hoof
pressed its trotting tone,

or as cumbersome as its mane
of macro-shots that shows to us
quasi orbs of capsuled dust
within the code of rain,

or sun as it stabs the green
ants on the river nest,
going, going—it flurries, begs,
spins around on its last legs,

silk and larvae swallowed whole
as fruit for water's thirsted bowl.



Photo credit: Pierra Van Sparkes



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