



# PeaceWrites

## newsletter

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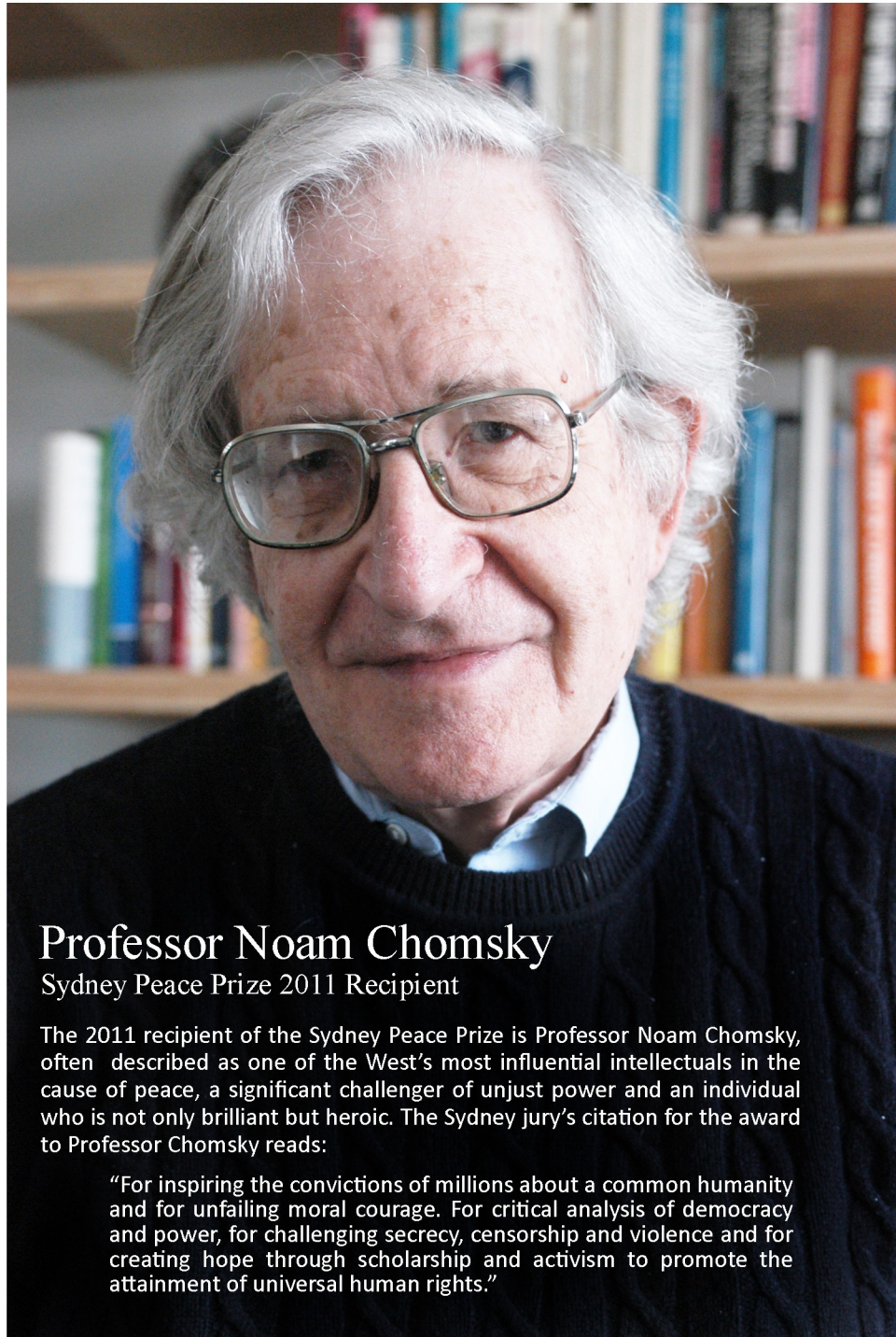
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## Professor Noam Chomsky

Sydney Peace Prize 2011 Recipient

The 2011 recipient of the Sydney Peace Prize is Professor Noam Chomsky, often described as one of the West's most influential intellectuals in the cause of peace, a significant challenger of unjust power and an individual who is not only brilliant but heroic. The Sydney jury's citation for the award to Professor Chomsky reads:

"For inspiring the convictions of millions about a common humanity and for unfailing moral courage. For critical analysis of democracy and power, for challenging secrecy, censorship and violence and for creating hope through scholarship and activism to promote the attainment of universal human rights."

Professor Chomsky was chosen for his contributions to advancing ways of achieving those universal human rights which bolster peace with justice across countries and cultures. For more than 50 years he has been a world champion of freedom of speech, the value of transparency in government and the need to challenge secrecy and censorship.

He gave vigorous support to the Sydney Peace Foundation's recent award to Julian Assange, the co-founder of WikiLeaks.



In his study of the political economy of human rights, he exposed state crimes, induced by US foreign policy, across South America, the Middle East and South East Asia. With unfailing moral courage, he has challenged abusive uses of power and false claims made about democracy.

In his analyses of democracy and power he identifies the 'manufacture of consent' by governments, corporations and the media and has raised public awareness of massive human rights abuses, such as in Middle Eastern dictatorships, Gaza and the Occupied Territories and East Timor.

Noam Chomsky was chosen because he not only identifies abuses of power but also generates hope by describing alternatives in domestic and foreign policy. He admits to being inspired by the British mathematician philosopher who founded the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Bertrand Russell. He is enthusiastic about Russell's claim that a primary goal of education

is to elicit and fortify whatever creative impulses a man may possess, 'through literature, laughter and creative discourse.'

Chomsky also allied himself with his great friend the Palestinian musician and social scientist Edward Said who wrote that 'the intellectual must be unwilling to accept easy formulas or ready made clichés or the smooth ever accommodating confirmations of what the powerful or conventional have to say, and what they do.'

Chomsky is both an activist and intellectual. He would not separate those responsibilities. He wants the academic to find the courage to move far beyond the ivory tower, to play a fuller role as citizen educator – about human rights, about the violent militaristic ways of thinking and acting, about those peace with justice issues, such as poverty and hunger, which give rationale and purpose to the award of the Sydney Peace Prize.

Professor Chomsky will deliver the City of Sydney Peace Prize Lecture on Wednesday 2nd November at 7pm in the Sydney Town Hall. Tickets for this event are sold out.

He will speak at a Q and A session on "Problems of Knowledge and Freedom" on Thursday 3rd November at 10.30 am at the Sydney Opera House. Tickets \$25/\$15 on sale from the Opera House Box Office.

He will receive the 2011 Peace Prize at a gala dinner and award ceremony on 3rd November in the MacLaurin Hall of Sydney University. Tickets are \$350 and can be purchased from the Sydney Peace Foundation.

Finally on the morning of Friday 4th November, Professor Chomsky will attend the Voices Inspiring Peace schools peace festival at Cabramatta High School.

*For more information, please go to [www.sydneypeacefoundation.org.au](http://www.sydneypeacefoundation.org.au)*

## Reflections of a Peace Tourist

by Andrew Greig

Central London in June and July is packed with tourists. They queue for hours to ride on the 'Eye' – the giant ferris wheel by the Thames – and they swarm across Westminster Bridge to look at Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament. One sight these tourists cannot miss is the Peace Camp – a score or so of tents pitched along the footpath around Parliament Square.



Parliament Square Peace Camp, London



I certainly noticed the Peace Camp, because I too was a tourist - a peace tourist in fact. I've just spent two months in the UK looking at peace activities while promoting my own non-lethal weapons for peace campaign (more about that below). I occupied my time like any other tourist - visiting the sites, meeting some of the natives and trying to work out the culture.

It was a special pleasure to see the Peace Camp because I had forgotten all about it and came upon it by surprise. You have to admire the campers. They have lived there for years, summer and winter, protesting against the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Best known of the demonstrators was Brian Haw, who lived in the camp for nearly ten years. He died in June this year. The authorities have tried to dismantle the camp a number of times but happily, in the heart of establishment London, it has survived. It's good to know that the rights of peaceful protesters still have some protection under British law.

Not far from Parliament Square is Trafalgar Square with Nelson's Column, symbolic of Britain's former military power. (Many, many years ago in Trafalgar Square I heard Bertrand Russell address an early Ban the Bomb rally.) As you will probably know, the two squares are connected by Whitehall, home of the Foreign Office and the War Office. Just off Whitehall is 10 Downing Street, home of the Prime Minister. I am also old enough to remember when you could walk right up to Number 10 to see the lone policeman guarding the door. Those days are long gone. Downing Street is now fenced off and the kindly bobby has been replaced by several serious looking cops with body-armour and sub-machine guns.

A major agenda item for British peace groups is to prevent the current Trident carrying nuclear submarines from being replaced. A close second is withdrawing the troops from Afghanistan. Prominent in nuclear matters is CND, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. It was good to visit its North London offices and find that it is still working actively from there and from other centres around the country.

CND now puts a good deal of effort into education. There is a new generation, almost grown-up, for whom the Cold War is history. The nuclear scares of the sixties are pre-history. This new generation needs to be reminded that the danger is still with us.

Not too far from CND and well worth a visit is Housman's bookshop on Caledonian Road. Houseman's stocks a wide range of books on peace issues and publishes 'Housman's Peace Diary' with its World Peace Directory (naturally, CPACS and the Sydney Peace Foundation are listed). The same building is home to Peace News and to Network for Peace (a website which lists peace contacts and events).

Focusing more on advocacy and information rather than direct action are several London-based think-tanks. They try to engage with the decision makers in the government and the

military. One of these is the Oxford Research Group (now located in Hackney, because, as they told me, they used to spend all their time on the train from Oxford). Manager of the Sustainable Security Programme is Ben Zala, from Melbourne, who is working on his PhD in International Relations. The major event for the ORG in June was the launch of a report on civilian deaths from Drones ('Drone Attacks, International Law and the Recording of Civilian Casualties of Armed Conflict'). The lead author of this report is Dr Susan Breau, legal adviser to ORG and Professor of International Law at Flinders University.

Another peace think-tank I visited quite close by was BASIC (the British American Security Information Centre). Despite its rather awkward title, this outfit is doing some excellent work engaging with senior policy makers from organisations like NATO. It arranges forums and produces a range of briefing materials.

Quakers (members of the Society of Friends) are much involved in the peace movement in the UK (as they are in other parts of the world). The promotion of peace is of course central to Quakerism. Quaker organisations have and still do provide significant financial support. Early in my tour, I had a very useful meeting with Sam Walton, Peace and Disarmament Programme Manager, at Friends House in Euston Road.

At the other end of the spectrum is the military and the security industry, exemplified by the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI). This venerable organisation was founded in 1831 by the Duke of Wellington and describes itself as 'an independent think tank engaged in cutting edge defence and security research'. RUSI's offices are located in Whitehall (where else!), but despite its military orientation it appears to keep up a dialogue with the peace movement. I had an interesting discussion with Dr Toby Feakin who is RUSI's Director, National Security and Resilience. Toby did his PhD in peace studies at the University of Bradford.

As in Australia, there is a certain overlap of peace studies, international relations and 'security studies'. The London School of Economics, which I visited (very close to Australia House), is running some interesting programs through its Civil Society and Human Security Research Unit.



*Greenham Common Peace Garden*

Outside London, I was able to make a pilgrimage to Greenham Common near Reading. The women's camp at Greenham was established in 1981 to protest against the American Cruise missiles located there. The missiles were removed in 1991 and the camp finally closed in 2000 with the establishment of a memorial peace garden.

Before arriving in the UK, I presented a paper on 'Educating the community about Non-Lethal Weapons' (NLWs) at the 6th NLWs Symposium at Ettlingen near Karlsruhe in Germany. There were some 130 delegates, with just me from Australia.

The idea of non-lethal weapons is to resist aggression and protect communities while minimising the kind of damage that results from conventional weapons. NLWs is a fairly new concept, but it is gaining currency across Europe (and also North America).

In summary, what did I find out from my peace tour? Not surprisingly, in Australia we have a different perspective on peace issues from Europe. Our local focus includes, for example, our treatment of refugees and West Papua. But we share some issues with Europe - Afghanistan and our defence budget.

Overall, I have come home with some feelings of optimism. The financial meltdown in the Northern Hemisphere has had the beneficial effect of putting strong pressure on defence budgets. The British Government is drastically cutting defence expenditure. It may be that the replacement of the Trident missiles will be defeated on economic grounds if nothing else.

The fiascos in Iraq and Afghanistan are making European nations much more cautious about ill-thought-out overseas adventures. Governments are beginning to realise that there may be more clever and less expensive methods of resolving international conflict than using sharp pieces of metal and exploding gases – the bullets and bombs which they currently employ. I hope that at our end of the world our government can start to think in the same way.

**Contacts:**

British American Security Information Centre  
[www.basincint.org](http://www.basincint.org)  
 Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament  
[www.cnduk.org](http://www.cnduk.org)  
 Non-Lethal Weapons for Peace Campaign  
[www.nonlethalweaponscampaign.com](http://www.nonlethalweaponscampaign.com)

Oxford Research Group  
[www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk](http://www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk)  
 Peace News [www.peacenews.info](http://www.peacenews.info)  
 Peace Network  
[www.networkforpeace.org.uk](http://www.networkforpeace.org.uk)  
 Royal United Services Institute [www.rusi.org](http://www.rusi.org)  
 Society of Friends [www.quaker.org.uk](http://www.quaker.org.uk)  
 Society of Friends (Australia)  
[www.quaker.org.au](http://www.quaker.org.au)

*Andrew Greig is a member of CPACS Council and a sometime CPACS Visiting Scholar. He is Coordinator of the Non-Lethal Weapons for Peace Campaign and the author of Taming War: Culture and Technology for Peace (Peace Power Press, Sydney, 2007).*

## Indigenous Culture, and the Illusion of Knowing

by Natalia Cartney

The Spanish language has two words meaning 'to know': *saber* and *conocer*. The former means knowing things in the theoretical, knowing how

many people there are in a city or to be able to name the author of a book. *Conocer* refers to personal experience: to know a city is to have visited it, to know an author this way is to have acquainted with him or her in person.

As a doctor, I have seen how the traditional medical system can fail Indigenous people. Indigenous communities are a crucial place, where the reality we expect can be very different to the one we encounter. In some of the communities where I have worked, asking a child to bring in its mother sometimes resulted in two or more people coming as the mother. The primary care of a child was considered to be not only, or even not largely, that of its biological parents. When cooking food for underweight school children in one community, rice could only be bought in portions enough for one day, otherwise it would disappear as property was considered communal. In another, time was rarely measured with clocks, and the community did not run according to strict hours.

I also worked at a community in which non-verbal communication was much more important than verbal. As part of training for health care workers in a remote Indigenous community, we were instructed not to make excessive eye contact because it made people uncomfortable. I had, until that point, not appreciated how much facial expression helped communication. Coincidentally, we gave children from that community a video camera to use. When I was looking at film, I expected to see footage of people's faces, yet instead, time after time, I saw the camera focus on people's hands. It was a communication I could neither read nor speak. I had been saying things with my hands unaware that I was even speaking.

Culture is a difficult concept because it changes with place and time; it is never absolute. It is a collection of all the often unspoken notions that contribute to a different way of being. Sometimes we can speak the same words, and yet not understand.



*One plane used for medical outreach in Arnhem Land with the Aboriginal flag*

These are my personal impressions, largely from working with Indigenous communities in outback and rural Australia. I would be happy to have any of them challenged. Regardless, if there is even slight truth in my interpretations of what I have seen, then Indigenous culture is incredibly rich and complex, and at times fundamentally different from many lives in this country. Differences in concepts of time, property, family and many other things that people take for granted influence the daily impact of policies.

In the case of Indigenous issues, it is wrong that policy research and policies are sometimes created by people who are neither Indigenous nor have spent any time in an Indigenous community. It is only when two people try to negotiate the same thing, try to really communicate, that the differences are apparent.

Despite compulsory education about Australian Indigenous culture for primary and high school students, these ideas were never introduced to me. I wonder if in fact I was taught Indigenous culture by people who didn't understand these concepts themselves. They took information out of textbooks and gave it back to us. Subsequently, I grew up thinking that Indigenous culture consisted of didgeridoo music, dot paintings and the Rainbow Serpent.



Looking back, I almost consider this an insult.

If we are keen to show respect and acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land, then it should be beyond lip service. To respect, is to value. To value, is to show interest in understanding.

For this reason, I strongly believe in not relying only on academic understanding through books, lectures and papers. Just as historians critically analyze second hand sources, and question who wrote them and what their perspectives were, we should always be in a state of differentiating between having read and having experienced.

*Natalia Cartney is a medical doctor with an interest in public health and cultural competence and is a friend of CPACS.*

## Food, Conflict and Foreign Agricultural Investment in Kenya

by Tim Siegenbeek van Heukelom

In 2008, the world experienced a sudden price shock in food commodities. While much of the Western world hardly noticed any difference in food prices and availability, the globally skyrocketing food prices made many developing and structurally food insecure states suddenly find themselves in a difficult situation. For a majority of their population, food became financially inaccessible overnight. In a direct response to this abrupt threat of food insecurity, several net-exporting countries restricted exports only to exacerbate the already precarious situation. Demonstrations, riots and violence spread throughout parts of Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa and South-East Asia, where low- and middle-class citizens took to the streets to demand affordable food. It was not the poorest of society that stood up; it was rather an uprising of the massive emerging middle-class in the developing world that found themselves suddenly food insecure.

During 2009, food prices eased just enough to alleviate the most immediate food insecurity, and attention quickly shifted to the evolving Global Financial Crisis. But as the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations repeatedly reports, food prices never dropped back to their original levels but remain at record heights. Then, in the spring of 2011 a popular uprising and subsequent revolution spread throughout North Africa and the Middle East. While it is widely debated whether high food prices should be seen as a key factor in the 'Arab Spring', there seems to be an increasing recognition that the high food prices may have functioned at the least as a mobilising factor in the fight against the more underlying structural issues that led to a general feeling of relative deprivation.

In direct response to the food insecurity created by the World Food Price Crisis of 2008, a number of states and private investors kicked off a scramble for cheap agricultural land. The media started to report large-scale investments in agricultural land taking place in the developing world, targeting Sub-Saharan Africa, South-East Asia and South America. Soon these investments became known as 'land grabs' since few details on the deals were available and the nature of many deals was assumed to be zero-sum. The debate that followed between investors and governments on the one side, and non-governmental organisations, human rights and environmental activists on the other, focused on large-scale versus small-scale agriculture, the reality of 'win-win' land deals, and questioned the existence of a need for foreign investment, expertise and technology in agriculture in developing countries.

The above dynamics set in motion my interest in food security and foreign agricultural investment, while at the same time their rapidly evolving nature continues to shape my current research. In 2009, I commenced my doctoral research into the relation between food and conflict, which is essentially very intuitive: people must eat or will rebel. I realised that much

of the debate on food security was located within the economic, agricultural, or development disciplines. Which meant that 'food as a matter of security' remained an under-conceptualised and widely misunderstood concept. Similarly, the consequences of foreign agricultural investment and the so-called 'land grabs' were hardly understood and even less researched.

In the last six months my research into the security dimensions of food and the link between conflict and foreign agricultural investment has taken me to Kenya to undertake fieldwork. While some countries in Africa are undoubtedly more targeted by foreign investors, the existing land tensions in Kenya and the presence of a highly disputed American investment project made it a highly interesting location for data collection. Formally based in Nairobi and affiliated with the University of Nairobi, I managed to spend most of my time in rural Kenya to interview and observe the situation in two regions: the Yala Swamp on the shores of Lake Victoria and the Tana River delta on Kenya's Indian Ocean coast.



*Tim with colleagues in a Tana River boat trip*

While much of the analysis of my data will take place in the coming months, there are some general findings I can share. Let me briefly outline three structural problems I encountered during my case studies in Kenya: poor





Dominion rice field

communication, cultural and social misunderstanding and political involvement.

The lack of communication and information sharing came not as a surprise. Yet the scale of the problem was not anticipated. Nearly all parties I engaged with relied to a certain degree on information that was not factual, mostly coming from 'hearsay' sources. At the same time, most organisations and individuals were not particularly keen on information sharing with other organisations. With regard to specific conflicts in my fieldwork areas, I found that most parties were not interested, motivated or willing to have a proper dialogue, either because they tried before and did not achieve the desired results, or they just took for granted that the other side would not be interested or willing to engage.

Cultural and social misunderstanding can exacerbate tensions, cause conflict or deepen an existing stand-off. A good example is the expectations and understanding of 'development'. An investor often takes the perspective that large-scale economies are the most efficient way to run a business and at the same time increase food security in Kenya. This requires huge investment in infrastructure and production, which indirectly benefits the local communities. Local communities often respond that they favour the development of the region, yet they believe this should be done by their government. Their interest lies in infrastructural development, the availability and access to education and employment opportunities – while at the same time retaining a degree of self-sufficiency. Most of them find it difficult to accept that a foreign investor may be better equipped, or simply more willing, to provide this type of

'development'.

The most volatile factor is usually political involvement. In Kenya, political ties to ethnic groups are still incredibly strong. This is displayed in the often heard proverb describing this relation between the ruling ethnic group and the ongoing development in certain regions as "it's our turn to eat". The group in power 'eats' as much as it can, that is, until the next election. Foreign investors should therefore be extremely careful when dealing with politicians, since the next government may very well like to 'eat with someone else'.

*Tim Siegenbeek van Heukelom completed a Master in Peace and Conflict Studies at CPACS, and is currently a PhD Candidate at the Centre for International Security Studies at the University of Sydney. More about his research is available online: [www.state-of-affairs.org](http://www.state-of-affairs.org)*

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## Permaculture and Peace: Think Global Garden Local

by Chris Brown

In February this year I relocated to rural NSW to begin the dream of growing my own food. In order to enhance my chances of achieving such a dream, I began studying permaculture through TAFE's National Environment Centre, located on a beautiful 400 acre certified organic farm. Whilst the concept of permaculture is becoming increasingly well known, many people upon hearing the term have one primary question: what is it? A common misconception



is that permaculture is a recent gardening fad, kind of like a new diet that promises guaranteed results. Well, permaculture is largely about gardening, but its explicit focus on ethical, sustainable and organic gardening that harnesses the natural reproductive capacity of nature to provide a healthy and nutritious food supply for all makes it a lot more than just a new technique to get the roses going. By focusing on small-scale environmentally friendly food production, permaculture (or permanent culture) sets about challenging our current systems of agriculture and the dysfunctional political economy of global food production. It concerns itself with innovative designs for a sustainable society and grapples with a future of serious climate change repercussions and a lack of oil. The garden becomes such a focus because through it, it has the potential to significantly address all of these big global issues.

Being responsible for your own food producing garden may seem a little abstract when we can buy affordable food from anywhere in the world, at any time of the year, in the air conditioned comfort of a major supermarket. This ease, choice and affordability, however, all come at a substantial cost. People who purchase imported garlic from the supermarket are not necessarily informed that it has been sprayed with methyl bromide to eradicate pathogens, insects, and weeds that may ride on imported garlic into our environment. Crucially, however, methyl bromide is recognised as an ozone depleting substance that is also harmful to humans. In 2008, recommendations were put into place to seek an alternative to this chemical, but in 2011 methyl bromide continues to be used. People who purchase a neatly wrapped steak from the fridge at Coles are not told that a recent government report has estimated that each and every steak consumed requires 4660 litres of water. Of course, contemporary agriculture also demands a large and regular supply of oil; oil to power the farm tractors, oil to power the trucks that deliver the produce, and oil to fly it to other parts of the world.

Even supposedly fresh fruit, marketed as a healthy alternative to fast food, is not immune to such questionable practices. Writing in the 1970s, Japanese philosopher and farmer, Masanobu Fukuoka, detailed the process involved in getting fruit from the farm to the shop. First, he said, a colouring agent is used which makes the fruit become fully coloured one week earlier than usual. When the fruit is shipped out early, however, it is not sweet enough, so artificial sweeteners are added. He goes on, "the fruit is then taken to the fruit sorting centre. In order to separate the fruit into sizes, each one is sent rolling several hundred yards down a long conveyor. Bruising is common. After water washing the fruit is sprayed with preservatives and a colouring agent is brushed on. Finally, as a finishing touch, a paraffin wax solution is applied and the fruit is polished to a glossy shine". Fruit salad anyone?

Beyond the health and environmental implications of such agricultural production, however, being responsible for your own food production is increasingly important as a handful of corporations like Monsanto, Bayer, Dupont and Dow are attempting to gain full ownership and control of our food production systems. If you are wondering how a company can actually own a food production system, well it is surprisingly simple when our elected governments seem to facilitate and endorse the process. First, these companies are genetically engineering (GE) plant seeds in their laboratories. Having concocted some artificial variation on, say, broccoli, they are patenting it with a pliable and willing US government. Once this is achieved, it is just the simple process of selling this supposedly enhanced seed onto farmers who use it to produce our essential food.

As this system becomes increasingly commonplace, however, the negative repercussions are increasingly clear. Across the globe, half of the world's farmers rely on saved seed to produce food for around 1.4 billion people, making this common sense agricul-

tural practice crucial for global food security. Saved seed, though, is of course seed that farmers do not need to buy from a supplier. For this reason, the Monsanto Corporation requires its growers to sign 'technology use agreements' which prohibits the farmer from saving the seed from their GE crop and renders them liable to prosecution if they do. In order to ensure that no sneaky farmer from the 'developing' world is allowed to save the seed from their crop, companies such as Monsanto are leading the so-called 'terminator' technology which makes any saved seed infertile and unable to fruit. Combined with this aggressive approach to farmers and seed saving, Monsanto have also set about acquiring independent open pollinated seed companies, including one started by the co-founder of the permaculture movement Bill Mollison, to ensure they have a near complete monopoly on the market. With such control, astronomical prices are easily introduced for both the GE seeds and the pesticides required to protect them, and the growers become trapped in a nasty cycle of corporate manufactured dependence.

Even more troubling, however, is how organic growers who make sure they acquire their seeds from alternative non-corporate sources are increasingly subject to Monsanto's ruthlessness. In the US, Monsanto has filed lawsuits against numerous growers for so-called 'patent infringement' when GE seeds have contaminated open pollinated seeds on adjoining farms. In each case heard by the US courts so far, the rights of the GE seed have been recognised as superior to those of the non GE. Just the simple and uncontrollable drift of pollen from a GE farm next door is enough to contaminate your crop and render you liable to prosecution. And it is not just in America. Only last year in Western Australia, a long term certified organic grower of wheat and rye grass had his crop contaminated by GM canola which resulted in the suspension of his organic status and the decertification of 70% of his farm. To become certified organic, by the way,



takes three years and many thousands of dollars. Such a case as this is yet to be heard by the courts in Australia but if this particular case proceeds, the organic grower will be supported by the Gene Ethics and the Network of Concerned Farmers, the GM canola grower will reportedly be backed by, yes you guessed it, Monsanto.

In response to these government endorsed systems of dysfunction, however, a global movement is growing. Just last month the Public Patent Foundation in the US filed suit on behalf of 60 family farmers against the Monsanto company to challenge the chemical giant's patents on genetically modified seed. The organic plaintiffs were forced to sue preemptively to protect themselves from being accused of patent infringement should they ever become contaminated by

Monsanto's genetically modified seed. Closer to home, the Seed Savers Network grows and researches non-hybrid open pollinated plant varieties and provides these seeds to individuals, groups and communities. Indeed, the excessive profits being generated in the seed industry seem particularly absurd when the seed saved from just one pumpkin can supply a family with enough pumpkins for a couple of lifetimes.

Often it seems we are at a loss as to how we can contribute to meaningful social change in the 21st century. The permaculture movement, with its focus on small scale food producing gardens, is so vital and important precisely because it provides such an avenue. Just by planting a few open pollinated rocket, spinach or lettuce seeds, you challenge the worldview of companies like Monsanto and send

our governments a clear message that the contemporary system of agriculture, and the neo-liberal economic growth model of development in which it sits, is not the only avenue for the future. What's more, your open pollinated seeds will grow like a weed, taste delicious, and you'll know that it has not been sprayed with poisonous pesticides, travelled a million miles in transport powered on oil, been drenched in preservation chemicals, covered in a wax designed to enhance its appearance, wrapped in multiple layers of plastic or stored in a freezer for months before hitting the shelf. Just by converting a little of the lawn, or by joining a food co-op or community garden or the seed savers network, people are beginning to change the world one garden at a time.

*Chris Brown is an MPACS graduate and an independent writer/researcher.*

## Whose Agenda?

by Punam Yadav

For ten years, from 1996 to 2006, Nepal was gripped by a brutal internal armed conflict between the state and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). During this period, hundreds of thousands of people were displaced, about 12,000 died and more than 1200 people's whereabouts are still unknown. While the violence affected all sections of society, women and children were affected severely and in very specific ways.

According to a study by Caritas, 80% of the displaced population in Nepal are women and children. People were forced to leave their villages for various reasons such as death threats and intimidation, extortion spree and psychological suffering, charges of spying from both the conflicting parties, murder of family members and relatives, fear of being abducted and tortured, the destruction of their homes, exchanges of fire at schools, obstruction of children's education, lack of basic health services, and loss of jobs and livelihoods (Caritas, 2005). The situation further deteriorated when the government announced the state of emergency in 2001. There were various reasons for displacement; however, most of the women were displaced due to causes associated with male members of their families (Yadav, 2007).

Since people were in search of a secure place, the capital city was the destination for most of them. Therefore, the Internally Displaced People (IDP) influx was very high in Kathmandu valley. Because there were no dedicated camps, IDPs were scattered all over the city. People who could afford it were renting houses, but those who couldn't were staying in slum areas.

After the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2006, some of the IDPs returned to their villages. However, over 70,000 IDPs remained displaced (IDMC, 2010) for various reasons such as lack of livelihood opportunities in the villages, the fact that their captured lands were not returned, a general feel of insecurity, and the availability of better education opportunities for children in the city. IDPs who still have not been able to return or who have decided to stay in the city, have adopted various survival strategies. Women and girls, in particular, have not been able to get decent jobs due to lack of education, relevant skills and experience. Many women and girls are working in cabin restaurants, or as wage labourers and domestic workers. Women who work in the cabin restaurants and as wage labourers have been facing sexual violence and other forms of violence in the workplace.

I would like to present some examples from research I conducted in Nepal in 2006 with 15 IDP women who were doing various types of jobs for their survival in the new city. One of them who was working in a cabin restaurant shared her story:

*Since I could not get any other job, I started working in a restaurant. They are paying me NRs 2500 (AUD\$32) per month. I have to pay the rent and bus fare with this money while I get to eat in the restaurant and in return I have to*



*serve the clients. I have to make the clients happy. Whatever a client demands, I have to fulfill that. I work there from 9 am till 9 pm everyday.*

Cabin restaurants have rapidly increased in the capital city as it has become a profitable business. These IDP women don't have any other means to support themselves; therefore, they are forced to work against their will. There is no policy to guarantee the safety and security of workers in such restaurants. It has already been four years since signing the peace agreement. The country is now moving from war to peace; however, there hasn't been any attention to the concerns of these women.

Another IDP woman shares her story about how she got into sex work.

*We had nothing when we came to Kathmandu. In the beginning both of us did labour work. I worked in others' houses while my husband worked in a construction site. After some time, he got a job in a furniture store. I did whatever work I managed to get. Both of us had to work to run the family. Despite being in Kathmandu, we continued to get threats from the Maoists. I had to face abuses at my work places. When I went to work in a garment factory, the supervisor said that he would increase my salary if I kept a physical relationship with him. I left that job. After that I worked as a labourer in a construction site loading sand and bricks. The contractor also abused me. I had to face physical abuses wherever I worked. I tolerated everything. My husband was busy in his work. We had a son. My husband didn't provide enough for the household's expenditure, that is why I had to work. I was fed up with all the abuses. I used to wash dishes at a businessman's house. One day when his wife had gone out of the house, he told me that he would give me 1000-1500 if I kept a physical relationship with him. I needed the money, so I agreed to it and this was how I got into this profession. I thought it was the same thing to have sex with one or more than one person.*

Some of the IDP women have been victims of violence not only at work places, but also at home. One IDP women shares her story:

*Our relationship was good earlier. We didn't have any mental tension. Both of us were busy with our respective work, but ever since we came to Kathmandu there has been a huge change in our life. We have financial problems. It is difficult for us to manage a day's meal. We can't get a job. We had to leave the village because of insecurity. I wonder what happened to our property. All these problems add up to our tension. We are mentally traumatized but I have to work for survival. My husband doesn't work. He must be tense because he doesn't have work and has to rely upon his wife and father. He doesn't show interest in anything. He doesn't help much at home either. Whenever he sees me talking to other people, he scolds and beats me up. This is a market place. People move around and if he sees anyone sitting next to me drinking tea or doing anything he suspects me. He beats me up. He has become suspicious. He doesn't do anything and doesn't even let me work at peace. It is difficult to define our relationship. Earlier things were fine. He doesn't have work and when he sees me go out to work, interact with people and earn for the family he gets frustrated. Perhaps he feels guilty for not being able to do so; therefore, he pours his frustration by getting angry with me and beating me up. Our society is a male-dominated one. It is difficult for him to digest the fact that his wife is earning and he is not. He probably feels incompetent and his conflict within himself bursts out as anger.*

Until 2007, there was no IDP policy in Nepal to protect these women's rights. The IDP policy was introduced in 2007, but people were reluctant to register, because they preferred to hide their identity due to social stigma and security concerns. After the peace agreement, the government announced some support packages which were very minimal of NRS 15000 (AUD \$200) only. The emphasis was on return to previous localities rather than reintegration and rehabilitation. Each household was taken as a unit, and there was no consideration given to special needs of these IDP women.



IDP Woman

Apart from the IDPs problem, there are other impacts of the conflict on women. Mothers and wives of people who disappeared during the conflict are still waiting for their loved ones. They believe they will come back one day. These families of these disappeared people are dying in every bit. They have been demanding for the whereabouts of their loved ones. Similarly, people are suffering from physiological trauma, and some women are under severe depression.

All the problems are on one hand and the government is always busy with power sharing games, on the other hand. There were four coalition governments within five years after the peace agreement. However, none of them have been able to address any of these issues. (continued on p.12)



Mackie Building  
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CPACS





# nd Conflict Studies ommunity





(continued from p.9) The Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction was established in April 2007. Several millions have been spent on capacity building for staff and tours to South Africa and Rwanda to learn from their reconciliation models. Some money was spent on IDPs return; however, issues of concern to women do not fall under their agenda.

In the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, both parties, Maoist and the Government, promised to form a high-level Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The draft Bill is ready but it hasn't been endorsed yet. The Bill on Enforced Disappearances (Charge and Punishment) Act, which focuses largely on amnesty and reconciliation, was endorsed in 2009. The bill proposes a five-year jail term and fine of Rs. 100,000 (AUD\$ 1200) to perpetrators. There hasn't been any progress despite instruction from the Supreme Court for the investigations. Both parties were involved in disappearances; hence the lack of progress on this front.

The conflict has been over since the signing of the peace agreement in 2006; however, whether this peace agreement has really brought peace to women is still questionable.

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*Punam Yadav is a PhD Candidate at CPACS.*

## 30th August 2011

by Lesley Carnus

The Refugee Language Program continues to offer free English classes to refugees and asylum seekers on Wednesday evenings and Saturdays. Unfortunately, there have been some serious setbacks in the last few months for our students. I would like to share some of these stories with you to illustrate how difficult the lives of many asylum seekers remain and the generous response of our volunteers to their students' concerns.

My first story tells of a couple and their young family, who have been coming to classes for the last two years. They have had all their appeals turned down and are now awaiting the final intervention from the Minister for Immigration. The mother has been suffering from acute depression for most of the time she has been in Australia and has recently given birth to twins. Generous volunteers took over nappies and gifts to their one bedroom flat to help this family cope financially with the babies' arrival. Karen Garlan, their teacher, visited the mother in hospital and donated a twin pram to the family.

Another of our students, Kiefer from Africa, was deported after losing his bid for asylum (see *Peace-Writes*, October 2009, p 16), but with support from his church and refugee activists, an arrangement was made for him to seek asylum in a second country on his way back to his country of birth. Unfortunately,



*Karen and her daughter are pictured here with the twins*

his asylum application was rejected. He was not allowed to land and he was sent back to Australia immediately. On arrival he was whisked off to Villawood detention centre and was there during the riots and suicides that occurred several months ago.

Every day is a struggle for him; incarceration, debilitating headaches, loneliness, fear of the future and his probable deportation. His support team of friends, church leaders and refugee activists has mounted another case for him with the Refugee Review Tribunal. But speaking to the young man today, he seems to have lost all hope. His teacher, Lesley Seebold-Freedman and her husband Rod, visited this fine young man in Villawood detention centre to try to bring him some comfort and warmth in his prison-like surroundings.

What do you say to a person suffering like this, who has been a victim of abuse in his own country and subsequently deported then imprisoned in Australia? Chin up; or the ubiquitous, she'll be right, mate?

This week, we welcomed back another of our students who hadn't attended class since November last year. She described to us in her faltering English, how she had spent the last 8 months in a serious depression, sleeping all day and rarely leaving the house. Last year she had finally been granted her Permanent Residency, but the 5-year wait, the anxiety of never knowing what the future held for her combined with the fear of being deported, had finally taken its toll. We all hope that her health improves and that she will stay well enough to continue with our classes.

Then on Saturday during the computer class, a student arrived in a very distressed state. She had just found out that her grandson back home had been critically injured and had undergone a major heart operation. She wanted the computer teacher to help her book a plane ticket on-line so she could go to him immediately. The teacher also helped her for several

hours in the evening contacting relatives and airline companies. Luckily this student had received her Permanent Residency papers last year so she now can leave the country and return. Many of our students cannot return if they leave, and have had to endure the loss of family members without ever seeing them again. One of our former students lost both her mother and her brother while she was waiting for her refugee status to be recognised.

The turbulent nature of the personal lives of many of our students, mirrors the ever-changing nature of Australian refugee policy; a policy that is trying to use refugees as pawns in a swapping game. The 'Malaysian solution' reminds me of the games we used to play as children with toys, football cards, Star Wars men, marbles and so on but this time, people's lives are at stake. We have a Prime Minister who has been shopping for a detention centre all over the region and politicians on both sides who compete to offer the most expedient, least compassionate response to asylum seeker arrivals. Both major parties declare that their tough and often inhumane stances represent the views of the Australian people. Yet a recent Nielsen Poll (mid-August) found that the majority of voters want refugees processed onshore. A pre-election poll published in the Courier Mail on 30th August found that 70% of voters in Brisbane do not support the sending of asylum seekers to Malaysia.

A group of detainees, who failed their security assessments, has launched an appeal to the United Nations Human Rights Commission, challenging the federal government's right to continue to hold them in detention despite their being recognised as genuine refugees. University of Sydney Professor Ben Saul, who represents these refugees, will argue that their detention is unlawful as they are unable to challenge any evidence that was used against them. ASIO is not required by law to give reasons or sources for adverse security findings.

In Melbourne today another court battle begins that will challenge the charge of "aggravated people smuggling" against an Indonesian man, Jeky Payara. This charge can carry a sentence of up to 20 years imprisonment, if prosecuted. The challenge will be based on the fact that the refugees that Mr Payara brought to Australia by boat have a right to seek asylum under international law and therefore his actions cannot be considered 'people smuggling'.

A decision on the High Court challenge to the 'Malaysian solution' will also be handed down tomorrow (August 31st) and should the High Court rule in favour of upholding the plan, The *Australian* reports that transit centres are on standby to accept transfers.

What would it take to develop a compassionate, humane and fair policy for asylum seekers arriving on our shores? If the majority of Australian voters are against the government's present policy, wouldn't it be time to make some changes? We also need those policies to respond to a very vulnerable group of people in a way that does not scar them psychologically for life. Many people in our society, who wish to live a good life, live by 'the golden rule'. I prefer the philosopher, AC Grayling's take on this, "Don't do unto others, that, which you would not like them, to do unto you". Politicians, please take note.

#### **Postscript:**

On 1st September 2011 the High Court handed down their ruling today on the 'Malaysian Plan'. Judges voted 6 to 1 against the proposal.

*Lesley Carnus is Coordinator of the Refugee Language Program at CPACS.*



## The Debasing of Public Debate

by Ken Macnab

John Stuart Mill argued in *On Liberty* (1859) that it was 'imperative that human beings should be free to form opinions, and to express their opinions without reserve'. Moreover, they should be free to act upon these opinions, subject only to the limitation that they do no harm to others. Implicit in Mill's emphasis on freedom of opinion was the necessity for civil public debate in pursuit of the truth, a calm and systematic contest which acted as a check on power and authority.

In the 1820s the English press came to be conceived as 'the fourth estate', and credited with an important role as a 'check' on the various arms of government. A similarly crucial role is given to freedom of speech and the press in the First Amendment to the American Constitution (1791) and Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).

The modern media often claims the same role as facilitator of constructive public participation in democratic politics and society. However, the media largely fails to provide either the full information or informed commentary necessary for it to be part of genuine public debate and a check on adversarial polemic. Instead, it is mostly servile and partisan. When media moguls like Rupert Murdoch set out to make more money by blatantly serving narrow political interests, through media such as the alleged 'world's greatest newspaper 1843-2011' (News of the World) and the 'Fair and Balanced', 'We Report, You Decide' network (Fox News), the role of the 'fourth estate' becomes a cynically manipulated and exploited façade. Moreover, and equally insidious in its effect on the quality of public debate, the tone and language of both much media communication and public response has become aggressive, personal and abusive.

Some recent Australian examples illustrate the point. At the end of July, Mia Freedman wrote a column in the *Sun-Herald* describing a recent experience. She was appearing on the Today show in her regular 'What's Making News' segment when Karl Stefanovic asked her to share his intense jubilation over Cadel Evans's victory in the Tour de France. She wrote: 'I replied I was happy for Cadel but ambivalent about the over-the top adulation we lavish on sports stars and the way we're so quick to laud them as heroes.' When she was jeered at by the studio floor crew, she tried to explain 'how I wished we afforded the same praise and glory to those doing amazing things in other, non-sporting fields.'

Attempts to elaborate and give examples only led to further aggravation with her interviewer. But the subsequent public response brilliantly

exemplified the current shallow nastiness of much public commentary in Australia. Freedman wrote:

The backlash was immediate. As the waves of online abuse turned into a tsunami, I was in tears before breakfast. By lunchtime, I was physically afraid to go outside. Cyber-bullying is like that. The anonymity makes you paranoid and fearful because you don't know who your abusers are.

Freedman went on to describe what went on:

The responses fell into a few categories, including many who agreed with me and many who politely didn't. But the overwhelming majority hurled outright abuse. I was called every name you can think of - bitch, dog, skank, mole, idiot, loser, cow, slut - and many you can't. Hundreds and hundreds of times. They denigrated my parents, my children, my appearance, my voice, my weight, my religion ... it was endless and still hasn't stopped.

Richard Glover recently came in for the same kind of abuse. In an article using 'some comic hyperbole' about both 'environmental zealots' and 'climate-change deniers' he jestingly suggested for the latter either tattooing their beliefs on them (to prevent later denial) or in 2040 tying them to a pole in the shallows off Manly. When the article was noted by a right-wing website in the US, he became the focus of 'an internet hate campaign'. Physical threats of mutilation and murder were common, as was abusive labeling. Glover thought 'you f---g commie bastard' was 'charmingly retro'. But the intolerance and nastiness of the 'wave of hate' was overwhelming.

Internationally acclaimed cartoonist Robert Crumb recently decided to cancel his invited appearance at the Sydney Graphic Festival because of media intemperance. The *Sunday Telegraph* manufactured an abusive tirade about him to use as part of their ongoing campaign against liberals at the City of Sydney. They solicited derogatory comments about some of his images from 'anti-child abuse campaigner' Hetty Johnston, and used them to assert that his visit 'has sparked outrage with sexual assault groups de-

scribing the France-based American artist as ‘sick and deranged’.

Crumb wrote that he ‘had no clue that there were such nasty right-wing media manipulators there’, that he feared being attacked if he attended, and made the point:

One can see in this example how skilled media professionals with low standards of integrity are able to mould and manipulate public opinion, popular beliefs and, ultimately, the direction of politics. The majority of the population in most places is not alert to this kind of deceptive manipulation. They are more or less defenceless against such clever ‘perception management’.

The worst offenders in this debasement of public debate are quickest to denigrate their critics. Alan Jones, criticised by the ABC’s Media Watch over years (they broke the cash for comment affair), recently labeled these critics as ‘losers’ and ‘just nasty small minded people on the ABC.’ He defended his right to ignore criticism by stating:

It’s called the Alan Jones show. Much of my stuff is opinion. I’m a broadcaster. I don’t pretend to be a journalist and I don’t know what that means anyway – they’ve got a certificate or something. If those opinions lack validity or if those opinions are extreme or if they are overly provocative, they won’t listen. I’ve stood the test of time.

This is deviously deceptive, to say the least. But Jones seems immune from both commercial radio regulations and any sense of responsibility.

In the wake of Anders Breivik’s atrocity in Norway, and comments on his admiration for named Australian conservatives, even Gerard Henderson opined that ‘Right-wing extremism forces rethink on civil liberties.’ He wrote that there was ‘room for a thoughtful discussion’ about major issues from all perspectives, but concluded with a mealy-mouthed defence of the current tactics of public debate:

There is an obligation on all involved in the public debate to moderate their language, to desist from exaggeration and to disavow symbolic or real physical violence. However, mass murder in Norway should not be allowed to inhibit free speech. That would be counter-productive.’

As is his wont, Mike Carlton went straight to the point with the statement: ‘Curb the hate mongers, for all our sakes.’ Commenting on the ways in which Anders Breivik’s 1500-page diatribe reflected admiration for all sorts of ‘heroes of the political right’, including some Australians (Howard, Costello, Pell and Windischuttle), Carlton wrote of Breivik:

His words and actions were a seamless, linear progression of right-wing rage and loathing. At one

end, you start with the anger and paranoia fomented by rightist politicians, demagogues and commentators for their own cynical political ends, the bigotry and racism that is daily grist to the talkback radio mill.

At the other end is a clear-eyed fanatic with tonnes of fertiliser, automatic weapons and an ubermensch mission to save the world. The dots join up.

Carlton went on to point out: ‘The temperature of hatred has been rising in Australia for most of this year. Lately we’ve reached critical mass, with public calls for the murder of Julia Gillard and senior ministers.’ A list of contributors to this culture of vituperation include Joe Hockey, Murdoch’s *Herald Sun*, Alan Jones (a serial offender), Brian Wilshire and Chris Smith. The last three are all broadcasters on radio 2GB, which regularly breaches both Australian hate speech laws and the Australian Communications and Media Authority’s commercial radio Code of Practice. The very first clause of ACMA’s commercial radio Code of Practice states: ‘A licensee must not broadcast a program which, in all of the circumstances, is likely to incite, encourage or present for its own sake violence or brutality.’

That clause then says ‘there must be nothing likely to incite hatred against, or serious contempt for, or severe ridicule of, any person or group of persons because of age, ethnicity, nationality, race, gender, sexual preferences, religion, transgender status or disability.’ But hatred, ridicule and contempt are standard right-wing weapons in politics and the media. Joe Hockey and Christopher Pyne act like schoolyard bullies (primary school, at that) by trailing Julia Gillard in the corridor and taunting her with derogatory songs and sledging. Alan Jones, when asked a question he didn’t like at the Convoy rally in Canberra on 22 August, ‘spluttered with rage and verbally abused’ the female reporter, Jacqueline Maley, then took the microphone on the stage, named her, shouted abuse at her and incited the crowd to boo and jeer. She wrote: ‘I then left because I feared for my safety.’

At the same rally, Jones and other key speakers loudly denounced the stopping of part of the truck convoy at the border, despite knowing in advance that it was simply not true. There is a bumper sticker on a few cars around Sydney at the moment, asking ‘Is that the truth? Or did Alan Jones tell you?’ There should be more of them. But the debasement of public debate is an issue that goes to the very heart of the workings of a democratic society. When significant sections of the media abuse the standards for their own ends, they are exercising the worst type of power. As Stanley Baldwin put it in 1931, criticizing the media barons of his day, they exercised ‘Power without responsibility – the prerogative of the harlot through the ages.’

*Dr Ken Macnab is President of CPACS.*



## CPACS Research News

## Peace Journalism Research

by Jake Lynch

The worldwide peace journalism research community is growing and thriving, with another edited collection just published by Sydney University Press, and a significant 'bridgehead' established in a major association of media researchers.

Titled *Expanding Peace Journalism: Comparative and Critical Approaches*, the new book features a chapter each by CPACS researchers, Associate Professor Jake Lynch and Annabel McGoldrick. They and other contributors developed their chapters out of presentations to the Peace Journalism Commission of IPRA, the International Peace Research Association, when CPACS hosted its biennial global conference in 2010.

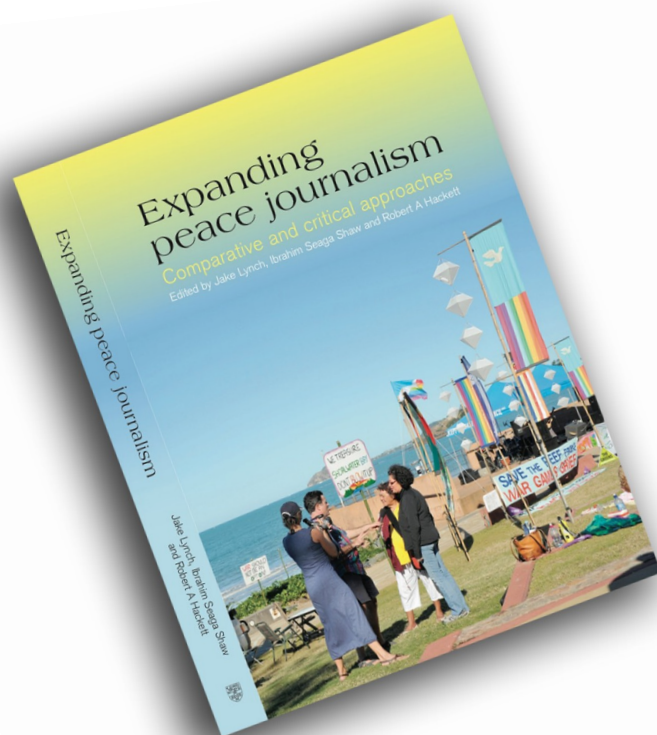
One of the key issues in thinking about journalism today – both by scholars and by journalists themselves – is how to distinguish 'good journalism'. Here in Australia, for instance, the Crikey website has been running interviews with public figures from various parts of the media, asking them to identify examples of quality journalism, and explain why they rate them so highly.

Several of the chapters in the new book put forward ideas on what journalists – and the rest of us, who rely on news to inform us about the world we share – could look for, in good journalism. Annabel's chapter picks up on a recent wave of research emphasising the often-overlooked human instinct for empathy. We are, in the words of one influential author, Jeremy Rifkin, "soft-wired for empathy".

This key part of our relational and meaning-making capacity is routinely marginalised, however, in so many fields, with their familiar assumptions: the nostrum of International Relations, that 'nations have no permanent friends, only permanent interests'; or neo-classical economics, which models 'market actors' as self-interested, motivated by maximising their own outcomes, regardless of others'. Friendship and fellow-feeling are often seen as lesser, somehow optional responses, to be set aside when making 'real', hard-nosed calculations about human behaviour.

News too often goes along with such assumptions, Annabel argues, especially when cutting off empathy towards a particular group, in complicity with political agendas: 'boat people', or 'people smugglers', to take typical examples familiar here in Australia.

Peace journalism rejects the demonisation of such groups, and the neat binary division of the world into 'goodies' and 'baddies'. It therefore enables and prompts us to make meanings, in response to news, by switching on our natural empathic capabilities, not



switching them off. So it can be seen as a more authentic form of journalism, truer to our true selves, as well as more useful if we want to build mutual understanding in the world.

## Istanbul media conference

Peace journalism was well represented at the annual global conference of the International Association of Media and Communication Researchers, held in Istanbul, in July, with two full panels and a members' meeting to discuss research collaborations.

Presenters of papers from CPACS were Jake Lynch, who also convened and chaired a panel, as well as two of his PhD students, Frenchie Carreon and Leticia Anderson. Frenchie made a fascinating presentation, conceptualising her experiences covering the US troop presence in the southern Philippines, where they are stationed under the rubric of the so-called 'war on terrorism'.

Leticia presented her research comparing the Australian press treatment of Muslims and Islam, in the respective periods leading up to the two Federal elections of 2004 and 2007. It was just when she reached the point of emphasising the importance of hearing Muslim voices that her flow was interrupted – by the clearly audible Call for Prayer from a Mosque near the conference centre! Peace journalism was, we concluded, truly an idea whose time had come...

\* *Expanding Peace Journalism: Comparative and Critical Approaches*, edited by Jake Lynch, Ibrahim Seaga Shaw and Robert A Hackett, is published by Sydney University Press. Copies are available through the CPACS office.

Associate Professor Jake Lynch is Director of CPACS.

## Our Ideas Lead the Way

### CPACS is the stand-out research performer of the School of Social and Political Sciences, (SSPS), according to the latest figures from the Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC).

The results, compiled by universities for the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, were released in July. HERDC points are allotted every time a scholarly book (5 points), book chapter or article (1 point each) or conference paper is published. Where there are joint authors, the points are shared.

The number of points accrued by SSPS in the last complete year, 2010, was 213, and CPACS contributed 30 of these, or 14%. At the same time, the Centre has just three of the 99 full-time academic staff members in the school, or 3%.

It's a situation so aptly described by one of those phrases we try to avoid in the peace world: CPACS is punching well above its weight!

Of all the researchers listed in the HERDC return, CPACS Director, Associate Professor Jake Lynch, recorded the third highest points total, at 6.938596.

As well as research published by full-time staff, CPACS' rating was boosted by Honorary Associates of the Centre. CPACS books published in 2010:

- Belinda Helmke, *Under Attack: Challenges to the Rules Governing the International Use of Force* (Ashgate Publications);
- Erik Paul, *Obstacles to Democratization in Southeast Asia: A Study of the Nation State, Regional and Global Order* (Palgrave Macmillan);
- Jake Lynch and Johan Galtung, *Reporting Conflict: New Directions in Peace Journalism* (University of Queensland Press);
- Lynda Blanchard and Leah Chan (eds.), *Ending War, Building Peace* (Sydney University Press);
- Michael Otterman and Richard Hil with Paul Wilson, *Erasing Iraq* (Pluto Press);
- Otto Ondawame, *'One People, One Soul:' West Papuan Nationalism and the Organisasi Papua Merdeka* (Crawford House Publishing).

## Serious about peace? We are.

by Jake Lynch

It's time to invite your colleagues, contacts and friends to revise their opinion of International Peace Research Association (IPRA).

Since last year, IPRA has acquired:

- A legally recognised existence, in Australia;
- A bank account in the same territory;
- An up-to-date list of members;
- A bi-annual e-newsletter;
- A new functioning website: <http://ipra-peace.com/>.

Five Commissions have published, or are publishing edited collections off the back of their sessions at our last conference:

- Peace Journalism Commission;
- Internal Conflicts Commission;
- Peace Tourism Commission;
- Religion and Peace Commission;
- Reconciliation and Transitional Justice Commission.

**It means at least 50 of the papers presented to our Sydney 2010 conference, 'Communicating Peace', will have been published as scholarly book chapters: an outstanding record of productivity.**

Between them, these works mark out new frontiers of exploration, in each specialist area, taking the distinctive value-explicit, multi-disciplinary approach of Peace Research. And they strengthen and extend the productive networks, in which many of our members are involved, that give shape and meaning to a research career.

### Peace Research indispensable

Like many of us, I am often asked to review books, for scholarly journals, by writers from other disciplines. This year alone, I have reviewed five such works, applying to issues of peace and conflict the methods and concepts of International Relations, and Sociology, respectively.

It is welcome, of course, for peace to be taken seriously by scholars, of whatever background. However, my concluding comment, in each case, was the same: applying a single-disciplinary lens leads to significant gaps, omissions and distortions of emphasis. And there are key points, in the arguments advanced by all the books concerned, where a lack of clarity about values, and the orientation of the scholarship towards them, creates confusion.

For any serious, cutting-edge scholarship about peace and conflict, a value-explicit, multi-disciplinary approach is essential. For that, if no other reason, IPRA retains an indispensable leadership role in Peace Research. Our progress since our last conference builds on this historic strength, whilst adding new organisational resources, and new levels of productivity and professionalism.

Welcome to the New IPRA – please pass the message on to your colleagues, contacts and friends. Invite them to join IPRA, and to respond to the Call for Papers for our conference in 2012.

For the details about the Conference, please visit: <http://ipra-peace.com/Japan2012.html>;

Join IPRA by contacting:

Jake Lynch, [jake.lynch@sydney.edu.au](mailto:jake.lynch@sydney.edu.au)



## Jottings from Timor Leste

In Timor when asked by expats 'what do you do here?', my stock answers are either "on holidays" which surprises many working expats, or I test the questioner's mettle by employing Bernadette Connole's aphorism "I'm not doing here, I'm just being".

Being away from the familiar is productive for one's inner life (no more so is lack of radio and television) and hours-of-reading -without-guilt becomes a large part of just being in Timor.

I've been privileged to spend time and share living space within a community of religious and other ways of just being. It has been demonstrated amply in generous acts of camaraderie, simple good manners and an environment of peace. My inner life is challenged too and I think I'm enjoying it! The peaceful environment is surely a luxury in Dili and much appreciated by both students and teaching staff, and conducive to real conversation about what 'peace' actually means. Two quotations adorn my room "We can do no great things, only small things with great love" and "Peace is not something you wish for; it's something you make, something you do, something you are and something you give away"!

Yours in peace  
Yvonne Langley Walsh  
CPACS Council Member

[www.ourworldtoday.com](http://www.ourworldtoday.com)

by Annabel McGoldrick

Peace Journalism on the rise! A new website [www.ourworldtoday.com](http://www.ourworldtoday.com) is vowing the redress the balance of depressing, propagandistic news by bringing you the most inspiring stories of the day.

What they say about themselves: "Our World Today is an online news website that provides people with an alternative choice to the current trends of negativity and sensationalism in news and current affairs. Rather than focus on the suffering and destruction in our world, we will capture the truly inspiring, the unheard, the stories that make us proud to be human, proud to be alive, and by doing so, reconnect individuals with the essential spirit that binds us all".

The website has only just launched and there's a touch of the "happy clappy" about them but they welcome stories from anywhere, so go on send them your own version, peace journalism.

From their website:

Our World Today Inc is a not for profit news website sharing the truly inspiring and challenging stories that are often not portrayed in mainstream media.

**Heard an inspiring story lately? Tell us your story below and share the happiness. We might even come knocking on your door.**

Our World Today has a philosophy that your interior and exterior environments directly affect you as a person. This is in both your personal and professional life. What happens in your outside world, or society, is reflected in your thoughts, who you are and how you act.

**But why do we want to focus on the positive?**

We realise we live in a smart society, and that people deserve a well-informed and educated source of news. This of course means absorbing and understanding daily events, including disasters, wars and the happenings of the world. However, Our World Today believes news does not have to be solely about that. We believe that as a society we are far greater than our failures and this deserves to be seen. Current trends, according to Richard Noyes "TV's Bad News Brigade: ABC, CBS and NBC's Defeatist Coverage of the War in Iraq," indicate that the quantity of 'positive' news (15%) is disproportionate to that of 'negative' news (85%), veering away from

the original idea of news reflecting a balanced view of society to itself.

Like a good work life balance, so should be the news and our surrounding environment. We believe news has a crucial part to play in the way society is influenced, and the way people think. Your thinking obviously has an effect on your life, and consequently as a whole, the actions of the world. We want to allow individuals a chance to be inspired, a place to source not only headlines, but positive stories from around the world, promoting individuals to be inspired and help the world, sharing the positive side of humanity.

We are an independent not for profit organisation, apolitical and have no agenda other than to source and publish positive and inspiring stories of our world. If we can inspire one individual, they can change the lives of hundreds around them, and this many, can go forth and change the world. It is all connected, all aspects of life, and the scientific proof is now out to show how a positive environment can not only affect your chemical and physical state as an individual, making you healthier and more stable, but also that happiness and positive energy does spread to people around you. We know from personal experience the amazing effects of this, and feel passionate about the art of storytelling and news, as well as our philosophy and creating this opportunity for society and the world.

*Annabel McGoldrick is a part-time lecturer at CPACS, doctoral candidate and psychotherapist.*

## Book Reviews: Violence, Trauma and Healing

by Wendy Lambourne

Leah Chishugi, *A Long Way From Paradise: Surviving the Rwandan Genocide*, Virago Press, London, 2010.

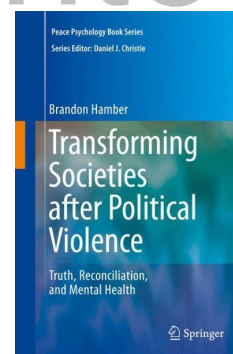
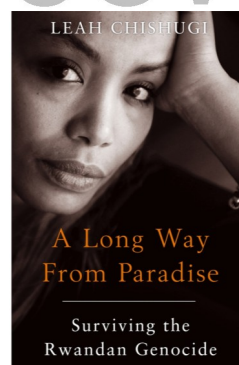
Brandon Hamber, *Transforming Societies After Political Violence: Truth, Reconciliation, and Mental Health*, Springer, Dordrecht, 2009.

**Leah Chishugi** has provided readers with a detailed and moving account of how one young woman and her baby survived despite being caught in Kigali as the Rwandan genocide unfolded in April 1994. Directly confronting us with the inexplicable brutality, as well as the sometimes overwhelming generosity of friends and strangers alike, Leah takes us on a painful yet ultimately rewarding journey through loss, struggle and self-reflection. How Leah survived is a story of courage and determination driven by the desire to escape the horror, find safety and protect her six month-old son.

Believing that her husband and the rest of her family have been killed, Leah becomes a refugee fleeing from Rwanda, back to her home in eastern Zaire (now DRC), to Kenya via Uganda, and then south through Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi, finally ending up in South Africa where she is eventually reunited with her husband. Her belief that she would feel safe again once in South Africa is shattered when she experiences the discrimination and violence perpetrated against black African women in that country, despite the recent ending of apartheid. Leah and her husband save the money for her to fly to England where she is granted asylum, later bringing her small family to join her in a new life far removed from the Africa she has rejected because of her traumatic experiences.

What is particularly interesting about this book is the insights it provides into the psychological processes of fear, trauma, guilt and loss of faith that Leah describes in a very direct and personal way. Hers was an innocent, privileged childhood, suddenly shattered and challenged. Leah shares her feelings and self-doubt about her actions in a way that is helpful for those trying to understand and support refugees and other traumatised survivors of mass violence. Her experience with forgiveness is also instructive, illustrating how an encounter with the 'feared other' can produce feelings of compassion and recognition that perpetrators are also victims.

Leah finds a new purpose in life after she discovers that her mother is also still alive and as a result confronts her fears – to meet with the killer of her siblings in a Rwandan jail, and return to her home village in eastern Congo where she encounters continuing brutality and suffering. Much to her own surprise, Leah forgives the young *génocidaire*, and establishes a charity (Everything is a Benefit) to assist the women of eastern Congo.



On 13 September, Leah spoke at an event hosted by University of Sydney to publicise her book and raise awareness about the needs of women traumatised by rape in the DRC. A capacity audience in the Law School Foyer heard how Leah has struggled with the ongoing incapacitating impact of trauma and her pleas for individuals to take practical action to help other women who continue to suffer from violence in their daily lives.

**Brandon Hamber's** book provides a scholar-practitioner's perspective on the psychological processes involved in healing from the trauma of political violence. Grounded in his practical experiences working with the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission from 1995 until 2003, as well as 15 years of research and reflection, Brandon Hamber offers an invaluable contribution to our understanding of the intersections between mental health, trauma and transitional justice. Like Leah, Brandon takes us on a journey – in this case through an exercise in inductive theory-building which confronts the impact of trauma and the role of emotions. He unpacks the complexities and ambivalence of healing, closure, reparations, truth, justice and reconciliation, and embraces the potential for these processes to transform transitional societies.

He expands our thinking about the responsibility of psychologists going beyond individual therapeutic interventions to a concern with societal processes in the context of political trauma. His book thus makes a significant contribution to advancing interdisciplinary cooperation in the field of transitional justice. As he concludes: "the role of the mental health worker is not merely to assist the bereaved and injured, but also to be an advocate for change and to accompany survivors on their own transformative journeys" (p. 206).

Both of these books are ultimately optimistic about human nature and hopeful about the prospects for healing, whilst being realistic about the challenges and ongoing need to address the trauma and other effects of mass violence.

Sydney-based organisations assisting refugees and others recovering from trauma induced by political violence include the Refugee Language Program hosted by CPACS; TraumAid International (contact Dr Jennifer Dawson, office@traumaid.org); and NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (www.startts.org.au)

*Dr Wendy Lambourne is a Senior Lecturer  
and Academic Coordinator at CPACS.*



## Revolution of Hope!

by Wendy Lambourne

The United Nations is a much-maligned organisation, faced with enormous challenges and often unrealistic expectations of maintaining international peace and security in a world beset by war, poverty and mass human rights violations. Or so the story goes ...

Another version sees the UN as inspiring hope in what might be possible when compassion and courage are harnessed in the quest to promote human security, peace and development. It is this latter vision that UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was keen to convey to students at the University of Sydney when he spoke in the Great Hall on 8 September.

Ban Ki-moon emphasised the urgency of taking cooperative action to tackle interlinked global problems such as food insecurity, climate change and the empowerment of women. He drew on his own personal experience growing up in hardship in South Korea, and his recent visits to Solomon Islands and Kiribati where he heard first-hand from children afraid that they would wake up to find their Pacific Island home submerged by the ocean.

He highlighted the significant role of University of Sydney graduates in the founding of the United Nations more than 65 years ago, and called upon the young people in the audience to be proactive and positive about making a difference in the world: 'to dream, be an idealist, but at the same time be grounded and practical'.

The words of the UNSG and the focus of the UN's work seem particularly relevant in a University which offers a

unique combination of postgraduate programs in Peace and Conflict Studies, Human Rights, International Relations, Security Studies, International Law, Political Economy and Development Studies. And for CPACS, which offers both a postgraduate unit on the *United Nations, Peace and Security* and undergraduate unit on the *History and Politics of War and Peace*.



UN General Secretary Ban Ki-moon speaking to the University of Sydney community

The video of the UN Secretary-General's presentation can be downloaded at: <http://sydney.edu.au/news/84.html?newscategoryid=4&newsstoryid=7722>

Further information about the work of the UN can be found at [www.un.org](http://www.un.org), the Canberra-based UN Information Centre ([www.un.org/au](http://www.un.org/au)), and the United Nations Association of Australia (<http://www.unaa.org.au>). Students can also join the University of Sydney United Nations Society.

## Visiting Scholar

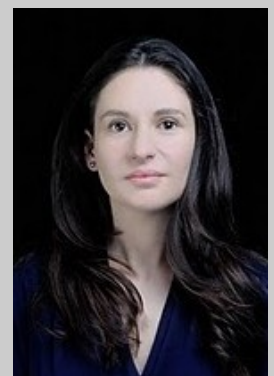
by Jake Lynch

CPACS is hosting Dr Susana Salgado, of the New University of Lisbon, as a Visiting Scholar from September to December 2011.

A former journalist, Susana is interested in the roles and influence of media in transitional and developing countries. Her ongoing post-doctoral research project is titled *More information means better democracy? The case of emerging democracies*.

Susana says: "I am interested in questions like: Can the media help to promote a more democratic society? How can the media be used in an election or in a crisis context? What role can new information technologies, like the Internet, play to strengthen democracy, promote participation and development and empower citizens in general and women in particular? My main focus is the field of post-conflict societies experiencing a transition to democracy and the necessary conditions for the consolidation of democracy and access to information".

Her aim, in visiting CPACS, is to explore and integrate concepts of 'Conflict', 'Peace', 'Social Change' in her research and to consider the role Peace Journalism can have in these settings, as well as to study the effects of different types of mediation.



Associate Professor Jake Lynch is Director of CPACS.