Courage for the BDS Movement

by Stuart Rees

Former Foreign Minister Bob Carr admits in his diary papers that the Israel lobby had direct communication with former Prime Minister Gillard and considerable influence over her.

On April 8th in the Footbridge Theatre, 48 hours before the publication of the Carr papers, a public forum analysed the means of combating the uncritical and many would say sinister influence of those who promote the State of Israel, irrespective of its brutalities and constant human rights abuses.

That Footbridge Forum explained the international law basis and the inherent non-violence of the world wide Boycott, Divestment Sanctions (BDS) movement to achieve Palestinians’ rights to self determination, to end the Occupation of Palestinian lands so that all Palestinians may enjoy a land of their own.

Palestinian playwright and activist Samah Sabawi asked her April the 8th audi-
ence, 'Stop the silence on human rights abuses. Find the courage to stop being silent'. Musician Phil Monsur sang his question 'Whose side are you on?' and asked the audience to stand up and sing, 'Stand Up, Stand Up.'

Dr. Jake Lynch, currently before the Federal Court, in essence for supporting the BDS movement, linked the prestigious sandstone walls of Sydney University to the giant concrete wall which divides Palestinian land: 'By continuing to foster links with institutions which support the Israeli occupation, Sydney University colludes in abuses.'

Olivia Zemor, brave French activist for BDS who has been prosecuted several times by the French State, showed the enormous commitment involved in resisting the power of the Israeli lobby. As a response to Olivia's example, some principled and gutsy Sydney academics have formed 'Sydney academics for BDS.' And with shrewd planning that movement could and should grow across all Australian campuses.

Perhaps we did not need Bob Carr to highlight the influence of the Israeli lobby and its utter indifference to the plight of all Palestinians. But we do need the BDS movement to stir academics from their cozy slumber, discard their career worries in order to answer those key human rights questions 'Whose side are you on.' 'Will you break your silence on Palestine?' 'Will you stand up and be counted?' 'Will you find the guts to join the BDS movement.'

Stuart Rees is the Chairman, Sydney Peace Foundation

Reflections from the Old Country

by Jake Lynch

On sabbatical in Oxford

The curve of palm-fringed beach stretched away behind the Prime Minister as he was pressed by reporters’ questions. Britain’s David Cameron decided to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Sri Lanka last November in the face of mounting evidence of war crimes against the Tamil people of the island in a military campaign ordered by President Mahinda Rajapakse. To defuse criticism, he’d promised to see for himself the ravages in the north of the country, and to deliver a tough message to his host in a 45-minute private briefing.

When I used to go with TV news crews to interview leaders at summits, we would choose a redolent background to convey the location – usually some familiar city skyline. On this occasion, however, the dizzying drop behind the British delegation’s hotel balcony bore a different interpretation. Now – backed up, both physically and politically, as far as he could go without plummeting backwards – Cameron had begun to turn his trade-mark shade of pink, denoting incipient panic. Finally he gave the promise, on camera, that campaigners had been waiting for:

"Let me be very clear, if an investigation is not completed by March, then I will use our position on the UN Human Rights Council to work with the UN Human Rights Commission and call for a full, credible and independent international inquiry".

Through our work in the Sri Lanka Human Rights Project and collaborations with the Australian Tamil Congress, among others, CPACS was an early adopter of the call for such an inquiry. And, just before Peace Writes went to press, the UN Human Rights Council did indeed finally hand the Human Rights Commissioner the task of conducting a “comprehensive investigation into alleged serious violations and abuses of human rights and related crimes by both parties in Sri Lanka”.

And the UK was indeed one of the resolution’s chief supporters, as Cameron had promised. Australia, unfortunately, was not. Of 47 mem-
bers of the HRC, 23 voted in fa-
vour, with 12 against and 12 ab-
stentions. Australia is not one of the 
voting members, but it opposed the 
resolution and used its diplomacy 
in efforts to sabotage it. How come? An editorial in the Sydney 
Morning Herald, days before the 
vote, linked Canberra’s appease-
ment of the Rajapakse government 

to its “stop the boats diplomacy”, which, the paper said, “has under-
mined the values Australia has 
proudly and powerfully articulated 
on the world stage for decades”.

A full inquiry “could show that 

Australia’s rapid return of Sri 
Lankan asylum seekers under the 

bipartisan ‘enhanced screening’ 
policy risks exposing them to con-
tinuing persecution, a breach of our 

international obligations”, the Her-
ald editorial pointed out. And gov-
ernments here of both main parties 
have sought to excuse and mini-
mise the abuses meted out to the 
Tamils as part of dirty deals with 
Colombo to try to reduce the num-
ber who leave Sri Lanka’s coastal 
waters to seek asylum here.

Weather permitting

As Australia reeled from the earli-
est onset of the bushfire season 
anyone could remember, Britain 
was enjoying mild conditions. To 
sit by the Thames and enjoy the 
distinctive palette of an English 
Autumn was to be reminded of 
Hilaire Belloc’s remark: “There are 
several greater temptations on earth 
than to stay permanently at Oxford 
in meditation, and to read all the 
books in the Bodleian”. But storm 
clouds were gathering, and the win-
ter to come would break all records, 
as the rain kept falling ... and fal-
lind. That beloved riverside path 
sank beneath the floodwaters – and 
never resurfaced before my depar-
ture in mid-February.

An old colleague, BBC Science 
Editor David Shukman, who lives 

in Oxford, was covering the floods 

for television news. In his impres-
sive nightly dispatches, he took 
every opportunity to point out the 
link, supported by a rapidly swell-
ing stream of scientific evidence, 
between the increased frequency and 
severity of extreme weather 

events all over the planet, and the 
acceleration in human-induced 
global warming.

I ran into David on a railway plat-
form at an obscure station to which 
the flood-stricken London train ser-
vice had been diverted. As we 
waited for the connecting service, 
we discussed the significance of a 
parliamentary answer by Cameron 
in which he had dismissed the cli-
mate change sceptics on his own 
backbenches: “We are seeing more 
abnormal weather events. Col-
leagues across the House can argue 
about whether that is linked to cli-
mate change or not. I very much 
suspect that it is”. The Prime Min-
ister went on to commend the Car-
bon Act, setting a price on carbon 
consumption, which was adopted 
with bipartisan support under the 

previous Labour government.

Back in Australia, meanwhile, both 

journalists and politicians were 

sending the opposite message. 
Prime Minister Tony Abbott went 
on Radio 3AW to dismiss 25 years 
of research in a single phrase: “These fires are certainly not a 
function of climate change; they are 
just a function of life in Australia”. 
At the time of writing, the outgoing 
Senate in Canberra has just beaten 
on attempts by the Coalition gov-
ernment to repeal the Carbon Tax 

and Mining Tax, two rudimentary 
measures to lessen Australia’s con-
tribution to greenhouse gas emis-
sions. Given likely changes to the 
Upper House later this year, how-
ever, the votes, led by Labor and 
the Greens, will almost certainly be 
seen in retrospect as a famous last 
stand.

Political advances by creeping de-
nialism are perhaps less surprising 
given the media context. A report 
last year by the Australian Centre 
for Independent Journalism, based 
at UTS, found that Australia’s big-
gest-selling papers, the Sydney 

Daily Telegraph and Melbourne’s 
Herald Sun, are misleading and 
confusing their readers about re-
search findings on climate science, 

and the Australian “deliberately 
creates uncertainty, and [the ap-
pearance of] a debate about aspects 
of climate science that the world’s 
leading climate scientists have 
found are ‘virtually certain’”. All 
three are owned by conservative 
proprietor Rupert Murdoch.

Time for action

I could go on and on: Cameron 
went on a state visit to Israel and 

lectured the Knesset on the realities 
of international law, while on her 
trip to the country, Australian For-

gn Minister Julie Bishop de-

manded, of an Israeli journalist, 
which bit of international law 

which is known bit, the Fourth Ge-

neva Convention, which declares 

the occupying power shall not 
transfer any portion of its popu-
lation into the territory it occu-
pies”).

Shortly after I arrived in Oxford, 
British MPs voted down a motion 
to attack Syria, thus depriving a 
sitting Prime Minister of a mandate 
to order the use of force for the first 
time in over 200 years. Debate over
the terms on which the UK had joined the US-led invasion of Iraq had, Cameron declared, “poisoned the well of public opinion”, following several public inquiries into the episode. Australia has never conducted a single one, and a Campaign for an Iraq War Inquiry has been established to demand one.

How to account for these differences, between governments that are, in many respects, ideologically soulmates (and which are both supporters of the present global ideological crusade against social spending funded by general taxation)?

I suspect Cameron and Abbott, and their followers, share similar basic instincts. The significant differences between the UK and Australia are in the broader public sphere and political context for debates over issues such as foreign policy and climate change. Britain has strong parliamentary opposition, which draws on an abundant supply of informed media commentary and expertise – from academics, among others – that finds ample points of iteration and traction in public debate.

Cameron knows that, if he appears to disavow global warming and its influence on the weather, or ignores the strong and widely reported evidence case to indict the Sri Lankan government on war crimes allegations, he will face an avalanche of informed opinion in the press and a grilling on the agenda-setting Today Programme on BBC Radio Four. Such constraints are much weaker here.

What is to be done about the rapid relative deterioration in public debate in Australia? One could compile a ready wish-list: regulate commercial broadcasters to oblige them to separate news from comment, and present issues of public concern in a balanced way, as in the UK, to diminish the malign influence of rightwing shock jocks on stations such as 3AW. Reform election rules to empower voters to choose neither Labor nor Liberal, if that is their inclination, thus pressuring politicians to supply positive reasons to vote for them.

However the answer, essentially, lies not in our stars but in ourselves. Everyone must work out a way in which they can take action, to breathe new life into our democracy. The onus might be thought particularly pressing on academics: people who are paid to think and write, and have their freedom of expression protected under the terms of their employment (thanks to our union, the NTEU, for that one).

So where are they? Too many are content to closet themselves in their offices, filling in forms and applying for grants. There are even plenty of Profs and Docs these days who like to present themselves as being interested in human rights, or democracy – even peace – who conform to the classic pattern of ‘lion in the lecture theatre, mouse on the streets’: what is sometimes called the ‘imposter complex’.

On the demand for an independent international inquiry into war crimes allegations in Sri Lanka; on the academic boycott of Israel; on inviting the Dalai Lama to speak in Sydney, and on many other issues down the years, CPACS has set the standard for genuine public advocacy. We have taken risks, and we have spoken truth to power. It can often feel like a thin line we’re holding – it would be nice to have more company.

Jake Lynch is the Director of CPACS.

Kwibuka 20: Journey of Hope for Rwanda
by Wendy Lambourne

We acknowledge the humanity that binds us together in remembering the past – the unbelievable horrors of the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi that was taking place in Rwanda exactly 20 years ago, the immeasurable suffering, pain and loss which left a country and a people devastated and without hope. We stand united in bearing the shame of those who failed to act to stop the genocide, and in working together to prevent such mass atrocities from occurring again in the future. We also unite with Rwandans in recognising the incredible resilience and determination they have shown in rebuilding their country and renewing a sense of hope in the future.

April 2014 marks the 20th anniversary of the genocide that killed one million people in 100 days in the tiny Central African country of Rwanda which, in 1994, became famous for all the wrong reasons. Today, Rwanda has become a poster child of post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery, with strong levels of economic growth and investment, free of corruption and with impressive achievements in health, education and especially, women’s participation. Rwanda is
the only African country on track to meet all of the millennium development goals by 2015 and has the highest percentage of women in parliament of any country in the world (64%). The 2014 World Bank Doing Business report rated Rwanda as having the second best business environment in Africa, and the country is now regarded as being one of the safest, cleanest and most peaceful countries in Africa.

One of the characteristics that has made this remarkable progress possible has been the Rwandan government’s policy of unity and reconciliation. In 1999, the Rwandan government established the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission and decided to adapt the traditional gacaca community justice system to deal with the crimes of the genocide and promote both justice and reconciliation. Through these national institutions, and the work of local and international civil society organisations, Rwandans have been encouraged to confess and forgive the crimes of the past, to reconcile and to live together peacefully. For the good of the country and the future, feelings of anger and the desire for revenge have been buried in the hope that future generations of Rwandans will grow up free of the prejudices and interethnic violence of the past.

As a result of their experience in 1994, Rwandans have been committed to the global effort to prevent genocide, including the creation of a National Commission for the Fight Against Genocide (CNLG). In its determination to avoid being a bystander to mass violence, Rwanda has also become a significant contributor to UN as well as regional peacekeeping missions, including in Darfur, South Sudan, Haiti, Cote d’Ivoire, Mali, Liberia and Central African Republic (CAR). Some of the initiatives taken by the United Nations in the wake of the genocide in Rwanda have included the establishment of the International Criminal Court, the development of the norm of the Responsibility to Protect and the creation of a Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide. Despite these developments and the lessons of Rwanda, the international community has continued to fail in averting genocide and other mass atrocities, in different crises such as in Darfur since 2004 and more recently in Syria and CAR.

Genocide prevention is a significant focus of the Kwibuka 20 program of events taking place around the world to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda. On 3 April, at the first of two events hosted by the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (CPACS) at the University of Sydney as part of Kwibuka 20, Eyal Mayroz, who recently completed his PhD with CPACS, presented a public lecture on the potential and challenges of genocide prevention twenty years after Rwanda. Eyal explored the impediments to effective action arising from perceived geopolitical dictates and operational constraints, lack of enforcement of the Genocide Convention and limited impact of moral norms on political decision-making.

CPACS joined with the Rwandan community of New South Wales and the Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS NSW) to organise a second public event on 10 April, Kwibuka 20: Journey of Hope for Rwanda. The event featured guest speaker Rwandan Ambassador to Japan and High Commissioner to Australia, His Excellency Ambassador Dr Charles Murigande, and a Q&A panel which was facilitated by Dr Wendy Lambourne with genocide survivor, Lambert Ndakaza, and special guests Professor Shirley Randell AO, PhD, Michelle Shaw from Hope: Global and Mohamed Dakuly from STARTTS. Olivier Kameya, chair of the Rwandan community of NSW, led one minute of silence to remember the lives lost and showed excerpts from a documentary about Kwibuka 20 and the origins of the genocide.
Lambert Ndakaza spoke of his feelings of shock, horror and disbelief as the genocide unfolded around him as a 20 year old young man in Rwanda, and of wondering if life was worth continuing after losing both his parents, three brothers and many members of his extended family. Lambert now lives in Newcastle with his own young family, thanks to the generous and caring sponsorship of an Australian family who enabled him to come to this country in 1997. In responding to the question ‘Why remember?’, Lambert admitted that it was extremely painful and not an easy process to go through, but, he said, ‘as survivors, we have an obligation to remember, so that the memories of our loved ones live on’ and ‘so that we make sure to learn some lessons for the future for the next generation’.

Ambassador Murigande explained how ‘the people of Rwanda refused to be overwhelmed by death and despair, and undertook to courageously pick up the pieces and re-build a new and stronger nation’ by using a number of home grown solutions including: 1. the traditional gacaca courts which focus on restorative rather than retributive justice and thereby foster reconciliation; 2. imihigo, a performance contract between the leaders and the led which ensures transparency and accountability in the country’s governance; 3. ubudehe, a solidarity system at village level which ensures that the weak members of the society are not left out but are collectively assisted and supported by those who are strong; 4. umuganda, collective community work aimed at addressing community problems such as building classrooms and cleaning the neighbourhood; 5. Ikigega cy’Abacitse kw’icumu/ Fund for Survivors of Genocide which has been assisting survivors of genocide to meet their basic needs of health, education and shelter; and 6. Ndi Umunyarwanda/I am a Rwandan, which undertakes to help Rwandans rediscover what it means to be a Rwandan and the values that underpin this inclusive national identity, including integrity, patriotism, courage, mutual respect and humanity.

In summary, the Ambassador attributed Rwanda’s success to three fundamental choices made by the country in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide: ‘to stay together as a people’; ‘to be transparent and accountable as a government’; and ‘to think big for our country’.

Professor Shirley Randell AO, has been an adviser to the Rwandan government and worked in Rwanda as a gender and education specialist for the last nine years. She founded the Centre for Gender, Culture and Development at the Kigali Institute of Education (now the University of Rwanda College of Education) in order to develop a professional expertise to match Rwanda’s leading role globally in the empowerment of women and achievement of gender parity in almost all sectors, especially in education. After the genocide, according to UNICEF, women constituted 70% of the Rwandan population, and the government took a proactive policy stance to include women and men equally as the ideal foundation for development. Women have made a key contribution to healing, peace, reconciliation and reconstruction by facilitating survivors and perpetrators working together for their communities and the nation.

Hope: Rwanda is particularly active in the early childhood and primary education sector, as explained by Michelle Shaw, Education Program Manager for Hope: Global, an international NGO whose motto is ‘shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart, strength to strength’. Amongst their major achievements have been training teachers in
teaching English, developing a school leadership program, and social and economic empowerment of homeless women and children. Michelle emphasised the difference Australians have made in Rwanda through volunteering their professional skills, and gave an example of how Australians had funded the building of a primary school classroom which had become a model centre of teaching excellence and innovation.

Faith-based civil society organisations such as World Vision and the Quakers have also assisted Rwandans in their recovery and development through the provision of psychosocial services and reconciliation programs. Mohamed Dukuly, originally from Liberia and a trainer and facilitator with the Families in Cultural Transition (FICT) program at STARTTS, identified the importance of trauma healing as a basis for building relationships and communities after mass violence, a process that is essential to peacebuilding in Rwanda.

There are still political, social and development challenges in Rwanda. However, as Ambassador Murigande said in his closing remarks, ‘the modest but meaningful achievements we have made against incredible odds over the last 20 years, I am tempted to say that “All the Angels have left Heaven to join us in the rebuilding of our country”.’

Dr Wendy Lambourne is Deputy Director of CPACS.

*Surprise! Surprise! What a surprise!*

*by Ken Macnab*

According to Alyssa Newcomb (ABC News, May 11, 2012), in 2010 the Pentagon was inundated with so many ‘studies’, one of their favourite tools for making policy and assessing outcomes, that Defense Secretary Robert Gates complained that his department was ‘awash in taskings for reports and studies.’ He wanted to know how much they cost. So the Pentagon commissioned a study to determine how much it cost to produce all those studies. Two years later, the Pentagon review was still continuing, so Congress asked the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to review the Pentagon’s study. What they found lacked military precision; the study was a flop.

The GAO found only nine studies that had been scrutinized by the Pentagon review of studies, but the military was unable to ‘readily retrieve documentation’ for six of the reports. The Department of Defense’s ‘approach is not fully consistent with relevant cost estimating best practices and cost accounting standards,’ the GAO concluded. In fact, they often did not include items like manpower, the report found.

The Pentagon ‘partially concurs’ with the GAO’s report. The cost of the study of the studies was not available from the GAO.

**Surprise! Surprise! What a surprise!**

According to the Sydney Morning Herald (31 March, 2014), a report by the US Senate Intelligence Committee concludes that the Central Intelligence Agency deliberately misled the government and the public about aspects of its brutal interrogation program for years - concealing details about the severity of its methods, overstating the significance of plots and prisoners, and taking credit for critical pieces of intelligence that detainees had in fact surrendered before they were subjected to harsh techniques.

The report, built around detailed chronologies of dozens of CIA detainees, documents a long-standing pattern of unsubstantiated claims as agency officials sought permission to use - and later tried to defend - excruciating interrogation methods that yielded little, if any, significant intelligence, according to US officials who have reviewed the document.

‘The CIA described [its program] repeatedly both to the Department of Justice and eventually to Congress as getting unique, otherwise unobtainable intelligence that helped disrupt terrorist plots and save thousands of lives,’ said one official briefed on the report. ‘Was that actually true? The answer is no.’ It is likely that the CIA even secretly accessed the workings of the Committee inquiring into its behaviour.

**Surprise! Surprise! What a surprise!**

Senator the Honourable Arthur Sinodinos AO had a reputation as an
influential ‘minder’ for John Howard, a man with a sharp mind for detail and a smart businessman. He was hired as Deputy Chairman and then Director of a water company doing ‘business’ with the State Government, and as he said, ‘hoped in a business sense I was a door opener’. His recent performance before the Independent Commission Against Corruption didn’t open many doors.

As Kate McClymont put it, ‘over the four years he was deputy and then chairman at Australian Water Holdings (AWH), serious corruption was taking place under his nose but he saw nothing, did nothing and asked no questions.’

Senator Sinodinos was ‘defensive’ about being paid $200,000 for less than 45 hours’ work a year as a director of AWH, and the fact that he stood to make up to $20 million if the state Liberal government made a public-private partnership with the company. He didn’t mention this when lobbying Premier O’Farrell; it was sort of ‘understood’.

He denied knowing that AWH, when he was Deputy Chairman, donated $72,000 to the NSW Liberal Party, where he was Treasurer. Or that three Liberal-aligned lobbyists, with whom he had frequent contact, were being paid $17,000 a month by AWH. Or that among the outrageous ‘costs’ being billed to Sydney Water were millions of dollars for inflated salaries for a small staff, $164,000 for a corporate box at Olympic Stadium, $28,000 in limousine hire, and donations to the federal election funds of Joe Hockey.

His most frequent response to questions was ‘I don't recall’. It’s really quite funny how ASIC inquiries cause amnesia!

Prime Minister Tony Abbott said of Sinodinos, when he ‘stood down’ temporarily from his position as Assistant Treasurer, ‘He is a good man, he is a brave man, and he is a friend and colleague of whom I am proud.’

Surprise! Surprise! What a surprise!

According to an anonymous security source who spoke to an English paper, The Telegraph, former British PM Tony Blair and then-Foreign Secretary Jack Straw took a ‘very active interest’ in the CIA’s secret detention and interrogation program, launched after September 11, 2001, and were repeatedly briefed by MI6 about the ‘rendition’ and ‘torture’ of illegally-held terrorism suspects.

‘The politicians knew in detail about everything – the torture and the rendition. They could have said [to MI6] “stop it, do not get involved”, but at no time did they,’ the source added, flatly contradicting numerous previous statements made by UK officials.

It emerged at the beginning of 2013 that at least 54 countries, many of them European, cooperated with the US. Even in 2006 it was being reported that it was ‘highly unlikely that European governments, or at least their intelligence services, were unaware of the “rendition” of more than a hundred persons affecting Europe.’ Australia was among those cooperating in this secret, illegal and brutal programme.

Ken Macnab is President of CPACS.

East meets West in Yangon Media Conference
by Jake Lynch

East met West, along with competing ideas of the societal role of journalism, in this conference titled Challenges of a Free Press, held in Myanmar, the southeast Asian country formerly known as Burma and now emerging from decades of military dictatorship.

Journalists and professionals involved in media development heard an opening statement from presidential spokesperson (and deputy Information Minister) U Ye Htut, in which he emphasised his government’s commitment to freedom of expression, and promoting media reform as “a vital process for the evolution of democratic culture”.

Realising that “we cannot control the media in the digital age”, the new authorities here are instead urging government ministries to share information with journalists and the public. Veteran editor U Thiha Saw, who last year launched a new English language daily, Myanmar Freedom, serves on a newly formed Press Council, which has drawn up a Code of Ethics, Code of Conduct and a new press law.

Suddenly, after 50 years the dead hand of the censor has been removed from the process of reporting. Saw told the conference, and many Burmese journalists are revealing in their newfound freedom.

Dark shadows remain, however. Earlier this year, Tomas Ojea Quintana, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human
Rights in Myanmar, issued an outgoing report as his six-year term came to an end. “During this mission”, he reflected, “I met journalists who described a prevailing climate of uncertainty and fear of arrest, particularly if reporting dealt with issues too close to the interests of the military or other powerful elites”. Examples included newspaper staff arrested for investigating stories on chemical weapons factories, and a separate case where a reporter pursuing a story on corruption was sent to jail for three months.

The office of the Special Rapporteur has been an important safeguard, and a source for the international community of independent information and assessment. As PeaceWrites went to press, news had just arrived that the UN Human Rights Council has extended the mandate for another year, following some tense diplomatic manoeuvring over the apparent reluctance of the Myanmar government.

What has Peace Journalism to offer in this situation? A prevalent theme of the conference was that media freedom also confers responsibility. The Ministry of Information has “a mandate to promote diverse and responsible media”, Minister Htut said, in the interest of “enabling citizens to make informed decisions”.

Fine words: however, an involuntary shudder seemed to run through the hall at the notion of governments deciding what constitutes responsible media. Meeting that definition in Myanmar seems to require “cooperation” with the Ministry, to be rewarded – in the case of international news organisations – with extended multiple-entry visas.

A better way to foster journalistic responsibility is for it to grow organically. The now-globally distributed Peace Journalism movement has always drawn from people’s sense that there must be more constructive roles for journalism in conflict. It took root in the UK, in the mid-1990s, as wars in Iraq and the disintegrating federal state of Yugoslavia focused attention not just on the conflicts themselves but on the way they were reported.

It appealed to people in Indonesia, at the turn of the century, when that nation was at the same stage that Myanmar is now, when the abolition of censorship gave rise to debate over the roles of a newly freed media as not only a newly transparent window on matters of common concern, but also a potential vehicle for escalating tensions.

In such cases, journalists and their newsrooms can be prompted to the critical self-awareness, when reporting conflicts, that is crucial to the emergence of an enabling environment for peace journalism. Reporters should report, honestly and without favour, the facts in front of them, but also ask: how did I come to meet these particular facts, and how did they come to meet me? What is missing, with what consequences, and how could those elements be put back in?

One Asian country that enjoys both a free press, and a public debate of rare sophistication over journalistic ethics, is the Philippines. Another speaker here, Melinda Quintos de Jesus, is Executive Director of the Center for Media Freedom & Responsibility in Manila, and she urged Myanmar to create a national program of citizen education for media literacy as part of its reform agenda. “Ultimately”, she declared, “it is the people who are the only real watchdogs”.

In the Peace Journalism panel, I was joined by CPACS alumna Dilnaz Boga, who won an award from the Associated Press for her vivid and courageous reporting from Kashmir. People there are exposed to multiple dimensions of violence, and in need of raised awareness among, and engagement by internationals – in solidarity with their own nonviolent action for their rights and freedoms – if there is to be any prospect of peace with justice.

Myanmar, too, brings into its new era a set of regional and ethnic conflicts that are essentially unresolved. There is a risk that development, now proceeding apace, may both exacerbate those conflicts and bring new ones. The country’s ambition to achieve rapid industrialisation will require new sources of energy, and the newspaper given away in delegate packs at the conference, the Myanmar Times, contained a special pull-out section on the burgeoning power industry.

However, the Shan Human Rights Foundation has raised the alarm over six new foreign-owned hydropower plants now planned for the Salween River, since locals have not been consulted, the area is divided between government troops and rebel forces, and thousands of farmers stand to lose land, access to water, or both.

Many will be the conflict issues sparked by development and industrialisation, with implications notably for peace with the earth. How will Myanmar’s environmental treasures survive, and quality of life
for its people keep pace with growing economic prosperity? CPACS PhD student Frencie Carreon joined a panel examining issues in the media reporting of environmental issues, with speakers from the World Wildlife Fund, which is setting up a new office here. She urged the application of Peace Journalism principles to enable citizens to join a real debate about viable initiatives to share and conserve the natural domain.

Fully 99% of Myanmar’s media industry is reckoned to be concentrated in the main city, Yangon. Minister Htut acknowledged that “minority and marginalised groups are losing their voice in the media”, a problem that risks deepening inequalities, and requires more than merely commercial growth to resolve it.

There is a sense that Myanmar, for better or worse, is losing some of its exceptionality. Until recently, it was notorious as one of the most repressive states on earth, with periodic uprisings by a downtrodden but still courageous people. Now, it is best described as partly free, with many political prisoners released, media censorship lifted and an elected legislature. The military still has an overblown role in public affairs, and many illiberal laws are still on the statute book – but in those respects it has many other countries for company.

Delegates here included many who are keen to help. In one important respect, they have a local tradition on which to draw. Repression of the press in Burma is an artefact of colonialism. Back in the late 19th Century, the penultimate King, Mindon, promulgated 17 articles of press freedom, encouraging the nascent local journalism profession: “If I do wrong, write about me”.

As an early statement of willingness by rulers to submit to judgement in the public sphere, it still takes some beating. And it could easily feed into a context in which Peace Journalism initiatives could take root.

The International Media Conference in Yangon, on March 9-12, was organised by the East West Center with partnership by the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. Jake was a guest and keynote speaker at the conference.

There is a sense that Myanmar, for better or worse, is losing some of its exceptionality. Until recently, it was notorious as one of the most repressive states on earth, with periodic uprisings by a downtrodden but still courageous people. Now, it is best described as partly free, with many political prisoners released, media censorship lifted and an elected legislature. The military still has an overblown role in public affairs, and many illiberal laws are still on the statute book – but in those respects it has many other countries for company.

Delegates here included many who are keen to help. In one important respect, they have a local tradition on which to draw. Repression of the press in Burma is an artefact of colonialism. Back in the late 19th Century, the penultimate King, Mindon, promulgated 17 articles of press freedom, encouraging the nascent local journalism profession: “If I do wrong, write about me”.

As an early statement of willingness by rulers to submit to judgement in the public sphere, it still takes some beating. And it could easily feed into a context in which Peace Journalism initiatives could take root.

The International Media Conference in Yangon, on March 9-12, was organised by the East West Center with partnership by the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. Jake was a guest and keynote speaker at the conference.

Jake Lynch is the Director of CPACS

Refugee Language Program 2014
by Lesley Carnus

The Refugee Language Program began 2014 with full classes and a number of projects that will increase our students’ involvement with the community.

Enrolments have doubled and before our classes even began, we already had a long waiting list. Each week I receive between five and ten new enrolments. Students in our classes come from many dif-
ferent countries and backgrounds. Their occupations include: - a veterinary surgeon, maths teachers, nurses, personal trainers, interpreters, academics, lawyers, musicians and journalists. Students come from a range of countries as well, including Burma, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Iran, Syria, Jordan, Ethiopia, the Sudan and Korea.

While working with students such as these, we always ask how any Government with a rational refugee policy can keep a group of such talented people in a state of constant waiting and rejection when they could all be contributing in a meaningful way to our community. We also have enrolled a small group of young people who have not completed high-school but who would like to continue their studies at a university. Formerly they were allowed to enroll in a Senior High School to finish the HSC; now they cannot enroll after they have turned eighteen.

In the first semester we are trying to give further support to our classroom teachers who have to manage very disparate groups. We welcome Michelle Imison (PHD Public Health) and Priscilla Adey (a retired Crown Prosecutor) to our Saturday team. Anna Breckon (PHD candidate in Arts) is also supporting Dr Alexandra McCormick with the Creative Writing class on Wednesdays.

The RLP has been approached by staff in the Verge Gallery to start a creative project with Sydney University students who would like to teach or learn with a refugee. We envisage a collaboration where university students and refugees are matched and then produce a piece of work for exhibition at the end of the year. This could be printmaking, painting, learning a musical instrument, poetry, pottery, film-making or photography.

We have many gifted refugees in our classes and they have much to teach the students at this university. The students themselves can also offer something, which is invaluable as well: social inclusion, friendship, language, cultural and creative gains.

In March, the RLP was host to a small group of students from CHUO University (Tokyo) with their CPACS lecturer, Lynda Blanchard, and the supervising professor, Mike Nix. Two of the students interviewed me about the issues facing refugees in Australia and then on our first Saturday class of the year, they observed our classes and had lunch with the students and volunteers. There were mutual gains for both groups from this visit and we are hoping next year to receive another group of these delightful and well-informed students.

We have also improved our Facebook page and Leo Goorevich, a regular volunteer with computer classes, has agreed to manage the site. We will use the Facebook page to inform students of events that may interest them, to notify them of classes, to offer goods or services that may be of interest to them; for example giving away unused bicycles, blankets, whitegoods etc. It will also be a safe place for students to contact each other, practice their English skills and for teachers to contact students.

The students in the Refugee language Program appreciate the hard work and the commitment of our fine teachers and volunteers. We all look forward to the day when our students can be accepted into our community as full participating citizens rather than as outsiders trapped by intimidating policies that bring shame to our country.

The journalist, Hannah Belcher, is interviewing a range of activists from organizations that are working in a positive manner with refugees. She aims to show that not all Australians are afraid of refugees but rather are afraid of the misinformation, fear-mongering and cruel policies that the current government takes pride in.

Greens’ senator, Scott Ludlum, in a speech to parliament on March 4th, expressed passionately and succinctly what he and other like-minded people think about this government’s refugee policies. He admonished the PM in the following words: “most profoundly, your determined campaign to provoke fear in our community fear of innocent families fleeing war and violence in our region in the hope that it would bring out the worst in Australians is instead bringing out the best in us. Prime Minister, you are welcome to take your heartless racist exploitation of people's fears and ram it as far from Western Australia as your taxpayer funded travel entitlements can take you”.

The students in the Refugee language Program appreciate the hard work and the commitment of our fine teachers and volunteers. We all look forward to the day when our students can be accepted into our community as full participating members rather than as outsiders trapped by intimidating policies that bring shame to our country.

Lesley Carnus is the Coordinator of the Refugee Language Program at CPACS
Bonding over a Glass of Beer:  
The Tagay ritual of the Philippines  

by Primy Cane

We’ve all gone to the pub and shared a few drinks with friends. It’s a good way to unwind, catch up and bond. But in the Philippines, sharing a drink with the barkada (the gang, your posse), family, or even with new friends, is taken literally – as in, we drink from the same glass. The practice is called tagay. Walk down any street in the country that has a carinderia (small eatery) or more commonly a sari-sari store (a small shopfront usually attached to a home selling everything from cola, to toothpaste and of course, alcohol) and you will find Filipinos sharing a drink. You might even be invited to “tagay, bai!”

No, don’t cringe, there is a very logical reason behind it. Most Filipinos, if you get the chance to tagay with them, will laugh at you and call you maarte (fussy) if you drink with your own glass. “The alcohol will kill the germs,” is the usual explanation you’ll be given (no, there is no research to back this claim up). Unproven scientific facts notwithstanding, tagay is very popular because people believe it bonds a group closer together.

When people tagay, they sit around a table in a circle. A group drinks (usually beer, rum or brandy) using only one glass (or two, one for the alcohol and another for the chaser) that is refilled over and over again by the person holding the bottle of alcohol (who is called the gunner). This glass is passed around the drinking table, which means that at any one time, only one person is drinking, and the rest are free to talk. This drinking culture prevents people from sinking into their own thoughts while brooding over their own beer. You cannot sit on your drink because other people are waiting for their turn. Thus the exchange of experiences and stories keeps going, and to Filipinos, a flowing conversation, means a good time.

The culture of Tagay is said to have originated from the Sandugo and evokes a feeling of camaraderie. Sandugo is a centuries old ritual in the Philippines used to create and seal peace pacts. The word literally means ‘one blood’ and is a pact that is not taken lightly. It occurs between Datus (tribal leaders) of two parties who swear to ‘become blood brothers, vowing to stick together through thick and thin; war and peace.’ Datus would mix a few drops of their blood together in water or wine, and consume it from the same cup. This ritual signifies that the two leaders (and thus their clans/tribes) were then kin, and the conviction was that they would behave like family, protect each other, and work together. For example, in 1603, the Muslim Datu of Maguindanao (now part of the ARMM) used the Sandugo pact to ally with the Christian Datus of Leyte (on the Visayas Island) to work together in fighting off their common enemies.

Later a ritual called pagampang or drinking from the same cup evolved from Sandugo, with the same aims, but where there was no longer any blood involved. Today, sealing of peace pacts is not the first thing Filipinos think of when practicing tagay. It’s just how we drink. But if you think about it, if drinking from the same glass can make people feel closer together or make them better friends, then isn’t that achieving the same goal with the Sandugo?

Because of the familiarity of this practice throughout the country both in the past and present, the Sandugo pact, or even a Tagay session (sans the alcohol, in consideration of Muslim beliefs) seems to be a most appropriate way to clinch peace agreements regarding the Christian-Muslim conflict in Mindanao. The newly signed Bangsamoro Framework Agreement contains an annex on Normalization, which mentions Transitional Justice. How astute would it be if one of the methods they turned to was as simple as...
drinking from the same cup?

References:


*Primi Cane is a MPACS student.*

---

**Creators of Peace Circle, at CPACS**

*by Shoshana Faire and Patricia Garcia*

The weekend of 1-2 March saw a Creators of Peace circle come together for the first time at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at Sydney University. The circle was held in the Posters of Peace Gallery where, surrounded by the faces of well known peace makers and posters of major peace events, we took the time to explore ourselves as peacemakers and what it means to be a peace maker in our own lives and in our own communities.

Eight out of the ten participants were postgraduate students and academic staff of CPACS. We brought a diverse mix of cultures and religions with participants from Afghanistan, Kenya, Nepal, Philippines, Taiwan, and Australia. Although Creators of Peace is a program created for women, it was decided to open this circle to both women and men. We had one male participant. Shoshana Faire and Patricia Garcia facilitated the circle, which was at the invitation of Dr. Wendy Lambourne, the Centre’s Deputy Director.

Creators of Peace is an international women’s initiative started in 1991. It is a programme of Initiatives of Change, which is a worldwide movement of people of diverse cultures and backgrounds who are committed to the transformation of society through changes in human motives and behaviour, starting with their own (www.iofc.org).

Creators of Peace was launched at the Initiatives of Change conference centre in Caux, Switzerland by the Honorable Anna Abdalla Msekwa of Tanzania, a respected politician and leader of her country’s women’s organisations. In her inaugural speech, she urged everyone to “create peace wherever we are, in our hearts, our homes, our workplace and our community. We all pretend that someone else is the stumbling block….Could that someone be myself?” Creators of Peace is now a global network of people working on different continents through conferences, events, workshops, personal meetings, and conversations.
encounters, community building activities and peace circles. Creators of Peace operates in 40 countries.

The session at CPACS went over two full days plus an evening three weeks later. We covered various topics known as “gathering points” which generated stimulating conversations and exploration about our understanding and experience of peace. Included were: What is Peace? What Builds and what Destroys Peace? Qualities of a Peacemaker, Inner Peace, Listening, Inner Listening and Forgiveness. Sharing our personal stories in an atmosphere of trust and respect was the highlight for many in the group with timely moments of silence and reflection sparking a light on our inner life and our insights about peace.

The circle brought a fresh angle to the participants’ experience in their peace studies. Some of the things said at the end were: “Much more personal and real”, “We had the opportunity to resolve our own issues and look at practicing inner peace”, “we experienced how to develop deep trust and connection”, “a wonderful forum to explore the inner peace and connect with people.” “The depth of connection evident among us despite our varied backgrounds was particularly inspiring.”

“No! The Creators of Peace circle brought together the most extraordinary group I have encountered in a long time. Their stories either made you want to cheer, gasp in awe or cry.”

“Many things I have only read about – from cyclones, wars, political suppression, forced marriage, indoctrination at school, and walking miles barefoot to school came alive as people’s personal life stories and experience unfolded.”

“Experiencing the real person in each other was at the core.”

“My whole life I’ve been told I’m a bad listener, and as a Journalist, that’s a very bad thing to be. But at the peace circle we had fun exercises to practise better listening and we learned why it was so important. The secure atmosphere allowed me to see and admit to what I was doing that made me such an ineffective listener. It really opened my eyes! I will bring the lessons and inspiration from those precious two days with me for the rest of my life. I am hoping now to not just be a better journalist but to be a better daughter, sister, partner or friend to everyone around me.”

In a world today where we are living with so many pressing needs and world concerns, our Creators of Peace circle provided a haven and a safe space for each of us to look in and look out, to listen, reflect and find personal ways to engage in creating peace.

Shoshana Faire is a Co founder, Conflict Resolution Network, International Coordinator for Creators of Peace and Patricia Garcia is a Visiting Scholar at CPACS and Facilitator, Creators of Peace.

The 40K Impact Project

by Jessica Stephanie Arvela

July 2013, I was in the Indian village of Chowknahalli, south of Bengaluru. My work was with the 40K Foundation. Our aim was to investigate the feasibility of a social enterprise to cross-subsidies the after school education centers 40K had developed.

I had been spending time with several of the women who lived in the huts surrounding my own. There were four of us sitting on the floor of the hut, working on prototype bags for the 40K Impact Project. Two of the youngest children were running in between each of us, climbing over us, and playing with the bag materials that were scattered over the ground between the group. Women in the villages often sew all of their family’s clothes; these women were considered the
best in their skill. One of the women, who spoke excellent English due to her work as a receptionist in Bangalore, was translating for the others.

The women decided to find out more about Australia. “What country is Australia landlocked with?” Once I explained it was an island, they wanted to know what surrounding countries there were, and how close India was to Australia. “How long does it take to fly to America from Australia?” and “How long did it take you to fly here?”

“If a husband beats his wife in Australia can she divorce him?”, “How soon can you divorce him?” “What do you wear to signify marriage?” Indian Hindi women wear their wedding rings on their second toes. The rings are a set of two, usually silver, and worn on both feet, along with a gold necklace with several pendants on it. “If you take off your wedding ring are you then divorced?” I explained the signing of official legal divorce contracts, and that the ring is of religious significance.

“If a woman has trouble getting pregnant, there is a treatment to help her have a baby isn’t there?” I explained IVF treatment. “Is it expensive?”

“How big are the houses in Australia?”, “How many people live in them?” “What are the houses made of?” I explained the wooden frames. In this area of India with its vicinity to the quarries, telephone poles, electrical poles, fences, sewerage pipes, and houses are all made of granite rather than metal or wood. “When it rains, does the water leak through the wood?”

“This will be the third 'Nuclear Security Summit' to have been held. The governments that take part, including both the US and Russia and other 'official' nuclear weapons states, will want to report modest progress in 'locking down' nuclear material, in theory at least making it less likely that terrorists will be able to accomplish a 'Nuclear 9-11'.

Modest progress at least, in making nuclear material less available for terrorist use does indeed seem to have taken place, with some 52 countries reporting unsecured nuclear material at the first such conference in 2010, and the number now expected to be less than 25 countries.

However, the success of an 82 year old nun in accessing the most secure nuclear facility in the United States (to make precisely this point) as well as an embarrassing series of other failures, does seem to suggest that not all is well in nuclear security in the US.

Much of the success in 'locking down' material that could be used in nuclear weapons in what used to be the USSR has come through the 'Nunn-Lugar' program, a joint program to boost nuclear security in Russia and the CIS with US assistance. While a good deal of progress has been made by this program, there is increasing resistance in the US Congress to its continued funding (exacerbated by the Ukraine crisis), and also in Russia. And the most hazardous uses of nuclear weapons are left completely untouched by the emphasis on terrorist use in vaporizing the downtown of a single city.

Terrifying as the use of a Hiroshima-size nuclear weapon on a
single city would be, and profoundly world-changing as those consequences would be, such use is not yet, literally, the 'end of the world'.

Other uses are:
The use of nuclear weapons by the validly constituted authorities of either the US and Russia, or India and Pakistan, most likely by miscalculation or malfunction, would, literally, spell the end of what we call the world.

An India-Pakistan nuclear exchange, still involving a modest 150-200 Hiroshima-sized or slightly bigger, fission warheads, largely targeted at Indian and Pakistani cities, would cause an immediate body count of over 150 million, and a cloud of dense smoke from burning cities that could, in its aftermath, bring about cold dry conditions globally in which crop failure could kill as many, according to some estimates, as a further 2 billion people over the ensuing decades’ famines.

A US-Russia nuclear exchange would utterly destroy the entire fabric of what we call 'civilization' in its first seconds. The smoke of burning cities worldwide, especially if the conflict also involved China, would create the coldest temperatures since the last ice age and these would persist for at least three decades, making human survival problematic.

The threats being made by some Russian (and US) commentators with respect to possible nuclear use over the Ukraine crisis, and the possibility that threat and counter-threat may spiral the crisis completely out of any rational control, are surely cause for concern.

As few as 5 large nuclear warheads (such as the warheads on the ends of China's DF-5 missiles), exploded in space above continental landmasses are enough to cause the global financial system, the internet, satellite communications, and all electronic communication of whatsoever type as well as all electrical equipment to cease functioning. (Very large solar flare activity could also do this).

The Hague conferences focus on potential nuclear terrorism is undoubtedly of the highest importance, and if real progress has been made it is important to celebrate that, and to achieve further progress.

However, the potential of nuclear weapons to end civilization and possibly the human species remains untouched.

Back in 2008, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists published an article entitled 'Minimizing the Probability of Human Extinction' in which they pointed to the need to:
--take the 2000 or so nuclear warheads that are currently maintained by the US and Russia on 'Day-to-Day Alert', able to be launched in less than a minute, OFF that alert status
--Eliminate nuclear weapons altogether.

This, the *Bulletin* sagely noted, would remove completely the two most important short to medium term threats to human survival.

These steps have yet to be taken in spite of UN resolution after resolution that shows the overwhelming majority of the world’s governments in favor of taking them.

They need to be taken now. The Nuclear security Summit and the upcoming NPT Preparatory Committee Meeting at the UN in New York (28 April-9 May) are the appropriate forums in which to take these momentous decisions.

John Hallam is a co-convener of the Human Survival Project and a CPACS Council member.

Police Guns Project
by Andrew Greig

A new research project at CPACS is looking at the issue of police firearms. Since 1894, all police officers in NSW have been required to carry a handgun while on duty. While firearms may offer protection to police in some situations, they may also increase risks to members of the community and to the police officers themselves. In some police forces, for example in the United Kingdom, police do not usually carry a gun while on normal duties.

The project will examine the role of firearms carried by police in the context of maximising the safety of the police and the public, while minimising violence. Suggestions about the project and offers of assistance are welcome. Please contact the coordinator, Andrew Greig, at:
andrewgreig@bigpond.com

Andrew Greig is a member of the CPACS Council.
Ukraine Crisis Has Nuclear Dangers

by John Hallam and Peter King

The Human Survival Project (a joint project of People for Nuclear Disarmament and the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, Sydney University) has pointed to the potential for nuclear catastrophe inherent in the latest and most severe crisis in Ukraine. We are calling for extreme caution and restraint on all sides.

The nuclear dimensions of the Ukraine crisis are pretty obvious to many experts, yet they remain thus far the 'elephant in the room' in all the talk about Ukraine.

Russia and the United States together possess about 95% of the world’s nuclear warheads. Each of them maintains just fewer than 1000 warheads in a state in which they can be launched in, according to Russian military sources, 'a few dozens of seconds'. These warheads are primarily aimed at each other. Their use would spell the end of what we call civilisation, and create an immediate body count of over a billion. The subsequent global climatic effects of their use would make human survival questionable. Ukraine itself was once home to over 400 Soviet nuclear warheads, which it inherited at its independence. Ukraine was persuaded to renounce those warheads only by the conclusion of the 'Budapest Memorandum' in which the US, the UK and Russia together guaranteed Ukraine's independence and territorial inviolability. Ukraine has now invoked that memorandum.

Russia has over 1000 'tactical' or non-strategic warheads. While we do not know locations with any precision, it’s likely that some are located with Iskander missiles in Kaliningrad, on the Baltic. The Russian naval base at Simferopol in the Crimea, as a major submarine base, will of course be home to submarine-launched ballistic missiles. On the other side, NATO countries, including Germany, Italy, and Turkey, host as many as 400 US tactical nuclear weapons.

NATO does of course include France and the UK, both nuclear armed, France with just under 300 warheads, the UK with just over 100 warheads operational.

There is a frightening record of nuclear 'close calls' between the US and the USSR/Russia, ranging from a bear that nearly set off WW-III in the Cuban missile crisis to the Serpukhov-15 incident of September 26, 1983, 'The Day the World Nearly Ended', whose hero, Colonel Stanislav Petrov, is the subject of the movie 'The Man Who Saved the World'.

There is no point in apportioning blame for the meltdown that is now taking place in Crimea and elsewhere in Ukraine. It is hardly surprising that Russia wants to defend its most important nuclear submarine facility. Reflexively blaming one side and lining up with the other is completely unproductive and, indeed, highly dangerous. It does nothing to promote a solution. If we go in the direction we are now going, the potential for catastrophe is all too real. Let us hope and pray (and work) that this is not the outcome.

Possible solutions might well include either a Ukraine that no longer includes Crimea (which was "gifted" to Ukraine by Nikita Khrushchev in 1954) and acknowledges the special interests of Russia in eastern Ukraine, and/or a Ukraine that has a close and cooperative relationship with BOTH Russia and the EU. Looking in these directions rather than finger-pointing would be more productive, and less potentially catastrophic, than a rush to confrontation.

John Hallam and Peter King are co-conveners of the Human Survival Project. John Hallam is also a CPACS Council member.
Funding Peace – Australia Japan Foundation

by Lynda Blanchard and Mike Nix

In a political climate of funding cuts to humanities research and teaching, CPACS acknowledges the support of AJF in providing $15,000.00 seed funding in 2013-14 for an innovative collaboration between CPACS (Australia) and Chuo University (Japan). Specifically, the praxis project engages young people in a student-initiated peace education and cultural exchange project: Investigating Diversity, Human Rights and Civil Society.

The AJF funded pilot project proposed three key activities:

The objectives of this project address the AJF goal of increasing understanding in Japan of shared interests with Australia. Notions of human rights and peace education are shared interests between Japan and Australia. This is in keeping with the AJF's Strategic Plan 2010-2013, in terms of (human) security and Australia and Japan’s shared contribution to promoting regional solidarity and stability through peace education and cultural exchange. The principle objective of this project is to develop a modest collaboration between universities in Australia and in Japan, to support cross-cultural education in terms of investigating diversity, human rights and civil society in Australia. Three key perspectives on diversity will be developed as part of the programme: (i) Indigenous Issues; (ii) Multicultural Societies; (iii) Gender Equality. The aims of the project are twofold: to engage high quality collaboration between (FUNDING Continued on page 20)

Reflections on the Mentoring Process

By Juliet Bennett, Tim Bryar and Punam Yadav

The process of mentoring students from Chuo University was educational, inspiring and a lot of fun. The project spanned a four-month period across Tokyo’s winter and Sydney’s summer. It began in October, as buds were beginning to bloom, with a spontaneous invitation from Lynda to her “three-musketeers”. Although deeply consumed by our own research deadlines, we jumped at the chance to be involved. In November we landed in Japan’s most lively city, convening over Asahi and sushi at what for our bodies was the early morning hours.

The innovative peace education praxis kicked off the following day, with a six-day line up of informative meetings and oishi meals organised by our gracious hosts. Sho, Ryo, Yumi and Nozomu’s enthusiasm for these social issues, and the cross-cultural perspectives that they presented comparing Australia and Japan were both informative and impressive.

It was an excellent example of Paulo Freire’s (1972) pedagogy of ‘problem-solving education’ (or peace education) in action. This reflective and participatory pedagogy stands in (REFLECTIONS Continued on page 20)
Innovating Peace Education Praxis

At the end of February, CPACS hosted, with wonderful hospitality, a visit by four undergraduate students and Mike Nix from the Law Faculty at Chuo University, Tokyo. An experiment in cultural exchange - the ‘Investigating diversity, human rights and civil society in Japan and Australia’ programme breaks with top-down, classroom-based templates for study abroad. The Chuo University team together with programme co-ordinator Lynda Blanchard and HDR students Juliet Bennett, Punam Yadav and Tim Bryar at CPACS, explored a praxis for learning about and building peace with justice based on the principles of agency, engagement and dialogue. With enthusiastic support and mentoring from CPACS colleagues, the Chuo students planned, arranged and carried out their own fieldwork in interviews and visits to organisations, activists and academics working in key areas of human rights including in indigenous rights, refugee issues, and sexual diversity. Whether conducting an interview with a nurse in the medical consultation room at the Asylum Seekers Centre, or joining in the Tribal Warrior Aboriginal Cruise of Sydney Harbour; joining the fun at the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, or getting to know Hazara, Kurdish and Tamil refugees at a splendid lunch reception in the Blue Mountains; we learnt from people on the ground through interaction and participation. Having researched the repatriation of Ainu ancestral remains, the (INNOVATING Continued on page 21)

Japan

by Juliet Bennett

An experiment with experiential learning
Brought me back
Seven years had passed
Since I called Tokyo my home

Like an ex-lover
Familiar but different
A flood of memories
In the streets, big and small

The love and the hate I once felt
for the city, for the culture and for a boy
Fused, buried
A different self, many life times ago

Filled with paradoxes
Racism to extremes
Celebrated or despised
Aliens swimming in a foreign sea

of manicured faces
Designer top to toe
Toy cars, play trucks
Uniforms with helmets

Hostesses and serial killers
Cold beer and hot rice wine
Pachinko, yakuza
Ninjas, samurai

Loud lights scream
A subtle honour
In a fantasy land called Japan.

Juliet Bennett is the Executive Officer, Sydney Peace Foundation and graduate of CPACS
Engaged Pedagogy as Peace Praxis:
The week-long pilot programme in Sydney included a series of meetings, interviews and discussions organised by Chuo & CPACS peers after comprehensive research on each of the student initiated topics. Networking with NGOs, community groups, scholars and civil society organisations enabled a rich learning from theory to practice. The pilot programme included participating in the Tribal Warrior Aboriginal tour of Sydney Harbour (with CPACS council, staff & students), the Refugee Language Programme (CPACS) and the Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras parade; visiting the Diversity Centre (Auburn) and the Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group; meetings with Marriage Equality Australia and Refugee Art Project directors; interviews with museum curators and peace scholars on campus and visiting inner-city Aboriginal communities.

The programme marks a new development in study abroad programmes for Chuo, with key innovations including the emphasis on student-directed and fieldwork-based research, the comparative focus and exchange of information about issues in Japan and Australia, and the building of relationships not just with CPACS but with civil society organisations and activists in both countries as part of the programme. Many people have been at work behind the scenes at Chuo to make this breakthrough possible including Shizuo Satoma, Yuri Komuro, Steve Hesse, Sacko Nagashima and the Dean of the Law Faculty, Yasuyo Nakajima.

Happily most of them were able to step into the limelight for a moment and join us at the drinks reception and farewell party on the last day of the CPACS visit to Tokyo. We were also delighted that Maki Nishiumi, an expert on international law and refugee issues, and Hideo Nakazawa, a specialist in grassroots social movements, both of whom will be teaching on the programme at Chuo from 2015, as well as Uwe Makino who researches Ainu issues, were able to meet the team from CPACS.

This AJF funded pilot project has culminated in an institutional collaborative agreement for an ongoing programme, fully funded by Chuo University with CPACS engagement to provide lectures and oversee setting up meetings as well as inviting the broader CPACS community membership to host home stays for visiting students from Japan.

Postscript—Already this model has provided inspiration for a proposed Canadian student exchange!

Lynda Blanchard (CPACS) and Mike Nix (Chuo) are the Project Co-coordinators, “Investigating Diversity, Human Rights and Civil Society in Japan & Australia”.

(REFLECTIONS Continued from page 18) contrast to what Freire calls the traditional ‘banking education’, referring to situations in which teachers communicate in a manner akin to depositing money in a bank. Teachers make ‘deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat’. Such a process fosters a ‘scope of action’ that ‘extends only as far as receiving, filing and storing the deposits’ (p. 46).

Problem-posing education, on the other hand, encourages critical engagement as the crux of the education process. The accounts of Yumi, Sho, Ryo and Nozomu (on pages 15-17) illustrate a reflective engagement with their chosen subject matter.

Central to peace education is a bringing together of the roles of teachers and students, understood to be ‘simultaneously teachers and students’ (p. 46). This was certainly evident in throughout project, as the three CPACS students took a back seat while the Chuo students were the drivers in their own research questions and learning process. The expanded agency of the Chuo “students” turned them into teachers and us “teachers” into students as well.
Ryo and Yumi taught us about the possibilities for refugees in Japan which allows only 30 people into the country per year (actually only six refugees were recognized in 2013! A new low). They also taught us about the different types of resettlement programs available for refugees and asylum seekers in Australia.

It was fascinating to learn from Nozomu about LGBT people in Japan, gaining insights into the lack of explicit oppression that LGBT’s face alongside pervasive cultural difficulties streaming from a general desire not to be seen as different.

It was also very interesting to learn from Sho of the predicaments faced by the Ainu people of Japan, who were only officially recognized as Indigenous in 2008. She shared her interest in comparing their journey with that of Australian Aboriginals, and in particular the process of repatriation of ancestor remains that have been studied and displayed in universities and museums.

Some of the most important learning within this exchange project was done on trains and mooching in stations. Conversations with Chuo students shone light on cultural differences between career paths in Australia, which can involve an average of three years at an organization and an eclectic mix of cross-disciplinary experiences, and those in Japan, which tend to involve a life-time of work at the one organization in a set path. Conversations between us stimulated thought, clarified ideas, and inspired new perspectives on our PhD research.

Our mentoring project continued via email and Skype, over the swelteringly hot (in Sydney) and icy cold (in Tokyo) months of December, January and February. During this time we helped our Chuo students connect with the people that they had researched and wanted to meet with during their time in Sydney. We followed this through to encourage and support their meetings across the city. The project finished with fireworks of colored masks and funny hats at Sydney Mardi Gras in March.

Each stage of the process was a learning experience, as much for us as it was for the Chuo students. It appeared to teach everyone involved far more than a banking education model could.

Education as a pedagogy of peace, Freire writes, a ‘practice of freedom’ rather than a ‘practice of domination’. It encourages both students and teachers to ‘develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves’ through which ‘they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation’ (1972, p. 56).

The experiences of Yumi, Sho, Ryo, Nozomu and ourselves, shared in their accounts above, suggest a promising contribution of cultural exchange in peace and human rights education, and in transforming global society to be more peaceful and just.

Reference

Juliet Bennett, Tim Bryar and Punam Yadav are HDR Students.
children learn about indigenous issues, I could understand how greater awareness of Aboriginal issues has developed. Mr. Gordon said that most people in Sydney have their own views on indigenous people and policy, whether for or against.

They have the chance to know and think about indigenous people and issues. Most Japanese people, however have not taken this step. They have less opportunity to know about Ainu people and other people who live in Japan. I think this step is the preparation phase for repatriation based on negotiation. Another important factor is the participation of indigenous people in different levels of society and in repatriation processes. People such as Mr. Gordon and Mr. Poll who work in organisations returning remains, are needed. The involvement and control by indigenous people themselves in the repatriation processes is important to find the right way for both interested parties.

Arranging interviews was challenging for me but I could exchange information with three repatriation experts about the Aboriginal and Ainu situations and learn many points about repatriation in Australia, which I couldn’t find from secondary research. I hope that I can use these experiences in Australia to think about the situation in Japan more deeply.

Ryo Ito - Health issues of asylum seekers in Japan and Australia

As well as research in Japan, my fieldwork in Sydney included meetings with Pam Blacker, a nurse at the Asylum Seekers Centre, Safdar Ahmed of the Refugee Art Project and Lesley Carnus of the Refugee Language Program. I also talked to asylum seekers at the Language Program and Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group. One expected similarity between Japan and Australia is that many asylum seekers suffer serious mental health problems and that detention worsens these. In contrast, one difference is that there is no financial support from the Australian government for medical care for asylum seekers in the community until they receive some kind of protection visa, whereas there is some support in Japan although it is insufficient. As a result, perhaps, medical support from NPOs, like the Asylum Seekers Centre seems to be more important and widespread in Australia than in Japan. I realized again from this that refugee health issues are borderless problems all over the world.

At the start of my research, I thought that refugees were not related to me and that they live in a different world to mine. However, this was changed by meeting with refugees in Sydney. I noticed, for example, that refugees are often well-educated people, because I met refugees who had PhDs or Masters Degrees and who were teachers or pharmacists. Many people, however, only know about refugees through negative or inaccurate media coverage, and don’t hear the actual voices and experiences of asylum seekers. So I’ve learnt from my fieldwork that chances to actually talk to asylum seekers and refugees, and projects like Refugee Art Project that help them have a voice, are very important for changing the understanding about refugees and their situation.

Yumi So - Resettlement programs for refugees in Australia and Japan

The aim of my research was to find out what Japan, which launched a refugee resettlement program in 2010, could learn from Australia’s long experience of resettling accepted refugees (as opposed to its harsh treatment of asylum seekers). During fieldwork in Sydney, I visited various organizations working with refugees such as Settlement Services International and Auburn Diversity Services.

One interesting insight is the much higher level of collaboration between government and civil society in Australia, and the much greater role given to NGOs for resettlement of refugees. The Japanese government tries to provide most assistance to refugees through the Refugee Headquarters (RHQ), but this is insufficient so other Japanese civil society organizations have to support refugees. The Australian government, however, funds various organizations that provide resettlement support to refugees. This collaborative approach in Australia between the government and civil society seems to facilitate effective support for refugees.

It is very important to have support for newly arrived refugees in their first language until they can learn the language of the country they settle in. From this perspective, employing so-called “former refugees” at the refugee assisting organization seems effective as they are fluent in the language of their country of origin or ethnicity. Unlike Japan, many “former refugees” engage themselves in assisting refugees in Australia. Even though this is hard to achieve in
Japan, where the number of migrants and refugees accepted is much lower, I think that Japan should also aim at this. Arranging and conducting interviews myself was challenging, but this kind of fieldwork research enabled me to understand the roles played by civil society organizations and “former refugees” in assisting refugees. As well as gaining important information about Australia, I was able to share my knowledge about refugee resettlement in Japan, and thus to have interesting discussions with my interviewees. I hope to use this exchange of information to think about how Japan could establish a better resettlement program.

Nozomu Kawashima - LGBT activism and media coverage in Japan and Australia

The environment for LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) in Japan is difficult. There is no Gay marriage law and little LGBT activism, and even though there are LGBT parades, the mainstream media does not report them and most straight people do not know about them. This situation, and my interest in becoming a journalist, raised questions for me about how Mardi Gras in Australia became a national event, how media coverage affected the growth of Mardi Gras and if it contributed to the advancement of Gay people’s rights, or had turned Mardi Gras from politics into entertainment. In my fieldwork in Sydney, I investigated Mardi Gras’s influence on the marriage equality debate in Australia, new media coverage of LGBT communities, and NGO activities for marriage equality. I attended the Mardi Gras parade and also interviewed LGBT activists and journalists, as well as CPACS Director, Jake Lynch.

One interesting discovery is that Mardi Gras is still a political protest. In the parade, I saw many “marriage equality” placards and banners, and I could feel the passion for equality from many people there. According to Andrew Potts, of Gay Star News, many school kids participate in the parade, which helps sweep away their stereotypes of LGBT people.

Another discovery is that the political situation for marriage equality in Australia is still difficult. According to Rodney Croome of Australian Marriage Equality, “understanding” Gay people and “taking action” for them are different. Although 60% of people in Australia support marriage equality, same-sex marriage doesn’t directly affect the majority of (straight) people, so they focus on other problems. That’s why Prime Minister, Tony Abbott can avoid dialogue on marriage equality.

The process of our research was really fruitful because we could experience book-based research in advance in Japan and then practical learning when we conducted interviews and fieldwork in Australia. The learning in Japan is important, but experiencing for myself is more important because I could make the interesting discoveries above. So fieldwork research helped me understand the issues from diverse perspectives.

Mike Nix and Lynda Blanchard are project coordinators, “Investigating Diversity, Human Rights and Civil Society in Japan & Australia.”

What is our Creation story?

by Zachary Wone

Whether in the form of a history, a narrative or a yarn, stories have always been a part of the human experience. Storytelling is universal. Every culture has its own storytelling traditions. Stories can take many forms. They can be written or spoken, shared or personal, epic or every day. They can be practical, spiritual, entertaining or often a combination of all three. We tell one another stories of what happened to us that day as well as stories about the creation of the universe. Indigenous peoples in Australia in particular understand the power of storytelling in the maintaining of culture, passing lore, laws and morals through generations in the form of stories which have lasted thousands of years.

Whether they are family stories passed down from our parents and ancestors or national stories learnt in the classroom textbooks, stories now as ever, help us to understand where we fit into the wider world. We can see this increasing desire to know more about ourselves through stories in the rise in popularity of TV shows like “Who do you think you are?” and websites like ancestry.com. We are starting to put the story back into hi-story. Despite this trend, Australia in 2014 is, in my opinion, a nation without a creation story. As a re-
The good news is that now, thanks in large part to the struggles of previous generations, Indigenous people and other alternative voices are increasingly heard and respected. As a result the old version of our story which excluded us is no longer unquestioningly accepted by the majority of Australians to the extent that today, even the most conservative politicians must acknowledge the significance of Indigenous people and culture or risk seeming out of touch.

Our generation is more fortunate than any before us because there have never been more opportunities to learn about previously untold aspects of our history. There have never been more books, more articles, more documentaries or other resources available which we can use to improve our understanding of the past. And of course as always, the old people who lived history first hand are usually happy to share their stories with us if we are prepared to listen. Unfortunately, too many of us are still living day to day mostly unaware of the history of the land we are standing on. This tells me it is not just an issue of access to knowledge. There are other less tangible, more psychological barriers such as shame and guilt as well which must be overcome. Although we are living in the age of technology and information, there is no substitute for real human relationships.

Last year I went to the National Australia day celebrations in Canberra for the first time and was genuinely surprised to find that neither Captain Cook, 1788 or the First Fleet were mentioned once. Neither were Aboriginal culture or history featured. I half-jokingly asked some of my (non-Indigenous) friends who I was with what time the First fleet re-enactment would start and was greeted with nervous laughter. People seemed genuinely embarrassed of the events the day was commemorating and I was breaking an unspoken agreement amongst those in attendance not to talk about it. I have nothing against Guy Sebastian or Timomatic or a good airshow every now and then, but it felt there was something lacking and that it was all a bit of a missed opportunity. I was struck by the sense that although we as a society have mostly moved past blindly glorifying our British history above all others, we are not yet ready to fully embrace the Indigenous story either. It seems to me that we are still stuck in the middle and not really sure which way to go.

Even though it is uncomfortable for some, I believe our story is too important to leave to academics and politicians alone to tell on our behalf. It goes to the heart of who we are as a people and as a nation. In the process of reclaiming our creation story, we will be at times ashamed, at times inspired, but in the end it all needs to be told because it is our story. It’s all we’ve got and we need to own it if we are to face each other and the world with confidence. The Australian story cannot have one author, it belongs to all of us so this must be a shared effort. But first we need to be brave enough to start the conversation. We need to start talking about the past, for our future’s sake.

Zachary Wone is a MPACS student and the National Research Director of Y.A.R.N (Youth Awareness Resource Network).
A Tale of Two Sabahs: looking through the CPACS lens
by Craig Oehlers

On 1 February 2013, I arrived on holiday in the eastern part of Sabah, a Malaysian state on the island of Borneo known for its natural beauty and abundance of wildlife. On the surface, this tropical paradise delivered everything the glossy travel brochures had promised and more. East Sabah revealed to me an extensive network of tributaries bordered by lush jungle canopies teeming with monkeys, snakes and ‘Birds of Paradise’, most of which I saw for the first time. The local Sabahans who I encountered were generally friendly and seemed overall at ease with life. All the while, there was no hint of danger and I left satisfied that I had experienced the ‘real Sabah’. Or so I thought.

Two weeks later, eastern Sabah exploded into a war zone. Unbeknownst to me, a group of more than 200 Filipino nationals of Tausug background had left Southern Philippines and arrived in eastern Sabah around the time of my visit. Their purpose? To lay claim to Sabah as a territory of the Sultanate of Sulu, a historic kingdom that the insurgents claimed encompassed Northern Borneo. According to their claim, Sabah was rightfully part of modern-day Southern Philippines and not a legitimate part of Malaysia. The insurgents indicated their willingness to use force if necessary to achieve their aim. Unsurprisingly, the Malaysian authorities responded swiftly and forcibly by mobilising five military battalions and declaring a ‘Special Security Area’ – effectively imposing martial law over parts of eastern Sabah that had previously been peaceful for decades. Reports of deaths among government forces and insurgents, as well as bombings by Malaysian fighter jets, underscored the speed at which the crisis escalated. All this hostility transpired in a part of the world which, only a few weeks earlier, I had visited and perceived to be a pristine, safe and peaceful tropical oasis.

As a result, I couldn’t help but feel that I had overlooked certain aspects of ‘the real Sabah’. My subsequent education as a MPACS student has enabled me to look back on that experience with fresh analytical eyes. I have learnt that the absence of overt forms of violence does not necessarily equate to sustainable peace. Structural violence can still exist even when one does not see tanks in the street or hear of riots breaking out. Similarly the hospitable and welcoming surface of Sabah masked the undercurrents that existed within its borders and beyond. While many Sabahans of Filipino descent have full Malaysian residency, there is also a segment of the community that have entered Malaysia as undocumented migrants and do not necessarily have the same level of access to legal, health and employment opportunities, regardless of the extent to which they have integrated into, or contributed to, broader Sabahan society. This social inequality is, in my view, a form of structural violence. Based on my experience in Sabah and my studies at CPACS, I have learnt that it is sometimes necessary to go ‘beyond the guided tours’, and instead engage with local men and women in the street, the coffee shops, the churches, the mosques and the NGOs. It is at this level that one hears the narratives that provide glimpses behind the mask of society, and that strip away the veneer of glossy brochures and glitzy tourism ads.

Social Identity Theory is another concept that coincidentally manifested in the 2013 Sabah conflict. Research suggests that many members of the Tausug (Suluk) community in Sabah see themselves as Tausugs first and Malaysians second. Tausugs (Suluks) in Sabah view their social identity as one that transcends national boundaries to the point that they perceive a close and ongoing link between themselves and Tausugs in Southern Philippines. So historically entrenched is this social identity that leaders of the Tausug (Suluk) community in Sabah had to publicly declare their support and loyalty to the Malaysian government to avoid suspicion in the aftermath of the 2013 attacks, despite there being no evidence of systematic paramilitary collaboration between local Sabah members of the Tausug community and the foreign Tausug...
insurgents. In making this declaration, the Tausug community in Sabah avoided any chance of social identity conflict escalating into direct violence against them, and instead recriminations by the Malaysian government were mainly limited to military operations against the invaders from The Philippines.

There are a range of other factors that came to light as a result of the 2013 insurgency. The purpose of this article is not to engage in a comprehensive social-political examination of Sabahan society and its regional neighbours, but rather to highlight the manner in which we, as CPACS students, have been provided the tools to look a little closer, a little differently, and with greater scrutiny, at the world around us. This is not to argue that we should view each new environment primarily through a prism of cynicism and doubt. Indeed, a preoccupation with societal conflict and political issues runs the risk of ignoring the simple beauty of the surroundings and the vibrancy of different cultures.

In contrast, my brief experience in Sabah has taught me that the true richness of travel is often obtained through a first-hand understanding of various facets of local cultures and environments, and that these facets can range from harsh realities to sublime beauty, from conversing with members of local communities about their problems, to exploring the majesty of the rainforest. It is only when we experience the full gamut of what a place and its people have to offer, including listening to the stories of the women and men as they go about their daily lives, that we can truly say we have ‘been to that place’.

Craig Oehlers is a MPACS Student.

The Changing Face of Hamas

by Neven Bondokji

Four years of my life were spent in CPACS, researching on the Palestinian Resistance Movement (Hamas). My research stint at CPACS resulted in a doctoral degree and recently my thesis got published in the book Hamas: Social Identity, Violent Resistance and Power Politics. I share with PeaceWrites readers here the results of four years of research at CPACS.

The book analyses the discourse of Hamas from 2005 to 2009. It analyses 196 Arabic daily statements of Hamas, interviews with Hamas leaders in regional media outlets, and other key documents of Hamas. The research aimed at examining how Hamas constructs violence towards Israel and Fatah to its local audiences. The analysis in the book builds on two theoretical grounds: Galtung’s concept of the ABC of Conflict Triangle, which clarifies the relation between structural, cultural and direct violence, and Tajfel and Turner’s Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict from social psychology. This interdisciplinary nature of analysis allowed me to examine the intergroup dynamics that led to the rise of Hamas, and relations with other Palestinian actors. It also helped clarify how intergroup relations contribute to the loop of violence in the overall Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

I examined the construction of structural violence, cultural violence and direct violence in the dis-
course of Hamas in relation to the two main actors: Israel and Fatah. Initially, the results, I have to confess, were shocking! Hamas has undergone considerable shifts in its political ideology and in its perceptions towards Israel and other Palestinian actors. These influence its political choices today.

Changes towards Israel
The main finding in the construction of violence towards Israel is that Hamas’ antagonism of Israel relies now on nationalist arguments compared to religious antagonism that was prevalent in earlier discourse of Hamas. From 2005 onwards, Hamas employed a discourse of human rights, the right to self-defense, and identity needs. Hamas articulated this shift through three factors: the continuous emphasis on Israel as an “occupying entity” or “occupation establishment.” Hamas ascribed the relational between Israel and Hamas as one of occupier against occupied, thus, defining the overall framework of this antagonistic relation. This differs from earlier discourse in which Hamas attacked Israel due to perceptions of a Jewish conspiracy against Palestinians and attacked everything Israeli.

Hamas also showed an indifference to Israel’s Jewish identity. In the 196 analysed daily statements, for example, there was no reference to Jews or Judaism. Earlier Hamas discourse, however, including the Charter and statements from the 1990s, are replete with references to Jews and a Jewish conspiracy against Palestinians and Muslims. Despite this indifference, Hamas continued to discuss violent resistance in religious frames. It used the word “Jihad” to construct violent resistance against Israel. Yet, this use has been on a steady decline. Instead, Hamas placed an emphasis on the term “resistance.” This shift from Jihad to resistance signifies a shift from religious justification of violence to nationalist grounds. Although my doctoral research focused on the period from 2005 to 2009, I subsequently did a follow up analysis of Hamas discourse for 2010-2012. This decline remains a continuous factor.

It is striking that in Hamas’s recent discourse a huge emphasis is placed on re-orienting its discourse to a language of human rights and international norms. The period of analysis is one during which Hamas was placed under intense international and regional pressure, after winning the Palestinian legislative elections of 2006. So perhaps it sought to articulate its positions in a language that would be understood by international actors. Hamas justified direct violence in three arguments: as a retaliation to Israeli attacks on Palestinians; as the most viable option given the prominence of violent events in media and thus through violence Hamas would communicate its cause in the media; and that resistance was the choice of the general Palestinian public. While Fatah represents a commitment to peace negotiations, Hamas represents a commitment to resistance, armed or unarmed. So when the Palestinians voted for Hamas, they voted for resistance, so goes Hamas’ argument.

The overall analysis of Hamas’ discourse on violence towards Israel reveals the significant shift from the religious to the nationalist in all Hamas’ arguments against Israel: be it the occupier-occupied dichotomy, references to Palestinian sha’b (national community) instead of umma (Islamic community), use of resistance instead of Jihad, and the emphasis on the right to self-defense. I have detailed the significance of this shift and its implications for prospects of peace with Hamas in an article I recently contributed to the online magazine Footnote on Israel Palestine www.IPfootnote.com (an online magazine that publishes research findings on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict).

Changes towards Fatah
Hamas has been the main rival of Fatah on the Palestinian national scene for years now. Yet, it was Hamas’s victory in the 2006 elections that unequivocally confirmed long-held Hamas claims that it represents the political choices of Palestinians. The ugly chapter in the relation between the two rivals unfolded in mid-2006 and continues till today. It included violent clashes, complete disregard to Palestinians national institutions, and a division of the Palestinian Occupied Territories between two rival governments: one in the Gaza Strip and another in the West Bank. Within this context, the analysed discourse of Hamas clarifies how Hamas antagonised Fatah in that period.

One shocking finding in examining the relation between Hamas and Fatah is the intense religious antagonism of Fatah in Hamas’ discourse. Fatah leaders and members are constructed as the religious other. Terms like “hypocrites” and “sinful faces” describe Fatah leaders. Hamas also asserts its religious superiority since it chose “Jihad” against Israel.

The clashes that occurred in Pales-
tinian Territories in 2006-2009 were an alarming signal of the wide polarization between Hamas and Fatah over power politics. Hamas justified violent clashes between the two rivals as an attempt to establish rule of law, and to assert its legitimate right of governance after winning the elections. It should be noted here that Hamas has indeed won democratic elections. It was Fatah that could not fathom that Hamas unsettled it from its leadership position in Palestinian politics. Yet, with violence instigated by both sides, they both emerged as selfish parties hungry for power regardless of Palestinian suffering on the ground.

Intra-Palestinian violence was not limited to Hamas-Fatah clashes. Hamas has also engaged in violent confrontations with the then newly established militant group Jund Ansar Allah, which sought to establish an Islamic emirate in Gaza. Violence between the two in August 2009 resulted in 25 deaths. New militant groups have since mushroomed in the Gaza Strip. The latter sought to undermine Hamas rule, arguing that Hamas has put a halt to its violent resistance to Israel. They also criticized Hamas as a “secular” movement! This indicates the rise of more extremist groups in Gaza as a result of three factors: the Islamization campaign lead by Hamas and Islamic Jihad in Gaza for decades now, the failure of Palestinians and Israelis to reach any mutually acceptable deal that improves ground realities for Palestinians, and continuous Israeli attacks on Palestinian lives and restrictions on their freedom of movement.

Overall the findings in the book shed light on the continuous transformation of Hamas since 2005 and clarify the overall shift from the religious to the nationalist in its perceptions of Israel. It also clarifies the ensuing religious and political polarization of Palestinian politics. The findings highlight how international law and human rights are used to justify and explain Hamas violent choices; it also signals the shift in its employment of religious discourse to attack and antagonize local rivals. The book clarifies these after a background on the rise of Hamas as a result of intergroup dynamics and conflicts in the Palestinian national setting. The book might attract scholars with interest in the study of violence dynamics, academics with interest in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and diplomats.

Neven Bondokji is a recent Doctor of Science Graduate at CPACS.

International Women’s Day 2014: Celebrating Women, Inspiring Girls and Gender-Inclusivity

by Lisa Townshend

This International Women’s Day (IWD), the world celebrated the extent to which women have overcome gender-based injustice and violence. The world recognised the important role women play in the development of peaceful societies and the active participation of women around the world. However, despite such significant and positive developments, the situation of many women and girls in conflict zones and across much of the developing world remains to be far from acceptable.

In an event co-hosted by the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies and the Global Social Justice Network and organised by MPACS graduates Lisa Townshend and Kerstin Jonzon, ‘Celebrating Women and Inspiring Girls’, a panel of women were brought together to discuss various issues still confronting women and girls in 2014. Panellists included Naomi Steer, Australia for UNHCR, Susan Banki, Department of Sociology and Social Policy (USYD), Punam Yadav, Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (USYD), Rosemary Grey, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (UNSW) and the session was moderated by Kate Moore, UNICEF Australia.

The panel discussion covered issues including the impact of conflict and violence on women and girls (both positive and negative), their unique experiences as refugees, the continual threat of gender-based violence throughout much of the world and the representation and reporting of sexual violence in the International Criminal Court. In addition to these diverse topics, one component - the important role of men, boys and the community in contributing to gender justice, equality and peace – emerged as a central issue, critical to the future of gender equality. Susan Banki pointed out that the re-definition of gender norms is required to challenge unjust social and cultural practices which continue to subjugate women today. Hearing stories about women’s organisations on the Thai-Burma border and grassroots-based organisations led by women in many refugee camps around the world, panellists argued that it is through inclusive community-based action and conversation that such gender norms can be ef-
effectively challenged. To do this, men and boys need to be actively involved and committed to the development of a more gender-just society.

While International Women’s Day focuses specifically on women and girls, a focus on gender-justice needs to assess both masculinities and femininities in understanding the impact of conflict and violence on women and men, boys and girls and in the development of peaceful societies. In a recent report by International Alert, Rethinking Gender in Peacebuilding, the relational aspect of gender is emphasised as critical for the success of peacebuilding work. The complex dynamics of gender deeply embedded in and constructed by context calls for a more nuanced approach to gender-inclusive peacebuilding initiatives. The role of women and girls in the development of peace therefore cannot simply mean that peace is more easily facilitated by women. The message of the IWD event clearly echoed International Alert’s thesis – that whilst women and girls do experience more vulnerability and gender-based violence, a narrow understanding of gender could lead to more harm than good.

For details about the event and participants go to: www.celebrateiwd.com

Lisa Townshend is a recent MPACS graduate.

Fourth Model Global Parliament in Sydney, 25th October 2013

by Chris Hamer

The 4th Australian Model Global Parliament was held on Friday 25th October in the New South Wales Parliament House. Our Model Global Parliaments are generally made up of university students who enact the role of members of a future Global Parliament, empowered to deal with the pressing global issues which confront our global village. They debate motions which might come before such a Parliament. The topics chosen for the fourth MGP were Peace, Security and International Law.

The event was organized by valiant efforts from Andrea Booth and a Steering Committee including Kayla Nesbitt, Megan Sofyanra, Lucy Soyoung Park, and Yuanyue Sun. The event was much enjoyed by all concerned. Several of the student MPs asked when the next MGP would be held, and hoped to be part of it.

The day began with brief talks from several invited speakers, preceded by a welcome from our Parliamentary sponsor, Mr Bruce Notley-Smith, MP for Coogee. The speakers included Prof Geoffrey Hawker from Macquarie University, and Dr Devorah Wainer and Prof John Keane from the Institute for Democracy and Human Rights at Sydney University, followed later by Mr Stephen Killelea, Director of the Institute for Economics and Peace. All the talks were on completely different topics, but all were very pertinent and relevant to the MGP. Geoffrey Hawker discussed the increasing importance of global civil society, Devorah Wainer emphasized the importance of compassion and fellow-feeling for the ‘other’, and John Keane commented briefly on the history of democracy, while Steve Killelea talked about his invention of the Global Peace Index.

After a lively discussion of the reasons that members were interested in a Model Global Parliament, the debating sessions began. It was noticeable the members found it difficult to wear two hats at once. They were keen to approve motions calling for action by the Model Global Parliament. They were a little more reticent or timid about assuming the role of the Global Parliament itself, and passing major decrees on its behalf.

Nevertheless, the members had a very enjoyable and sometimes amusing session with each other, and generally ended up asking for
more. We find this concept is embraced with enthusiasm by the young people, especially by international students, and we look forward to it being taken up by universities in other parts of the world in the future.

One problem was that the event occurred rather late in the year, and most CPACS students had to prepare for tests and assignments the following day. We will try to hold the next MGP earlier in 2014, and attract more participants from CPACS.

Extracts from the Communique follow.

Model Global Parliament,
Convened in the Legislative
Assembly in the Parliament of
NSW, Sydney, Australia
Friday 25 October 2013

Communique

Students studying at Australian universities, from Australia, Bangladesh, Britain, Canada, China, Denmark, Hong Kong, Lebanon, Indonesia, India, Republic of Korea, Pakistan, Palestine, Nepal, Nicaragua, Taiwan (Republic of China), USA participated in the Model Global Parliament that was convened in the NSW Parliament House on Friday 25 October 2013. A group photo was taken on the steps of Parliament House. Then the students engaged in an interactive discussion about the value and purpose of a global parliament.

The formal session opened with a roll call and adoption of the draft agenda. The first agenda item focused on the theme of Peace. Mr Steve Killelea, AM, Founder and Chairman of the Institute for Economics and Peace, gave an introductory comment about his invention of the Global Peace Index and stayed for the debate, offering further comments after the successful adoption of all the motions.

After a lunch break, the Model Global Parliament resumed in The Legislative Assembly, where two further agenda items were considered - on Security and on International Law.

The following motions were adopted.

**Agenda item 1: Peace**

**South Asia**

Noting the incidence of violence against women globally, which continues to undermine efforts to promote peace around the world; The Model Global Parliament calls upon the Institute for Economics and Peace to extend its measures within the Global Peace Index to include prevention of violence against women as a key item in measuring peace in every country.

**North Asia**

Noting the serious threat to peace, global cooperation and human security posed by weapons of mass destruction; and noting that there are different pathways to peace, The Model Global Parliament resolves to establish a global agency to research the different cultural and social understandings of peace in the effort toward the banning of weapons of mass destruction and to monitor further development of future weapons of mass destruction with a view to the creation of an enduring peace.

**Southeast Asia and Oceania**

Democratic peace theory suggests that democracies are hesitant to engage in armed conflict with other democracies (Hayes, 2012). Furthermore, democracy is associated with civil peace (Gleditsch, Hegre, & Strand, 2009). The Model Global Parliament resolves to facilitate and encourage democratic development in aspiring countries, while respecting and assuring the prevalence of national sovereignty.

**Volunteers Worldwide**

Noting the increasing academic interest in concepts related to human security, and the groups of people who are now suffering from the impacts of security issues such as wars and environmental degradation;

Calls upon the Model Global Parliament to establish two separate intergovernmental organizations to facilitate more effective support for groups suffering from the consequences of wars and significant environmental destruction.

**Agenda item 2: Security**

**Africa**

Noting the continued economic impact that piracy, primarily off the coast of Somalia, has on international shipping and the general peace and security of the Gulf of Aden, Calls upon the Model Global Parliament to establish a committee to investigate the practical and economic factors that contribute to the participation in piracy of those in local coastal communities and to determine strategies as a response.

**Latin America**

Noting the current context of war on terror and increasing insecurity, and that the greatest threat for the peace and security of the world is economic instability and
inequality.

Calls upon the Model Global Parliament to facilitate more effective action for the developing nations of the world to have greater say in their economic affairs, through greater community consultation that is transparent, and less intervention and imposition of negative conditions from external entities to access capital markets.

**Agenda item 3: International law**

**Europe**

Emphasizing the increased interdependence between sovereign states of the world,

Noting that with the increased interdependence there is an imminent need to establish a global court to adjudicate upon transnational issues.

Resolves that the Global Court shall have jurisdiction within areas of competence of the Global Parliament. The Court's jurisdiction shall be based on the principle of complementarity where it is the states' primary responsibility to settle disputes within their jurisdiction. Only when the states fail to do so, it will be for the Global Court to decide upon the matter. The court shall additionally have jurisdiction to decide if the Global Parliament is acting within its given mandate.

**Intergovernmental Organizations**

Noting that decisions by Intergovernmental Organizations are dominated by the national interests of the larger states, which violates the international spirit of IGOS and fails to bring fair and just agreements for the majority,

The Model Global Parliament resolves that Intergovernmental Organizations provide fair representa-

- Peace Transition in Nepal: Alternative Perspectives on Security, Gender, and Development”. My paper was on Social Transformation in Post Conflict Nepal: A Gender Perspective. It was my first ISA. My paper was well received and got very good comments and feedback. It was also a great opportunity to test out my ideas and network with like-minded people.

Colleagues Dr James Tonny Dhi-zaala and Dr Wendy Lambourne also attended this year’s ISA conference, meaning that CPACS had its strongest ever representation. Both Wendy and James presented papers as part of the Human Rights Section which coordinates papers on transitional justice. James reflected on lessons from the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, including challenges with implementation of its comprehensive but controversial final report. Wendy presented a paper on her research in Burundi, including a critical analysis of the United Nations approach to transitional justice, its theoretical and empirical foundations, and the extent to which it is fulfilling the promise of national consultations, civil society participation and local ownership.

**CPACS at International Studies Association (ISA) Annual Convention, March 2014, Toronto**

by Punam Yadav

The International Studies Association’s Annual Convention took place in Toronto this year, from 26-29 March. According to the organiser, there were about 5000 scholars from various parts of the world. I was invited by Associate Professor Tatsushi Arai, SIT Graduate Institute, Vermont, USA to put a panel together for the Peace Studies Section on Nepal. There were five papers focusing on post conflict Nepal. The panel was entitled “War-to
Jake Lynch’s new book can be seen as a response, for Peace Journalism, to a critical article years earlier by BBC correspondent David Loyn (2007). Loyn contended that: ‘The opposite of peace journalism is good journalism’, a category he referenced to the ‘established tools’ of the profession: objective and factual reporting, accuracy, search for truth and emotional detachment. Peace journalism, on the other hand, with its call for the journalists to choose context over events and find non-violent responses to conflict situations, Loyn presented as a ‘uniquely unhelpful and misleading prescription of journalism’.

For those who have been engaged in the debate or pondered over it since then, including myself, have been neither here nor there in terms of deciding which side was right. Indeed one could find several grains of truth in Loyn’s argument if it was not for this question: do the contemporary standards of conflict reporting reflect the values which Loyn argues for? In the same article, Loyn has acknowledged that there is certain ‘glibness’ in the reporting of trauma, ‘meaningless throwaway analysis’ of the conflict and ‘a preponderance of seeking grief in place of understanding reality’.

What then makes ‘good’ journalism? Isn’t the term ‘good’ as ‘subjective’, ‘relative’ and ‘value-oriented’ as ‘peace’?

Lynch, director of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (CPACS), University of Sydney, Australia, takes up these issues in A Global Standard for Reporting Conflict (2014). The book, he says in the Introduction, defines the role of journalists in public spheres in the light of the political and communication theories (including those of Herman and Chomsky, Foucault, Galtung, Lederach, Castells and Habermas) and shows how these relate to ideas from peace research in the form of peace journalism.

Evidently, at the heart of the author’s argument lies the Nordenstreng’s (2001) notion of media being the ‘audit of democracy’ (in Lynch, 2014, p. 9). But media can only play this role in society if it is empowered with the ability to employ ‘critical awareness, and
self-awareness, of what it is, could be and what it should be’ (p. 9). ‘Good journalism, then, has to be imbued with a critical awareness’ (p. 28).

In answering what makes good journalism, the book takes the ‘insurgent’ approach for both journalism and peace. In order to ‘make up’ for the biases in the construction, agency and norms inherent in journalism, good journalism is ‘bound to take insurgent form’ and in doing so, it ‘stands out from the mainstream’ (p. 33).

Journalism is only ‘any good’, in the sense of being worth having, insofar as it contains the potential for, and supports the practice of, insurgent forms. The insurgent forms are the ‘good thing’ about journalism, and the ‘good bit’ of it. (Lynch 2014, p. 33)

Similarly, the book offers ‘an alternative understanding of peace, [as] an insurgent form’, that is nurtured and developed in peace movements and is seen ‘from our own interiority’ that is reflected in our relations within families, workplaces, communities, nations and countries (p. 47). Peace is a desirable goal not as ‘an end state requiring everyone to agree on everything’ but because it ‘allows people to live with conflict… and find alternatives to “bloody routes” in responding to it’ (p. 50). Peace can thus claim to be ‘an organising principle for journalism, a discursive practice with a remit to facts’ (p. 50).

It is in this perspective, that the book views peace journalism as ‘an approach to reporting conflicts that can be regarded as good journalism’ (p. 51), with the ability to ‘perceive the tacit inscription of dominant accounts’, critiquing them, highlighting the background and thereby ‘chasten power and take issues with ascendancies’ (p. 51).

These arguments are supported by an extensive research project undertaken by the author, along with co-researcher Annabel McGoldrick, in four countries – Australia, Philippines, Mexico and South Africa – each dealt with in a separate chapter of the book. In an elaborate methodological approach, the experiment is conducted in three phases: the first being the content analysis of the ‘existing news coverage in the country’ from the selection of ‘two newspapers and two broadcast services’ (p. 53). In the second part, throughout the four experiments, two versions of the same story were prepared: one in war journalism model and the other in peace journalism, and each shown to a different set of audience. Then, in a third phase, reactions of the audiences were recorded in terms of their response to different versions that evoked different ‘feelings’ in them, such as ‘anger’, ‘hope’, ‘hopeless’, ‘sad’, ‘fear’, ‘empathy’ etc.

The conclusion drawn by the author from the findings is not inconclusive: ‘the audience responses supply validation for peace journalism’ (p. 11). And its application lies ‘within reach of the idiom and range of professional journalism’ (p. 107). Although the pattern of the validation varies in each country – the media in Philippines exhibits more of the PJ trends followed by Australia, then South Africa and lastly in Mexico – they form important findings based on empirical evidence.

However, what I find more significant is the ‘evaluative criteria’ formed by the author for this experiment to code and compare the media content within the PJ and WJ models. It is based on what Shinar has outlined as the characteristics of peace journalism stories in his book Peace Journalism: The State of the Art (2007, p. 200). Following these attributes, the author gives the selected stories one point for exhibiting each characteristic. A minus half point is given to the peace journalism stories if they exhibit three ‘passive indicators’ (Lee & Maslog, 2005) of ‘emotive language, “labeling” of conflict parties as good or bad, and partisan reporting’ (Lynch, 2014, p. 53). ‘Mean averages of these scores indicated the PJ quotient of conflict reporting of that country’s media at the times of the study, enabling comparisons to be made vis-à-vis a global standard’.

These criteria have certainly proved a useful technique for the author in his comparative content analysis; but more importantly, the approach demonstrates a potentially effective way to gauge the extent of peace journalism being practised in the media across the world.

In the final analysis, the book though claims to present ‘a global standard for measuring conflict reporting’; it is not meant to be ‘handed over’ to the academics and journalists as a ‘pattern to follow’. Rather it is desired to be seen as an effort in ‘contributing to a shaping of ideas’ and debate (p. 9).

For me, the value of the book lies in it providing the guiding path for further cross-cultural research to bridge the gap between the professional and theoretical aspects of
peace journalism in public spheres. In other words, if peace journalism can be identified in four countries, it can be found in other countries. It stands on the empirical research and is elaborated by theoretical debate.

Moreover, although it has been said elsewhere that the book is an attempt to marry good journalism with peace journalism; I think that it is more a matter of reuniting the two. Somewhere along the way in time, space and profession’s evolution, the good aspects of journalism—as it should be—got severed from its spirit—the author has just made the effort to reunite them.

References:


Rukhsana Aslam is a student at Pacific Media Centre, Auckland University of Technology.


by Annabel McGoldrick


Filled with sensible conclusions on what news is doing to us—confusing, boring and distracting its readers and audiences—he argues that a lot of news in ostensibly free societies is exerting a similar effect to North Korean-style censorship: “Enough to undermine people’s capacity to grasp political reality—as well as any resolve they might otherwise have summoned to alter it” (de Botton, 2013: 32). He suggests that it is because we are flooded with news, that average people in the UK, for example, check the BBC news site at least five times a day: ‘Why?’, he asks.

Just as CPACS Director, Associate Professor Jake Lynch, wrote 15 years ago “What are journalists for”? (Lynch, 1999), de Botton is asking what all this news is for? Deploying suggestive metaphors and engaging with deep philosophical questions, he likens the experience of news to watching a friend drown from behind a pane of glass: one reacts with concern, even alarm, but is rendered powerless to intervene. Our fear and anxiety are raised by so many stories, yet we are left powerless to act without any means of how to utilise such facts.

Many such arguments are considered in my own recently submitted PhD thesis: The Evolving Case For Peace Journalism. Peace Journalism, as originally conceived by Professor Johan Galtung, is peace, truth, people and solution orientated (Galtung, 1998) whereas its counterpart, the dominant form of war journalism, is violence, propaganda, elite and victory orientated. Reading de Botton, it is clear that much of the news he is complaining about is war journalism, which bores and disempowers us. What he misses is that war journalism contributes to escalating conflicts and cheerleading for violence as a solution.

He is correct in his critique of other news such as economic news that it doesn’t talk about the important stuff. Such as why 2% of world population own 50% of global wealth and that the news itself is
intimately intertwined with consumerism. Most people buy things, he suggests, not to have things but to be changed. Many of us are driven by an “unconscious desire for some form of psychological transformation” (de Botton, 2014: 227). To make that explicit, he suggests that travel news about a “calm and tranquil” hotel is really describing how we want to be, not the product we are buying. So he recommends that the deeper purpose of the products be made more explicit, and the news sections renamed accordingly:

- from “Travel” to “Calm”;
- from “Dining” (restaurant reviews) to “Conviviality”;
- from “Technology” to “Resilience”, thus connecting our consumerism with our deeper needs to help us become “happy shoppers”.

Art and culture, he argues, is our best therapeutic tool: "Art is a therapeutic medium that helps us guide, exhort and console audiences, assisting them in evolving better versions of themselves" (de Botton, 2014: 236). So journalists could become like “pharmacists” recommending the best artistic remedies for our ills: a novel to help with emotional trauma or a certain film to help to pull us out of negativity.

The wider theme of the book is how news can help individuals and society to “flourish”. For me this is the same as asking, how can news contribute to peace? While viewing his subject through an emotional and philosophical lens, de Botton does not make his own theoretical perspective clear enough.

He does, though, draw on some fascinating historical and philosophical contexts. For example, Hegel’s view that in modern societies news replaces religion as our central source of guidance; that worshiping saints demonstrates an innate need to admire the best in our society, so perhaps there is a role for celebrity news; that tragedy according to Aristotle can be a civilising force, so if disaster news was written properly it could be a “life simulator” to help us avoid such calamities.

One of de Botton’s big complaints is how boring most news is, even when it is about the deaths of thousands such as a horrific war in the Democratic Republic of Congo in Africa. Why, he asks, is it because ‘we’ as human beings don’t care? No, it’s because the reporting convention of objectivity means that: “our fascination empathy are merely slumbering” (de Botton, 2014: 91). Art and poetry does the opposite, he suggests, reminding us of the power of Shakespearean drama to engage our interest and bring vitality and meaning to any situation.

I rather enjoyed this poem he reproduces on the power of poetry to bring life, news to simply bring death.

“It is difficult to get the news from poems yet men die miserably every day for lack of what is found there.”

by William Carlos Williams, Asphodel, the Greeny Flower (1955) (de Botton, 2014: 105)

"What Williams fears is that without regular contact with poetry, we may lose our vitality, cease to understand ourselves, neglect our powers of empathy or become unimaginative, brittle and sterile. Literature, for Williams as for [the Victorian novelist] George Eliot before him, is the medium that can reawaken us to the world. The news may have an intense surface seriousness - which sensible people naturally imagine gives it a greater claim over our attention than verse could ever hope to command - but the artist recognizes its dangerously anaesthetizing effects" (de Botton, 2014: 105).

But de Botton goes on to make one recommendation that I strongly disagree with, which is to sacrifice accuracy to make stories more compelling! There is such a danger of manipulation here – such manipulation is already evident in claims by the Israeli security state to make out that Israel is always the victim, or lobbying groups funded by fossil fuel companies who set out to denigrate and downgrade the science on human-induced climate change.

This is the conclusion of my thesis, that audiences feel more empathy and hope when they watch peace journalism and particularly those stories that tell a personal story of transformation. Whether it be former gang members in Mexico studying at university or a reformed rapist in South Africa now empowering boys to respect women: someone who has experienced violence and found or suggests a solution. Audiences engage and themselves spontaneously recommend cooperative, nonviolent responses to conflict after watching such transformative stories. Oh wouldn’t
that be a flourishing world, where, on hearing about war, disaster, tragedy and pain we would feel empathy, then engage and recommend cooperative nonviolent solutions! I think they call it peace.

References:

Annabel McGoldrick is a part-time lecturer at CPACS.

Inclusive rather than Exclusive
by Hilary Roots

Why not set in motion a campaign for Australian families to ‘foster’ a refugee? While not easy, it could be an enriching experience for all. It would be a way for decent Australians and the government to demonstrate man’s humanity to man. After all, it is worth remembering that no refugee becomes a refugee lightly, and it would have been much easier to stay at home, had the circumstances been easier and more liveable.

Some governmental financial help for each foster family would help towards food and board for, say the first three to six months, while the welcomed stranger finds his or her feet and sets about integrating into the community and developing confidence with which to find employment.

Being inclusive rather than exclusive would be less expensive and certainly more compassionate than maintaining the present detention centres in the country, and shuffling bewildered detainees between Villawood and Curtin, without even mentioning Manus and Nauru.

The idea is not extreme nor without precedent: following the 1956 uprising against Russia in Hungary, Australia welcomed some 14 thousand refugees while New Zealand took just over a thousand - of these, several hundred young men were taken in by generous New Zealand families. My parents, who had experienced war first-hand, applied to take one, only to find there were "none left".

In New Caledonia in 1997, confronted by a squad of military police flown from France, some one hundred and ten Chinese boat people were saved from repulsion by a local people’s committee that sprang into existence. These families offered foster homes to the hapless men, women and children who had landed on their shores.

Now, some sixteen years later, most of these ‘foreigners’ have integrated into the community; young ones have mastered the French lan-
On Privilege
by Haylee Fuller

With each moment it becomes more lounge than garden.
Do you want to see what’s happening in the garden?
Best turn out the light.
Turn out the garden light.
Let the garden reencounter with its self.
Let shadows be cast, free.
Let garden life be liberated.
Let night creatures free of fear and floodlights.
Do you want to see what’s happening in the garden?
Turn out the light.
Turn out your lounge room light.
Let the dark encroach.
Let it bathe you, and encompass you.
Breathe deep in the dark.
Let your vision vary and adjust.
There, in the absence of light, the window pane will be
That which disappears.

Haylee Fuller is a recent MPACS graduate.

By night,
Turn on the light.
Take a seat in the most comfortable chair.
Open the windows of your lounge room.
Do you want to see what’s happening in the garden?
Watching your window,
From light to dark,
You’ll see yourself reflected.
Turn on the garden lights.
You’ll see clearer.
But the night you sought to see
Will flee.
The garden
Will lose the charm of dark.
Night creatures will hide.
The shadows will be others.
Natural will be nothing.
The gardens face will replicate yours.

With each moment it becomes more lounge than garden.
Do you want to see what’s happening in the garden?
Best turn out the light.
Turn out the garden light.
Let the garden reencounter with its self.
Let shadows be cast, free.
Let garden life be liberated.
Let night creatures free of fear and floodlights.
Do you want to see what’s happening in the garden?
Turn out the light.
Turn out your lounge room light.
Let the dark encroach.
Let it bathe you, and encompass you.
Breathe deep in the dark.
Let your vision vary and adjust.
There, in the absence of light, the window pane will be
That which disappears.

Haylee Fuller is a recent MPACS graduate.

Leticia Anderson, PhD Graduate (3rd from right) with MPACS graduates (L-R) Daniel Buckingham, Blake Mcdermott, Lisa Townshend, Maria Autunno, and Peter Thomas on graduation day 2 May 2014.
Nominations for the 2015 Sydney Peace Prize: “The Art of Peace”

by Juliet Bennett

The Sydney Peace Prize is Australia’s only annual international prize for peace. The awarding of the Sydney Peace Prize is a celebration of inspiring people and their achievements.

Each year the Sydney Peace Prize, $50,000 and a hand-made glass trophy crafted by the Australian artist Brian Hirst, is awarded to an individual:

- who has made significant contributions to peace with justice locally, nationally or globally, including steps to eradicate poverty, racial or sexual discrimination, and environmental destruction - conditions often labelled as “structural violence”;
- who is committed to the promotion and attainment of human rights; and
- whose work illustrates the philosophy and principles of nonviolence.

The Sydney Peace Prize has national and international significance in terms of support given to leaders for peace. It also identifies Sydney as a city with a prominent peace agenda.

While the Sydney Peace Foundation anticipates the announcement of the 2014 Sydney Peace Prize recipient (watch this space!), we are also looking ahead to the nomination and selection process for 2015.

We invite you to submit a nomination for the 2015 Sydney Peace Prize, in fitting with the theme “The Art of Peace”.

A play on Sun Tzu’s The Art of War, this timely theme draws attention to the Centenary of the First World War and the role of art in its many forms, such as painting, sculpture, music, dance and literature, in the pursuit of peace.

In 2015 the Foundation will highlight the work of artists who have used their creative skills and imagination to contribute to the aim of peace with justice.

The Sydney Peace Prize Jury selects the Sydney Peace Prize recipient in the year prior to its award. The Jury accepts nominations in writing or email. Nominations should be accompanied by an explanation as to merit of the nomination against the criteria for selection, together with as much relevant supporting material as possible.

Starting in August, the Jury will spend three months assessing the merits of the nominees’ efforts to promote peace with justice.

Please download the nomination form from our website to assist with this process.

To learn more about the selection process please visit our website: http://sydneypeacefoundation.org.au/sydney-peace-prize/nomination-process/

Nominations for the 2015 Sydney Peace Prize are due by the 31 July 2014.

Juliet Bennett is the Executive Officer of the Sydney Peace Foundation and graduate of CPACS.

Editors: Punam Yadav and Lydia Gitau

P +61 2 9351 7686 | F +61 2 9960 0862
E arts.cpacs@sydney.edu.au
W sydney.edu.au/arts/peace_conflict/

Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, Mackie Building, The University of Sydney NSW 2006, Australia

Photo credits: Jessica Stephanie Arvela, Juliet Bennett, Wendy Lambourne, Lesley Carnus, Chuck Fuentes, Shoshana Faire, Craig Oehlers, Lisa Townshend

Layout: Primy Cane

DISCLAIMER: The views in this publication are solely those of the contributors.