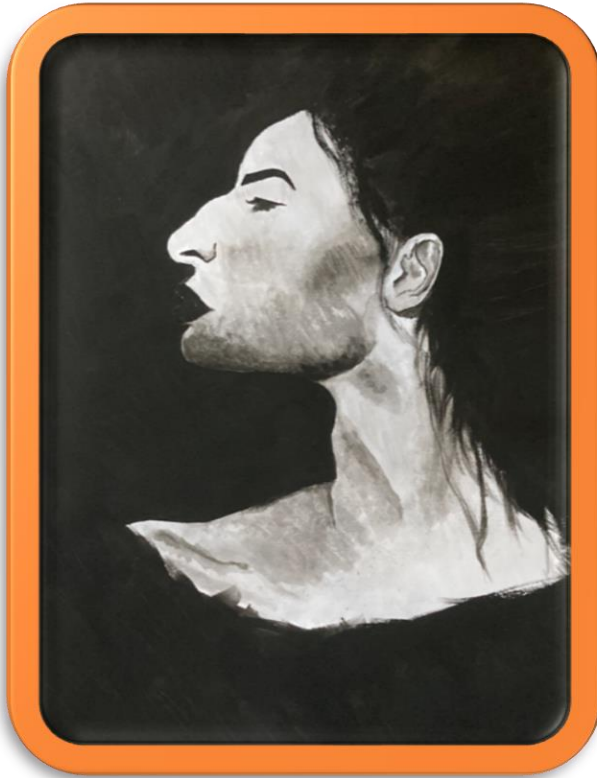




Kindlehill School

TURNING 21 IN 2021



Artwork by As Address, *"Art creates that space where your voice can be heard".*

Sanctuary

Year 10 Studies in Peace Building

Sanctuary

In our studies of Peace Building, Class 10 students took on the mammoth tasks of researching key human rights issues of our time, understanding the complexities behind these and using their individual voices to call for social change. The titles alone reveal to you that this young generation have a social conscience that is global and yet is grounded in their personal lives.

We began our studies on Peace Building, exploring the idea of Sanctuary, not only as a place of rest and safety; but as a place for the shared exchange of ideas and ideals, of grief and disillusionment, and of potential for change and hope grounded in how we choose to live our individual lives.

These are powerful and impassioned voices, resonant with the complexities of living authentically amidst global crises that impinge on the lives of planet and people. They are unpacking their thoughts and questions about what is happening in the world. Together they call for hearts and minds, to deeply realise that change is not only possible but necessary.

Lynn Daniel
History Teacher

Titles

Arts Contribution to Peace, by As

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Arts Contribution to Peace

As Address

Art means so many things. Art is film, art is dance, art is colour. It's a skill, it's an idea, it's a tool. With or without meaning, art can alter, influence or completely change values, opinions and emotions. Everything in some way is linked to art. The building you sit in, the words I'm speaking, the clothes you wear.

Art for centuries has been used as a tool to influence and alter people's views and opinions.

The most popular form of influential art is propaganda. Propaganda came about in the 17th century and over time has been used to incite fear and hatred against a certain people.

The most common example of propaganda is Nazi Germany's. Propaganda was used to boost Hitler's popularity in Germany and played a key role in the persecution of Jews.

Art offers people a voice when they don't always have the freedom to use their own. It inspires change and offers the idea of a better world. It questions what we know. This can be seen in Glennon Doyle's book "Untamed," where Doyle asks the question, "Who were you before the world told you who to be?" The book questions society's 'standards' and raised many questions about how many live their lives.

Edouard Manet's "Olympia," painted in 1863, offered women a new power. Manet painted the nude in a new way. In the painting lies Olympia, her stare is confrontational. Her hand a barrier to her genitals, rather than the usual gesture of invitation found in every nude at the time.

So how do the arts contribute to changing hearts and minds for a more fair and peaceful world? I've spoken about how art has been used to influence people. I've spoken about art that has caused change and raised questions but I haven't mentioned how art actually contributes to peace. This is because I don't think people are yet ready for peace in its entirety. If people can't love and accept themselves, how can we ask them to apply that to somebody else?

So how can art promote peace within ourselves? Whether the thing you can't accept is your body, your race, your sexuality, your disability, your religion, art again creates that space where your voice can be heard. We can use art to familiarise and normalise the things that stop us from creating that peace within ourselves. I'm tired of hearing songs about someone that doesn't love you. I want to hear songs about how you are deserving of love. I want to watch movies that normalise all religions. I want to listen to podcasts about normal bodies.

I want to see art that promotes peace within ourselves.

How a False Narrative Killed 1 Million People

By Kasper

Nearly a million people killed and at least 37 million displaced; this has been the catastrophic effect of the so-called 'War on Terror'. After nearly a million dead, has the US achieved its goal? What was their goal to begin with? And how should we approach counter-terrorism in the future? September 11th this year will mark twenty years since several planes were hijacked in The United States of America by Islamic extremists; a plan engineered by al-Qaeda with Osama Bin Laden as the face of the attack. The attacks resulted in the tragic death of nearly 3000 people. This attack would forever change the world, its effect was arguably larger than the often compared attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941. What followed after 9/11 was twenty years of war, destruction, exacerbating cultural tensions and the crippling of foreign governments. This has been the US lead strategy to curb extremism.

1. The origins of 'The War on Terror'

A false narrative. As Napoleon Bonaparte once said, "History is a set of lies that people have agreed upon." This in my view holds true in regard to The War on Terror. Following the September 11th attacks, President George W. Bush declared a "Global War on terror" stating that *"Every nation in every region now has a decision to make. Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists."* This was the narrative set by the Bush administration. However, it was a new kind of war. The US wasn't fighting a country, they were fighting a covert organisation and a loose collection of ideas that operated in the shadows.

The US needed an enemy that people could perceive and identify, they needed a narrative. In order for public opinion to be favourable to war, you need an enemy. And in this narrative the enemy became Afghanistan. With Islam being the supposed hateful ideology that fueled the actions of the al-

Qaeda terrorists. To this day there are still conflicting beliefs about the true intentions of the American Industrial-Military Complex. We do know however that Oil played a large role. The US needed a reason to be in the Middle East and al-Qaeda gave it to them.

2. How does the Western World view Islam?

The only way you can create an enemy is by dehumanising others. The sleeping giant that is the American propaganda machine was awoken with one goal, to make Islam the enemy. A mentality that when examined seems like it's from the Dark Ages, a kind of renaissance of the Crusader ethos. Psychologist Nour Kteily set out to measure how Americans viewed different ethnic groups. The results were shocking, they showed that a significant cohort of Americans viewed Muslims as less human than Europeans.

The study by Nour Kteily proved the effectiveness of the propaganda that has been carried out over the past two decades. It has dehumanized Muslims. This is a powerful tool to make Americans turn a blind eye to atrocity. To be clear, Islamophobic sentiment in The West is much older than two decades, but its frequency and scale have rapidly increased. The effects of this are not only relevant to public opinion on war but also domestically to the treatment of Islamic communities. A study conducted by Gallup found that Muslim-Americans are 48% more likely to be victims of discrimination when compared with the average American.

If you want to know what dehumanization of Muslims sounds like, this quote from media mogul Benjamin Shapiro sums it up "Arabs like to bomb crap and live in open sewage". Keep in mind that Benjamin Shapiro has millions of viewers who actively take his statements as gospel. He is yet another Koch funded conservative, but his influence cannot be understated.

1. Is terrorism uniquely Muslim?

George W. Bush once said "I am driven with a mission from God'. God would tell me, 'George go and fight these terrorists in Afghanistan'. And I did. And then God would tell me 'George, go and end the tyranny in Iraq'. And I did." This is a holy war, violence sanctioned by God. This is not different to when

Osama Bin Laden declared a holy war against the West. Yet people seem to see them differently.

A common conservative talking point amongst western countries is that Islam is inherently violent and that the proposition that Islam is a religion of peace is intrinsically false. This sentiment is held by many people in the western world and has been nurtured into existence through effective propaganda. While I believe that all the Abrahamic religions are flawed in many ways and that historically the adherents of these religions have done horrendous things, I do not believe that their faith is the root cause of violence; it is however used as a scapegoat. For instance, when we compare the Bible and Quran, statements that are actively pro-violence occur as often in both texts.

It has even been said by some notable academics that the Bible is a more violent text than the Quran. Why then are Muslims more violent? Well, quite simply they are not. Terrorist attacks in Western countries are overwhelmingly committed by white supremacists who more often than not are adherents of the Christian faith. Not to mention, historically both Christians and Muslims have killed millions in the name of their faith and our best historical estimates show that Christianity is responsible for more deaths than any other comparable ideology. Despite all that, I still believe Christianity and Islam are religions of peace that both have extremist wings that are condemned by the majority of the members of said religions. The beliefs of Christian Fundamentalists and the beliefs of Isis are not as different as some would like to think.

2. How empathy is the best way to counter-terrorism

For twenty years our way to curb a rise in extremism has been aggression and strongman politics. As Republican presidential candidate Jeb Bush (brother of George W. Bush) once said *"We should have no empathy for radical Islamic terrorists. We should destroy them – plain and simple."* This kind of political policy has failed. It has failed to end extremism; it has failed to bring democracy to the Middle East and it has instead worsened the situation. Michael Ungar Ph.D and many other notable academics have all stated the

the best way to counter-terrorism is through empathy and understanding. It is not about destroying, obliterating or to *"Bomb the shit out of Isis"* as former US President Donald Trump claimed he would do.

Instead of violent responses to radical Islam we should have instead reflected on the context in which people became radicalised. The environment in which they grew up, was their radical reaction proportional to their situation, was there an aspect of young Muslims seeking a community and a purpose in the face of oppression? Absolute poverty, the death of family members and of your wider community, the destruction of your cities; all of these things create a vacuum in which people can easily be radicalised. The first step to solving this problem is empathy, attempting to put ourselves in the shoes of the young man from Afghanistan whose family was murdered, his town destroyed, and who lives in constant fear. What options did he have? Empathising with terrorists isn't easy and it's not the same as supporting their horrendous ideology. It is however a first step in the road ahead.

Fridays for Future

By Angela

On Friday the 21st of May 2021, a protest was held and tens of thousands of students all around Australia marched for this cause. Students from cities and towns all over Australia left their classrooms, taking part in the latest march for action on climate change. Strikes were held in 47 different places over Australia.

Despite the pouring rain in Sydney, students like myself still chanted and marched condemning the gas, coal and fossil fuel industries, and the Morrison government's recent decision to fund a 600million dollar gas-fired power plant. The government's decision to put 600million towards the gas power plant, in addition to allowing so much money in the budget for fossil fuels, gas and coal, will only drive us deeper and closer to climate change.

This protest was for School Strike for Climate to bring awareness to climate change and the changes we need to do now. The youth of today's society has come together to tell people it is not right and that we need to change our ways for the better.

There were many speakers including First Nation speakers, saying there can be no climate justice without First Nation people and how important it is for them to be a part of this. One of the organizers, 16 year old Natasha Abhayawickrama, told students she wanted to see the government change their ways to promote prosperity and wellbeing for all.

I was introduced to the climate crises when I started going to Kindlehill School. We viewed the film about Greta Thunberg and since then I have become passionate about the fight against climate change and the crisis we face. I truly believe if the youth stick together and keep pushing for change with the fossil fuel industries, that we can make a change. If we don't change,

I fear that it'll be too late for the next generation. And what everyone doesn't understand is that we are killing ours and everyone's future so make a change and help us fight the climate crisis.

Greta Thunberg born January, 2003 is an environmental activist who works to address the problem of climate change. She first learned about the problem when she was eight years old, and within a few years changed her own habits, becoming vegan and refusing to travel by airplane. Seeking to make a greater impact, Greta attempted to spur lawmakers into addressing climate change. For almost three weeks prior to the Swedish election Greta missed school to sit in front of the parliament with a sign that stated, School Strike for Climate. Although alone on the first day she was joined each time after this by more and more people, and her story gained international attention. After the election, Greta returned to school but continued to skip classes every Friday and this quickly became Friday for Future. Her action inspired hundreds of thousands of students all over the world to participate in their own Friday for Future days.

LGBTQI+

By Indi

I think one of the most saddening things to experience and watch is when a society, system, group, or individual won't overcome or change their harmful opinions, or mindsets for the benefit of another human being. Kindness and acceptance are such foreign concepts to so many and the result of a lacking of these two things create feelings of loneliness, isolation and a loss of self and shame of self. This same cycle is imbedded in the queer community.

Every queer person will experience a hateful act in their lifetime; whether it be a derogatory or threatening comment targeted towards them, refusal of service or employment, an act of violence or even murder in the overwhelming and rising rates. Society waits until there is death to be outraged, we only feel pain for a fraction of a second when a name slides across a news headline; their last moments, words, and breaths on display for the world to see; your willingness to care fading away with them off the screen as they disappear into the vast and endless sea of names.

We wait until it's too late to emerge from the silence. We wait until there is death and loss to be outraged, but where is and where was your outrage when the name you saw on the screen was living with an unsupportive family, who suffocated them until they couldn't breathe, until there was no point to breathe anymore. Where is the outrage when the average life expectancy for a trans women of colour is 35 in the U.S.A, or that queer youth are growing up in a society that tells us that we are undeserving of respect, that we are disgusting, broken, ungodly, outcasted and unloved.

These behaviours and mindsets are stitched to the heart of society, and you see it, we all do but you only continue to wait in silence, until there is yet another name to mourn for that fraction of a second. As a queer teen growing up in this day and age I am tired, my friends are tired, my peers are

tired, the entirety of the queer community and its supporters are tired; tired of the excuses and compromising, tired of the fear that drowns us.

Young people on average spend 16,380 hours of our lives at school. It is in this environment that we grow and change the most as individuals: physically, mentally, and spiritually. School should be a place of safety, a place for self-discovery and a place of acceptance and unconditional support; being surrounded by support and acceptance is what creates a sense of belonging that young people so desperately need to grow.

So why isn't this mindset and moral applied to queer students in so many schools? LGBTQ+ teens are taught by the school system and society that being authentically us isn't appropriate and educating us and others about queer issues and health isn't even up for conversation. Yet heteronormative sex, health, and dynamics is always appropriate and is always up for conversation. Queer youth are exhausted by double standards and excuses. "I'm sorry but i can't just change overnight" "Your life choices are appalling" "I was born in a different time, it wasn't like this when i was young;" I could keep going, these are only a few excuses that have been used against me in regard to my sexuality. Queer people have always been here, the difference now is that we are trying to create a safer more accepting world for ourselves, each other, and future LGBTQ+ people and youth. The school system has failed many upon many queer students, but it can also help to create a safer more accepting society for queer students to come. The school system can support queer youth in so many achievable and diverse ways. Here are some.

1. Talking about queer historical figures and influential queer people; for example Marsha P Johnson who was the "founder" of the Stonewall riots. Just addressing queer history and historical figures normalises the LGBTQ+ community in the classroom, which breaks down the idea that queer people are the outsiders.

2. Providing LGBTQ+ students with information and resources e.g., access to support groups or counsellors, providing information about queer positive health clinics, crisis housing (hostels) and lifelines.
3. Minimise and penalise any form of bullying towards queer youth regarding their sexuality or gender identity. Cracking down on harmful behaviour in school targeted towards LGBTQ+ youth sends a message to the perpetrators, victims, spectators, the teachers, and the parents that harmful or bigoted behaviour is unacceptable in school or anywhere else. The ways the school system can minimise bullying targeted towards queer students can be by employing queer teachers and staff, putting up queer positive posters, being vocal about LGBTQ+ issues, and creating a sense of community and support for queer students within the school.
4. Teaching queer sex ed. Because queer or diverse sex ed isn't a part of the school curriculum and because there is so much stigma surrounding the topic, schools refuse to teach any form of queer health. Queer students are going out into the world without any knowledge about how to protect themselves or their partners from STIs, what to use as protection, availability, basic hygiene in regard to same sex or gender diverse sex.

I know for me personally and for most queer kids and teens we are sick of being dismissed by the school system. Back-alley YouTube videos, Reddit or word off the street are not reliable sources to gather our information. We need proper, formal, diversely sourced, and reliable information provided by the school system. Learning about the way we live, grow, and interact isn't some at home project that we're expected to do all on our own; the fact that we need to ask to be taught or supply ourselves with such basic information reinforces that society sees us as different, and we're not. So, what are you going to do to change the cycle?

What can Animals Teach us about Living in a Peaceful Society?

By Ruby

Kindness, empathy, co-operation and equality, if you believe that these are uniquely human qualities, I am here to change your mind.

Survival of the Friendliest by Vanessa Woods and Brian Hare, gives insight on how friendliness and cooperation are the key to success for any species. Their research is saying that animals can teach us a lot about living in peaceful, smarter, and cooperative ways. They also say that friendliness and cooperation are two of the most powerful strategies for creating a peaceful society.

Two examples are dogs and bonobos.

The dogs: Humans selectively bred wolves (wolves that were the friendliest to humans) in order to domesticate them. Along with their friendliness increasing, so did their success as a species, with millions of dogs thriving today world-wide.

The bonobos: Woods and Hare studied with our closest relatives, the bonobos. Bonobos have never been seen to kill each other, chimpanzees on the other hand, have been known to kill, male bonobos are far less dominating than chimps, and due to this, have a far higher success rate of gaining a mate and having offspring.

So why do people fight and why do people put themselves first and why are they doing things that will lead to their own demise like ignoring climate change?

One of Darwin's most famous theories is “survival of the fittest.” Many people see this as “the biggest and strongest are the ones who survive” but this has been misinterpreted and many use this theory as an excuse to be aggressive toward others, and to prey on the “weak.” Survival of the fittest should be seen as: those who have higher skills of cooperation, teaching and learning, empathy, reciprocity, care, and equality. These are the one who truly thrive.

We can learn from our fellow animals, by observing the different ways that these species care for each other and their methods of cooperation and seeing each other as equals. We can apply this to our own practices of empathy and working together. By learning from animals, we can become more human.

How do we know?

There are dedicated researchers of this topic, one example is: Frans de Waal. Frans was mostly focused on the idea of animals (humans and primates in particular) being competitive and aggressive. However, he had observed how chimps forgive each other after a fight, they do this by kissing, holding hands and hugging. He had also observed that bonobos forgive too. After this his views on competitive behaviour changed. Via this observation Frans soon realised that animals uphold the Pillars of Morality, which are: fairness compassion reciprocity and empathy.

One study showing fairness in animals was an experiment involving Capuchin monkeys. It showed that if the monkeys got an equal reward, they were happy to continue the task, but if it was unequal, they were unlikely to continue. If the reward was unequal, the monkey receiving the lesser reward would dramatically show its displeasure. And most of the monkeys that had the better reward, would refuse to accept it until their friend received the same.

One example involving compassion shows how chimps console and comfort each other when they are upset or after some sort of loss.

Another study demonstrated reciprocity. Two chimps were held in a cage and there was a box with food outside of the cage. To obtain the food both chimps must work together to pull the box over to the cage and grab the food. After some time one chimp was full and lost interest in the food and walked away, the other chimp was still hungry and encouraged its friend to continue helping. The bored chimp decided to help again, even though it didn't want any of the food. This shows that the chimp wanted to help, not so it can receive food but so it can help its friend. Frans de Waal suggested that after one chimp helps, the other chimp will return the favour.

Kindness, empathy, co-operation and equality, do you still believe that these are uniquely human qualities?

Why is Alexei Navalny so Important in Russia?

By Vin

Alexei Navalny is a name heard all throughout Russia, Putin refers to him as “A certain political force,” and many others in Russia see him as the leader of the opposition. But who is Alexei Navalny? Navalny is a Russian lawyer, an activist and self-described “semi politician” and is vital in the opposition to Putin.

No matter how you see him Navalny has certainly made a name for himself all throughout Russia but why is Navalny so important? Navalny has been certainly the most outspoken voice against Putin and has been since 2013 but what does he actually believe in?

Navalny is very anti-corruption even forming an Anti-Corruption foundation called FBK. However, since his arrest Putin seems to believe that his voice has been silenced. Navalny was arrested for “Calling for a western backed revolution” and many very minor charges dating back to 1991 the charges even including jaywalking.

Navalny was poisoned in 2020 and it was later confirmed that the Federal Security Service of Russia had been responsible for the poisoning. When Navalny was arrested hundreds of thousands all around Russia protested in almost every major city from St Petersburg to Vladivostok. The protests were calling out the Russian police for Navalny's unjustified arrest.

Since practically the fall of the Soviet Union Vladimir Putin has ruled over Russia with an iron fist and even when he did not from 2008 to 2012, he still was Prime Minister. Putin has had a rule over Russia for effectively 22 years and it does not seem to be stopping anytime soon. Throughout these 22 years Putin has made constant legislation to be able to stay in office for a

longer time. And therefore, Navalny is such an important and vital figure in Russia.

But as someone who does not live in Russia why should we care about what is happening there? Well from Putin making constant laws against free speech, freedom of movement and making constant threats to ex USSR nations such as Kazakhstan and Ukraine, an end to Putin's tight grasp on all 200 million Russians is needed.

Origins of Kindness

by Leo

Bonobos share 98.7 percent of our DNA. From them we can learn to be more kind to our kin. They have a female dominated troop and are basically hippies. They enjoy sexual relations, they are matriarchal, empathetic, loving and playful. They are also highly intelligent.

Bonobos have sex and pleasure for fun and to form bonds and they also do a thing called genital rubbing which they use to resolve conflict.

Friendliness and cooperation are secrets to human success, says Mark Berkoff. He says it is not survival of the fittest but survival of the friendliest. The study by Brian Hare and Vanessa Woods of Bonobos and dogs shows that these animals develop partnerships with each other and with humans to help their species thrive.

Animals are fundamental to understanding ourselves. They can show us a lot about Darwin's theory of natural selection and how it works. The survival of the friendliest is based on the theory of human self-domestication. Bonobos can teach us more about being kind, not being aggressive and violent and greedy.

Hare and Woods argue that natural selection is nothing to do with beating up the competition in order to survive but rather working together with others. People assume we are higher than animals when we are animals ourselves. But animals are more than we think they are. Reciprocity & Fairness and Empathy & Compassion was studied by Franz de Vaal for many years. He was able to prove that some animals definitely have these qualities. Some animals are actually really smart and empathetic.

Studies in Non Violence and Non Cooperation. What are methods? The successes? The challenges?

By Issi

"An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind". Mahatma Gandhi.

Gandhi is perhaps one of the most well-known examples of a nonviolent protester and non-co-operator. The well-known 'Salt March' in 1930 was an act of civil disobedience against the British rule forbidding Indians from harvesting or selling salt. The Indians were forced to purchase heavily taxed salt. Gandhi, then 60 years old, set off on foot with a dozen companions from his ashram near Ahmedabad. Along the 240-mile journey to the Arabian Sea town of Dandi more and more people joined him, until approximately 60,000 people accompanied him. At Dandi, he and his followers defied the salt tax by illegally harvesting salt from the beachside. This continued for several months, thousands of protesters were arrested, beaten and jailed. Gandhi was also arrested but encouraged others to continue the civil disobedience. He was eventually released and spent months negotiating with the English. Eventually a truce was reached.

Gandhi's example of nonviolent protest, non-cooperation and civil disobedience is also called Satyagraha, which means 'holding onto truth'. He was determined to overcome evil (non-truth) by nonviolent resistance. His satyagraha became a major tool in the Indian struggle against British rule. Protest groups all over the world use this concept.

Nonviolent protests and non-cooperation are statements or actions expressing disapproval of or objection of something using peaceful means to bring about political or social change. Although he wasn't perfect, Gandhi greatly benefited the people of India.

Methods of nonviolent protest and non-cooperation

Public speeches and the use of social media platforms

Letters of support or opposition

Signed public statements/petitions

Marches, large group of assembled people (ie pickets, vigils, sits ins, strikes)

Posters, slogans, symbols, leaflets/pamphlets, newspapers/reporting

Protest art and music

Boycotting products, events or businesses

Symbolic acts of peaceful opposition

A recent example of nonviolent protesting is Greta Thunberg (age 15). In August 2018 she rode her bicycle to the Swedish parliament in Stockholm and sat alone on the cobblestones outside with a handmade sign reading “school strike for climate”, some pamphlets and her lunch. She posted her actions on social media, local journalists and passers-by took notice of her. Just 11 days after she started The Guardian published an article on her actions and the floodgates opened. She had hundreds of thousands of followers on social media. She turned up each day for three weeks straight and then continued striking on Fridays.

Greta Thunberg has inspired a worldwide movement called Student Strike 4 Climate or Fridays for Future. On the 18 of September 2019, 80,000 school students and parents gathered at the Domain in Sydney to strike for climate action. The protesters called for no new coal gas or oil projects, 100%renewable by 2030, and funding for all fossil fuel industry workers and communities to transition to carbon neutral jobs.

The Student Strike 4 Climate movement is important to young people because it is giving us the power to take control of our future. The students that are striking now will be the next generation of politicians and policy makers and I hope that climate change and ecological problems will be given high priority.

Culturally Safe in Early Childhood

By Chantae

I'm Chantae and I'm a proud Wiradjuri woman. Wiradjuri are what we call First Nations People, the first people to be living on this land. I want to work in early childhood and I want to bring culturally respectful activities for all children.

Here are some of my ideas:

Introducing and reading books such as "Black Fella, White Fella". I like this book because it shows that we are all human and we all belong to the same planet.

Craft Activities such as making Friendship Bands. We make these for one another. We do this because its kind and we should stand by and care for each other. We use the colours of black, red and yellow, as these are the colours of the Aboriginal flag. The yellow is the sun, the red is the earth, the black is the night sky.

I interviewed Jo Clancy for my research into culturally respectful ways in early childhood.

Jo says everyone should dance! Dance is storytelling and a great way to connect to culture. Jo says, Aboriginal children need to feel connected to and immersed in their culture, to feel safe. She says it is important for children to smell, touch, listen to and be with country. She also spoke about language being an important aspect.

For Aboriginal children to feel safe, Jo says we must acknowledge the diversity in Aboriginal students. They need to know who they are. They need to feel connected to and immersed in culture. She says it's important not to impose anything.

Really Good Children's Picture Books

1. My Culture and Me by Gregg Derise
2. Dark Emu by Bruce Pascoe
3. Shake A Leg by Jan Ormerod
4. Respect by Sue Lawson
5. My Lost Mob by Venetia Tyson
6. Welcome to Country: A Traditional Aboriginal Ceremony by Joy Murphy
7. Stolen Girl by Trina Saffioti
8. Ten Scared Fish by Balarinji
9. Black Fella White Fella by Neil Murray
10. Lost girl by Ambelin Kwaymullina

Can we Live an Open-minded, Conscientious Life?

By Dom

It is so important to live an open-minded, conscientious life. We easily make assumptions, paint pictures and have expectations that are not realistic. There is so much that is unknown about a single person. There are many layers behind the apparent finished painting.

When thinking about certain places or thing, your first thought is usually the impression you give that place, or something related to it. For example, think about India, is it maybe the food, the culture, population, caste system? What realistically do we know? Is it based on stereotypes?

The caste system is embedded within the main religion, Hinduism. The system is over 3000 years old and is essentially about ancestor occupation, entitlement, privilege, a complicated hierarchical group. These groups determine your social status, diet and behaviour. You inherit what caste you are in. It is made up of 4 main castes which have thousands of sub castes within it. One is not allowed to marry or even have social interactions with someone from another caste, people who do so, face discrimination. The higher caste which makes up a very small percentage of India's population, consists of people like politicians and priests. The lowest caste, Dalit, also known as the “untouchables” are frowned upon and are mistreated every single day. Ghandi was an advocate for non-violence but what were his attitudes and actions toward the untouchables?

Ghandi said that caste is the genius of Hindu civilization. To most of us Ghandi is seen as a great figure, a Mahatma. There are many great things that he has done and his influence continues. Yet there is a lot we don't hear about. For example, Ghandi said and did things with women that are rarely talked about,

his advice to husbands and wives was to not sleep in the same room, yet he engaged with women from all ages to “experiment” and test his vows.

Ghandi also used slurs to describe people of the lower caste. Rather than helping lower castes to freedom he would not assist and would diffuse movements that had to do equality. When in South Africa, he wrote that white people should be the predominating race and would describe black people as troublesome, dirty and living like animals.

One of Gandhi's first legal battles was in South Africa where he was demanding a different entrance for Indians at the post office so that they were not classed with blacks. These are many of the things that aren't shown to the public and are masked behind the reputation of greatness.

None of this information about Ghandi is hidden, it is accessible to anyone and yet it is almost never talked about. His legacy is changing in some parts of the world. Students and younger people are starting to become more aware of this are rallying for change. For example, statues of Ghandi on university campuses have been taken down. A key principle is to be aware, have an open mind, learn diverse viewpoints, and not think everything is as black and white as it can be portrayed. Everything has layers.