Support Us!

Like what you've read?

On Line Opinion is the only Australian site where you get all sides of the story. We don't charge, but we need your support. Hereig ½s how you can help.

· Subscribe or donate

Become a subscriber or donor. Even \$50 will make a difference.

Advertise

We have a monthly audience of 70,000 and advertising packages from \$200 a month.

Volunteer

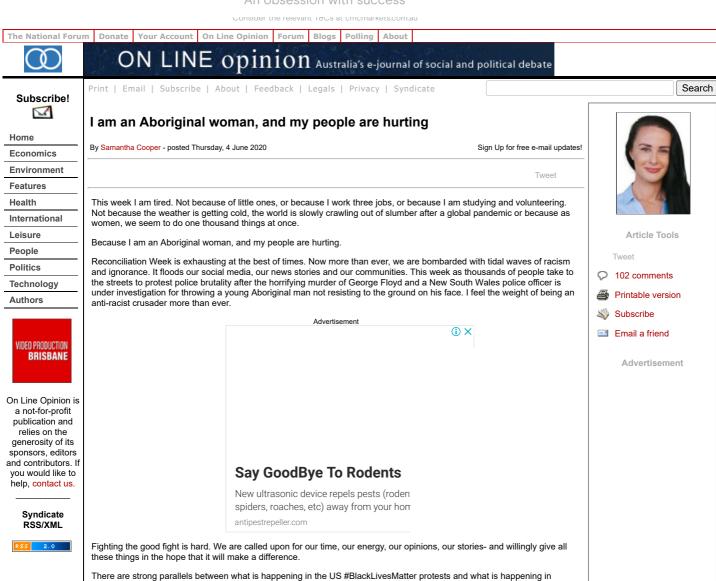
We always need commissioning editors and sub-editors.

Contribute

Got something to say? Submit an essay.

CMC Stockbroking

All obsession with success



Australia. The systemic racism in Australia means my people are thirteen times more likely to be incarcerated than a non-indigenous person, we are thirty per cent of the prison population and only three per cent of the people of Australia.

These statistics are often used for political campaigns and news articles to provide some factual basis for a well-intentioned piece but let me tell you what these statistics mean. These statistics are my family. It means that every third person I walk

Since the Royal Commission into Aboriginal deaths in custody in 1991 we have lost 432 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in custody. They are people. They have names and lives and families who miss them. #BlackLivesMatter is more

past in jail as a lawyer one day is my brother or my sister.

than a hashtag on twitter for these families.

These statistics are the reason I chose to pursue a career in the justice sector and to study the law. I watched an excellent lawyer and a compassionate police officer keep family members out of prison. As a People, we fear that one day someone in our family could be incarcerated as an Indigenous person, and we won't be able to protect them.

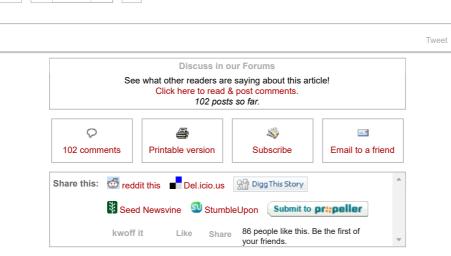
We have a global pandemic that goes unspoken year after year- it is violence against people of colour all over the world. In 2016 Will Smith said, 'racism isn't getting worse, it's getting filmed' and it is as accurate today as it was then. It feels, for my people, like another year has passed and nothing has changed. We are fighting the same fight today as we were ten and twenty years ago. We have been fighting for the same thing for generations. For equality.

Advertisemen

Watching everything unfolding in America is horrifying, and the deep-seated parallels between these international headlines and our stories at home; of police brutality, corrective services ignorance and mistreatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people when they are face-to-face with the justice system cannot be ignored- George Floyd in the US is our Aunty Tanya Day, Ms Dhu, Mr Ward, David Dungay Jr, Kumanjayi Walker.

We are exhausted by heartbreak that never seems to end and consistently called upon to comment.

This week be kind. Think before you speak. Don't tell of your anger over riots and looting, without remembering the First Nations people in this country experienced the same not too long ago, or the treatment of black people for hundreds of years which has resulted in thousands of lives lost, children removed, land pillaged, sacred places destroyed and intergenerational trauma for hundreds of years. You may not understand, but please stand with us.





About the Author

Pages:

Page 1 >

All

Samantha Cooper is Sector Sustainability Coordinator, Community Legal Centres Queensland



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons License.



Search Discuss Feedback Legals

© The National Forum and contributors 1999-2020. All rights reserved. ISSN 1442-8458
Web Design Brisbane by Internet Thinking

Privacy