

**Discussion and worship resource for youth groups  
and churches wanting to reflect on the recent events  
in the Cronulla area.**

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Special thanks also to Duncan Macleod for his reflections on racism and 'met the enemy'

Also thanks to Dave Andrews who's Christmas letter in 2002 has continually confronted the way I live in the world as a disciple of Jesus

*Our first task, as always, will be to seek to be the peace we advocate -to be calm in the midst of the turmoil -so we can act constructively - with clarity and courage.  
Our second task will be to deal with our own violence - to deal with our own actual or potential violence - in our own hearts, our own homes, our own communities and our own countries.  
And our third task will be to do whatever we can to stop the violence elsewhere - addressing the root causes of exploitation and oppression, as well as the bitter fruit of terror and terrorism. We may not always be able to stop the violence, but we will always protest against it.*

*God is for life against death, for love against hate, for hope against despair. There is no neutral ground. So let us wage peace well this year.*

- Dave Andrews in his 2002 Christmas Letter

In a world where polarization seems to have become the normative means of community control and an important tool for political control it's probably not surprising to see that racially inspired violence is gradually becoming more and more of an issue. As I said, it's not surprising, for if we polarize a community for long enough, whether it be liberal/conservative or white/not white or surfer/biker or Christian/Muslim we're setting ourselves up for some form of violence, of bullying and oppression.

The latest round of violence in the Cronulla area may have inspired some emotions in those young people and children with whom you work, live, pray, play, worship or teach. The media has played a very important part in that, I'll post more about the media's role in the proliferation of the violence in the area later, but unless your young people have not seen a tv, read a paper, been on the Internet or listened to the radio in the last few days they would have heard something about what's been going on in the area. As they've probably been immersed in the media reports over the last few days it may be a good thing for you to allow them to debrief the situation and their emotions...

This small document aims to give you a few ideas as to how we can share our feelings and reflections from the last few days, it will include a couple of prayers, some news articles, reflections, songs, films, ideas and activities for people working with children, youth and young adults to help them reflect on the violence that we've seen, experienced, watched, heard or read of over the last few days.

## **DISCUSSION RESOURCES:**

### **The Media and the Message:**

The media has played a large part in the escalation of the violence in the Cronulla area over the last few days, in one day the SMH had put up about 12 different articles while the television news programs had managed to sneak images, news, reflections in almost every news update that they could find.

The first news article I heard warning of the weekend's violence was on one of the news programs, in which the reporter was blaming a text message for inspiring more concern within the area. Now, even if the text message had already caused some concern the actual report, and the many articles in papers and on tv after that gave the message even more power and spread the message over suburb boundaries.

The news reports from the evening's riots were mostly close up shots, giving us the impression that the riots were everywhere, how do we know what the media is showing us is true?

The news has been blaming "Youths" for the violence in the area, while many of the ring leaders and people who have encouraged the violence would most likely be over the age of 25. The media in this case is perpetuating a long standing fear of young people in it's blaming of an unnamed group "youths" for the violence.

During my writing this piece the media have reported a growing support for a curfew (<http://newsletters.fairfax.com.au/cgi-bin16/DM/y/hvzq0Ktm6P0Bhi0JDCx0Eg>) in Sydney to stop the violence this weekend. Some tv programs have started telephone polls to test the publics opinion.

#### **Questions for reflection:**

- To what extent do you think the media is perpetuating or supporting the violence and racism?
- To what extent do you think the media is working against the violence and racism?
- To what extent do you feel the media is blaming young people for the racism and violence over the weekend?
- How do you feel about being a young person and at the same time being blamed for the violence?
- How have you responded to the images, news, reports on the violence over the last few days in Cronulla and surrounding areas?
- How do you think we could debate with, respond to or argue with the media in this case?
- How do you think the media treats young people?
- How do you feel about the way that young people are treated by the media?
- How can we respond in our personal lives? Should we be looking into alternative media? Should we stop watching commercial news altogether?

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### **Political Response:**

How has the political world responded to the violence over the last few days? From my reading of the commercial media and that of the not-so-commercial media the government's response has been to call the acts un-Australian, to speak out against the violence and to call an emergency meeting to discuss the granting of greater powers for police.

The police powers will now include the power to lock down trouble spots, confiscate cars, and order hotels and bottle shops to stop serving alcohol.

#### **Questions:**

- What do you think about the government's response?
- What are some other ways that the government could have done to prevent or discourage the violence?
- Do you think that greater police powers will help or increase the violence in the area?

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### **The "War against terror":**

There's something about the rhetoric of the "war against terror" that frightens me, and as the events of the last couple of weeks have unfolded the fear has continued to rise. The thing that scares me is the rhetoric of "the other" or "the evil people" it's the rhetoric that refuses to name who we're at war with, who we are battling and who is causing the terror. It's the same rhetoric that seems to be promoting distrust of people of middle eastern appearance, quite simply because if we don't know who is causing the terror then it could be anyone... it could be my neighbour or my school friend or my workmate.

It's also the same rhetoric that leaves me with a fear that the war will never end, because if we don't know who we're at war with how can we ever declare the end of the war, or even victory over them.

The media has been fairly keen to pick up the same kind of language in the reporting of the events in and around Cronulla over the last few days blaming "the youths" or "the surfies" or "the Lebanese" or other groups for the violence, thereby creating a fear of "the other" of young people, of surfies, of racial groups. In a way it seems much easier to blame groups of people without being specific, but in doing so you're demonising the group, creating unfair stereotypes and creating a fear that's not logical.

For some sound bites check out this link:

[http://search.abc.net.au/search/search.cgi?form=simple&num\\_ranks=10&collection=abcall&query=cronulla&meta\\_v=a m&submit=SEARCH](http://search.abc.net.au/search/search.cgi?form=simple&num_ranks=10&collection=abcall&query=cronulla&meta_v=a m&submit=SEARCH)

#### **Questions:**

- In what ways have the media demonised groups of people in the recent violence in Cronulla?
- How has the media influenced the way we relate to and look at people from these groups?
- Is this fair?
- How do we, how can we relate to the people that have been targeted by the media?

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## **What is Australian?:**

Check out the article in the SMH at: <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/what-is-australian-anyway/2005/12/12/1134235980386.html>

"This is un-Australian" says the politicians, the police and the media... The term "un-Australian" is almost becoming trendy in the media, but it's something that we might need to explore a little bit more. In a time where the government has actually gone to great lengths to determine what is and what isn't Australian, both geographically and socially, in a time where the government has determined that certain islands are and are not in Australian waters, where it does seem Australian to let people get into a position of almost drowning in the ocean (see the Tampa incident), where it seems Australian to detain children in refugee camps, to ignore the UN, to help invade a country without UN support and where it does seem Australian to allow it's citizens to be held indefinitely by American government.

And where it seems Australian to not apologise for the mistreatment of indigenous Australians in the countries past and present.

Just what is Australian, and are we as Christians are called to be something more than that?

#### **Questions:**

- What is Australian?
- What is un-Australian?
- What about these characteristics do we like, do we not like?
- What do you think our government thinks is Australian?
- Are we, as Christians called to be more than that?
- What does it mean to be a Christian?
- How easy is it to confuse what it means to be Australian with what it means to be a Christian?

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## **Racism:**

### ***Australian Racism:***

Written by Duncan Macleod, from <http://pacifichighlander.blogspot.com/2005/12/australian-racism.html>

Yesterday on TV we were shown racist attacks on Lebanese men at Cronulla Beach, Sydney. The fact that the media had spread the story and inflamed it before showing up to film the violence was bad enough. But to hear Australians talk about it today you'd think we were living in a multicultural paradise.

Was racism behind the attacks on Lebanese men at Cronulla? John Howard says that this behaviour is unacceptable but earnestly tells us that Australia does not have a problem with racism. We have politicians telling us that it was alcohol that made this happen. Talkback callers start by saying they're not racist but go on to make blanket statements about these Lebanese people who are behaving badly and need to be pulled into line.

Such denial of racism reveals a disturbing lack of self awareness. Having lived in Australia for five years I've heard a lot about being multicultural. We have many cultures living here. That's about as far as it goes. I have met very few white adults who have any interest in the language or customs of other ethnic groups. In the Uniting Church we talk about multicultural churches as the ones who are made up of ethnic migrant groups. They're the ones who must make the effort to maintain their ethnic identity in a predominantly British Australian culture. The majority of Australians have no need to engage with the 'other'.

I like what Leslie writes at Singular Existence in reference to Anne Jacobsen's now infamous blog post on a fearful encounter with Syrians flying with her on a Northwest Airlines flight.

*Most of us don't like to think of ourselves as racists. It conjures up visions of angry men in white sheets burning crosses on people's front lawns. We like to think we are better than that. We like to think we judge people for what they do, not what they are. But the fact is, we're all racists.*

*White, black, red, yellow, burning crosses or not, race provides the context for our perception of the world around us, particularly where other races are concerned. If we're smart, we acknowledge our inherent racism and filter our observations accordingly to ensure they are not too tainted. We second-guess and sometimes third-guess ourselves. But we make mistakes. And when we do, we're ashamed.*

*If we're stupid, however, we refuse to acknowledge our inherent racism. We protest vehemently that we are "tolerant" individuals and dredge up endless examples of pleasant interactions with members of other races as proof positive that that ugly "racist" label doesn't apply here, no sirree.*

*But it is this refusal to acknowledge our racism that perpetuates it. After all, if it wasn't racism that led her (Anne) to believe that fourteen innocent Muslims were undercover terrorists, that must mean that she was justified in her belief. Which, in turn, means that it's not racist to draw negative aspersions about strangers simply because of their race, creed, or color. Which means that it's okay to do it next time as well.*

## **The Enemy Within:**

Written by Duncan Macleod, from: <http://pacifichighlander.blogspot.com/2005/12/we-have-met-enemy.html>

As I walked into Ignite, the regional youth event held in Redcliffe last month, I was recruited as a professional soldier. I was handed a Berserker sub machine gun, given a combat outfit to wear, and introduced to two fellow soldiers. Our task was to engage in guerrilla warfare with teams of three young people at a time, taking out our opponents by shooting just above the eyes.

These weren't real guns or real bullets. We were playing Laser Skirmish, firing infra red rays like those emitted from television remote controls. On the backs of our orange t-shirts someone had plastered the words hatred, apathy and greed. Young people were being challenged to fight against injustice rather than against people.

So what do you think? Was this a great way to get young people talking about the issues behind war? Or was it just another way of feeding and exposing the blood thirst in all of us? I must admit I enjoyed myself. I coped fine with the adrenaline rush of keeping myself 'alive' by taking out members of my youth group and their peers. I nearly lost my voice as I rooted out resistance in the trenches with my battle cries.

But afterwards I got to thinking. These young adversaries may have taken on the cause of defeating all kinds of evil. But too readily it was 'us against them'. The people in the orange shirts wore the labels and so had to be eliminated.

Labels are tags we give people from what we see of them, from where we stand. Some people use labels to fit others into a box. Some people use labels to explain quickly what they believe. Labels hardly ever describe accurately who we are. People are human and don't fit into boxes without being squashed and reduced to a caricature. Likewise God is divine and does not fit neatly into any box we might dream up.

The very act of pinning the weight of 'evil' on a character, be it Saddam Hussein or the molester in the news, prevents us from dealing with our own shadow - our own capacity to distort God's gift of life.

In the time of McCarthyism in the 1950s, the enemy was 'communism'. Individuals and groups were singled out for harsh treatment and rejection - because of their perceived lack of loyalty. I've seen the same dynamic at work in churches sick with mutual suspicion and fault-finding.

"Yes, son, we have met the enemy and he is us". Famous words from Pogo, a cartoon character possum created by Walt Kelly in the middle of



last century. Pogo sighs out those words not in the battlefield but at the edge of a junk-filled swamp. Walt Kelly's words below remind us to dedicate our resources to the battle raging within each of us.

'There is no need to sally forth, for it remains true that those things which make us human are, curiously enough, always close at hand. Resolve, then, that on this very ground, with small flags waving and tiny blasts of tiny trumpets, we shall meet the enemy, and not only may he be ours, he may be us.'

### **Jesus and Racism:**

Believe it or not Jesus had to confront his own racism...

*From there Jesus took a trip to Tyre and Sidon. They had hardly arrived when a Canaanite woman came down from the hills and pleaded, "Mercy, Master, Son of David! My daughter is cruelly afflicted by an evil spirit."*

*Jesus ignored her. The disciples came and complained, "Now she's bothering us. Would you please take care of her? She's driving us crazy." Jesus refused, telling them, "I've got my hands full dealing with the lost sheep of Israel." Then the woman came back to Jesus, went to her knees, and begged. "Master, help me." He said, "It's not right to take bread out of children's mouths and throw it to dogs." She was quick: "You're right, Master, but beggar dogs do get scraps from the master's table."*

*Jesus gave in. "Oh, woman, your faith is something else. What you want is what you get!" Right then her daughter became well.*

Do you think that Jesus knew everything, or do you think that Jesus, like everyone else learnt, made mistakes, said things he shouldn't have? This is an interesting interaction between the Canaanite woman and Jesus, she challenges his refusal, and in turn challenges his calling her a dog. Was Jesus being racist, was he using a cultural term that his peers used to describe the Canaanites? Do you think that Jesus could have picked up that same cultural understanding?

In this interaction Jesus finds someone who teaches him, who challenges him, his ministry and his racist cultural understanding... This interaction challenges Jesus' understanding of his calling, is he here just for the Israelites, or is his mission wider than that, does he need to challenge his own cultural assumptions?

Jesus had just spent time telling people that what they "vommit up" comes from the heart and defiles the person then he goes ahead and does this... Is this Jesus using reverse psychology? Why did he insult the woman? Was it cultural? Was it a racist slur? Was he unaware of what he was saying?

Even if it is the Canaanite woman still challenges the oppression, the insult that Jesus just threw at her, she still has the guts to say "I can smell the bread and wine, the healing and the grace and I want the crumbs."

### **Questions:**

- What is racism?
- Have you been a victim of racism, how did it feel?
- Do you think of yourself as racist?
- What does Australian racism look like?
- How do you see racism in your school, work, family?
- How have you had to confront racism?
- What can be done about racism?

## How do we respond?:

This could be a good time to spend some time sharing with one another how we could deal with violence in our local community, in our schools and with our friends, it may also be a good time to discuss how we respond to racism in these environments.

The group may even wish to participate in a public act to respond to the violence over the last few days, perhaps meet with people from another race/faith for a meal or for a conversation, perhaps they might like to do some kind of community service to respond to the media's reflection on the role of young people in the violence.

- How do we respond at Home?
- How do we respond at School?
- How do we respond with Friends?
- How do we respond at Church?
- How do we respond in the Community?
- How do we respond to the Media?
- How do we respond to the Government?
- How do we respond to God?

## **WORSHIP RESOURCES:**

### **Response time:**

Here's an idea that would work for all ages, children through to older adults...

Before the gathering and discussion place around the room you're meeting in a candle, some clay, play dough, paint, paper, pens, glue, magazines, bibles, string, cardboard... anything crafty really.

After the discussion enter into a time of worship, prayer and reflection, light the candle as a symbol of you moving into worship and invite the group to use the resources around them to quietly reflect on their own responses to the conversation and the events of the last couple of weeks. Invite them to create something, anything, abstract, beautiful, realistic, whatever it is it doesn't matter, that this is a time and space for them to reflect upon the discussion.

Some may choose to paint, others write or model with clay, whatever is ok, this is a time to respond.

A sharing time may be ok after a while, or simply finish with a time of prayer.

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### **Lament:**

Ask the group: What's the difference between whining and lament? Can you think of any recent world events (catastrophes) that needed to be lamented, not just by individuals, but by an entire community? Have you ever taken part in a communal service of mourning? What was it like for you?

Ask participants to choose a partner and identify elements of biblical lament (below) in one of the lament psalms (6, 22, 28, 42, 43, 69, 77):

- Invocation of God (calling on God to be present)
- Complaint
- Recollection of God's saving power/acts
- Request /demand for help
- Thanksgiving for God's (as yet unknown) response

Ask each person to write a brief personal lament using the above structure. Read aloud these laments in your closing worship.

*(This reflection was taken from the WAY TO LIVE – Leaders Guide ([www.waytolive.org](http://www.waytolive.org)))*

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### **Task 2 - Confession:**

You will need a pile of river stones, some water soluble pens, a couple of tea towels, a few small scrubbing brushes, an indoor pond or pool of water, or large bucket... You will also need a pile of sheets of bubble wrap and some string.

**Statement to read at the beginning of the prayer time, the statement can be re-read a few times if wanted:**

*Our first task, as always, will be to seek to be the peace we advocate -to be calm in the midst of the turmoil -so we can act constructively - with clarity and courage.*

*Our second task will be to deal with our own violence - to deal with our own actual or potential violence - in our own hearts, our own homes, our own communities and our own countries.*

*And our third task will be to do whatever we can to stop the violence elsewhere - addressing the root causes of exploitation and oppression, as well as the bitter fruit of terror and terrorism. We may not always be able to stop the violence, but we will always protest against it.*

*God is for life against death, for love against hate, for hope against despair. There is no neutral ground. So let us wage peace well this year.*

- Dave Andrews in his 2002 Christmas Letter

**The invitation to prayer:**

Responding to this challenge to examine the violence in our own lives and to be peace, use a texta to write down on a rock provided those aspects of violence in your life, actual or potential. After you've finished place the rock in the pool of water and return to your space and contemplate what you've written.

*During the prayer have a minister or leader sit by the pool and wipe the rocks clean and dry, you may need to scrub the rock a little with a brush:*

### **Announcement of forgiveness:**

The clean rocks are distributed to the community one by one, as they are handed over the leader is to say "your sins are forgiven"

### **The sending out:**

As a part of the sending out hand each of the people a piece of string and a sheet of bubble wrap. Remind them of the harm that their judgments, the violence in our own lives can do to others and as you do so invite them to wrap their clean rock in the bubble wrap and use the string to tie it up as a symbol of the blunting of the power of their judgments to hurt others. Invite the community to take the rocks in bubble-wrap with them as they leave as a constant reminder to be careful with their own racism, judgments, violence and to be aware of others.

(the bubble wrap idea was borrowed from the Ikon community in the UK)

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## **Task 3 - Intercession:**

This is a participatory intercessory prayer, you will need a hibachi, or a coal burner, some incense, a box of matches and some paper n pens.

### **Statement to read at the beginning of the prayer time, the statement can be re-read a few times if wanted:**

*Our first task, as always, will be to seek to be the peace we advocate -to be calm in the midst of the turmoil -so we can act constructively - with clarity and courage.*

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*And our third task will be to do whatever we can to stop the violence elsewhere - addressing the root causes of exploitation and oppression, as well as the bitter fruit of terror and terrorism. We may not always be able to stop the violence, but we will always protest against it.*

*God is for life against death, for love against hate, for hope against despair. There is no neutral ground. So let us wage peace well this year.*

- Dave Andrews in his 2002 Christmas Letter

### **The invitation to prayer:**

Responding to this challenge to remember those who have been the victims of violence, racism, demonisation, vilification and bullying in the world, both local, those in Cronulla and those people overseas, write down on the paper provided those prayers you would like to offer up to God for the world. Fold up the paper with a grain of incense and drop it in the burner, praying for strength to be peace.

### **The scripture to be placed by the burner:**

"The smoke of the burning incense went up with the prayers of God's people..." Revelation 8:4

## Songs:

Here are a few song suggestions for use in worship, perhaps they could be used during the prayers suggested in this handout, perhaps you'd like to mix the song with some images from the riots from a variety of news reports or websites...

### **I Am Not At War With Anyone**

Lyrics: Luka Bloom

I am not at war with anyone  
I am not at war with anyone  
Go away war planes  
You bring fear and shame  
I am not at war with anyone

I give my love to Iraq, and to America  
I give my love to Israel, and to Palestine  
We could live as one  
Between the sea and sun  
I am not at war with anyone

I don't need to be friends with everyone  
But I'd like to live in peace with everyone  
This rush to war is wrong  
And so I sing this song  
I am not at war with anyone  
I am not at war with anyone

I am not at war with anyone  
I am not at war with anyone  
Go away war planes  
You bring fear and shame  
I am not at war with anyone ...

### **Prayer of Saint Francis**

Artist Sarah McLachlan  
Album Surfacing.

Lord make me an instrument of your peace,  
Where there is hatred let me sow love.  
Where there is injury, pardon.  
Where there is doubt, faith.  
Where there is despair, hope.  
Where there is darkness, light.  
And where there is sadness, joy.

O divine master grant that I may  
not so much seek to be consoled as to console;  
to be understood as to understand;  
To be loved as to love  
For it is in giving that we receive-  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned.  
And it's in dying that we are born to eternal life.  
Amen

### **Fighting to Make Peace**

Lies Damned Lies

we are fighting to make peace  
hurting 'til we're healed  
laughing 'til we cry

we are fighting to make peace  
hurt until we're healed  
laugh until we cry

I have my head on my sleeve  
then I cannot despair  
you have your heart in your mouth  
that is the cross you bear

my mind is like a river  
never standing still  
our sickness unto death  
is climbing up this hill

we are fighting to make peace  
hurting 'til we're healed  
laughing 'til we cry  
everything is upside down

you keep an open secret  
there's nothing I can hide  
the whole world stands between us  
when you are by my side

the words of my confession  
the blood upon my hands  
are sickness unto death  
within this barren land

we are fighting to make peace  
hurting 'til we're healed  
laugh until we cry  
everything is upside down

**Where is the Love**  
by Black Eyed Peas

What's wrong with the world, mama  
People livin' like they ain't got no mamas  
I think the whole world addicted to the drama  
Only attracted to things that'll bring you trauma  
Overseas, yeah, we try to stop terrorism  
But we still got terrorists here livin'  
In the USA, the big CIA  
The Bloods and The Crips and the KKK  
But if you only have love for your own race  
Then you only leave space to discriminate  
And to discriminate only generates hate  
And when you hate then you're bound to get irate, yeah  
Badness is what you demonstrate  
And that's exactly how anger works and operates  
Nigga, you gotta have love just to set it straight  
Take control of your mind and meditate  
Let your soul gravitate to the love, y'all, y'all

People killin', people dyin'  
Children hurt and you hear them cryin'  
Can you practice what you preach  
And would you turn the other cheek

Father, Father, Father help us  
Send us some guidance from above  
'Cause people got me, got me questionin'  
Where is the love (Love)

Where is the love (The love)  
Where is the love (The love)  
Where is the love  
The love, the love

It just ain't the same, always unchanged  
New days are strange, is the world insane  
If love and peace is so strong  
Why are there pieces of love that don't belong  
Nations droppin' bombs  
Chemical gasses fillin' lungs of little ones  
With the ongoin' sufferin' as the youth die young  
So ask yourself is the lovin' really gone  
So I could ask myself really what is goin' wrong  
In this world that we livin' in people keep on givin' in  
Makin' wrong decisions, only visions of them dividends  
Not respectin' each other, deny thy brother  
A war is goin' on but the reason's undercover  
The truth is kept secret, it's swept under the rug  
If you never know truth then you never know love  
Where's the love, y'all, come on (I don't know)  
Where's the truth, y'all, come on (I don't know)  
Where's the love, y'all

People killin', people dyin'  
Children hurt and you hear them cryin'  
Can you practice what you preach  
And would you turn the other cheek

Father, Father, Father help us  
Send us some guidance from above  
'Cause people got me, got me questionin'  
Where is the love (Love)

Where is the love (The love)  
Where is the love (The love)  
Where is the love  
The love, the love

I feel the weight of the world on my shoulder  
As I'm gettin' older, y'all, people gets colder  
Most of us only care about money makin'  
Selfishness got us followin' in the wrong direction  
Wrong information always shown by the media  
Negative images is the main criteria  
Infecting the young minds faster than bacteria  
Kids wanna act like what they see in the cinema  
Yo', whatever happened to the values of humanity  
Whatever happened to the fairness in equality  
Instead in spreading love we spreading animosity  
Lack of understanding, leading lives away from unity  
That's the reason why sometimes I'm feelin' under  
That's the reason why sometimes I'm feelin' down  
There's no wonder why sometimes I'm feelin' under  
Gotta keep my faith alive till love is found

People killin', people dyin'  
Children hurt and you hear them cryin'  
Can you practice what you preach  
And would you turn the other cheek

Father, Father, Father help us  
Send us some guidance from above  
'Cause people got me, got me questionin'  
Where is the love (Love)

Where is the love (The love)  
\*repeat last line

### **Your Racist Friend**

by They Might be Giants

This is where the party ends  
I can't stand here listening to you  
And your racist friend  
I know politics bore you  
But I feel like a hypocrite talking to you  
And your racist friend

It was the loveliest party that I've ever attended  
If anything was broken I'm sure it could be mended  
My head can't tolerate this bobbing and pretending  
Listen to some bullet-head and the madness that he's saying

This is where the party ends  
I'll just sit here wondering how you  
Can stand by your racist friend  
I know politics bore you  
But I feel like a hypocrite talking to you  
You and your racist friend

This is where the party ends  
I can't stand here listening to you  
And your racist friend  
I know politics bore you  
But I feel like a hypocrite talking to you  
And your racist friend

Out from the kitchen to the bedroom to the hallway  
Your friend apologizes, he could see it my way  
He let the contents of the bottle do the thinking  
Can't shake the devil's hand and say you're only kidding

This is where the party ends  
I can't stand here listening to you  
And your racist friend  
I know politics bore you  
But I feel like a hypocrite talking to you  
And your racist friend

## Children's Resources:

### Mem Fox – Whoever You Are

*"Every day all over the world, children are playing, laughing and crying. They may not look the same or speak the same language, but inside they are just like you."*

This book by Mem Fox shares a very important message with its readers, that while people look different and live differently that we all share a lot of things that are the same. This is a book that celebrates diversity, different cultures and people from all over the world.

The illustrations by Leslie Staub show children from all over the world traveling, eating, going to school and working. This is a beautiful story that asks questions of how we are different and celebrates our similarities...

*"Remember this: Joys are the same, and love is the same. Pain is the same, and blood is the same. Smiles are the same, and hearts are just the same..."*

Author: Mem Fox, Leslie Staub (Illustrator)  
Publisher: Voyager Books; Reprint edition (August 1, 2001)  
ISBN: 0152164065

### Umberto Eco – The Three Astronauts

One of two children's books that Umberto Eco wrote in 1996, (The other was titled "The Bomb and the General") The Three Astronauts tells a story of three astronauts from different countries (USA, Russia and China) that all take off from earth and land on Mars at the same time. The story is about how three people learn to look beyond their differences so that they can survive on the new planet.

The three astronauts meet an native from Mars and automatically want to kill it, together they create a big gun because they are afraid. But they see the alien help a native bird that had fallen to the ground, they see it cry and suddenly they are able to see beyond the ugliness and the different-ness of the alien.

The collage artwork is highly symbolic and plays with our imaginations, stunningly done by Eugenio Carmi. Umberto Eco turns the world's troubles of the time on their head, letting us see it through a child's eye...

*"The visitors realised that on Earth, and on other planets too, each one has his ways, and it's simply a matter of reaching an understanding."*

Author: Umberto Eco and Eugenio Carmi  
Publisher: Harcourt Children's Books; 1st edition (March 10, 1989)  
ISBN: 0152863834

## **Simulation Games:**

Simulation games are a good way for groups of people to experience feelings, interactions and learn lessons that are out of the ordinary, they allow people to act and then to reflect upon their actions and the consequences of those actions.

I've selected a couple of simulation games that might be appropriate for use in a youth group setting to discuss some of the issues that have come to front over the last couple of weeks...

### **Game - "I'm superior and couldn't be prouder"**

Simulation Games 1  
by Pat Baker and Mary Ruth Marshall  
ISBN 0858195828  
Page 12  
Game: "I'm superior and couldn't be prouder"

This simulation offers an opportunity to experience what prejudice and discrimination do to both the minority and majority group. The simulation may be seen either as an experiment in human relationships or as a program of emphasis on race and cross cultural relations.

### **Game - "Mana"**

Simulation Games 1  
by Pat Baker and Mary Ruth Marshall  
ISBN 0858195828  
Page 46  
Game: "Mana"

A simulation game for youth in a multi-racial society.

Mana is a human relations game.

- It simulates certain features of society
- It dramatizes the place of youth in society
- It provides a way of learning about society
- It encourages reflection upon experience.

The object of the game is to reach Mana, the place where you have power, status and recognition.

### **Game - "Encounter"**

Simulation Games 3  
by Pat Baker  
ISBN 0858195860  
Page 62  
Game: "Encounter"

A board game about conflict and the price of peace...

## **Bible Passages:**

*Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God.*  
Matt 5:9

*You have heard that it was said, 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' But now I tell you: do not take revenge on someone who wrongs you. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, let him slap your left cheek too.*  
Matt 6:38

*You have heard that it was said, 'Love your friends, hate your enemies.' But now I tell you: love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.*  
Matt 6:43

*For the law will go forth from Zion  
and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem  
And he will judge between the nations  
And will render decisions for many peoples  
And they will hammer their swords into ploughshares  
and their spears into pruning hooks  
Nation will not lift up sword against nation  
And never again will they learn war*  
Isaiah 2: 3,4

*Here on Mount Zion the Lord Almighty  
will prepare a banquet for all the nations of the world,  
A banquet of the richest food and the finest wine.  
Here he will suddenly remove the cloud of sorrow  
that has been hanging over all the nations.  
The sovereign Lord will destroy death forever.  
He will wipe away the tears from everyone's eyes  
and take away the disgrace his people have suffered  
throughout the world.*  
Isaiah 25:6-8

*He will settle disputes among the nations,  
among the great powers near and far.  
They will hammer their swords into plowshares,  
and their spears into pruning hooks:  
Nations will never again go to war,  
never prepare for battle again.  
But everyone will live in peace  
among his own vineyards and fig trees,  
and no one will make them afraid.  
The Lord Almighty has promised this.*  
Micah 4: 3,4

## **Web Links:**

More Praxis: <http://morepraxis.org.au/?p=156>

Shire Wars: <http://shirewars.com/>

Underlying Racism in Australia: <http://www.gabbr.com/thread.php?id=143>

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## **Images:**

Gallery: <http://www.smh.com.au/photogallery/2005/12/11/1134235939302.html?page=3>

Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/tags/cronulla>

## News Articles:

### **Muscling up on beach gangs**

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/muscling-up-on-beach-gangs/2005/12/08/1133829688767.html>

December 8 3.10pm

Police have drafted their dog squad, helicopter and officers on foot, pushbikes, motorcycles and in cars to avert thuggish behaviour at Sydney's Cronulla beach.

The beach has been the scene of two violent incidents in the past week - an attack on two lifeguards on Sunday and a brawl yesterday in which a gang of youths allegedly turned on a media crew.

Beachgoers and witnesses have told the media that youths of specific ethnic origin have been going to the area in groups to cause trouble and intimidate people, including young women, for two years.

Police Assistant Commissioner Mark Goodwin said the major operation was designed to curb loutish behaviour.

"At this point we've got an operation running," Mr Goodwin told reporters.

"We are taking it very seriously ... we are here to ensure people's safety."

Mr Goodwin said police were aware that a series of text messages had been circulating among locals urging them to take revenge at the beach this weekend.

But police would not tolerate any anti-social behaviour, he said.

"The Australian way is about coming to the beach with your towel and sunscreen, and maybe a book, and lying back and relaxing," Mr Goodwin said.

"It is not about congregating and swarming in groups for any sort of anti-social behaviour."

### **Beach 'morons' vigilante alert**

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/beach-morons-vigilante-alert/2005/12/08/1133829698954.html>

December 8 3.25pm

A Sydney mayor says he understands the sentiments behind a text message call for vigilante behaviour at one of his shire's beaches.

But Sutherland Shire mayor Kevin Schreiber has called for calm and says violence is not the answer.

A major police operation has started around Cronulla Beach after two violent incidents in the past week, including an attack on two lifeguards on Sunday.

Yesterday, a brawl erupted at the beach when a gang of youths allegedly turned on a media crew.

As a result, email messages have been reported calling for vigilante action.

One message circulating in the shire urges "Aussies" to take revenge against "Lebs and wogs".

"Bring your mates and let's show them that this is our beach and they are never welcome," the message says.

Today, Mr Schreiber called for NSW Premier Morris Iemma to meet with the local community in an effort to solve the problems.

"I can understand the sentiments and can see what some of the people in the shire are trying to achieve, but this energy needs to be redirected into a collective voice of the people not into a gang of outlaws," Mr Schreiber said in a statement.

"We need the NSW premier to lead high level community discussions that can bring about a peaceful solution.

"And this is how angry shire residents can respond - by voicing their concerns so the politicians take action."

Mr Schreiber said locals should allow police to continue the job of investigating the recent violent incidents.

He said they should not take the law into their own hands.

"We hold grave concerns that further outbreaks of violence could erupt whilst this text message is in circulation," Mr Schreiber said.

### **Bad blood boils in the Cronulla stomp**

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/bad-blood-boils-in-the-cronulla-stomp/2005/12/07/1133829664172.html>

**Dec 8 2005**

ON THE same day a teenager was charged over the bashing of lifesavers at Cronulla, more violence erupted at the beach, and an email circulated urging locals to reclaim their suburb from visiting gangs.

An 18-year-old concreter from Bankstown was released on bail yesterday on the condition he stay away from the beach and from his alleged victims of an attack on Sunday.

While he returned to work, racial tension resurfaced at the beach when a group of young men started brawling with three locals outside Cronulla's lifesaving club, then turned on a news photographer as police intervened.

Police arrested a 20-year-old man from Riverwood and charged him with smashing the photographer's camera. They were still looking for the rest of the men last night and said they had not ruled out a link between yesterday's violence and Sunday's attack.

Erika Lamour, 18, was at the beach yesterday when the violence broke out. "I saw a group of ethnic people come down as usual and try to start a fight," she said. "They always do it. I didn't actually see the fight. But I saw everyone running towards the club."

### **Text messages 'fuel trouble'**

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/text-messages-fuel-trouble/2005/12/11/1134235946976.html>

**December 11, 9.27pm**

Sutherland Shire Mayor Kevin Schreiber says inflammatory text messages calling for revenge attacks fuelled violent scenes at North Cronulla beach today.

Mr Schreiber said the heavily-circulated messages ensured troublemakers went to the southern Sydney beach today looking for a fight.

Police have patrolled the area all weekend after text messages began circulating among the community calling for vigilante responses to unwelcome visitors on the beach.

Mr Schreiber said there was no excuse for the level of violence shown by the angry mobs today.

"As mayor and as a resident of Cronulla, I'm devastated by what has occurred on our beach front," he said.

"The sending out of that text message was foolish and irresponsible and ensured that people from all over Sydney came to Cronulla looking to cause trouble and this was further fuelled by alcohol."

### **Worst possible outcome - vigilantes rip unity to shreds**

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/worst-possible-outcome--vigilantes-rip-unity-to-shreds/2005/12/11/1134235951337.html>

**December 12**

Forget race and bring all criminals to justice, writes Stepan Kerkyasharian.

YESTERDAY we witnessed a sight that I thought we would never see in Australia.

A few years ago Australians of all backgrounds - indigenous, Muslim, Asian, European - united to display national pride, Australian pride, to put on the best ever Olympics.

A few weeks ago tens of thousands of people, young and old, combined to help our Socceroos ride the wave to the World Cup. Those Australians were, again, of all backgrounds. Young girls wearing the Islamic hijab were proudly displaying green and gold.

And then at North Cronulla beach we had a bunch of thugs bashing that great symbol of Australian devotion to their countrymen, surf lifesavers.

It is sad that these thugs appear to be more or less of the same ethnic background, or are perceived to be, because that causes pain to the hundreds of thousands of people of that background who live and work

peacefully. That community's leaders condemn the actions of these young thugs just as the rest of us do. Yesterday, as if on cue, people took this opportunity to reclaim territory - whatever that means.

### **Thugs ruled the streets, and the mob sang Waltzing Matilda**

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/the-mob-sang-waltzing-matilda/2005/12/11/1134235951620.html>

**December 12**

Damien Murphy describes what he saw in the middle of the Cronulla violence.

A BARE-CHESTED youth in Quiksilver boardshorts tore the headscarf off the girl's head as she slithered down the Cronulla dune seeking safety on the beach from a thousand-strong baying mob.

Up on the road, Marcus "Carcass" Butcher, 28, a builder from Penrith, wearing workboots, war-camouflage shorts and black singlet bearing the words "Mahommid was a camel f---ing faggot" raised both arms to the sky. "F--- off, Leb," he cried victoriously.

It was one last act of cowardly violence on a sad and shameful day that began as a beach party celebrating a kind of perverted nationalism that was gatecrashed by racism.

A crowd of at least 5000 - overwhelmingly under 25 - took over Cronulla's foreshore and beachside streets. Police were powerless as 200-odd ringleaders, many clutching bottles or cans of beer and smoking marijuana, led assaults on individuals and small groups of Lebanese Australians who risked an appearance during the six-hour protest.

The horde swirled after fleeing individuals, sometimes sweeping past police lines and horses, chasing a quarry who sought safety in restaurants, shops, toilet blocks and ambulances and police vehicles. Some were snatched by police, who stood against the swarm and repelled the most violent with capsicum spray.

After a local man, "Steely", had led a chant of "F--- off, Lebs", a young man demanded the megaphone and told the crowd it was "racist". A bottle arced in from the audience and shattered on his forehead. He fled "like a bleeding rabbit", someone yelled after him.

### **Race riots spread to suburbs**

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/race-riots-spread-to-suburbs/2005/12/11/1134235951313.html>

**By Les Kennedy, Damien Murphy, Malcolm Brown and Tim**

**December 12**

RACIAL violence erupted in several Sydney suburbs last night in retaliation for a rampage by thousands of young residents through Cronulla that turned the seaside suburb into a battlefield.

Political, community and religious leaders joined stunned locals to condemn an afternoon of violence by a crowd that turned on people of Middle Eastern appearance and those trying to protect them, with police and ambulance officers also attacked.

As the violence spread, police cars raced through Sydney streets from Cronulla to Miranda, Brighton-le-Sands, Rockdale, Maroubra, Woolooware and Tempe. Police said they had received reports of firearms being "flashed" threateningly but not discharged. "So far we have had no one shot," an officer said.

A 23-year-old man was in St George Hospital in a serious condition after a fight in Woolooware about 10.25pm. A radio report said he had a knife embedded in his back. Police said the man was with friends when he had an altercation outside a golf club with a "group of males of Mediterranean or Middle Eastern appearance".

In Brighton-le-Sands a group of people were reported to have taken down the Australian flag at the Brighton RSL Club and burnt it in the street. Youths were seen at a garage filling bottles with petrol in nearby Monterey.

### **Beach battle makes world news**

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/world/beach-battle-makes-world-news/2005/12/12/1134235985016.html>

**December 12**

Sydney's race riots has cast a shadow over Prime Minister John Howard's visit this week to Malaysia's for meeting of regional leaders, with the story receiving wide coverage in newspapers across Asia.

In Kuala Lumpur, the New Straits Times newspaper carried a front-page photo of police armed with batons battling rioters in Cronulla with the headline "Race Riot Down Under".

The rival Malaysia Star carried the story under the banner "Racial Tensions Spark Sydney Beach Violence".

The Philippines media also reported the violence.

"Racial riot breaks out on Aussie Beach", The Manila Times said.

The Hong Kong Standard newspaper said "Race riot flares in Sydney".

The story even featured in papers as far afield as London, where The Times described a "Battle on Beach as mob vow to defend Aussie way of Life".

The Middle East-based al-Jazeera Tv network showed footage of the mayhem and ran a story on its website headlined: "Race riots spread in Sydney" with a picture captioned "Drunken thugs on the rampage".

"Racial tensions erupted into running battles between police and thousands of white youths, many chanting racial slurs against ethnic Middle Easterners, at a beachside suburb in southern Sydney, Australia," British Press Association reported.

### **PM refuses to use racist tag**

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/pm-refuses-to-use-racist-tag/2005/12/12/1134235985480.html>  
**December 12**

Prime Minister John Howard has condemned the race-based attacks in Sydney, but says they don't mean Australia is a racist nation.

"I do not accept there is underlying racism in this country," Mr Howard said today following yesterday's race riots at Cronulla Beach.

"I have always taken a more optimistic view of the character of the Australian people."

Up to 5,000 people descended on North Cronulla Beach, chanting racist slogans and attacking people of Middle Eastern appearance in what NSW Premier Morris Iemma today condemned as the "ugly side of racism".

The violence sparked apparent reprisal attacks late last night, with cars damaged at Maroubra Beach.

"Mob violence is always sickening," Mr Howard told reporters.

"Attacking people on the basis of their race, their appearance, their ethnicity, is totally unacceptable and should be repudiated by all Australians irrespective of their own background and their politics," he said.

### **United in condemnation, divided over the causes**

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/united-in-condemnation-divided-over-the-causes/2005/12/11/1134235951340.html>  
**December 12**

POLITICAL, community and religious leaders united to condemn the Cronulla beach violence but were at odds over the causes. Lack of police resources, media incitement and deep-seated racism were blamed for sparking the clashes.

The Leader of the Opposition, Peter Debnam, said Sydney was paying the price for a lack of police on the streets and a softly, softly approach by the State Government towards gang violence.

"This is a real disgrace and it didn't just come about this week," he said.

"The Premier and the Police Minister are in denial that Sydney is a violent and intimidating society and there are no police on the streets to deal with it."

The problem of street violence was not limited to Cronulla, he said. He described those responsible as home-grown thugs.

The Premier, Morris Iemma, and the Minister for Police, Carl Scully, said the police had adequate resources.

Mr Iemma said the behaviour at Cronulla was "disgraceful, cowardly and will not be allowed to continue, in Cronulla or anywhere else".

"These hooligans have brought shame upon themselves. Some today tried to hide behind the Australian flag. The Australia that I know, and intend to preserve as Premier, does not support the sort of behaviour that we saw today."

### **Neo-Nazis in race riots: police**

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/neonazis-in-race-riots-police/2005/12/12/1134235970427.html>

**December 12**

Neo-Nazis are believed to have been among those who took part in the race-fuelled violence at Cronulla in Sydney's south, NSW Deputy Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione says.

Up to 5,000 people descended on the beach yesterday as mobs yelling racist chants targeted people of Middle Eastern appearance.

Mr Scipione said police believed neo-Nazi and white supremacist groups were among the crowd.

"That in fact is something that we're following up," he told the Nine network. "Yes, that's the advice we've received."

One woman was pictured at Cronulla Beach holding a poster that read "Aussies fighting back." Her photo appeared in a Sydney News Limited newspaper today. She was advertising a group called the Patriotic Youth League.

The group, founded by former Newcastle student and One Nation activist Stuart McBeth in 2002, described itself as a "radical nationalist" group, News Ltd newspapers reported today.

### **'What is Australian anyway?'**

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/what-is-australian-anyway/2005/12/12/1134235980386.html>

**By Edmund Tadros**

**December 12, 2005 - 4:16PM**

There was a sense of dismay and frustration as people in the predominantly Muslim community of Lakemba came to terms today with scenes of drunken youths in Cronulla demanding they leave the country.

"The boys in the fight yesterday, they 25 years old. I've been here longer," said 50-year-old Abdul Darwich.

"I got my citizenship before they were born."

Mr Darwich, who has been in Australia for 30 years after leaving Lebanon, said he was frustrated when he watched the youths on the television last night talking about having Australia for Australians.

"What is Australian anyway?"

He said the fighting wasn't between Australian and Lebanese gangs. It was between kids.

A Lakemba cafe owner, Mohamad - who did not want to give his surname - said: "The main concern among my customers is that this is going to get bigger and bigger. A lot are also disappointed that it has come to this."

### **Police powers boosted today**

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/police-powers-boosted-today/2005/12/15/1134500939845.html>

**December 15, 2005 - 9:36AM**

Police powers will be boosted during an emergency session of NSW parliament today amid fears of more race fuelled violence in Sydney.

Under the changes, police will have the power to lock down trouble spots, confiscate cars, and order hotels and bottle shops to stop serving alcohol.

Eleven people were arrested overnight, as more than 450 officers again patrolled Sydney's streets to counter the threat of more "smash and bash" attacks.

Assistant Police Commissioner Dave Owens said groups of men of Middle Eastern appearance were involved some assaults.

But the attacks appeared to be random and there was nothing to suggest any organised link between them, he said.

"Police received only a small number of reports from across the metropolitan area overnight which are linked to the recent unrest," he said.

"The community can be assured that police are conducting hundreds of vehicle stops and are receiving great support from motorists and members of the public alike."

Meanwhile, police are calling for calm following reports of text messages calling for retaliatory strikes this weekend at Brighton, in Sydney's south, at Terrigal, on the NSW central coast, and in Newcastle, north of Sydney.

Among the arrests overnight were two men, aged 18 and 19, who were arrested at La Perouse, in Sydney's south, armed with a metal pole, a knuckleduster and a street sign.

### **Police guard churches as tension rises**

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/police-guard-churches/2005/12/14/1134500916773.html>

**By Samantha Baden**

**December 15, 2005**

POLICE will pay "special attention" to religious venues after a spate of attacks on places of worship linked to race-fuelled violence.

Religious leaders called for unity and calm as text messages and emails, similar to those which promoted Sydney's violence earlier this week, spread to other states.

The NSW parliament will convene today for an emergency session to pass new police laws allowing authorities to lock down trouble spots, seize cars and turn off alcohol.

Police in Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia said copycat text messages and emails calling for unrest had been circulating. Queensland Premier Peter Beattie said he believed there would not be any support for racial unrest on the Gold Coast, where text messages have called for people to start "cracking skulls".

In Sydney, hundreds of police continued to patrol flashpoint suburbs in the city's south and west last night following violence sparked by an attack on surf lifesavers and Sunday's subsequent race riot at Cronulla.

### **Surfers say sorry, condemn violence**

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/surfers-say-sorry-condemn-violence/2005/12/14/1134500916782.html>

**December 15, 2005**

CRONULLA surfers have apologised for their role in Sunday's race riots, saying they were ashamed by the violence and vowed not to allow a repeat.

Shire surfer Brad Whittaker released the written apology last night after two days of talks between senior members of the beach's surfing community and representatives of Sydney's Lebanese community.

The statement said the surfers unequivocally rejected any form of racism and was accompanied by apologies written by younger surfers who took part in the riots.

"The day began as a show of solidarity against the behaviour of ethnic gangs who have been harassing the public on our beaches over a period of several years," the statement said.

"It escalated out of control under the influence of right wing racists, from outside this community, and alcohol.

"As senior members of Cronulla's surfing community, we will be doing everything within our power to ensure there is no repeat of Sunday's violence and we would expect those of influence in the wider community, including the Islamic community, to do the same.

### **One family's beautiful beach life robbed of innocence**

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/one-familys-beautiful-beach-life-robbed-of-innocence/2005/12/14/1134500916779.html>

**By Dan Silkstone**

**December 15, 2005**

FOR Jeannie Iredae the past few days have been the low point of a life-long love affair with the beach. Ms Iredae, 51, has lived in Cronulla for two decades, moving here after growing up on the sands around Bondi in Sydney's east.

Fit and tanned, she teaches physical education at nearby Kirrawee High School and lives with her son Matthew and daughter Jamie, at Wanda, just north of Cronulla beach.

"It's beautiful here," she says. "Sun, cafes, gorgeous beaches, it's like being on holiday every day of your life."

If that's so, the past few days have been the holiday from hell. Last Sunday, Ms Iredaoe was nervous, knowing an "Aussie Pride" rally was planned to take place nearby.

While she was on the phone to a friend, her 14-year-old son left the house, saying he was off for a bike ride.

Suddenly, she says, it hit her where he must have gone. In her gut she knew that Matthew's teenage curiosity had tempted him down to see the beachside mob.

"I jumped in my car and chased him," she says. "I found him 100 metres from the crowd, there were drunken people everywhere, police running, fights. I took him straight home."