

Fundamentalist States of Mind: Some thinking about Australia's treatment of asylum seekers

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This paper was originally delivered to a general public audience at the University of Melbourne on May 25th, 2017. The paper was the second in a series of five interdisciplinary seminars titled “*Engaging with Southeast Asia: Anxious Nation and Fundamentalist States of Mind*”. Drawing together political scientists, historians and psychoanalysts, the seminars were facilitated conjointly by Melbourne University's Asia Institute and the Melbourne Institute for Psychoanalysis.

The author argues that the psychoanalytic understanding of unconscious anxiety, and how it is managed, can contribute to interdisciplinary thinking about Australia's off-shore incarceration and persecution of asylum seekers. Post 9/11, we have been precipitated into a world of terror and confusion: we no longer know who are our friends and who are our enemies. The author suggests that strong anxiety can push us all into fundamentalist states of mind, where certainties and simplifications are used to defend against what is complex, confusing and terrifying.

My approach to this paper begins with the question “Why has the majority of Australians supported successive governments' off-shore incarceration and persecution of asylum seekers?”. I will be suggesting that the psychoanalytic understanding of unconscious anxiety, and how it is managed, can contribute to the discourse amongst other disciplines about the issues this question raises. The history of psychoanalysis is one of trying to understand the core anxieties of the human condition: anxieties like fear of annihilation, displacement, vulnerability, dependency.

In wondering about the behaviour of voters, we can think of Society as a collection of minds, shifting this way and that, according to whether we are feeling threatened or attracted. I will be arguing that we, as voters, consciously and unconsciously, look to political leaders and parties, to protect us from our anxieties, just as we look to them to provide health and aged care when we need a good parent government to care for us, or to provide education to prepare us for the big challenging world or to protect us from being exploited by our employers.

Any consideration of anxiety must also include thinking about the defences against it. Without defences, we would be quite unable to function, lost in a psychotic world with no contact with reality. I'll return to talk about defences a bit later, but it's important to establish that, throughout our lives, we remain sensitive to, and anxious about, the possible loss of our defences.

It was on the way to last month's seminar that I was startled to be passed by a tram with a huge lettering, repeated on the sides of 3 linked carriages:

“In a world where you don’t know who to trust, think independently”.

It was an advertisement for The Age newspaper. I didn’t catch the route number, or destination. That could have been relevant.

So, what is it that leaves us feeling so unsafe? What is it, in our collective unconscious, that’s so terrifying? Post 9/11, we’ve been precipitated into a world of confusion and terror: we no longer know who are our friends and who are our enemies. War by proxy in the Middle East between two opposing blocks, previously clearly identified, now involves a byzantine number of factions, increasing fragmentation, confusion and the very anxiety that provides a cradle for terrorism. Who are “the goodies” and who are “the baddies” is no longer clear. The globalisation of suicide attacks stirs the most primitive terror: that there is someone out there who actually hates us to the point of annihilation. (Segal, 2002) This is a narrative of nightmares.

Recognition of the experience of terror and anxiety makes it possible to wonder about their effect on our mind. Psychoanalysts work with the understanding that there are two states of mind resulting from early developmental experience. (Klein, 1946) I’ll give some examples of one, which I’m calling the fundamentalist state of mind. (Stokoe, 2016) I’ll argue that these examples of terror in an infant and unconscious anxiety in two three-year old children can inform our understanding of unconscious anxieties in the Australian voter.

“James, at 2 weeks old, became inconsolable when his mother gave him his first bath at home. [The mother described it], ‘The midwife told me to bath him before a feed, so he wouldn’t be sick. But when I put him down to get him ready he seemed to panic. I’m sure he was expecting a feed, and when it didn’t come, his world fell apart. When I took his clothes off he looked at me with his eyes full of terror, as if I’d turned into a witch. It was terrible. His little arms kept on jerking out, as if he was falling off a cliff and trying to grasp hold of something. He kept forcing his fingers into his mouth and sucking hard, as if he had to believe that milk would come out’.” (Boswell, 2004, pp27-8)

“James seems to be experiencing a terrified state of disintegration, something a newborn is particularly susceptible to, with his fragile sense of self and his world.” (Ibid, 2004 p28) James doesn’t have the means to deal with what feels like an attack when the milk he wants fails to appear. He’s lost his connection with anything good in his world. He doesn’t have the means to think independently.

Psychoanalysts understand that unpredictability and helplessness are central factors in the experience of anxiety. (Freud, 1926) In the fundamentalist state of mind, the world is divided simply into good and bad, predictable or terrifying. (Klein, 1946)

The second example from early childhood involves a children’s book, *The Three Wallabies Gruff*, (Morrison and McKenzie, 2013), an Australian variation on *The Billy Goats Gruff*. I think it’s relevant to note that *The Three Wallabies Gruff* was

published in Australia in 2013. To my mind, *The Wallabies Gruff* should have a place on the list of Invasion novels in Australian literature that David Walker told us about in our last seminar and in his landmark publication, *Anxious Nation* (Walker, 1999).

This second example also involves Alice, three years old, who had, eighteen months previously, experienced the invasion of a baby brother, an invasion in which she was displaced from being the one-and-only with her adored parents.

Alice and I were reading *The Wallabies Gruff*, a favourite of hers. The story tells of the need of the Wallaby family to flee their parched, hostile country to find a home where they can live. They arrive in new lush, fertile territory, within sight of the longed-for waterhole. But access to the waterhole is only over a bridge and under the bridge is a slathering monster, called a Yowie, who refuses, in a viciously attacking way, to let anyone pass. The Yowie is truly hideous: fangs, gaping maw, green slime, bulging red eyes.

I pointed out to Alice that the Yowie didn't want to share. "Poor Yowie", she said, with heart-felt empathy. This little girl, still struggling to come to terms with having to share the precious resources of her mum and dad, had no mind for the needs of the thirsty Wallabies, or the other endearing bush creatures. We talked about how hard it is to share. I gently asked, "Do you sometimes feel like the Yowie?" "No!" she quickly insisted with a rising intonation, barely letting me finish my question. There was a haunted look on her face. The thought of being seen as monstrously selfish was very frightening to her. Who could love a monster like the Yowie?

As in other fairy tales, the resolution of this bush narrative relieves Alice from her worrying feelings. (Bettelheim, 1977) The three Wallabies trick the greedy Yowie and, to Alice's delight, the Daddy wallaby triumphantly kicks the Yowie from the newly-gained paradise into shark-infested waters.

The inevitable losses and disillusionments that we all experience in having to share stir up anxieties in us that can continue to be hard to think about throughout our lives.

Like little Alice, we can all find it unthinkable to recognize our own mean, greedy, ruthless feelings. If we were to own such feelings, we'd surely be seen like the appearance-challenged Yowie: stupid, mean and ugly. Strong anxiety pushes all of us into a fundamentalist state of mind where we find someone else to have the unacceptable feelings, so that the paradise of our idealized selves can be protected.

In this state of mind, the requirement for thinking is hated, because thinking is predicated on uncertainty and not knowing and having to bear the vulnerability and confusion of complex, ambivalent feelings. Curiosity is hated because it means having to bear uncertainty about what we'll find out. We noticed how quickly Alice batted away any possibility of thinking how she felt, slamming the door on any room to be curious about that.

The required thinking that I'm talking about here isn't calculation or utilitarian transaction, but rather it's about what we're feeling, so that our feelings become informing, instead of unrecognised forces driving us to, say, snatch and withhold what's wanted from others, or to identify others as monstrous. Thinking about our feelings is not natural to human behaviour but is a developmental achievement, and one that's fluid and precarious throughout our lives. This sort of thinking, taking responsibility for what we feel, and do, is the second state of mind resulting from our early developmental experience. We'll be hearing more about this state of mind from Coll Osman next month. (See Osman, 2016)

With anxiety, if the worrying...[feeling] can be recognised, it can be bound or attached in some way to an anticipated defensive response or memory or name, and this itself can reduce anxiety. If you know what the threatening something is, at least you can begin to plan a course of action to try to deal with it. Predictability reduces anxiety, since it implies a reduction in uncertainty and helplessness.” (Emanuel, 2000 p19) The experience of James in his first bath at home demonstrated, in a very raw form, a terrified response to unpredictability and helplessness. Alice's regular choice of *The Wallabies Gruff* to read was a way for her to feel, for those brief times at least, that her worrying selfish feelings were under control. Identifying migrants, religious or ethnic groups, or asylum seekers, as threats, for instance, paradoxically allows a certainty of knowing and the possibility of control that assuages an otherwise nameless fear.

Many of us are familiar with the way children love to have previously frightening stories read to them again and again. John, another three-year old, was watching the *Three Little Pigs* cartoon on TV for the 1st time and was terrified by the Big Bad Wolf who could 'eat you up'.

John “developed a generalised fear of wolves. He'd avoid looking at them in books or hearing any fairy stories that featured them. He did however want to watch the very cartoon which he'd previously found frightening. He'd watch it again and again and again. He'd then start to laugh manically and over loudly as if he had no fear of it at all. He seemed to be forcing himself to confront and master his fear. He'd play a game where he had to be chased, caught and eaten by the wolf, then he'd reverse the situation with himself chasing and eating the pursuer...he [was wanting] to convince himself he was not helpless and could triumphantly predict the appearance of the wolf.” (Emanuel, 2000 p20)

This phobic behaviour was a way of binding more generalised anxiety to a specific situation that could then be controlled, to some extent. It was also a way of projecting his unacceptable, attacking, frightening and frightened feelings onto the obliging wolf. I'll say more a bit later about ways of managing anxiety.

Perhaps, in this story about young John and his wolf, you can hear with me a resonance with the Australian government's preoccupation with asylum seekers, the drumming up fears of the country being invaded and swallowed up by them and then the taking of draconian steps to predict, control and repel them from our shores. In a less anxious state of mind, we recognise that the chances of death by wolf in Australia are as likely as the country being gobbled up by asylum seekers.

In the fundamentalist state of mind, the dominating anxiety is persecutory, a fear that persecutors will invade and destroy the self and the ideal world. We heard from David Walker in the last seminar about the history of invasion paranoia in Australian literature. David recognised its connection with the murderous violence and cruelty inflicted by white settlement in Australia. This connection between our longstanding paranoia and our unconscious guilt is called projective identification by psychoanalysts. (Klein, 1946) It's a form of defence that involves denial of reality. We create our enemies to carry what we cannot bear to know about in ourselves. With the analogy of John and his Wolf, we can see the Australian governments, on our behalf, identifying the asylum seekers as the wolf. I'm suggesting that we need the asylum seekers in the detention centres to carry and contain our anxieties for us.

In 2010, addressing the Australian parliament, the then Indonesian president, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, lamented that the most persistent problem in Australian-Indonesian relations was age-old stereotypes, "misleading, simplistic mental caricature(s) that depicts the other side in a bad light". (Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, 2010) This is a very succinct description of a fundamentalist state of mind. The certainty of stereotypes, we know, is very comforting. With a stereotype, as with a virtual wolf, you know where you are and who you are with and there's no need to engage with what's unfamiliar, complex or confusing.

SBY continued, "Even in the age of cable television and internet, there are Australians who still see Indonesia as an authoritarian country, as a military dictatorship, as a hotbed of Islamic extremism or even as an expansionist power,". (ibid)

He added, "On the other hand, in Indonesia there are people who remain afflicted with Australiaphobia— those who believe that the notion of White Australia still persists, that Australia harbours ill-intention towards Indonesia and is either sympathetic to or supports separatist elements in our country" (ibid). In publicly recognising these stereotypes, SBY was demonstrating the capacity of group leadership to express, and contain, the paranoid anxieties in each country.

One of the main tasks of any group is to contain and deal with psychotic anxieties we cannot contain in ourselves. (Segal, 2002) In talking about psychotic anxieties, I'm talking about irrational anxieties which do not recognise reality. There can be something very positive in group organisation which protects us from the combination of fear and hatred. There is a vicious circle of fear and hatred: we hate, we project, we become more fearful, more hateful and so on. The group socialises us, or socialises the dangerous part of ourselves, the part that denies reality. By socialise, I mean lets us talk about and helps us think about what's disturbing, so that we can live with what feels worrying, rather than act on it, like the example of SBY naming our prejudices as stereotypes. Other examples would include the role of media and social forums for debate, like the tv panel discussion program, *Q and A*.

However, the group not only helps deal with irrational anxieties, it also generates them. "In situations of excessive anxiety, a group may behave in a destructive and self-destructive manner which, in an individual, would be called mad". (Quinodoz

2008 p144) Fears of migrants and asylum-seekers, fears that are out of touch with reality, merge with group identity, to such an extent that we do not feel ourselves to be mad because our opinions are acceptable to the group as a whole. Again, I'm thinking of sections of the media, shock-jock talk-back radio and some political parties as examples in this fermentation process. I was interested to read in Mike Seccombe's essay in *The Saturday Paper* on the secretive Q Society and its associated political party, The Australian Liberty Alliance, that Debbie Robinson, its president, sees Islam as "the wolf at the door". (Seccombe, 2017)

When an irrational way of not thinking dominates a group, then the whole group acts on that, producing leaders who represent that madness and, through escalating projective processes, driving those leaders further away from reality. (Segal, 2002) For example, since Paul Keating's mandatory detention of asylum seekers in 1992, (made indefinite detention in 1994) Australian government responses to the electorates' invasion paranoia have intensified, to the current argument that off-shore incarceration is a necessary addition to the Turn Back the Boats policy, so as to break the business model of the people smugglers. There's been a competition to see which government can be the most receptive to the electorate's need for Daddy wallaby to keep the yowies and the wolves out of our paradise.

Voters are vulnerable to the exploitation by political leaders of cultural anxieties. David Marr, in his recent Quarterly essay on Pauline Hanson, writes, "If Trump is "Make America Great Again", Pauline is "Keep Australia Anxious". (Marr, 2017 p78) He goes on, "The level of anxiety is not in touch with reality but keeps us in this state of constant dread that is very easily manipulated in the Australian imagination." (ibid, p78).

A little earlier in the chapter, Marr gives Dr Anne Aly's account of a recent lunch with Pauline Hanson. Dr Aly is an authority on radicalisation, a Muslim and the Labor member for the Perth seat of Cowan. "She literally said to me, 'Oh, but Anne, you're not a real Muslim because you aren't advocating to throw people off buildings or behead people'...Aly's sense is that Hanson isn't really concerned about Muslims. 'They don't factor into it at all. It's about homing in on those fears that people in Australia have'...Do you think she's driven by genuine fears, I asked, or do you think she knows she's on a winner? 'I think she knows she's on a winner'" (ibid p76)

I'll be drawing on Pauline Hanson again a bit later to help me illustrate some of the ideas I'm offering, but of course, dismayingly, she's not alone in manipulating the voter. The policy of breaking the business model of the people smugglers, entailing the hopeless incarceration of thousands already traumatised in wars we've fuelled, is insanely defended and promoted as a means of saving many thousands more from drowning. Stopping the boats may well have stopped people from drowning, but why is the hopeless incarceration of asylum seekers also required? Why not, instead, an efficient navy, regional diplomacy and Indonesian tolerance? The ideology of the market place, Breaking the Business Model of the People Smugglers, shapes the response to a humanitarian crisis and appears as normality.

In his 2010 address to the Australian parliament, SBY foreshadowed introducing legislation to punish people smugglers with up to 5 years gaol. Australia, meanwhile, has continued to commit the victims of the business model, the asylum-seekers, to an indefinite period of incarceration.

I think that the argument that turning back the boats will protect asylum seekers is a seductively perverse part of the rescue argument, where words are used to obscure the desperate suffering in the transit camps and detention centres. I call this argument perverse because the reality of the detention centres is not simply being evaded but is, in addition, being distorted and misrepresented. A coverup is being effected. (Steiner, 1985)

I'll return to this coverup later but at this point I want to say a bit more about defences against anxiety. Our defences against unconscious anxiety are also unconscious. (Galatariotou, 2005) The tell-tale signs of the existence of our unconscious defences against perceived danger, internal or external, become obvious in the tormenting shape of symptoms, like little John's wolf phobia and, more appallingly, like the dehumanising cruelty inflicted on detainees on Manus and Nauru.

With John and his wolf phobia, I've already suggested to you that one way of managing an anxiety that he does not yet have the means to identify, is for him to name the anxiety as being to do with a wolf. Naming his anxiety as a fear of wolves allows this little boy to maintain a loving and loved relationship with his father, rather than deal with the confusion of also having hateful and frightened feelings toward him. Our little cartoon watcher has yet to achieve the experience of ambivalence, that is, the recognition that the same daddy that he loves and has fun with, is also the hairy frightening monster who is so threatening to him. The splitting of experience into good, as in loving, playful and needed daddy and bad, as in the fearsome, persecutory wolf, is a common weapon in the armament of the fundamentalist state of mind. It means there is no experience of confusion, ambiguity or uncertainty. The enemy is external and is known.

In identifying this virtual wolf as the source of his anxiety, John is projecting his own greedy aggressiveness into the wolf, so that it's the wolf who's identified as hateful, and our boy is thereby absolving himself from any ownership of his own gobbling, murderous feelings. You'll recall his games where he had to be chased, caught and eaten by the wolf, then John would reverse the situation with himself chasing and eating the pursuer. In his repetitive games, we can see a defensive double identification process where firstly the wolf is identified as the invasive one who chases and gobbles up the little boy and then, in turn, the wolf is positioned as the frightened vulnerable one, who is chased and captured to be eaten up by our now masterful lad.

I would argue there is a similar defensive double identification process in the Australian psyche where, firstly, we identify in the asylum seekers the threat of invasion and persecution. The threat is clear and external. This collective perception allows the Australian electorate to feel absolved of any recognition of its own past history as invaders and persecutors. It also protects us from

intergenerational memories of our own experiences of migration, loss, rejection and displacement. It protects our good experience of ourselves. At the same time, it locates in the hapless asylum seekers the unbearable feelings of accusation, greed, rejection, loss of identity, helplessness and hopelessness. Then, in electing the governments that we do, we become the aggressors, who chase and incarcerate.

We can note in this that, having elected our governments, we then absolve and remove ourselves from any responsibility for our attacks. It's a bit like watching a cartoon on TV. All the aggression is out there, on the screen, or in Canberra. We have simply pressed the "On" switch. Such depersonalisation is also a feature of the fundamentalist state of mind. (I'm using depersonalisation to mean dehumanisation here, not in the psychiatric sense of the word)

Peter Hartcher, in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, (Hartcher, 1916), asserted that the British experience in the Brexit vote shows that angry people cannot be frightened, that the warnings of grave consequences from all kinds of experts didn't deter them. Well yes, but psychoanalysts recognise that anger can also be one of the defences used against the intolerable experience of anxiety and helplessness. Anger can be a signal of a deeper anxiety. We see something of this anxious anger in the Hanson's One Nation Party's constituency. Its contempt for, and deafness to, the complex and potentially worrying arguments of the better informed, on issues like childhood vaccinations, climate change, Islam and "the Great Halal Food conspiracy" are examples of paranoia, omnipotent knowing and denial, all common features in the landscape of the fundamentalist state of mind.

Some of you last year may have seen retired Major General Jim Molan's appearance on the tv discussion panel, *QandA*. (QandA, 10/10/2016) He was asked if he did not see the connection between the dehumanising abuse and hopelessness of the detainees and the incidents of self-mutilations, self-immolations and suicide attempts among them. Clench-jawed, Molan replied rigidly "I see no connection". Molan argued that the distressing behaviour was manipulated by external activists and he dismissed it as attention-seeking. This narcissism, where he only talks about the effect on him, of feeling manipulated and having demands made on him, is also an attribute of the fundamentalist state of mind, as is the fragmenting of responsibility, and the lack of concern for the terrible emotional distress of the detainees. Molan described Operation Sovereign Borders as "the new normal", with which Australia was leading the world. Well, I'd agree with him there. We're the only nation in the world to have a policy of mandatory, indefinite, unreviewable off-shore detention. This way of not thinking won Molan, from the government, our elected representatives, the role of co-author for the Turn Back the Boats policy. I need to stress here that I'm not psychoanalysing Jim Molan but, rather, using his comments to illustrate the psychoanalytic view of a particular state of mind to which we're all vulnerable.

I mentioned earlier that depersonalisation, or dehumanisation, is another trait in this state of mind. You'll recall the object of John's terror is a cartoon wolf. This primitive relationship with the world excludes empathy, compassion and concern, both for other people and for ourselves. As a result, when we can't recognise the

pain caused by our actions, we can't begin to look back on our history with concern and compassion. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's apology to Australia's Indigenous people in 2008, reflecting, in particular, on the mistreatment of the Stolen generation, was an acknowledgement of the suffering Australian government policies have inflicted on the victims. His use of the word "sorry" was very important in expressing empathy and respect. The apology is seen to be a beginning part, a very small beginning part, of a healing process. The Healing Foundation was established and funded the following year to support indigenous healing initiatives and promote public awareness of healing issues.

I also mentioned earlier the issue of a coverup, of information about the detainees being manipulated. The Australian government's policy has been to prohibit humanising information about the detainees, having them without visible faces or audible voices, all the better to project into them aspects of ourselves we don't want to know about. The media have been banned from immigration detention centres, with spokespeople like Matthias Cormann, as Finance minister, citing "operational discipline" (Matthias Cormann, 14.6.16, *The Age*) as justification. This is the language of corporate business management being used to defend a cruel and deceitful response to a humanitarian crisis. It's a chilling perversion of language that would be at home in Orwell's dystopian **1984**.

This dehumanising denial is also a disabling attack on our capacity to think about the appalling reality of Australia's violation of basic human rights. I'd like to acknowledge the enormous courage of whistle blowing employees returning from the asylum centres, the untiring efforts of *The Age*, *The Saturday Paper* and Eva Orner's film "*Chasing Asylum*", in drawing attention to the shared humanity of the detainees. For the most part, however, the government's veil of secrecy has been very effective.

The veil of secrecy also serves to protect us from any of the confusion about who are "the goodies" and who are "the baddies". Senator Pauline Hanson, in a different episode of *Q and A's* panel discussion program last year (18/7/17), found herself jaw-dropped to learn that the fellow parliamentarian sitting on her right was, of all things, a Moslem. "Are you a Moslem?" she asked, wide-eyed, of Senator Dastyari. He assumed Hanson was mocking him. "No, seriously," she urged, "are you?" Her anxious confusion was clear. She had assumed Dastyari was a colleague, not the enemy. In this post 9/11 world, how do you tell your colleagues from the enemy? Like our little John, who avoided looking at wolves in any other context than the cartoon, Senator Hanson doesn't seem to have encountered many Moslems.

By way of a summary statement, I thought I couldn't do better than to end with a quote from Freud. Writing in 1929, in the aftermath of the ravages of the first World War, delivering the manuscript to the publisher barely a week after the New York Stock Exchange crashed, and watching the rise of Nazism and ever increasing anti-semitism, Freud wrote, as an evident truth: "*Homo homini lupus*" (Freud, 1930, p111). Man is a wolf to man.

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Only RUB 193.34/month. Australia's Treatment of Asylum Seekers. STUDY. Flashcards. A person who has been forced to flee their country and cannot return unless the situation improves. Some are forced to flee without warning; many have experienced torture and trauma. The motivating factor for these people is safety and protection from persecution and human rights abuses. Asylum seeker. A person who is seeking protection as a refugee and is still waiting to have his claim assessed by the country they have submitted it to. Every refugee has at some point been an asylum seeker. Migrant. Someone who chooses to leave their country to seek a better life. He said Australia knew the dangerous and helpless situations on Manus and Nauru were damaging those held there. Cr peau found that refugees and asylum seekers do not feel safe on Nauru. Many of the migrants reported incidents of verbal abuse, physical attack or theft from the local community. Despite complaints to the local police, no one is being held accountable and, due to their lack of trust in the local police, incidents most often go unreported. Australia would vehemently protest if such treatment were inflicted by any other state on Australian citizens, and in particular on Australian children. In his 21-page report, the special rapporteur also condemned the Australian government's use of the term "illegal" to describe a person who sought asylum. The rise in the number of asylum seekers in Australia presents considerable challenges to the state as they are a self-selected, demand-driven group, whose numbers, country of origin, ethnic background, and social demographic characteristics cannot be determined in advance of their arrival. People who apply for protection at the border are regarded primarily as illegal immigrants, and only secondarily as asylum seekers, and the illegality of their entry has become the primary factor in the way they are treated by the state, rather than their need for protection. Two streams of asylum seekers a Australia continues to resettle homosexual refugees in homophobic Papua New Guinea. Gay men seeking asylum are both required yet unable to declare their sexuality for fear of persecution. Some rights reserved. It's no secret that Australia's policy of mandatory and indefinite offshore detention is harming asylum seekers. Men detained in the Manus processing centre have died. Women and children detained on Nauru have been abused. The United Nations have repeatedly assessed conditions in the camps as in violation of basic standards of human rights. But what makes these policies even crueller is their inflexible application.