



## **Barrenjoey High School, NSW, 2016 Red Room Education, with Candy Royalle**

Acclaimed poet and performer, Candy Royalle led a full day workshop at Barrenjoey High School. As part of their protest poetry unity, Candy explored the poetry and work of famous contemporary poets who have used language to reshape the boundaries of their times.

Red Room Poetry Education inspires students and teachers to create, perform and publish poetry. We enliven experiences with poetry by bringing contemporary poets into classrooms across Australia to run intensive writing workshops that awaken imaginations, support creative opportunities and curriculum outcomes.

## Student Poems

### Untitled

Sounds of people quieting me down fade.  
Light of the sun begins to become  
uncomfortably  
bright and my lungs feel as if 3000 tonnes of  
brick crush them.  
I cry.  
I cry for help though I know nobody on this  
Earth or any Earth in the million of fading  
galaxies can save me from my own head.  
I pray  
I pray for this unknown terror stimulating  
every instinct in me to leave. Leave, leave this  
hell that I do not understand to go away.  
I plead.  
I plead to be left alone to reflect on my  
own problems surrounding my silent, scary  
cell  
of a life.  
Though I know this isn't true,  
I know that without this I would be happy  
and see things without having to consider  
the possibility of seeing that dark, forceful  
wave that I refer to as anxiety.  
People tell me I'm crazy for wishing  
everything  
to be perfect though I know this is  
unchanged  
I refused that yoghurt with the unpeeled  
plastic  
seal and make up excuses.  
I refuse to sit in that desk with the wobbly  
leg like a lent over elder as it triggers this  
hell that is known as OCD.  
The sounds come back.  
Light dies down.  
Lungs relieve their pressure.

Until next time anxiety.

### By Anonymous

#### My Poem

How many times have you been called  
beautiful?  
Maybe not beautiful, but something of the  
sort. How many times have you been  
called sexy, wolf whistled, beard bristled  
or hand held in society, by the  
men within your home that you go for  
privacy, how many times have you looked  
In the mirror, the little piece of glass  
that can make your body shiver,  
but for what? So you can cover up  
your spots, hide your humour, personality,  
passion or compatibility, with intelligence,  
you see we focus on aesthetics, the  
thing that makes you look good, sound  
good, feel good, endlessly, we tire, us  
girls we tire, to make our boobs  
look bigger, our body darker, our humour  
bland, our hands cover our  
mouths when we smile, and for  
a while its been our fault, that men  
are womanisers caught in the daylight,  
its been us, the women who tan, who  
post revealing pics so we can go round  
getting x's from absolute d\*cks and then  
go, back to our bed, rest our heads,  
try to forget the boys, the guys  
aha the men who will always misogynise,  
objectify and make our happy end.

### By Anonymous

### Greed

It takes people over and pushes away rights.  
They are greedy behind their walls hidden,  
behind their masks.  
Rolling in money. Rolling in lies.  
Do they think of the after shock? The poverty,  
the wars.  
Do their lies keep them up at night?  
There is no push back there is no protest  
against the greed.  
They are left to destroy.  
Poverty, abuse, racism, refugees, war:  
they create the problem but run from he  
earthquake they make.  
Hiding behind their masks, lying with slitted  
tongues.  
Overtaken by nothing more than greed.  
They stay clean, safe and free. Hidden behind  
their lies.  
The affected have red eyes, bloody hands  
and murder to their names.  
Look what they have created.  
Poverty, abuse, racism, refugees, war.  
All for their greed.  
Will their money buy them a ticket to heaven  
or hell?  
Their hand shaped like a gun but they aren't  
the ones pulling the trigger.  
They are the ones creating....  
Poverty, abuse, racism, refugees, WAR.

### By Anonymous

## **Racism**

We are forced into these racial stereotypes by  
the media at such a young age  
Because we were always taught to believe  
what  
the media portrays  
So when the media portrays Muslims as  
terrorists  
every day  
What are we taught to believe?  
Whatever the media tells us  
It's gotten to the point when if you're a  
Muslim You  
have to be specially checked before going on  
a plane  
And if you're black and live in America then  
you must  
be a gang member  
And if you're Jewish you must be the one  
who will  
pick up that 10 cents dropped on the  
playground  
floor  
See this is what we get taught at a young age  
But we can stop this before it becomes a  
permanent  
page  
In the books of history  
Known as the racist generation

**By Chris H**

## **Poem**

They try to convince us of their cause  
They try to capture us in their beliefs  
Some of us fall for their lies,  
their propaganda, their false promises  
all created in the presence of greed

Some will say I can't talk  
I too contain greed and I too am bias  
but their greed gets people hurt.  
Mine effects few for I am only me  
With only myself hearing my voice.

We need to remember who we were  
before we became tangled in their webs  
caught in the promises of prosperity and  
peace  
they lie because they are greedy for power  
enough power to have the world at their feet.

Remember your morals buried beneath their  
cause  
that you now believe in too  
The morals they want you to forget  
Pain can be prevented no matter how many  
times they tell you otherwise  
You have a voice and can use it for good  
unlike them.

**By Anonymous**

## **Untitled**

Voices inside your head  
Thoughts Knocking on your door  
Do not let them in

These thoughts will destroy you  
May even ruin your life  
Send you into a never ending spiral

Depression, anxiety and self harm are just  
terms  
Terms to define what it is that you are  
dealing with so you have some sort of  
justification  
as to what is wrong with you. The answer is  
nothing.  
Nothing is wrong with you. You are perfect

Whoever you are.  
Wherever you're born.  
No matter what.  
These are the things that make us unique.  
These are the things we should be proud of.

So next time negative thoughts knock at your  
door  
Remember this poem and tell them to wait a  
minute.

**By Anonymous**

## War

even though people support our country in the past,  
war is taking Risk as the people are making History.  
people cry and Hurtfull for the people we love  
our children, wives and friends are believed  
you on what you're doing,  
please don't die, I'm on your side,  
even though people ride tanks just to have fun  
but the truth about War is that you risk  
your own life  
people are risking their own life because  
their family & peers support the dedication  
of our country

**By Anonymous**

## War on drugs

They say "hugs not drugs" but they don't know my mindstate, they say "it's bad for you" and try to make contemplate. But I do have an addiction and can't get out of this position, all my money goes to weed, ecstasy, and speed. I know what I'm doing makes me greedy when my family is so needy. I wish I could get help but I can't so I just yell, cause I just keep feeding this addiction and it's making my family have much friction and I can't cope so I do more dope but all I hope is I can get better.

**By Harley G**

## US Election

Trump Trump Trump  
who cares about Trump  
The guy who is going to  
bring America down in Trump  
all over the news Trump  
Trump is like a cat big while  
the dog isn't around!  
Who gonna happen when it over peace or  
war 1 big  
country or 2 split in half  
what will the American  
society choose the side that  
will lead them to goodness  
or the side that will lead them  
to hell

**By Sandor J**

## Poem

I feel like what we learn isn't relevant  
Like the teachers do it for the hell of it  
I feel like they teach us about the past & not a  
lot about the future  
I'd like to learn about my future  
A future where it's not controlled by a  
"teacher"  
I feel like a robot in today's society

**By Anonymous**

## Eight Years

8 years of success  
Now he's off the stage  
Who will take his place  
To look after this day and age

8 years of success,  
Making history  
Barack Obama,  
You mean something to me

8 years of success,  
Now his time is done  
Who will take his place  
It cant be Donald Trump

8 years of success,  
To be wrecked by a man  
with a heart as dark as night  
I know he's not our man

8 years of success ,  
We'll be the only country left,  
and once this crow leaves  
Life will be put to the test

**By Chloe L**

### Untitled

Are you gonna drop that bomb?  
Are you gonna push that trigger?  
Will you be the figure you mould yourself into  
on the screen, the monstrous words you  
type. Are you going to complete the inhuman  
tasks you claim you will? Will you be able to  
stare into the eyes of every dead person who  
lies on the streets filled with screeching war  
cries. Because, I think you want, you want to  
drop that bomb, you want to pull that trigger,  
you want to be that figure.  
See even though you mask your words with  
hatred of peoples raise and culture, you will  
Not complete your claims. I think my words  
can show you if not teach you how the world  
looks through my eyes, the eyes not clouded  
with the man in the suits lies. Follow your  
own thoughts, don't be That Person, that the  
racist people want you to be. Don't drop that  
bomb on my family for you have not looked  
into the pureness of their innocent brown  
eyes, eyes the same colour of their skin.

By Aisha A

### Oppression

who are the people in our lives  
If not but mere demons in the night  
we wish to fly and soar  
but we just get to die  
not live not give our  
love our heart but if  
not so this art will go  
go dark hit rock bottom. But when  
bottom comes it will be there in  
our heart. But the shard of  
government will splice will slice hard  
and true like a wolf howling for  
the moon. A lost soul a found friend  
we hear the owl we see the end  
but feint not for it is not  
yours nor mine but the world  
finding it's heart but not for good  
She has been oppressed depressed  
and suppressed by oil companies with  
their big factories. So who are you  
to me to not let me shine sit on the shrine.

By Anonymous

### Untitled

Knock, knock we open our door let you in, sit  
you  
down, give you a drink  
Knock, knock, we open the door, give you  
presents,  
open presents, smile, have a good time  
Knock, knock, no response, you walk  
it's another day  
But is it really?  
Knock, knock let me in I'm sorry for  
what I've done I never meant to sin  
Knock, knock I'm sorry Jessica had to see,  
hope she never believes it.  
I'm sorry I truly am, but as we  
progressed in this relationship I slowly lost  
aho I was & who I am. Jack turned  
me violent just like the full moon  
for a werewolf  
He was nice he was cool, but seriously I am  
sorry I let Jack Daniels turn me into  
a fool, into a d\*ck, I just was pr\*ck

By Anonymous

## Hurt

Eyes glazed, drawn on smile but behind  
the blinds there is pain!  
Pain, physical, mental pain  
Pain of a broken heart  
The loss of the one you loved, the  
one you thought you'd never lose.  
There one minute, gone the next.  
Left all alone, like a stray dog  
Shivering wet and cold longing  
for that warmth, for that love, just  
to know that there's no need  
for pain, no need to hurt. That one  
hug feels like super glue it could mend  
your broken heart. But that person  
is gone, moved on not coming  
back so like that stray dog  
you are left shivering, we and  
cold, longing for that warmth so you  
stay in front of those blinds, eyes  
glazed, drawn on smile.

**By Anonymous**

## Untitled

Why do the colours of a rainbow  
stay silent and still.  
They stand together, shoulder to shoulder  
no intentions to kill.

Why do the colours of a rainbow  
look below as they watch  
the colours of opposing races  
claw out at tinted faces

Why can't the rainbow of humans  
look up to see  
That different colours look good together  
and as one represent harmony.

Why is white better than black,  
and red more deadly than yellow.  
When a rainbow embraces ever colour  
And doesn't think one is better than another.

**By Bruna G**

## Untitled

I sit in silence as I can feel my world dying,  
as I hear screams and loud cries in the  
distance,  
I know life will never be the same,  
gun shots capture my attention, the noise  
gets louder and  
louder before it's all gone. The town is silent  
as if the world as ended and I  
sit and cry in disbelief. I'm sick, hungry and  
tired  
and now have nowhere to go. A  
spark inside of me makes me still have hope  
that I will live to grow old but as the world  
Is slowly changing and my life is coming to an  
end, I think my lucky stars, for letting  
me make it to this point as I will  
not be a refugee and life with no hope.

**By Anonymous**

### **Slam Poetry**

Tell me to open my legs  
Call me names, when I do so  
Tell me to open my brain  
Fill it with lies that I won't hold  
You'll slip a comment into our conversation  
About how "it was her fault, did ya see what she was wearing?"  
or about how "a woman could never run a nation"  
We're useful, only for what you need us for  
We're useless, but that's what we need ourselves for  
What keeps me sane  
You tell me "that's a child's game"  
Well that child's game I want to play  
The people, the women ,who play this game  
Are the women who make the change.

**By Zoe C**

### **Homophobia**

Everything is black  
No colour in sight  
I'm being beaten  
There's no way I can fight  
I'm scared to go out  
Being pushed and shoved  
all about  
My world is colourless  
They don't understand that it's not my choice  
All I get is teased  
I wish I had a voice  
One day I saw some colour  
I guess this is it  
It's my time to go  
But none of you will miss me  
Not even a bit

**By Jasmyn S**

### **Untitled**

Why do you say this when you don't even know  
You don't know what you are saying  
because you don't know what it is like  
If you haven't experience it you don't know it's a fright  
So get some perspective go fight  
fight for it  
and do it on the daily  
for you say it's fine in another way  
and conform to the stereotype another day  
you do not realise for you don't know  
you don't know the pain you've caused  
you're so shallow

**By Esther A**

### **Racism**

we are all the same  
same blood, same mind, same earth  
so why discriminate

why discriminate the person  
with different skin, why discriminate the  
person  
with another language.  
why discriminate just because  
there from another country. We  
are all in this together  
one big world with lots of minds forever  
Different people mean different opinions  
mean  
different ideas. Different ideas  
mean new beginnings. So why  
does it matter if we're not the  
same we were created to have  
individuality  
and Equality.

**By Bella C**

### **Untitled**

The earth was balanced and beautiful  
with forests, coral reefs and animals.  
The earth was balanced and beautiful  
but we chose to pollute

We dumped our waste  
and ruined the atmosphere  
and then we wondered why  
our health was declining...

The earth got hotter  
and the coral reefs died  
but we still kept slaughtering  
the environment.

**By Henri H**

### **Deforestation**

Rays of light shining through the canopy  
sounds of life surround  
deep colours of green all around  
Tree trunks are almost as solid as the stone  
beneath them.

Though cluttering steel teeth, cut through  
them like butter

The souls whose home is dead  
don't dare let out an utter  
So stand up and fight  
Use up all of your might

**By Sam P**





**Candy Royale** is an award-winning performing writing, performance artist, poet, storyteller, activist, educator and vulnerability advocate who fuses cinematic storytelling, poetry and unique vocal rhythms with confronting, political and heart-thumping content seeking to break open closed hearts. She tackles topics ranging from sexual obsession to social injustice, exploring the human condition and illuminating the darker areas of the human psyche for her audiences.

### **About Us**

The Red Room Company creates unusual and useful poetry projects that transform expectations of, and experiences with, poetry. We aspire to make poetry accessible to all, especially those who face the greatest barriers to creative opportunities.

[The Red Room Company at Barrenjoey High School, NSW, 2016](#)

[redroomcompany.org/education/](http://redroomcompany.org/education/)

