**Text’s for Peter’s talk**

**TEXT A**

**(1) Students asked about their sexuality for scholarships**

REBECCA URBAN, The Australian, August 1, 2016

(2) A leading education scholarship provider backed by some of Australia’s biggest businesses has begun quizzing high school students on their sexuality as part of its application process, sparking fresh concerns about the creeping influence of LGBTI rights activism on schools.

(3) The Australian Business and Community Network Scholarship Foundation is inviting applications for its 2016 grants program and, for the first time, is offering a grant targeted at Year 10 students who “identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and/or intersex”.

(4) As a result, the application form inquires as to whether the candidate is male, female or transgender and whether they are gay, lesbian or bisexual. In past years, candidates were simply asked whether they were male or female.

(5) The move means the program, chaired by prominent businessman Michael Hawker and financially backed by corporate heavyweights Microsoft, Optus and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), strays from its original purpose of helping students from disadvantaged backgrounds with education-related costs.

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(11) Damian Wyld, national policy officer for Family Voice Australia, criticised the awarding of education scholarships based on sexuality as another example of ideological activism making its way into schools.

(12) “Why should children, especially in a school setting, be asked to declare their sexuality or gender identity?” Mr Wyld said yesterday.

“Many 15-year-olds are still working through issues around sexuality. Offering a financial incentive to identify as ‘lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and/or intersex’ is completely inappropriate.”

(13) “Surely merit or financial disadvantage are more appropriate criteria for scholarships,” Mr Wyld said.

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TEXT B

[editorial, *The Australian*, September 2, 2016]

(slightly abbreviated\_

(1) It is little wonder many Australians are becoming wary of what can appear to be social engineering carried out by governments, activist groups and even well-intentioned individuals and businesses. There have been too many examples of late where social issues once aimed at overcoming prejudice have become progressive causes aimed at promoting alternative lifestyles or even enforcing a new political correctness. We have seen this unfold through the Safe Schools[[1]](#footnote-1) initiative in which admirable efforts to combat bullying of children on any grounds, including sexuality, were hijacked by those with a radical political agenda to “normalise” a wide range of sexual preferences, choices and behaviours. …

(2) The story revealed exclusively by Rebecca Urban in *The Australian* yesterday about a major high school scholarship scheme seeking out lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or intersex candidates tended to fall into a familiar pattern. ….

(3) Some of the firms involved in the Australian Business and Community Network Scholarship Foundation have been active in campaigns supporting same-sex marriage and clearly believe they are promoting a positive social cause. By funding scholarships for needy and worthy teenagers they are engaging in good corporate citizenship. But allocating LGBTI places seems to be overreach. It smacks of identity politics and is bound to be gamed at some stage if ambivalence about sexuality may add certainty to an application. All applicants should be equal and be judged on merit alone.

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TEXT C

<https://www.crikey.com.au/2021/12/10/sam-kerr-knocking-down-male-entitlement/>

Sam Kerr knocking down male entitlement raises ethical questions… but feels so right

MICHAEL BRADLEY DEC 10, 2021

We all agree that violence is generally bad and only rarely justified, right? Sometimes, though, a good hip-and-shoulder really speaks truth to power.

Sam Kerr, Australian women’s soccer team captain and arguably the best football player in the world, executed a perfect shoulder charge to drop a pitch invader over in the UK (where she plays for Chelsea), putting him on his arse and earning a standing ovation from the crowd.

I imagine many people shared my immediate reaction: give her a medal, make her Australian of the Year. Her act was a physical representation of … a good ol’ fashioned “don’t argue”. Could anything be, according to our cherished self-image, more Australian than Sam Kerr’s shoulder charge of the pitch invader?

Ah, but brace yourself for the think-piece counter-arguments: first, violence is bad always, n’est-ce pas? More to the point, what if she’d been a bloke and the pitch invader a woman? All hell would be breaking loose right now…

These points are not illegitimate. Nor is it wrong, per se, to watch the video of Kerr delivering her coup de grace to the smirking fool and feel unalloyed joy. What, properly, are we to make of this?

The standard ethical position on violence — whether retaliatory, righteous or not — is that it is unjustifiable except in either self-defence or defence of the defenceless.

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so it’s difficult to find a general principle which supports Kerr’s action. She wasn’t in any personal danger, nor was anyone else; there was security (albeit way less effective than her), and the only immediate downside risk was delay to the game.

In truth, Kerr’s decision looked very much like it was not so much provoked by the present circumstances but inspired by symbolism: the symbolism of this entitled male, and the symbolism of her iconic, female response.

The positive audience reaction, I suspect, falls into two camps: one is applauding Kerr for doing precisely what the archetype of a no-nonsense Aussie would; the other is cheering her as a feminist warrior declaring “Enough!” by body rather than words.

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For all that, it’s tricky still. We do not want to encourage self-help to the point of vigilantism, because that way really does lie a society that looks a lot like a Trump rally in Alabama.

But, as we all instinctively know, life is not an ethics symposium. Sometimes we see something that may be difficult to reconcile entirely, yet it feels harmlessly right. I suspect Sam Kerr has hit that sweet spot, in a manner as perfectly timed and placed as her shoulder charge.

1. The “Safe Schools” program, funded by the Australian Federal Government, was set up in Australia in 2013 with the purpose, according to its founders, of “working with schools to create safer and more inclusive environments for same sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse students, staff and families” , with the specific purpose of countering the bullying [http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org.au/who-we-are]. Critics of the program contended that material developed by the program was “ sexualised and promotes gender theories that are controversial for both the scientific community and the general public. The program is divisive because it challenges traditional sexual concepts” [http://youreteachingourchildrenwhat.org/safe-schools-coalition/], and furthermore that the program “has been teaching students that heterosexuality is not the norm, and encouraging students to explore sexual and gender diversity” [http://www.safeschools.acl.org.au/] . [↑](#footnote-ref-1)