

Call for Proposals

Anatomy of a Riot: Enquiring into the Civil Unrests in our Past

a seminar by educators and students

Every year, 21 July has been commemorated as Racial Harmony Day in Singapore. However, how many of us know that it memorialises the 1964 riots, which claimed over 400 casualties? This year marks its 50th anniversary. It is popularly known as “the race riots” and epitomised as the state of race relations in Singapore. However, half a century after the event, there is still scant information released on it from official sources and the findings from the Commission of Enquiry established to examine its causes have never been made public. But 50 years is a timely juncture to reexamine what we know about the event, as well as other episodes of civil unrest that make up our collective history. This is especially so when fresh unrest has reoccurred recently (last December) and the changing composition of our plural population has given rise to new politics of recognition.



A collective enquiry into the episodes of civil unrest in Singapore history will help citizens construct a renewed understanding of their significance in providing shared experiences and developing a national identity. This seminar will also highlight the different perspectives and opinions educators and students have of Singapore history.

SEMINAR DETAILS

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| time date | 9a.m. - 2.30p.m., Sat, 13 Sep 2014 |
| venue | Seminar Room, Level 2 National Museum of Singapore, 93 Stamford Road, Singapore 178897 |
| target presenters | Educators and Students |

If you are interested in presenting, please complete the application form and send it to us by **25 July 2014 (Friday)**. Successful applicants will be notified by email.

Conveners

Ms Junaidah Jaffar, jun.jaffar@gmail.com
 Mdm Karen Chan, karenchanoikhum@gmail.com
 Dr Christina Loong christina.loong@gmail.com
 Mr Justin Ng justin.ng.88@gmail.com
 Ms Jasvinder Kaur jasvinder.kaur@nie.edu.sg

We invite educators and/ or students to present their views and experiences as they enquire into the civil unrest in Singapore's past (10-15 mins per presentation). We are looking for educators and/or students doing social studies, history and other related fields at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The form of presentation is flexible. Students can present singly or in small groups (up to 3 persons), or engage in an informal dialogue with the audience.

The Singapore Heritage Society thanks the Tote Board and the Singapore Turf Club for their generous support.

Presenters may use these questions as a guide:

- 1. Anatomy of a Riot:** What questions should be asked about a riot? Which factors are salient and need to be examined? What causes a riot to erupt? What drives rioters? Are riots spontaneous or pre-meditated? What are the short term and long term implications of a riot?
- 2. Historiographies of Riots:** Who were the key players? What are the different perspectives on the different episodes of civil unrest/riots in Singapore history? How should differing accounts/perspectives be reconciled? What do differing accounts/perspectives teach us about the social fabric and political as well as economic realities of that time? How has this event been portrayed in popular culture or school textbooks (official historiography)? What significance do the different interpretations have on our current realities? (e.g. The 1964 riots is popularly viewed as a race conflict. How does this influence us in seeing race relations all these years or even presently? How is it treated in National Education campaigns?)
- 3. Moving On:** How does a society heal itself after an episode of violence? How do inter-communal relationships fare after a riot?
- 4. Eyewitness:** Are there any eyewitnesses to the riots who would like to share their experiences?
- 5. The Episodes:** secret society riots in the 19th and 20th century, Anti-Catholic Riots (1851), Chinese Post Office Riots (1876), Hokkien-Teochew Riots (1854), Sepoy Mutiny (1915), Hertogh Riots (1950), National Service Riots (1954), Hock Lee Bus Riots (1955), Chinese Middle Schools Riots (1956), Riot in a Penal Settlement/Pulau Senang Riot (1963), Singapore's "Race" Riots (1964), 1969 Riots, Little India Riots (8 December, 2013), etc.

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13th September 2014

Venue: Seminar Room, Level 2, National Museum of Singapore, 93 Stamford Road, Singapore 178897

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| Title of Proposal | |
| Name of Participant/s (include email address of each) | |
| Name of School/Institute (Primary / Secondary / Tertiary / Others*) | |
| Profile of Participant/s | |
| Topic Summary (to include the method of investigation) | |
| | (Not more than 500 words) |

* Delete where applicable

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