



Timor-Oans Cultural Group and the Dili Allstars, Womadelaide 2023.  
Image by Vanessa Hearman

# Nationalism, citizenship and social repair: Photography and the East Timorese diaspora

**HRC Work in Progress Seminar**  
**Dr Vanessa Hearman**  
**Curtin University**

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Members of the East Timorese diaspora in Australia took, appeared in and collected photographs of their activities during the campaign for independence from Indonesian rule (1975-99). Through photographs, they aimed to educate the Australian public about East Timor and the Australian government's support for the Indonesian annexation, but they also stored the images as mementos of their own involvement in the struggle. This paper examines the uses of such photographs in the context of an independent Timor-Leste, reflecting, for example, on how diasporic narrators use such photographs in oral history interviews. It analyses the possibilities for reparative work that these images could perform by incorporating the multigenerational stories of the diaspora, thereby fostering a more inclusive and pluralist nationalism in both Australia and Timor-Leste.

**Vanessa Hearman** is a historian of Southeast Asia and Senior Lecturer in History at Curtin University in Western Australia. She is researching the history and remembrance of East Timorese migration to Australia and contemporary artistic production in Timor-Leste, supported by funding from the Australian Research Council.

## Details

**Tuesday 24 October 10:15am**  
**Baldessin Precinct Building, Level 4**

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