



# The Young Greek Australian HERMES



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I am shocked. Actually, scrap that. I am disappointed. Why? Let me start from the beginning.

I arrived in Australia from Greece in 2003. Living here was a temporary situation fuelled by my parents' passion to explore, learn and teach others the Greek language. Similarly to most of the Greeks in Greece, I, too, felt that the Greeks living abroad were

heroes; they still called themselves Greek and sent their kids to Saturday Greek School classes even though in the best scenario, they were only second or third generation Greeks.

And then school started. I found that not many could speak Greek and that they were barely accustomed to the culture that I knew. I couldn't wait to return to Greece and I felt that those around me were so different to the heroes who I longed to meet. Through the years however, the difficulties of sustaining the Greek way of life and culture in a faraway land caught up with me; I started to appreciate the Greeks living here.

And then things in Greece turned sour. Politics and finances took over the country and I felt that we, the Greeks living

abroad, had to do something. Well you can imagine my surprise and disappointment when I read the last few Hermes entries addressing the economic crisis in Greece and most recently the role of ethnicity. I was fuming while reading that people outside of Greece could not be asked to help a country which was obviously in need. It is not about where you are, it is about the deed of helping. How can we call ourselves human, when we don't show any compassion for those in need? But let's ignore the simple deed of helping. How can we call ourselves Greek and not actually feel sad and compelled for the country of our ancestors? Yes, it is hard to help but we can start by educating ourselves on the matter. Learn about what the situation is and educate others about it too. Be proud of your ancestral roots, not only when you can eat a pita or when Greece wins a football competition but when bad times come as well. This is when the Greeks in Greece need you the most.

And so you ask, what are the benefits of ethnicity? Survival and culture. We are naturally made to feel closer to a Greek who we don't know and we would protect them to protect our kind. Traditions and dialects are all



by-products of ethnicity and vice versa. Yes, there are also negative by-products such as racism but in my opinion, is there such a thing as a positive that does not have a negative? It is times like these that ethnicity can be a positive.

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**Did this article get you thinking? [Hermes@nugas.org.au](mailto:Hermes@nugas.org.au)**

**Want to write in the next HERMES?**

The HERMES is open to any and every young Greek Australian who believes he or she has something to share!

Send your submission to [hermes@nugas.org.au](mailto:hermes@nugas.org.au)

or call Harry on 0401 937 870

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5 Jul	6 Jul	7 Jul	8 Jul	9 Jul	10 Jul	11 Jul
12 Jul	13 Jul	14 Jul	15 Jul	16 Jul	17 Jul	18 Jul
19 Jul	20 Jul	21 Jul	22 Jul	23 Jul	24 Jul	25 Jul
26 Jul	27 Jul AGUA BBQ	28 Jul	29 Jul	30 Jul CUGA Reunion	31 Jul	1 Aug

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