

Corrosive Speech: What Can Be Done

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SUMMARY

Online speech that denigrates foreigners living in Singapore and members from minority races has raised concerns among policy-makers, law enforcers, media practitioners and members of the public. Besides the vitriolic nature of the online posts, what is more disturbing are the strong undercurrents of resentment held towards others who are perceived as different from one's own group or as outsiders.

Unlike hate speech, corrosive speech directed at specific communities may or may not be expressed with the intention of inflicting harm or promoting hate, and assumes myriad forms. However, regardless of intent or lack thereof, corrosive speech has the potential to create misunderstanding, exacerbate existing tensions among different communities, and erode social relations in a heterogeneous community such as Singapore's.

This paper examines the nature of corrosive speech that is present in public discourse, and proposes a broad-based approach that works in tandem with existing policies, involving multiple stakeholders (e.g., the government, mainstream and online media, and civil society) and addressing various segments in the society.

We begin with reviewing similar cases in other countries, following which we examine the causes of corrosive speech in Singapore. We then present our methodology and findings pertaining to what we term as "tip-of-the-iceberg" corrosive speech incidents. Drawing on our observations and interviews with community leaders and members from the online community, we present a multi-pronged strategy to address corrosive speech in the short and long term, and offer recommendations on how society as a whole can cope with corrosive speech.

1. OVERVIEW

The recent cases of anti-foreigner and racist speech uttered by people in Singapore have engendered much discussion pertaining to their causes and effects. This topic has surfaced in online debates, commentaries in mainstream press, and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's National Day Rally speech on 26 August 2012.

In his speech, Prime Minister Lee made a specific reference to "nasty views which are expressed, especially online and especially anonymously, which brings out the worst in people" (Prime Minister's Office, 2012). He also referred to an article in the New York Times on anti-foreigner speech in Singapore which "damages our reputation" and "fundamentally speaks poorly about the sort of people that we are" (see Jacobs, 2012). Articles on Singaporeans' "xenophobic" behaviour have been published in other international media such as Bloomberg and The Wall Street Journal (see Adam & Tan, 2012; Mahtani, 2012a).

Other than the reasons why people engage in negative discourse about people different from themselves and why such speech is harmful, another strand of debate questions if anti-foreigner and racist speech does indeed pose a problem, and if it does, what needs to be done to address the problem.

1.1 Why "corrosive speech"?

In this paper, we classify negative speech about others such as xenophobic and racist speech as "corrosive speech".

Corrosive speech is not unique to Singapore. Speech that denigrates and discriminates against minorities is conventionally referred to as "hate speech" and is a term typically used in Western democratic systems such as the United States, United Kingdom, Spain, Germany and Denmark. Hate speech "puts people down based on their race or ethnic origin, religion, gender, age, physical condition, disability, or sexual orientation" (Cortese, 2006).

In our paper, we use the term “corrosive speech” instead of hate speech for several reasons. First, corrosive speech is wider in scope and includes speech made with and without the intention of promoting rancour or hate among different segments of the population. While unintentional corrosive speech includes utterances about “others” expressed as part of venting unhappiness, intentional corrosive speech encompasses “witch hunting” and galvanising support for one’s negative sentiments held towards other groups.

Second, “corrosive speech” focuses on the insidious effects of anti-foreigner and racist speech on the society, particularly how it creates misunderstanding, exacerbates existing tensions among different communities, and erodes social relations. It is corrosive because it could threaten to abrade what are commonly seen as important fundamental values in Singapore society, affect how one perceives differences between people, and how people are accepted in the long run.

Corrosive speech may not be overtly abusive or hateful, thus its impact may be subtle. This is because the erosion of one’s respect and trust in “others” takes place over time. Though slow, the effects of corrosive speech are acerbic because if left unaddressed, it cultivates and fortifies perceptions of “others” through the reductive one-dimensional lens of nationality or race. This is detrimental to cultivating understanding, acceptance and appreciation among different groups in a heterogeneous community such as Singapore’s.

When determining what speech is corrosive, the context must be taken into consideration. Sharing of racist jokes among a group of friends from different ethnic backgrounds is not corrosive. However, when the same speech spills over from a dyadic or small-group setting to a public setting (offline or online), it becomes problematic. Therefore, we focus on anti-foreigner and racist speech that occurs in the public domain and where corrosive speech is condoned or even encouraged.

1.2 Scope of the paper

Our report provides an assessment of corrosive speech in Singapore. What we term as “tip-of-the-iceberg” corrosive speech incidents include: the Ferrari accident involving a Chinese national, National University of Singapore scholar Sun Xu’s derogatory remarks on Facebook, East Asia Institute of Management student Wang Peng Fei’s YouTube video, and Jason Neo’s Facebook picture and caption Muslim children on a school bus.

We posit that corrosive speech is a symptom of underlying societal malaise, an outcome of what has been called “growth at all cost” economic policies, lack of cultural understanding between different groups of people, increased use of Internet technologies for political and personal expression, and unanticipated effects of new technologies.

After the 2011 General Elections, the government has counteracted with policy measures that place Singaporeans before non-Singaporeans to assuage rising discontent and resentment among the former, e.g., priority primary school registration for Singaporeans and tightened employment and housing rules for non-Singaporeans. In the case of racist speech, the government has also taken legal action against perpetrators.

However, overhauling economic and social policies is inadequate because the positive effects of these policy changes require time to unfold. They also do not address underlying issues such as lack of cultural understanding and social integration.

The key thrust of our paper is not to review social and economic policy changes. Based on an analysis of news coverage and discourse facilitated by mainstream and online media, and interviews with community leaders and bloggers, we propose a more broad-based approach that works in tandem with policy changes, targeted at various segments in the society.

In this paper, we posit that everyone has a part to play in curbing corrosive speech, from individuals, religious groups, media organisations, to the civil society and the government, failing which corrosive speech may further weaken the social compact in the Singapore society. As corrosive speech will continue to exist in a richly heterogeneous society, we also present coping mechanisms to help technology users navigate cyberspace and manage conflicts that they may encounter.

2. INTRODUCTION: UNDERSTANDING AND DEALING WITH CORROSIVE SPEECH

2.1 Background on speech targeted at “the others”

To understand the implications of corrosive speech and the complexities surrounding its regulation, we turn to Western democratic societies where controversies surrounding speech targeted at others pivot on finding the balance between upholding the freedom of speech and protecting marginalised communities.

Extant literature on hate speech addresses theoretical debates pertaining to regulation of speech, and the conundrum faced by policy-makers, free-speech advocates and the public in dealing with the problem (Cortese, 2006; Gelber, 2002; Matsuda, 1989; Waltman & Haas, 2011).

In the United States, free speech is given greater latitude based on the First Amendment. In other countries such as Australia, Denmark and the United Kingdom, laws provide redress to individuals vilified on account of their “otherness”, be it race, ethnic origin, disability or sexual orientation.

Besides the law, other stakeholders in the society such as independent regulatory bodies (e.g., Ofcom, the communications industry regulator in the United Kingdom), education institutions (e.g., universities), sports associations (e.g., Football Association in the United Kingdom), and members of the public play a role in collective action against hate speech. This is evident in the developments of high-profile incidents such as those listed below:

- i. Three contestants from British reality TV series *Big Brother* made racist slurs against fellow contestant Shilpa Shetty, which resulted in them receiving public objections (45,000 complaints were sent to Ofcom), Ofcom's censure Channel 4 for breaching its broadcasting code, and a suspension of the series' sponsorship (BBC News 2007a; 2007b).
- ii. Following an offensive comment on footballer Fabrice Muamba's on-pitch collapse and subsequent racist posts on Twitter, British student Liam Stacey was jailed for 56 days under the charge of racially aggravating public disorder and banned by Swansea University from attending school for the remainder of the academic year (Morris, 2012; The Telegraph, 2012).
- iii. Although Premier League Chelsea player John Terry was acquitted of racially abusing Queens Park Rangers Anton Ferdinand, the incident attracted much media scrutiny and led to the stripping of Terry's England captaincy (BBC News, 2012a). Following a four-day hearing, the Football Association banned Terry for four matches and fined him £220,000 (BBC News, 2012b).

The court rulings, public outcry and sanctions by regulatory bodies taken against hate speech actors indicate that free speech does not mean irresponsible speech, especially when private conversations and musings surface to the public domain. Furthermore, these cases demonstrate that even in the absence of intent, where speech may have been uttered in a moment of anger, perpetrators still face serious consequences.

In addition, another layer of complexity pertaining to the regulation of hate speech lies with the attitudes held by other segments of the society. In the above examples, responses from non-governmental bodies (e.g., Ofcom) and the public constitute a collective rejection of hate speech and a collective articulation of how society views hate speech.

On the other hand, in Spain, strong discrimination against gypsies and foreigners still persists. This is attributed to a government that is reluctant to take a stand against

racism, social organisations with insufficient resources, and mainstream media that propagate stereotypes (European Network Against Racism, n.d.). Thus, besides the law, the vigour with which other segments of society support the ideals of equality for all and protection of human rights is important in curbing hate speech.

2.2 Regulating speech in Singapore

When it comes to Singapore, the Constitution guarantees freedom of speech but with caveats.¹ Sacrosanct principles that govern public discourse include respecting the judiciary, and maintaining racial and religious harmony.

A person who promotes feelings of ill-will and hostility between different races or classes of the population of Singapore can be convicted under the Sedition Act, and be fined up to \$5,000 or jailed up to three years, or both (Sedition Act, Rev. ed. Cap 290, 1985). In recent years, the Sedition Act has been invoked on several occasions.

In 2005, a 17-year-old student was put on probation for two years and ordered to perform 180 hours of community service for his racist remarks on Muslims and Malays (Teo, 2012). Two other men, in their 20s, were jailed a day and a month, respectively, under the same charge during that year. In an incident linked to religion, a Christian couple was jailed eight weeks in 2009 for distributing anti-Muslim and anti-Catholic publications (Quek, 2009). More recently, two 17-year-old Chinese males were arrested in July 2012 for allegedly posting racist remarks on Facebook and Twitter² (Chin, 2012). In 2007, amendments were made to the Penal Code to allow greater prosecutorial discretion, and Section 298A was incorporated to cover online transmissions. That section tries to preserve “religious and racial harmony in the new global security climate” (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2007).

Besides these two laws, the 1997 Internet Code of Practice was implemented with the aim of promoting accountability and social responsibility among individuals when they

1. See Article 14 of the Constitution of the Republic of Singapore.

2. Investigations were ongoing at the time of this report.

communicate via the Internet. The code prohibits the publishing of material that “glorifies, incites or endorses ethnic, racial or religious hatred, strife or intolerance” (Media Development Authority, 1997). The Media Development Authority introduced a new licensing regime for websites that regularly carry local news content on 28 May 2013. News websites that have 50,000 unique visitors from Singapore each month over a period of two months and publish an average of at least one article a week on “Singapore’s news and current affairs” over the same period would have to be individually licensed (Tan, 2013).

However, the question lies in the adequacy and effectiveness of legislation on its own in engendering a society of tolerance and understanding. First, the law can only act as a deterrent and convict, but does not bring about attitudinal or behavioural change. Second, a reliance on the authorities to resolve unhappiness arising from corrosive speech impedes the cultivation of mutual understanding and a social immunity that is needed in an increasingly diverse society. Finally, advancements in technological development and new usage behaviours will always be ahead of regulatory changes. As such, the pre-emptive ability of the law will be severely limited (Tan, 2012b).

Regulation is hence only a part of the picture, and alternative measures to increase individuals’ capability to deal and cope with corrosive speech are required.

3. BACKGROUND: CAUSES OF CORROSIVE SPEECH IN SINGAPORE

In this section, we discuss the policy, societal and media factors that have contributed to the emergence of corrosive speech. In so doing, we will explain how and why a reliance on legislation and law enforcement is insufficient.

3.1 Growth at all costs and overflow of foreigners

On July 21, 2012, at the Racial Harmony Day celebrations held at Teck Ghee Community Club, Prime Minister Lee acknowledged that besides tensions arising from racial and religious differences, there is an increasing strain on “new fault lines” formed between new and older citizens (Toh, 2012b).

The government's open-door policy to attract foreign investors and foreign workers has been positioned as a necessary move to address the shortage of manpower resources in Singapore and to boost the supply of affordable manpower.

The outcome of the government's open-door policy is seen in the Population White Paper announced in January 2013. The total population of 5.31 million is made up of only 3.29 million Singaporeans, with 0.53 million permanent residents (PR) and 1.49 million foreigners (National Population and Talent Division, 2013). This means that 37 per cent of the current population are PRs and non-residents.

3.2 Social and economic strain resulting from influx of foreigners

Whilst in the past Singaporeans only had to compete with fellow Singaporeans for employment, housing, education and transportation resources, they now have to contend with foreigners for the limited supply of these same resources.

Furthermore, the rapid influx of foreigners is taking its toll on Singapore's physical infrastructure, leading to over-crowding and breakdowns in public transport.

Such challenges are likely to persist as, at a certain rate of economic growth, the population is expected to increase to 6.9 million in 2030, with up to 3.1 million PRs and non-residents included in the mix (National Population and Talent Division, 2013).

3.3 Cultural tensions between Singaporeans and non-Singaporeans

Community leaders observed that cultural differences between different nationalities contribute to the tensions among Singaporeans and foreigners. Leong (2012) posits that the economic strain is further aggravated by social and cultural differences that arise from an import of foreign cultures.

Nikhilesh Gupta, President of Bengali Association Singapore³, cited different cultures and practices as one of the causes of conflicts (personal communication, July 24, 2012). Ron Celestial, Managing Director of PinoySG⁴, provided an example of how Filipinos, “being naturally loud and happy carrying conversations with friends and family in public places like MRT, theatres, restaurants, etc.” may be negatively perceived by locals (personal communication, July 26, 2012).

Recognising the fragility that underpins social relations among different community and nationality groups, policy-makers have leveraged grassroots events to call for greater respect for and tolerance among various nationalities, ethnic and religious groups (Tan, 2012a).

3.4 Constraints of policy adjustments

Current tensions have sparked debate on whether Singapore should go for slower growth so it does not require so many foreign workers. The recognition of cause-and-effect between the government’s pro-growth policies and simmering tensions in the society has been articulated by individuals who have taken to cyberspace to air their grouses.

The government has acknowledged that the influx of foreigners exacerbated socio-economic problems and resulted in much unhappiness among Singaporeans (Chun, 2012). Another slew of measures were announced during Budget 2013 to slow down the influx of foreigners. These include reducing foreign worker quotas for selected sectors, raising salary requirements for entry into Singapore and introducing a new tiered-system for S-pass holders, and tightening eligibility requirements for Q1-pass holders (Budget 2013 Singapore). However, the effects of such policies on easing competition and infrastructural problems will take time to unfold.

3. Bengali Association Singapore was formed in 1956 to promote social, cultural, educational and recreational activities among its members.

4. PinoySG is an online portal that provides information and support for Filipinos residing and working in Singapore.

3.5 Censorship of media and public discourse

While Internet technologies contribute to the spread of corrosive speech, the development of online corrosive speech must also be considered in the context of public discourse in Singapore.

The government's control of content when it comes to mainstream media ensures that "content stays within the unwritten parameters of political acceptability" (George, 2003, p.250). Discourse that pervades mainstream media has traditionally observed out-of-bounds (OB) markers such as limits to speech on race and religion.

The regulation of speech through existing legislation and existing OB markers could have led to the unintended effect of steering individuals away from topics on race and religion in public discourse as they are perceived to be sensitive issues.⁵ Furthermore, the government's direct intervention, such as its blocking of the anti-Islam video "Innocence of Muslims", also wasted opportunities for individuals to assert their moral authority and practise engaging in rational discourse with one another (George, 2012b).

3.6 Unprecedented freedom of speech afforded by the Internet

The advent of "web 2.0" technologies has contributed to growing personal and political expression online, and a shift from information consumption to information production (Flew, 2005, pp.xv–xxii). Users now enjoy far greater access, participation, and reciprocity when interacting with one another in cyberspace.

The ease of use of new media technologies is evident in their take-up rate in Singapore: 74 per cent of residents communicate via social networks, blogs, instant messaging, emails and peer-to-peer platforms and 12 per cent create online content such as blogs or self-produced videos (Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore, 2010).

5. A study by Chew (2008) found that adolescents (aged 12 to 18) associated religious tolerance with not talking about religion as it was seen as a way to pre-empt possible conflicts.

The widespread use of the Internet and smart phones has posed significant challenges to the government's control on media. Social media tools such as blogs, online forums, and Facebook have allowed individuals to voice their opinions easily at a low cost and by circumventing or ignoring regulations, and experiment with new-found freedom in expressing themselves.

3.7 Anonymity on the web as a double-edged sword

Although new media technologies have been harnessed for galvanising like-minded individuals for the greater good, the same technologies are a double-edged sword. Perceived anonymity yields positive effects by lowering individuals' inhibitions when participating in online discussions and encouraging individuals in distress to come forward for help. However, it has also led to anti-social behaviours online such as astroturfing, flaming and trolling⁶ (Bienkov, 2012; McDermott, 2012).

The serious effects of anonymity are reflected in measures considered by website owners and regulators. Video-sharing site YouTube has announced that it is looking into linking comments to users' full names and photographs used on their Google+ accounts. This is to discourage people from leaving hurtful remarks on the site (Murphy, 2012). In South Korea, the government is policing Internet posts because "character assassinations and suicides caused by excessive insults, the spreading of false rumours and defamation have all become social issues" (Choe, 2012). New York lawmakers have also proposed bills to ban anonymous online posting (Holpuch, 2012).

3.8 Low media literacy

Social media has become complicit to the problem of corrosive speech in cyberspace because online discourse now takes on a viral effect. There is also the persistence of the "coffee shop" effect where people feel that they are talking and sharing their inner feelings among a small or known group. However, unlike conversations in face-to-face

6. Astroturfing creates the impression that there is widespread grassroots support for an individual or a policy when in reality little support exists. Flaming is the expression of hostility through insulting, name-calling or making libellous remarks; trolling is provoking and repeatedly tormenting anyone who responds to insults or pranks, thereby disrupting social norms of the community (McDermott, 2012).

settings, a “sticky” message that is attention-grabbing can be replicated and transmitted to many others instantaneously on the web. Mobile communication devices such as smart phones and tablet computers catalyse the spread of provocative content as information consumption and sharing become integrated into people’s daily lives.

Two recent cases involving adolescents illustrate social media’s viral reach. Nanyang Polytechnic student Lai Shimun posted a derogatory remark on Twitter about Indians. Originally only intended for friends in her network of followers, her post went viral when one of her friends re-tweeted it (Toh, 2012a). In the second case, Justin Wee, a student from the Singapore Institute of Management, was recorded on video sharing racist jokes. His friend posted the video on Facebook and the video was subsequently shared via YouTube (Osman, 2012).

Such incidents suggest that there is a lack of media literacy among new media users. Users are unaware of the digital footprints that they leave behind on the web and often underestimate the scale and speed of information-sharing facilitated by social media. Moreover, the blurring of the boundary between private and public discourse results in un-anticipated backlash for articulating a personal opinion or sharing seemingly “private” information.

4. METHODOLOGY

To examine the nature of corrosive speech, we first had to identify articles and postings written on high-profile incidents involving anti-foreigner and racist speech. This section details the procedure used to crawl the World Wide Web and identify relevant postings for analysis. It also describes interviews with bloggers and community leaders.

4.1. Keyword searches for mainstream and online news and commentaries

We conducted two-staged keyword searches in July 2012 to locate relevant articles related to anti-foreigner and racist speech that took place from January 2011 to June 2012. Some of these include a dispute between an Indian family and a Chinese family, an accident involving a Ferrari, East Asia Institute of Management student Wang Peng

Fei's YouTube video, National University of Singapore student Sun Xu's Facebook post, and National Heart Centre (NHC) Filipino employee's Facebook post (see Appendix A for all the cases discussed in this paper).

At the first stage, we used keywords such as "curry incident", "Ma Chi", "Ferrari", "Sun Xu", and "Pinoy" to crawl for articles and posts related to these incidents using Google and online sites' internal search systems to obtain an exhaustive sample. The internal search systems on sites such as The Online Citizen and STOMP allowed faster tracking of articles compared to Google (see Appendix B for the list of articles).

At the second stage, we snowballed links from each site as some links led to online forums and Facebook pages featuring articles and posts that mentioned the same topics. Some of the links led us to YouTube videos as well where we captured screen shots of comments that were posted on the videos.

The sites that emerged from our keyword searches comprise:

- i. Channel News Asia <http://www.channelnewsasia.com/>
- ii. PublicHouse.SG <http://publichouse.sg/>
- iii. Sammyboy forum <http://sammyboy.com/>
- iv. STOMP <http://www.stomp.com.sg/>
- v. Temasek Times <http://temasektimes.wordpress.com/>
- vi. Temasek Review Emeritus <http://www.tremeritus.com/>
- vii. The Online Citizen <http://theonlinecitizen.com/>
- viii. Yahoo! News <http://sg.news.yahoo.com/>

4.2. Interviews with bloggers and community leaders

We used a semi-structured interview guide to seek bloggers' views on corrosive speech and the criteria they used when reporting or featuring articles pertaining to clashes between Singaporeans and non-Singaporeans. We also sought their opinions on the measures they took to address this issue.

To understand the perceptions held by various communities pertaining to corrosive speech as well as their coping mechanisms, we interviewed community leaders from the Association of Muslim Professionals, Bengali Association of Singapore, PinoySG, and the Singapore Federation of Chinese Clans. These leaders work with members from their own communities as well as those from other communities in promoting social integration. (Refer to Appendix C for community leaders and bloggers who were interviewed for this study).

5. FINDINGS

5.1 Corrosive speech against foreigners

In our analysis of online reports and their comment threads, Facebook pages and YouTube videos, we uncovered several trends pertaining to the responses and comments shared in cyberspace surrounding the incidents.

5.1.1 Different reporting and commentary styles

Different reporting styles were observed on online sites. Citizen journalism site The Online Citizen typically adopts a more introspective and policy-oriented approach when reporting on incidents such as Sun Xu's criticisms of Singaporeans and Wang Peng Fei's parody of locals. Its relatively balanced approach is also evident in its focus on the reasons for locals' anger when such incidents occur (e.g., policy issues and socio-economic factors).

On the other hand, the same issues are covered in a more sensational manner by sites such as Temasek Times. For example, when publishing reports and commentaries on the Sun Xu incident, Temasek Times emphasised the misdeed and the person who is responsible. See Table 1 for some of the headlines published on The Online Citizen and Temasek Times.

Table 1. Headlines on the Sun Xu incident in online media

The Online Citizen	Temasek Times
<p>“Are Singaporeans too easily offended?”</p> <p>“Prejudice and discrimination – Xenophobia”</p>	<p>“NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu remains unrepentant: I am only complaining”</p> <p>“Majority of Singaporeans want NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu’s MOE scholarship to be revoked”</p> <p>“China’s netizens rally behind Sun Xu and agree with him that Singaporeans are DOGS”</p>

Articles such as “Majority of Singaporeans want NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu’s MOE scholarship to be revoked” (Temasek Times, February 25, 2012) are problematic as such polls are not scientific and potentially drive a further wedge between locals and foreigners.

In the case of the Ferrari accident, sensational and dramatic headlines such as “Family of PRC Ferrari driver Ma Chi scolds Singapore netizens: Hold back your poisonous tongues” (Temasek Times, May 15, 2012) and “Cocky PRC new citizen said “serve taxi driver right and asked why taxi was not fitted with airbag” (Temasek Times, June 4, 2012), which garnered 389 and 160 comments, respectively, may fuel greater resentment among locals towards Chinese nationals.

In such articles, foreigners are framed as parasites living off the Singapore economy and infrastructure or, at best, social pariahs. In addition to perpetuating negative stereotypes of foreigners, articles with sensational and dramatic headings emphasise the foreigners’ pernicious “effects” on the Singapore culture and Singaporeans’ lives.

5.1.2 Online enclaves formed on different sites

Different online sites engender varying types of responses from readers and this can be attributed to how online sites frame the issues. The ways in which issues and topics are

framed on platforms such as Temasek Times also encourage flaming. One specific example will be the “caption contest” that is organised by Temasek Times on its Facebook page. Online media such as these are part of the problem as most of their articles and posts focus on the character, i.e., the foreigner, instead of policy issues. Online sites also attract different types of readers, from the more rational and objective to those who are interested only in airing their unhappiness with the current state of affairs. For example, Temasek Times’ article “China’s netizens rally behind Sun Xu and agree with him that Singaporeans are DOGS” garnered a total of 122 comments with a majority being insulting and abusive towards Chinese nationals:

Wow, with people in the PRC like that I’m so glad my ancestors decided to leave that hell hole.

We are dogs, loyal dogs to our country. They are cockroaches, like pests of the world!

A similar distinction in reporting approaches among websites was also observed in the coverage of the Wang Peng Fei incident. An article published by The Online Citizen on August 2, 2011, “Wang Peng Fei video’s no more offensive than comments of Singaporeans along racial lines”, adopted a critical stance on the presence of a double standard when judging Singaporeans’ racist and anti-foreigner behaviour. The article elicited comments that were more circumspect and moderate. Although there were disagreements among readers, the comments in general were more respectful in nature:

I don’t know what the fuss is about. Wang was a fee-paying international student, and his studying here contributed to our economy. It’s really petty that he was asked to leave because of his remarks.

In contrast, Temasek Review Emeritus’ article “Wang Peng Fei became ‘celebrity’ as PRC netizens slammed Singaporeans for being ‘petty’”, published on July 30, 2012,

which reported that Singaporeans were being censured by others for over-reacting, attracted comments such as these:

Just how are they screened before they enter Singapore? This sissy chap surely is fit to sing and act in Chinese operas to entertain the people who frequent Geylang. He should have stayed to entertain during the 7th month festivals starting tomorrow, before he goes to jail. We should not have let him go like this, and should be caned like Michael Fay. He smeared Singapore, more damaging than vandalism by Michael.

The Shandong kid admitted his error and apologised to the southern barbarians. Are PRC netizens trying to act like hegemonists?

5.1.3 Galvanising Singaporeans for anti-foreigner movements

Another emerging trend on corrosive speech is the formation of online groups that urge Singaporeans to boycott certain groups of foreigners working and living in Singapore. These groups harness the one-to-many potential and social networking aspects of new media as a mobilising tool.

An online movement, “National Cook Curry Day — Cook a Pot of Curry” on August 21, 2011, and the call to boycott Diner En Blanc, point to the emergence of nationalistic sentiments (Mahtani, 2012b). Although in these two cases, the movements saw the uniting of Singaporeans in celebrating a quintessential part of the Singapore cultural identity, other ground-up initiatives instigate locals to reject and, in some cases, persecute foreigners in Singapore.

Based on our data, social networking site Facebook is often used to rally Singaporeans to express anti-foreigner sentiments. From the time Sun Xu’s remarks were first brought to the public’s attention to the meting of his punishment by the National University of Singapore, a Facebook group called “NUS should revoke Sun Xu’s scholarship” was set up and it gathered 3,580 “Likes”. The page archived all news related to Sun Xu to keep

its visitors up-to-date with the developments surrounding the incident. Other groups targeted at Chinese nationals include “P.R.C. = Please Return to China” and “Alliance of Hong Kong and Singapore against Chinese mainlanders”.

Under the guise of nationalism and patriotism, Facebook group “Give Me Back My Singapore” (now defunct) provides a platform for concerned individuals to come together and “address the inequalities that have been grossly undermining the livelihood of every citizens (*sic*) of Singapore”. With a small fan base (64 “Likes” as of July 2012), “Give Me Back My Singapore” posted information about all issues related to Singapore but focused on foreign talent, foreign talent policies, and their implications on regular Singaporeans.

These groups exhibit exclusionist tendencies as evidenced by their posts, e.g., “Are you guys ready to celebrate our nation birthday with 2 million other FTs?” and “It’s Nelson Mandela’s birthday today, so we are using one of his quotes which we think is very apt in our situation, if we don’t do something about our government’s foreign talents policy, then its ourselves (*sic*) to blame”, They also counter policy-makers’ and community leaders’ efforts in fostering greater cohesion.

Some groups also create the perception that they are sanctioned by known personalities. This happened with the Facebook group “Alliance of Hong Kong and Singapore against Chinese mainlanders”. It creates the impression that it has the support and endorsement of politicians when it added eight opposition members as “friends”. When contacted, opposition members were unaware that they were part of an anti-Chinese group (Aw Yeong, 2012).

“Members” of these online groups validate one another’s negative sentiments towards foreigners. Typically, they exchange “personal” anecdotes or friends’ experiences. Although these groups primarily function as a gathering point for Singaporeans to come together, share their experiences and express their opinions on how foreigners are

affecting their lives, they exhibit mobilising potential. Some of the individuals who visit these sites also use battle imagery, such as those below.

Don't be afraid of physical confrontation. We are not made of glass.

First China locusts now Pinoy locusts, all Singaporean (*sic*) let's start to fight all FT locusts.

We have to root out this Pinoy evil legacies (*sic*) deeply entrenched in our society. Singaporean Facebook fans let us all look for this Pinoy dog.

Calls to boycott foreigners and fight speech kindle discontent and disaffection both among Singaporeans and foreigners. For example, a Facebook page called “Pinoy PMETS — not welcomed in Singapore”, which has a profile picture of the Filipino flag with vulgarities superimposed on the flag, led to verbal retaliation by Filipinos. The resulting antagonism and feelings of hostility between different segments of the population of Singapore debilitate policy measures to alleviate locals’ resentment and foreigners’ alienation.

It needs to be stated, however, that being unhappy about the influx of foreigners and its impact, as criticisms of policy, is valid and is part of a healthy political discourse. However, it becomes a problem when foreigners themselves as individuals or groups are targeted for their nationality and become the object of prejudice and discrimination. It is the latter that this paper is concerned about.

5.1.4 Emergence of an anti-xenophobia “movement”

Our data points to a positive phenomenon where small groups of individuals come forward to condemn corrosive speech. These individuals are either bloggers or online commenters who speak out against derogatory remarks against foreigners.

While some bloggers have censured others for xenophobic reportage and for fanning animosity between Singaporeans and non-Singaporeans, a small number of individuals are speaking out against other readers in comment threads found on blogs such as Temasek Times and Temasek Review Emeritus. There is a presence of a reasonable and rational minority, such as “Chelsea” who responded to the article “TT Pinoy scolds Singaporeans”, and “David Garcia” and “Lim WJ” in HardwareZone posts.

In their posts, these individuals remind Singaporeans to be more objective when blaming foreigners for competition for jobs as well as crowded trains and public places. They identify policies as the root of the problem, and not foreigners per se. They also castigate bloggers for being irresponsible (e.g., “cutting and pasting angry remarks without investigating into the background is just lazy biasness”) and provoking others.

For instance, a Temasek Times reader wrote that xenophobia exists everywhere, but one should stay away from instilling hate:

The issue of foreign talent lies with the Singapore government. Its current policy allows in (*sic*) hundreds of thousands of foreign workers. The overwhelming majority is well-behaved and is contributing.... Be mature. Take this issue up with the government. Help promote goodwill not create hatred.... Every publisher must exercise responsibility over its content.

Another reader shares his concern on the negative repercussions of the “naming and shaming” tactic used by some blogs:

I’m a neutral observer here... seems to me that Temasek Times has been publishing quite a lot of “name and shame” articles recently. I think it’s unfair and perhaps dangerous that TT starts to single out individuals. Reminds me of “cyberbullying”. What if people actually start to stalk and physically attack these individuals whom you name?

Besides these individuals, a few others have also taken to setting up their own blogs to denounce corrosive speech. Some of these blogs include “Every Cloud Has a Silver Lining” (<http://sgmoderateobserver.blogspot.com.au/>) and “Of Kids and Education” (<http://hedgehogcomms.blogspot.sg/>).

Little Fish, the pseudonym of the blogger behind “Every Cloud has a Silver Lining”, explained his motivations for starting the blog in an interview. The distorted ways in which “alternative media” reported on clashes between locals and foreigners, the publishing of foreigners’ personal information and online harassment carried out by people who called themselves the “CSI Team” were “potentially dangerous”. When attempts to correct inflammatory posts and alert blog moderators and editors failed, Little Fish decided to start a blog “to create awareness among people who subscribes (*sic*) to xenophobic sites” and “to expose the flaws of some alternative media, and individuals using screenshots” (personal communication, August 6, 2012).

5.2 Corrosive speech against other races

5.2.1 Condemnation by various communities

This study found racist posts targeted at racial minorities such as Indians and Malays. These posts drew swift condemnation from the targeted groups as well as other communities. Members from various communities asserted that racism should not be tolerated in Singapore.

5.2.2 Quick action by authorities help stamp out backlash

In the incidents involving racist speech, relevant authorities were quick to respond and take action. They range from education institutions (Nanyang Polytechnic in Lai Shimun’s case), government officials and ministries (the Defence Minister and the Ministry of Defence in Christian Eliab Ratnam’s case), and political parties (Young PAP in Jason Neo’s case).

The quick action taken against racist speech actors by the relevant authorities appeared to quell online backlash. Statements were released by public authorities pertaining to

the seriousness of such posts. In response to Ratnam's Facebook post containing anti-Islamic sentiments, the Ministry of Home Affairs released a statement informing the public that the police were investigating several complaints of offensive postings on religion on the Internet.

In addition, the authorities also advised the public to let police investigations take their course and refrain from adding comments that may further inflame the situation. This could have mediated the scale and harshness of other citizens' responses to the perpetrators.

5.2.3 Calls for moderate responses from targeted communities

One important aspect of the response to racist speech is the reaction of the targeted or victimised communities. While many reacted to being abused with anger or worse, others also called for reason, a sense of perspective and moderation. These included community organisations and leaders.

In a news report, Huda kindergarten (whose students were mocked on Jason Neo's Facebook page) said it wished to "turn the page on this chapter of events". In the mainstream media, commentaries in the Malay newspaper *Berita Harian* noted that some responses by the Malay community on Donaldson Tan and Christian Ratnam's incidents have been nasty. The newspaper urged the community to respond in a high-minded manner and to be forgiving.

Pertaining to the Lai Shimun incident, a few netizens have also spoken out on her behalf and appealed to others to forgive her as she was young. A Temasek Times commenter suggested that everyone had made racist remarks in their private spaces before, so it is wrong for netizens to take the moral high ground and lambast her as if they had not done so. In a Facebook post, MP Indranee Rajah condemned Lai's comments as "particularly hurtful to Indians", but commended the girl for apologising and taking down the post, saying that "it must be a hard experience for her".

5.2.4 Emergence of an anti-racism “movement”

Positive reactions similar to those combating anti-foreigner corrosive speech were observed in the case of racist corrosive speech. A Singapore Facebook page called “Stop racism in Singapore” has been created to promote the anti-racist cause. It has garnered over 10,000 “Likes” so far. In its page description, the moderator states:

United, we will make a change. We will make a stand and Racism will end! We do not condone violence or rage towards any community, race or religion in Singapore. Racism is zero tolerance. This page is only for creating an awareness which will assist in making a difference against racism by methods of which are deemed to be peaceful, healthy and legal.

The page posted pictures like “Racism it stops with me” and other posters spreading the word on universal humanity. Such a movement parallels the Facebook movements against racism and xenophobia in Australia. Several pages such as “1,000,000 Aussies against racism”, “F-- off, xenophobes we are full” and “Australians against racism and discrimination” promote the cause of anti-racism.

6. DISCUSSION

Besides blaming the government for the competition they face from foreigners, individuals who engage in corrosive speech express derision towards other races, and resentment against foreigners. A minority have come forward to provide a more rational perspective when analysing problems faced by both Singaporeans and non-Singaporeans, and publicly express their disapproval of corrosive speech.

A limitation of this study is the sample size. We focused only on online sites and mainstream media that emerged from the web crawl. Our analysis of reports and comments is also limited to incidents that came up in the media radar, meaning that they were reported in the mainstream media or were prominent in online media.

What our study uncovered through crawling and snowballing techniques are “bottom-of-the-iceberg” incidents, which escape the media radar due to their obscurity.⁷ Although such discourse (e.g., fighting words and rallying calls) and anti-foreigner groups (e.g., those on Facebook) are not reported in mainstream media, our study shows that they do exist and they express the acrimony and umbrage felt by regular Singaporeans.

Although this study does not establish if the majority of Singaporeans engage in corrosive speech, what is evident is that a seemingly large number of people express anti-foreigner and racist sentiments, and those who decry or condemn such speech form the minority. These sentiments then feed into existing prejudices and further induce such speech — a reinforcing feedback loop with negative consequences.

For those who have limited interaction with non-Singaporeans, such a false representation may lead to a reinforcement of Singaporeans’ negative perceptions of non-Singaporeans. For non-Singaporeans and the international community at large, it creates a distorted and damaging perception of realities in Singapore. Misinformation is also inimical to the initiatives undertaken by community groups, individuals and the government to improve integration efforts.

Two questions need to be asked of corrosive speech here. How serious is the problem, and is it more than a passing phenomenon? These questions need to be raised because we do not want to be alarmist or fall victim to moral panic. On the question of seriousness, there is no doubt that corrosive speech is a major issue that confronts Singapore when we consider the swift and often severe punishments meted out by the authorities or institutions to which the perpetrators belong. That many incidents that elicit such a hue and cry also show that citizens ascribe great importance to racial harmony. Furthermore, that xenophobia is tolerated or even encouraged among citizens is a worry, as it shows up undercurrents of prejudice that potentially hurts society.

7. One example is Facebook user Jafri Basron’s post. In response to National Heart Centre’s Filipino employee’s criticisms of Singaporeans, he shared his experiences of being discriminated by Filipinos in the MRT train. His post led to many other users sharing their experiences. In another case, Filipino Eulenia Prudente criticised Singaporeans on Facebook for being lazy and defended Filipinos who attended PAP rallies. Her post attracted many negative comments on foreigners.

On whether corrosive speech is a temporary phenomenon, perhaps the tough actions taken against perpetrators will have their effect in reducing corrosive speech. That would most likely be the case for the more egregious types of hate speech. However, we believe that the reasons we gave for the emergence of corrosive speech — which extends from everyday utterances that are racist or xenophobic to those that are clearly against the law — also suggest its persistence.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Currently, provisions for seeking recourse for corrosive speech that deals with race and religion are provided through laws such as the Penal Code. This has led to individuals turning to law enforcers to seek recourse against corrosive speech actors. However, lodging a complaint with law enforcers whenever one finds speech offensive provides only symptomatic relief and fails to resolve underlying problems and tensions.

In this section, we present several recommendations targeted at different groups of people involved in corrosive speech: (i) those who are more moderate in their views pertaining to “others” or express anti-foreigner or racist speech without the intention of harming social relations among different groups residing in Singapore; (ii) those who express more extreme views and encourage discriminatory practices; and (iii) netizens in general. The last group refers to users of Internet technologies and social media.

As new social and economic challenges emerge in the society, and as technological developments continue to shape how individuals interact with one another in unforeseeable ways, corrosive speech and anti-social online behaviour will assume new and unanticipated forms. In addition, there is the issue of relativity as what is corrosive speech to some may not be corrosive speech to others.

Legal enforcement based on definitions with increasingly outdated parameters will become difficult to enforce. Technology users in general need to equip themselves with coping mechanisms to deal with myriad experiences, some of which may be offensive, in an increasingly connected world.

The following are our recommendations to address the problems of corrosive speech. These recommendations are multi-pronged (involving information dissemination, public education, and self-regulation), and involve different stakeholders (individuals comprising Singaporeans and non-Singaporeans, community groups, non-governmental organisations, the media, and the government).

Taken as a whole, these measures will provide what Gelber (2002) terms as necessary institutional, material and educational resources to help equip individuals — and we think societies — deal with corrosive speech.

7.1 For the “unintentional and moderate” corrosive speech actors: Information dissemination and public education

7.1.1 Mainstream media to foster greater awareness of community groups’ initiatives and constraints

Stemming from the initial days of post-colonialisation, the mass media in Singapore has played a supportive role in nation building. Race and religion are two boundary markers that have guided journalists and editors in their decision-making processes on what to report and how to report when it comes to sensitive issues.

However, the presence of online corrosive speech suggests that there is a pressing need for mainstream media to reconsider their approach when reporting on sensitive topics. The themes in mainstream news reports concerning clashes between Singaporeans and non-Singaporeans typically fall into these categories: how the incidents developed, general sentiments surrounding the incidents, and the outcomes of the incidents.

Table 2 presents samples of articles from the mainstream media and online media on the Sun Xu incident.

Table 2. Articles on the Sun Xu incident in mainstream and online media

The Straits Times	Lianhe Zaobao	Lianhe Wanbao	The Online Citizen	Temasek Review Emeritus	Temasek Times
<p>“Netizens too quick to cry foul?”</p> <p>“Chinese scholarship student apologises for insulting comments”</p> <p>“Did NUS student get what he deserved for online rant?”</p> <p>“Chinese students upset over compatriot’s blog”</p>	<p>“在网上恶言侮辱新加坡人 国大生孙旭 受纪律处分”⁸</p> <p>“奖学金得主 网上恶语事件 孙旭到中国 大使馆表悔过”⁹</p> <p>“加强对外来 学子的本土化 人文教育”¹⁰</p>	<p>“孙旭发表‘ 人狗论’惹祸 国大两周后 公开惩处结 果”¹¹</p> <p>“别让祖国丢 脸吧”¹²</p> <p>“马炎庆为 孙旭事件道 歉”¹³</p>	<p>“Are Singaporeans too easily offended?”</p> <p>“Prejudice and discrimination – Xenophobia”</p>	<p>“The China that can do no wrong”</p> <p>“MOE scholar from PRC finally apologised”</p> <p>“PRC student community in NUS plans protest in support of Sun Xu”</p>	<p>“Netizen filed complaint to NUS against PRC scholar’s offensive remarks about Singaporeans”</p> <p>“NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu remains unrepentant: I am only complaining”</p> <p>“Majority of Singaporeans want NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu’s MOE scholarship to be revoked”</p>

To play a more active role in cultivating greater understanding between different nationalities, the mainstream media can explore the following:

- i. Provide insights on why corrosive speech actors (e.g., Wang Peng Fei, Sun Xu, Lai Shimun, Christian Ratnam) post inflammatory remarks by examining questions that are left unanswered by incidents, e.g., “Why did these individuals make derogatory comments regarding locals/other races?” and “What is the recourse for foreigners who have been discriminated by locals?”

8. Translation: “NUS scholar Sun Xu disciplined for insulting Singaporeans on the Internet”

9. Translation: “Scholar Sun Xu expresses regret at Chinese embassy”

10. Translation: “Strengthen cultural education for foreign students”

11. Translation: “NUS’ decision on Sun Xu to be finalised in two weeks”

12. Translation: “Do not let motherland lose face”

13. Translation: “Baey Yam Keng apologises for Sun Xu incident”

- ii. Include a wider range of perspectives to generate deeper insights into the underlying reasons for their behaviour. Besides quoting the government and the authority involved (e.g., the polytechnic in Lai Shimun's case), this could be accomplished by interviewing and publishing the views of these individuals' family members, friends and experts on the subject.
- iii. Include the views of those who belong to the community of the perpetrator to show their abhorrence that one of their own should utter corrosive speech against others. These include clan or other associations or even religious groups to which the perpetrator belongs.
- iv. Explore granting anonymity to informants who may be corrosive speech actors themselves, victims and observers of corrosive speech incidents to encourage more individuals to come forward and shed light on the reasons why some foreigners and Singaporeans make disparaging comments about one another. However, sources must be stringently verified to maintain responsible journalism standards.
- v. Provide more air time and print space to discuss the difficulties foreigners encounter residing in Singapore, be it adjusting to a different culture, their efforts to integrate with locals or their experiences with less friendly locals.
- vi. Provide more airtime and print space to feature community work and integration activities helmed by different community groups. An article published in *Lianhe Zaobao*, “福建新移民更容易融入” (“Integration of Immigrants from Fujian”), is an example of such needed coverage. Such coverage will enable community groups to circumvent cost constraints that are hampering publicity efforts for their integration programmes.

The community groups that we interviewed have been engaging in outreach programmes, by interacting with individuals from their own communities as well

as with those from other communities. Although not targeting the problem of corrosive speech directly, these efforts create greater opportunities for interaction and enhance mutual understanding among different communities.

For example, the Singapore Federation of Chinese Clan Associations (SFCCA) “organises events that involve both Singaporeans and new immigrants to promote greater racial and social harmony” (Lim, B.T., personal communication, July 23, 2012). The recent Dragon Boat Carnival SFCCA co-organised with Toa Payoh Central Community Club saw the participation of 5,000 individuals. They included members from the Toa Payoh Central Community Club’s Malay and Indian Activity Executive Committees and 22 other grassroots organisations and Chinese clan associations from all over Singapore.

PinoySG, an online community for Filipinos who work and live in Singapore, brings together like-minded individuals and disseminates information to its members (e.g., attitudes, values, lifestyle and cultural practices in Singapore). The website serves as “a bridge between relevant and significant organisations with campaigns on educating Filipinos on how to act in Singapore, and adapt to its culture” (Celestial, R., personal communication, July 23, 2012).

In addition, PinoySG assigns senior advisers to various sub-groups, with the objective of monitoring its members’ actions, advising educating them on how to behave in Singapore, and emphasising the importance of respecting Singaporeans and the Singapore culture. It also holds outreach programmes such as blood donation drives with the Red Cross where Filipinos, Singaporeans and other foreigners work together for a common good.¹⁴

Nikhilesh Gupta, President of Bengali Association of Singapore (BAS), described how BAS promotes greater awareness of local customs through its website and

14. See “PinoySG Blood Donation Drive and Baratillo Festival 2012” at <http://www.pinoysg.com/20120215411/pinoyssg-activities/pinoysg-blood-donation-drive-and-baratillo-festival-2012.html>

Facebook page. BAS' annual event, Durga Puja, also saw a total of 20,000 participants comprising expatriates, PRs and locals in its last instalment.

These groups' initiatives serve two purposes. First, they create more opportunities for interaction between locals and foreigners; second, they foster Singaporeans' appreciation of the efforts made by foreigners to integrate into the Singapore society. However, non-profit organisations rely mainly on volunteers and hence often lack funds and manpower for publicity work to garner support for their outreach and integration programmes.

- vii. Highlight ground-up initiatives launched by individuals who are concerned with xenophobic sentiments in Singapore, to inform the larger public that xenophobia is unacceptable. In addition, foreigners will also come to know that individuals who engage in corrosive speech are not representative of Singaporeans.

Some of the bloggers we interviewed said that they were filling the void in mainstream media discourse. According to Richard Wan of Temasek Review Emeritus, "One of the roles I see TRE play is to be a balance to the views and news of the mainstream media, and reflect ground sentiments that the mainstream media may not necessarily reflect. It is better that we discuss these issues in the open than wrap everything up in the word 'xenophobia' and pretend to not talk about it — which is a fallacy because people are talking non-stop on the foreign over-influx issue in Singapore everyday, online and offline."

Although the above measures may be dismissed by skeptics who view mainstream media as the government's mouthpiece, the strategies may still be effective with individuals who hold a neutral position towards the mainstream media and remain open to factual reportage.

7.1.2 Increase media literacy

Educating the young and increasing media literacy among technology users enhance individuals' capabilities to manage and deal with corrosive speech. Education is likely to be more successful than regulation in bringing about sustainable and long-term effects.

Azmoon Ahmad, Chairman of the Association of Muslim Professionals (AMP), said that “self-policing” and the inculcation of good values such as responsibility, accountability and mutual respect are more sustainable (personal communication, July 26, 2012). Similarly Lim Boon Tan, Director of SFCCA, advocated that “children should be educated from young age about the importance of responsible speech and that teachers have to inculcate positive values in their students” (personal communication, July 23, 2012).

Educating users on the importance of practising responsible speech is a key focus of the Media Literacy Council (MLC). Set up on August 1, 2012, the MLC is tasked with promoting a safe, secure and civil media environment through public education and advising the government on appropriate policy responses pertaining to media and technology (Wong, 2012). Its current initiatives include the Communications Literacy Seminar and tapping the global Safer Internet Day to raise local awareness of issues discussed internationally.

Besides inculcating positive values that guide technology use, another approach for the media literacy programme is to appeal to users' need for self-protection or self-preservation, other than their sense of responsibility.

A survey conducted by the Singapore Kindness Movement found that Singaporeans are divided as to whether gracious behaviours should apply online (Goy, 2013). This could be due to users often overlooking graciousness in a bid to promote oneself or one's point of view online. Thus, a pragmatic and realist approach is needed to address the self-gratifying and self-promotional nature of online communication.

Netizens should be educated on the commonly overlooked characteristics of new media and their implications:

- i. How Internet technologies and social media liberate individuals when they express their personal thoughts, and embolden them to express hurtful comments, which they may not usually do in face-to-face settings.
- ii. The increasingly nebulous boundary between what is private and public in the new media environment and the consequences one may face when private thoughts surface in the public domain.
- iii. The digital footprints one leaves behind, the archiving of messages which can be easily disseminated to other online platforms, and “the fact that at least one system administrator always has access privileges to the contents of their servers, even when messages have been deleted.” (Herring et al., 2002, p.381).

Greater awareness of the above may encourage users to be more circumspect when they post and respond to content online. Specifically, such a programme should be targeted at all age groups, and policy-makers need to work closely with schools, parents, and corporations. In so doing, a media literacy programme will create a safer online environment for users of different age groups and backgrounds.

An ideal outcome described by Little Fish would be the creation of an online space where “people who want to give their opinion or express criticism to the government will exercise responsibility in their speech, preferably citing facts for constructive debates” (personal communication, August 6, 2012).

7.1.3 Foster greater awareness among foreigners of local cultures

Currently new citizens undergo National Integration Council’s (NIC) three-step “Singapore Citizenship Journey” which consists of online and experiential learning

programmes.¹⁵ The NIC could explore creating a document for new citizens to familiarise them with Singapore’s multi-cultural, multi-religious and multi-racial customs, traditions and colloquialisms.

For example, PinoySG features articles written by contributors, with several of the articles providing tips and guidelines for Filipinos who live and work in Singapore. In an article titled “Dealing with Multiracial Working Environments”, the writer advocates that Filipinos should adopt three key values when residing in Singapore — respect (for other customs and practices), learning local tongues (Malay, Chinese and Tamil) and observation (of local cultural events).¹⁶

However, a document that is developed for new citizens has to find the balance between education and indoctrination, and it should not be overly prescriptive. As integration can be aided by locals’ acceptance of non-Singaporeans, policymakers could also look into developing a similar document that promotes understanding of foreign cultures for Singaporeans.

7.2 For “deliberate” corrosive speech actors: Self-regulation and alliances

7.2.1 Online sites to self-regulate

The “self” takes various forms in cyberspace, such as that of the individual and the site. Bloggers, website developers and community moderators can play an important role in shaping the nature and type of online discourse on issues regarding population challenges, foreign talent policies, and the conflicts between locals and foreigners. As presented earlier, the approach a website adopts in framing issues sets the tenor for readers who participate in online discussions with one another.

Blog owners can moderate the quality of discussion by weeding out comments and posts that are extremely denigrating, vulgar and convey battle imagery. Richard Wan of

15. See the “Singapore Citizenship Journey” at <http://app.nationalintegrationcouncil.org.sg/SingaporeCitizenshipJourney.aspx>

16. See article at <http://www.pinoysg.com/20120807426/news/-/articles/dealing-with-multiracial-working-environments.html>

Temasek Review Emeritus spoke of the site's efforts to pre-moderate comments, where obvious "extreme comments like 'China dogs' and 'pinoys are liars' are deleted or masked" (personal communication, July 30, 2012).

Temasek Review Emeritus moderators receive a half-day training session, where Wan explains what content is permitted and what is not. They are also educated on the site's Term of Service (TOS). Most of the time, moderators learn on the job when readers complain about certain postings.

One of the main challenges that citizen journalism sites such as Temasek Review Emeritus face is the lack of manpower, especially when moderators and editors contribute on a voluntary basis and are not paid. For a site with a large readership, Wan also spoke about the tendency for comments to "slip through the cracks". However, he explained: "If someone reports an offensive comment to us and it contravenes our terms of service, we'll delete it. And when we delete, we add messages like 'Bro, please refrain from making racist comments here. For more info, please refer to our TOS.' We want readers to know why their comments are moderated so that they can be educated with regard to our TOS." (personal communication, July 30, 2012).

Similar measures are also adopted by Ron Celestial of PinoySG. His strategies include: deleting offensive posts and issuing direct warnings to members who fan negative sentiments towards Singaporeans by linking to Singaporeans' discussions concerning Filipinos found on other websites and social networking sites (personal communication, July 26, 2012).

Online media could also include a caveat or warning for videos and posts. The recent initiative adopted by YouTube last year to promote greater accountability among its users is a step towards self-moderation in cyberspace. Yahoo! Singapore launched a "Silence the Hate" campaign, which censures "haters and abusers". Yahoo! users are encouraged to express their objection towards corrosive speech actors by reporting corrosive speech to the administrator, show their disapproval for insensitive comments

by clicking the “thumbs down” button, and show their support for the campaign by making a pledge.

Former editor of The Online Citizen, Kumaran Pillai, described The Online Citizen’s strategy as a challenging one that involved balancing their objective of providing a platform for people to express their views and maintaining a civil online environment where readers’ sensibilities are respected. According to him, The Online Citizen “steers away from racially insensitive articles or comments” (personal communication, August 6, 2012).

However, The Online Citizen’s position is one where “contributors who feel strongly about a particular topic” should be given the leeway to express themselves. Hence, achieving a fine balance between promoting freedom of expression and protecting the readers’ dignity requires The Online Citizen staff “to capture the nuance without triggering an avalanche” when discussing sensitive issues pertaining to race and nationality (personal communication, August 6, 2012).

Sensationalism is a deliberate strategy employed by certain blogs and websites to maximise readership and in the long run, advertising revenue. Carrying out dialogues with these site owners could be another approach although it is constrained by bloggers’ and website managers’ anonymity. However, to avoid regressing to a paternalistic approach towards new media regulation, a better approach to counter the effects of such sites will be to let the marketplace of online discourse regulate itself.

Bloggers such as Pillai call for self-regulation where each group in cyberspace has the autonomy to establish its own rules. This is based on his observation that “each group has its own self-regulating mechanism, be it moderation or having other bloggers intervening to set it right” (personal communication, August 6, 2012).

In a closed-door discussion held by the Institute of Policy Studies in April 2012, members of the online community observed that self-regulation by individual sites is

more sustainable than establishing a common code of conduct that compels different sites, with their varying philosophies and target audiences, to subscribe to a common set of guidelines (Institute of Policy Studies, 2012).

In view of efforts undertaken by specific online sites to curb corrosive speech, policy-makers can reinforce these sound practices by acknowledging measures taken and commending site owners or organisations in public discourse. In addition, policy-makers should leverage these initiatives and call for other online sites to develop their own standards and practices.

7.2.2 Mainstream media to set standard for best practices

Traditionally, the mainstream media has not been able to take any initiative when covering issues pertaining to social tensions underpinned by race and religion. It has largely played the supporting role of buttressing the authorities' voice in such matters.

With an expansion in liberties in political discourse, largely due to the alternative media constantly pushing the boundaries of what is acceptable speech, it is opportune for the mainstream media to step up and assume a more proactive role in setting the standards for public discourse surrounding foreigners, race and even religion.

The evolving political and social landscape demands that the mainstream media reconsider its role and approach in nation building. If there are currently no policies within the mainstream media on how to deal with issues regarding nationality, race, and religion, it is now timely for media organisations to set an overall principles- and values-based policy framework for these areas. Such a framework will not only apply to principal media outlets but also to subsidiaries like Stomp and HardwareZone.

The framework can include guidelines such as:

- i. Adopting an explicit and clear anti-xenophobic and anti-racist stand, and enforcing this principle rigorously not just in the content it produces but also in

that of its subsidiary user-generated content platforms (e.g., Stomp and HardwareZone as subsidiaries of Singapore Press Holdings, or SPH), particularly the forum sections on these platforms.

To set standards for good journalistic practices for online sites, mainstream media subsidiaries should not play up on social categories such as ethnicity and nationality. For example, Stomp labelled Ma Chi as the “PRC Ferrari driver” in its article “PRC Ferrari driver runs red light, involving taxi and motorcycle in fatal accident” on May 13 2012. The citizen journalism site also has a feature called “The Mood Meter: How do you feel about this story?” which encourages readers to express how they feel after reading the story. The meter ranges from “LOL” to “Enraged”. For this particular story, 75 per cent rated their emotions as “enraged”.

- ii. SPH subsidiaries Stomp and HardwareZone to set an example for other online sites by: (a) not sensationalising such incidents, (b) practising greater moderation, selectivity and fact-checking when publishing content submitted by users, and (c) banning individuals who engage in corrosive speech repeatedly.
- iii. Implementing an in-house editorial policy of not letting people “get away” with unchallenged excuses, and ensuring that the voice of censure from the authorities, the victims, “average Singaporeans” as well as the perpetrators’ communities, are given fair coverage.

The above principles could be part of a code of good journalistic practice on race and nationality developed either in-house or shared by the two media giants.

7.2.3 Ground-up initiatives to change attitudes and perceptions

Currently, organisations such as NIC, the Singapore Kindness Movement and Onepeople.sg embark on different strategies to promote social harmony in Singapore. NIC promotes and fosters social integration among Singaporeans and new immigrants

in schools, workplaces, communities and through the media,¹⁷ and Onepeople.sg organises outreach programmes targeted at students, dialogue sessions, and educates the public by responding to mainstream forums and Facebook.

Similarly, religious organisations and self-help groups are also tapping their community networks to achieve such aims. For example, the Inter-Religious Organisation (IRO) builds bridges linking different religious communities and AMP promotes thought leadership on issues related to the Malay-Muslim community.

Through publication, education and dialogue sessions, IRO strengthens mutual respect and assistance among believers of different religions. In March 2012, AMP collaborated with its research arm, the Centre for Research on Islamic and Malay Affairs (RIMA), and organised a seminar that discussed racist postings on the Internet. Such an effort acknowledges the detrimental effects of corrosive speech, promotes exchange among different communities and increases awareness of what can be done to curb the problem.

Our study points to the emergence of individuals and informal groups who step out to denounce xenophobia and racism. In March 2013, the government launched a \$5 million Harmony Fund to support ground-up initiatives to promote racial and religious harmony. Support and recognition by policy-makers for such initiatives will encourage concerned individuals to come forward and play a part in alleviating the effects of corrosive speech on the society.

Canada has a plethora of anti-racist groups that are both state-funded and non-profit. These anti-racist groups conduct research, public outreach and empower their own communities (e.g., Jews and aboriginals) to fight racism.¹⁸ Students are also especially active in The Students Commission of Canada, the Muslim Students Association, and

17. See information on the National Integration Council at: <http://app.nationalintegrationcouncil.org.sg/>

18. Some examples: Pride of Race, Unity and Dignity Through Education Inc, and the League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada.

Students Together Against Racism, in championing anti-racism within and outside schools.¹⁹

A grassroots-based anti-xenophobia group is different from organisations such as the NIC, Onepeople.sg and IRO. Whilst the latter focus on promoting integration across different communities in the offline context, a grassroots anti-xenophobia or racist group will be an initiative that acknowledges and approaches xenophobia or racism as a problem — similar to smoking or alcoholism, with negative impact that extends beyond the personal to the public — plaguing Singapore society, and proactively targets commonly held misconceptions of foreigners or other races. It will galvanise members of the public who are concerned with prevalent misconceptions of foreigners and the ramifications of negative stereotypes if left unaddressed.

In addition, the tactics of a grassroots group will be context-specific with the overarching aim of countering myths and fallacies perpetuated online. With the cyberspace becoming a prolific platform for the articulation of anti-foreigner speech, anti-xenophobia groups could engage with online citizens converging on blogs, online news portals and social media and address the fallacies and problems of corrosive speech. Grassroots groups can also submit commentaries to mainstream media to address hate-speech incidents in online sites.

Such groups may also hold a greater appeal to individuals who may be skeptical of government-linked organisations. Leveraging personal networks instead of dispensing directives, such groups can raise the tenor of the society and dissuade xenophobic or racist behaviours through social sanctions. Members from different walks of life will serve as ambassadors and recruit other individuals in their personal social networks for the movement.

In addition, framing anti-xenophobia as a movement may provide collective momentum and further encourage individuals such as Little Fish, “Chelsea”, “David Garcia” and

19. See information on the Canadian anti-racism movement at: <http://www.debwewin.ca/antiracismcommunity.htm>

“Lim WJ” to step out and advocate for greater respect for other communities. However, in order for grassroots groups to be seen as credible and non-partisan, they have to be candid in their critique and point out shortfalls in existing policies when necessary.

7.3 Netizens in general: Learning to cope

The preceding sections discuss with how society as a whole can curb corrosive speech and alleviate tensions among communities. However, similar to the persistence of hate speech in developed democracies, corrosive speech targeted at others is likely to be a persistent phenomenon. This is due to misunderstanding, conflicts and tensions that are inevitable in a diverse society such as Singapore, which is still in the process of exploring its identity.

Thus, whilst embarking on multi-pronged measures to help society curb and manage the effects of corrosive speech, i.e., increasing public education and media literacy, and encouraging self-regulation and horizontal alliances, there is an increasing need to strengthen individuals’ ability to manage and cope with corrosive speech online.

This will become a necessity in a society that is not only becoming more diverse, but also increasingly connected. Personal coping mechanisms will be an individual’s bulwark against corrosive speech that continues to evolve as new fault lines appear when society undergoes more transitions.

When encountering corrosive speech or corrosive speech actors, one first has to make the decision of whether or not to respond. Deciding whether or not to respond demands that users consider a few possibilities when they encounter corrosive speech online:

- i. That some corrosive speech actors vent their frustration and unhappiness with social and economic realities, and they are not interested in rational discussions and cannot be reasoned with however hard one might try.

- ii. Like Internet trolls, some corrosive speech actors are attention-seeking provocateurs who seek to antagonise the people they encounter online.

In their articles on dealing with anti-social behaviour such as trolling and cyberbullying, Jarvis (2011) and McDermott (2012) advocate that the best tactic to deal with provocateurs such as trolls is to ignore them and not to respond.

Franco and his colleagues (1995) found that while reactions to flames range from annoyance to dismissal, “for many respondents, debates and disagreements are simply a part of life, and online they take the form of flames” (p.20).

- iii. Corrosive speech actors also tend to gravitate to certain platforms where they meet like-minded people.

As presented earlier, online enclaves are formed on sites that adopt different practices in reporting and providing commentaries, and technology users should exercise their choice in avoiding sites that they deem promote corrosive speech. Over time, the sustainability of these sites will be determined by “free-market” forces in cyberspace.

- iv. One should be mindful that the inherent nature of new technologies gives rise to atypical communicative behaviours. Anonymity, disinhibiting effects and the lack of meta-communication language (e.g., facial expressions, tonal quality and body language) often result in vast differences between online communication and offline or face-to-face communication. Hence, one should avoid according too much significance to corrosive speech.

Upon considering the above possibilities, should one still feel a need to respond, one needs to evaluate the corrosive speech contents and decide on a suitable response, which ranges from reasoning with the perpetrator, informing the site administrator,

speaking out against the perpetrator, or as proposed earlier, forming horizontal alliances to collectively denounce corrosive speech.

Developing an immune system and an ability to cope with and navigate through corrosive speech is an integral part of the strategic plan to combat corrosive speech.

8. CONCLUSION

This paper examined corrosive speech online that is anti-foreigner or racist. Corrosive speech is an evolving phenomenon as the themes and sentiments expressed will reflect the changing societal context. Anti-foreigner corrosive speech is a reaction largely to the influx of immigrants though it is linked to societal and technological factors such as increased freedom of speech, lack of literacy, and the nature of the Internet. As for racist corrosive speech, it is arguably a by-product of a multi-ethnic society that has not previously enjoyed the freedom that the Internet now gives people.

The recommendations put forth in this paper speak to the needs of the society in current times. Covering public education, increasing media literacy, self-regulation and horizontal alliances that extend beyond regulation, these measures are also multi-pronged, involving civil society organisations, mainstream media, online media, and policy-makers. These measures will become increasingly relevant as Singapore transits from a controlled system to a less-controlled system and continues to be a destination for immigrants.

Finally, while society as a whole learns to cope with corrosive speech, individuals too will have to develop coping mechanisms that will help them navigate an evolving online world.

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Appendix A: Case studies

Anti-foreigner speech

1. The “curry incident” involving a Singaporean Indian family and an immigrant Chinese family: In 2011, news of an immigrant Chinese family that had sought assistance from the Community Mediation Centre, spread online. It was reported that they had done so because they could not tolerate the smell of curry coming from their Indian neighbour’s home. *TODAY* newspaper reported that the mediator managed to convince the Indian family to only cook curry when their Chinese neighbours were out. The incident sparked furore online, culminating in the “Cook A Pot of Curry!” movement on Facebook, which urged families to cook and share a pot of curry. It also came to light that the mediation had occurred several years ago.
2. National Heart Centre employee Rachelle Ann Beguia’s comments on Facebook in 2011: Beguia, a Filipino, made derogatory remarks about Singaporeans and National Servicemen on Member of Parliament Penny Low’s Facebook page. The National Heart Centre later announced on its Facebook page that it would conduct an official enquiry into the “insensitive” comments.
3. East Asia Institute of Management student Wang Peng Fei, a Chinese national, posts an anti-Singaporean video online: In his 2011 video, Wang wore black-rimmed glasses and black lipstick, spoke in a high-pitched voice as he made racist comments in Mandarin. The video went viral resulting in Wang apologising on his blog to all Singaporeans and explaining that his video was only for comic relief and entertainment.
4. Fatal accident involving Chinese national Ma Chi in 2012: A video went viral online, showing Ma driving at three times the speed limit when his Ferrari crashed into a taxi, which resulted in his death and that of the taxi-driver and his passenger. The accident provoked a backlash online against Ma and other Chinese nationals. Some

netizens wrongly identified him as the son of a powerful Beijing official and suggested the police prosecute him posthumously.

5. National University of Singapore (NUS) scholar Sun Xu, a Chinese national, calls Singaporeans dogs on Weibo in 2012: In his post, Sun complained about people who stared at him when he accidentally brushed past them, and said that Singapore “more dogs than humans”. His comment went viral and caused a fierce outcry online, with many responding by demanding that NUS revoke his scholarship and expel him.

Racist speech

1. Young PAP member Jason Neo’s insensitive Facebook post of Muslim children in bus: In 2011, Neo posted a picture of Muslim pupils from a kindergarten, some wearing the traditional Malay headwear, and captioned it: “Bus filled with young terrorist trainees?” His post led to outrage among the Malay-Muslim community, with several police reports filed against him. This episode prompted his resignation from Young PAP.
2. New Asia Republic editor Donaldson Tan re-posted a photo of a pig superimposed on the Kaaba (a sacred site in Mecca): In 2011, Tan re-posted the picture with the comment, “This is a flame bait. YOU ARE WARNED.” His actions were interpreted as anti-Islamic and a police report was lodged against him.
3. Singapore Armed Forces full-time National Serviceman Christian Eliab Ratnam’s posts on Facebook: In 2011, Ratnam posted on his Facebook wall pictures of the Israeli flag as well as a small poster that communicated strong anti-Islamic sentiments. A reader of The Online Citizen filed a police report against him. A letter of complaint was sent to *The Straits Times* and government officials. The Online Citizen subsequently published an apology issued by Ratnam.

4. Nanyang Polytechnic student Lai Shimun posted a tweet in 2012 implying that Indians were smelly: The tweet was shared only with Lai's circle of friends. One of them circulated a screenshot of the tweet, which went viral on Twitter and Facebook. Netizens called the comment insensitive and derided Lai as a racist. A member of the public made a police report against Lai who subsequently deleted her Facebook and Twitter accounts and issued an apology.

Appendix B: List of articles

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
Curry Incident	Channel News Asia	Aug 16, 2011	Shanmugam clarifies “curry case”
	Channel News Asia	Aug 21, 2011	PE: conscious efforts needed to integrate new citizens, says Tan Cheng Bock
	STOMP	Aug 17, 2011	Curry incident was 7 years ago: don’t be anti-foreigner, says Minister
	STOMP	Aug 16, 2011	S’poreans get ready to “Cook A Pot of Curry” in Facebook event this Sunday
	STOMP	Aug 20, 2011	Much ado about curry? Netizen responds to curry row with “I Love Curry” song
	STOMP	Apr 25, 2012	First neighbours argued over curry, now it’s “stinky” sambal chilli
	The Online Citizen	Aug 16, 2011	Curry of neutrality without the flavour of fairness
	Yahoo! News	Aug 17, 2011	Shanmugam clarifies “curry issue”
	Yahoo! News	Aug 21, 2011	‘S’poreans and foreigners need to learn to co-exist’
Ferrari Incident	Channel News Asia	May 12, 2012	Two dead, 3 injured in Rochor Road accident
	Channel News Asia	May 18, 2012	Taxi-Ferrari crash sparks outrage in China
	Channel News Asia	May 15, 2012	Taxi-Ferrari crash: late cabby’s family to get help
	Channel News Asia	May 13, 2012	Taxi driver involved in Ferrari crash dies
	Channel News Asia	May 18, 2012	Taxi-Ferrari crash: late cabby’s family receives overwhelming support
	Channel News Asia	May 17, 2012	Chinese nationals must adhere to Singapore law: Chinese Embassy
	Lianhe Zaobao	June 27, 2012	网络搜索新闻人物心里应加一把尺？(Additional yardstick for online search of newsmakers?)
	Lianhe Zaobao	May 26, 2012	新加坡人排外了吗？(Are Singaporeans xenophobic?)

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
Ferrari Incident	Lianhe Zaobao	May 26, 2012	站长的话 (The words of the station master)
	Lianhe Zaobao	May 26, 2012	中国媒体：马驰不是官富二代 (Chinese media: Ma Chi is not a rich official's son)
	Lianhe Zaobao	May 23, 2012	从法拉利车祸谈起 (The Ferrari accident as a starting point for discussion)
	Lianhe Zaobao	May 21, 2012	唉！网民！（Sigh! Netizens!）
	Lianhe Zaobao	May 18, 2012	不应让跑车事故主题失焦 (Let's not lose track of the Ferrari accident's main issue)
	Lianhe Zaobao	May 17, 2012	闯祸法拉利司机据查非酒后驾驶 (Ferrari driver said to be tested negative for drink driving)
	Lianhe Zaobao	May 18, 2012	德士司机遗孀：不会责怪任何人 (Taxi driver's widow won't blame anyone)
	Lianhe Zaobao	May 16, 2012	法拉利致命车祸德士司机家属获热心人士援助 (Family of deceased taxi driver in Ferrari accident receives help from generous public)
	Lianhe Zaobao	May 13, 2012	法拉利深夜撞德士电单车两死三伤 (Ferrari's late night collision with taxi and motorcycle left two dead and three injured)
	Lianhe Zaobao	Feb 28, 2012	狗婊子无知国人无端遭开刀1年内被骂3次 (Ignorant citizens become innocent targets of backlash, scolded three times within a year)
	Lianhe Zaobao	Aug 18, 2012	中国学生辱骂狮城人事件 (Incident of Chinese national student insulting people of Singapore)
	Lianhe Zaobao	May 23, 2012	法拉利车祸与排外 (Ferrari accident and xenophobia)
	Lianhe Zaobao	Aug 27, 2012	自制短片嘲笑新加坡人中国学生昨早回国 (Chinese national student behind self-made short film that mocked Singaporeans left for China yesterday morning)
	Lianhe Zaobao	July 26, 2012	来狮城读书自制短片辱骂新加坡人中国男生遭校方开除 (Chinese national male student behind self-made short film that insulted Singaporeans got expelled by Singapore school)
	Lianhe Wanbao	May 20, 2012	法拉利恐怖车祸追踪富少与女伴关系引发猜疑 (Horrific Ferrari accident led to speculation about young tycoon's relationship with female companion)

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
Ferrari Incident	Lianhe Wanbao	May 19, 2012	要供孩子读完大学PR和新移民资助德士司机家人 (PR and new immigrant to financially support taxi driver's children to complete university)
	Lianhe Wanbao	May 17, 2012	车祸现场捡走300元目击男子报警揪人 (Male eyewitness called police and detained person who picked up \$300 at car accident scene)
	Lianhe Wanbao	May 16, 2012	法拉利恐怖车祸追踪 (Follow-up to the horrific Ferrari accident)
	Lianhe Wanbao	May 15, 2012	富少夹毙法拉利议员成汉通：将集合各方援助助司机子女升学 (MP Seng Han Tong: To gather all kinds of assistance to enable deceased taxi driver's daughter to further her studies)
	Lianhe Wanbao	May 14, 2012	富少夹毙法拉利追踪车祸录像还原真相家人：不是你的错！德士司机睁眼含泪逝世 (Video of Ferrari accident provides truth and redress to family: It's not your fault! Taxi driver passed away teary-eyed)
	Lianhe Wanbao	May 14, 2012	富少夹毙法拉利追踪撞车录像曝光8人逃死劫 (Ferrari accident video shows 8 people escape death)
	Lianhe Wanbao	May 13, 2012	富少夹毙法拉利追踪车祸酿2死3伤惊闻车载有女人富少妻追问：她是谁 (Ferrari accident that left 2 dead and 3 injured, female passenger rumoured to be inside car, young tycoon's wife kept asking: Who is she?)
	STOMP	May 13, 2012	PRC Ferrari driver runs red light, involving taxi and motorcycle in fatal accident
	STOMP	May 14, 2012	Rochor 3-death crash: narrow escape for 8 other survivors
	STOMP	May 18, 2012	Why doesn't family of Ferrari driver offer any compensation for cabby's death?
	STOMP	May 14, 2012	Rochor 3-death crash: car cam shows Ferrari driver beat red light
	STOMP	May 15, 2012	Mystery woman who survived Ferrari crash was in spaghetti-strap top and hot pants
	STOMP	May 15, 2012	Japanese woman killed in Rochor 3-death crash was living and working here

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
Ferrari Incident	STOMP	May 28, 2012	Ferrari driver told colleague: "no roads here for high-speed driving"
	STOMP	May 16, 2012	Netizens in China slam Ferrari driver as spoilt, rich brat who's a disgrace
	STOMP	May 19, 2012	Ferrari driver's widow apologises for dead husband's "driving error"
	STOMP	May 16, 2012	Instead of apology, Ferrari driver's family hits out at netizens for criticising him
	STOMP	Jul 13, 2012	Rochor fatal crash: Ferrari driver was not drunk, report shows
	STOMP	May 23, 2012	Ferrari crash video garners over 3 mill views on Youtube in one week
	Temasek Times	June 4, 2012	Cocky PRC new citizen said "serve taxi driver right" and asked why his taxi was not fitted with airbag
	Temasek Times	May 16, 2012	Disgusted Singaporean suans Ma Chi's family: the dead can't apologise, but surely the living can do so?
	Temasek Times	May 15, 2012	Family of PRC Ferrari driver Ma Chi scolds Singapore netizens: hold back your poisonous tongues
	Temasek Times	June 15, 2012	Foreign observer concerned with rising tide of xenophobia in Singapore
	Temasek Times	May 15, 2012	Hong Kong Apple Daily: Ferrari accident fuels rising anti-China sentiments in Singapore
	Temasek Times	May 18, 2012	PRC journalist: Ma Chi is son of Ma Kai, a senior communist official in China
	Temasek Times	May 19, 2012	Ma Chi's family rubbished rumors that he is a son of Ma Kai, a high-ranking PRC official
	Temasek Times	May 19, 2012	Singaporeans rally behind family of late cabby Cheng Teck Hock to offer help and support
	Temasek Times	May 19, 2012	Foreigners need only pass the Basic Theory driving test to "convert" their driving licences into Singapore ones
	Temasek Times	May 18, 2012	Ma Chi's wife posts apology on Weibo: we are sorry and we will be responsible

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
Ferrari Incident	Temasek Times	July 11, 2012	Malay Singaporean to PM Lee: I do not feel part of Singapura anymore
	Temasek Times	July 13, 2012	Netizens outraged over favored press coverage given to PRC Ferrari driver Ma
	Temasek Times	May 19, 2012	Photos: Wu Wei Wei, the female passenger
	Temasek Times	May 20, 2012	PRC national and Singapore PR offered to sponsor education of children of late taxi driver
	Temasek Times	May 14, 2012	Singaporean cabby Cheng Teck Hock whose taxi was rammed by Ferrari has passed away from his injuries
	Temasek Times	May 25, 2012	SMU Prof tells Bloomberg: Foreigners have become the “punching bags” in Singapore
	Temasek Times	May 14, 2012	State media defends PRC Ferrari driver Ma Chi: He is not a “heavy drinker” and has applied for PR
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 9, 2012	How much do you know about PRC Chinese drivers?
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 8, 2012	PRC Chinese lawlessness explained
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 15, 2012	Fatal car crash stirs anti-immigrant resentment in Singapore
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 16, 2012	Family of deceased PRC Ferrari driver blast netizens for having “poisonous tongues”
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 16, 2012	Two examples of how Straits Times covers FTs
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 16, 2012	Deceased PRC Ferrari driver the brother of a fugitive mafia boss in China
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 17, 2012	A tragic accident evokes intense emotions in Singapore
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 19, 2012	Ferrari accident: Mr Cheng’s family should sue both the govt and the PRC family
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 20, 2012	Widow of deceased PRC driver apologized
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 20, 2012	Chinese told to obey Singapore laws after crash

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
Ferrari Incident	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 27, 2012	Of Ferraris, PRCs and social integration — putting things into perspective
	Temasek Review Emeritus	June 17, 2012	More on how PRCs get their driving license in China
	The Straits Times	July 13, 2012	Ferrari driver was not drunk
	The Straits Times	May 27, 2012	“No roads here for high-speed driving”, Ferrari driver told ex-colleague
	The Straits Times	May 19, 2012	Widow of Ferrari driver says sorry
	The Straits Times	May 19, 2012	A look at the talk of the week; A Ferrari, a foreigner and the fallout
	The Straits Times	May 19, 2012	Chinese-Singaporean divide a “mindset issue”
	The Straits Times	May 17, 2012	Chinese Embassy sends regrets
	The Straits Times	May 16, 2012	Chinese netizens slam driver as “spoilt brat”
	The Straits Times	May 16, 2012	Cabby's daughter given assurance of varsity aid
	The Straits Times	May 14, 2012	Ferrari driver “not a heavy drinker”
	The Straits Times	May 14, 2012	Cabby in crash with Ferrari dies
	Yahoo! News	May 12, 2012	Man dies in Ferrari accident in Bugis
	Yahoo! News	May 14, 2012	“The taxi went flying through the air”
	Yahoo! News	May 12, 2012	Mystery woman in Ferrari crash identified
	Yahoo! News	May 14, 2012	Ferrari driver in horrific Bugis crash cremated
	Yahoo! News	May 14, 2012	Minister Shanmugam pledges help for family of dead cabby
	Yahoo! News	May 15, 2012	Video of Ferrari crash shows speed of high-impact collision
	Yahoo! News	May 15, 2012	Japanese crash victim allegedly robbed
	Yahoo! News	May 15, 2012	Are Singaporeans becoming anti-foreigner?
	Yahoo! News	May 23, 2012	80 per cent say Singaporeans are becoming anti-foreigner: Y! poll
	Yahoo! News	May 19, 2012	Ferrari driver's widow says sorry for “driving error”
	Yahoo! News	May 17, 2012	Chinese embassy expresses regret over Ferrari accident
	Yahoo! News	May 17, 2012	PM Lee, DPM Teo “saddened” by Ferrari accident

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
	Yahoo! News	Jul 13, 2012	Ferrari driver Ma Chi was not drunk: HSA report
	Yahoo! News	May 18, 2012	Japanese crash victim was always ready to help: friends
Sun Xu Incident	Channel News Asia	Mar 26, 2012	NUS scholar Sun Xu punished for online remarks
	Channel News Asia	Feb 28, 2012	Baey Yam Keng apologises for comments over foreign student's remark
	Channel News Asia	Mar 13, 2012	NUS to decide on disciplinary action against Sun Xu
	Lianhe Zaobao	April 23, 2012	郭振羽教授：新加坡须以持续性政策建“永续性”移民社会 (Prof Eddie Kuo: Singapore must continue policy of building “sustainable” immigrant society)
	Lianhe Zaobao	April 29, 2012	族群敏感情绪依然潜在国人不能掉以轻心 (Ethnic-based emotions remain sensitive so Singaporeans should not take things for granted)
	Lianhe Zaobao	April 6, 2012	国人有责任缓和社会分化 (Singaporeans have a duty to soothe societal rifts)
	Lianhe Zaobao	July 8, 2012	‘不知死活’的马炎庆 (‘Clueless’ Baey Yam Keng)
	Lianhe Zaobao	May 20, 2012	陈振声：从理性感性着手解决移民问题 (Chan Chun Sing: Solving the immigration problem from rational and emotional approaches)
	Lianhe Zaobao	April 13, 2012	主动参与本地志愿福利团体外国大学生努力融入社会 (Foreign undergraduates work hard at integrating into society by joining local volunteer welfare organisations)
	Lianhe Zaobao	April 9, 2012	加强对外来学子的本土化人文教育 (Strengthen foreign students' local cultural assimilation education)
	Lianhe Zaobao	May 2, 2012	品德教育还有人坚持着 (Character education still finds supporters)
	Lianhe Zaobao	April 7, 2012	社交网络急需《行为守则》 (Social media in urgent need of code of conduct)
	Lianhe Zaobao	March 30, 2012	人际关系就在于互相尊重 (Interpersonal relationships are about mutual respect)
	Lianhe Zaobao	April 6, 2012	失言的自反与对策 (Self-reflection and strategy towards the loss of speech)

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
Sun Xu Incident	Lianhe Zaobao	March 18, 2012	冒犯的权利vs非礼勿言 (The right to offend vs corrosive speech)
	Lianhe Zaobao	July 21, 2012	王瑞杰：种族宗教课题敏感处理网络言论须更谨慎 (Heng Swee Kiat: Race and religion are sensitive topics that require careful treatment of online discussion)
	Lianhe Zaobao	July 16, 2012	学者研究中越学生融入问题造成理解误区 (Scholar's study finds Chinese and Vietnamese students' integration problems give rise to misconceptions)
	Lianhe Zaobao	July 15, 2012	高峰下的矛盾 (The dilemmas of being at the top)
	Lianhe Zaobao	May 7, 2012	孙旭记 (Sun Xu's records)
	Lianhe Zaobao	April 4, 2012	孙旭同学言论的性质及缘由 (The nature and reasoning of student Sun Xu's speech)
	Lianhe Zaobao	Mar 30, 2012	从孙旭事件看言论自由的边际 (Defining the boundaries of freedom of expression from the Sun Xu incident)
	Lianhe Zaobao	May 26, 2012	可以这样辱骂中国人吗？吴莹 (Wu Ying: Can the Chinese be insulted in this manner?)
	Lianhe Zaobao	Mar 27, 2012	在网上恶言侮辱新加坡人国大生孙旭受纪律处分 (NUS student Sun Xu disciplined for insulting Singaporeans online)
	Lianhe Zaobao	Mar 14, 2012	孙旭辱人惩处国大两周内宣布 (NUS to announce disciplinary measures for Sun Xu in two weeks)
	Lianhe Zaobao	Mar 9, 2012	议员建议削减外籍学生奖学金数目 (MP suggests reducing the number of scholarships for foreign students)
	Lianhe Zaobao	Feb 26, 2012	奖学金得主网上恶语事件孙旭到中国大使馆表悔过 (Scholar behind online corrosive speech incident expresses remorse at the Chinese embassy)
	Lianhe Zaobao	Feb 24, 2012	国大应清楚调查孙旭骂人事件 (NUS should thoroughly investigate Sun Xu's outburst incident)
	Lianhe Zaobao	May 7, 2012	福建新移民更容易融入？(Easier integration for Fujian immigrants?)
	Lianhe Wanbao	Mar 14, 2012	孙旭发表‘人狗论’惹祸国大两周后公开惩处结果 (Sun Xu's 'human dog remarks' prompt NUS to make public the disciplinary measures in two weeks)
	Lianhe Wanbao	Feb 29, 2012	马炎庆为孙旭事件道歉 (Baey Yam Keng apologies for Sun Xu)

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
			incident)
Sun Xu Incident	Lianhe Wanbao	Feb 28, 2012	别让祖国丢脸吧 (Do not let motherland lose face)
	Lianhe Wanbao	Feb 28, 2012	狗婊子无知国人无端遭开刀1年内被骂3次 (Ignorant citizens become innocent targets of backlash, scolded three times within a year)
	STOMP	Feb 19, 2012	PRC scholar from NUS calls S'poreans "gangsters" and "dogs" in online post
	STOMP	Feb 23, 2012	China NUS scholar who called S'poreans "dogs" threatens local blogger
	STOMP	Feb 22, 2012	Calls to revoke scholarship of PRC NUS scholar who called S'poreans 'dogs'
	STOMP	Mar 26, 2012	Chinese national who called S'poreans "dogs" has scholarship benefits revoked
	STOMP	Mar 28, 2012	Chinese NUS students angry with Sun Xu's comments as he tarnished their reputation
	The Online Citizen	May 12, 2012	Are Singaporeans too easily offended?
	The Online Citizen	Mar 2, 2012	Prejudice and discrimination — Xenophobia
	TemasekTimes	Feb 19, 2012	"More dogs than humans in Singapore" — NUS PRC students comments spark outcry
	Temasek Times	Feb 22, 2012	"Why are you visiting us dogs?" — netizen asks Baey Yam Keng on house visits
	Temasek Times	Feb 22, 2012	Did PAP MP Baey Yam Keng really urge Singaporeans to reflect on Sun Xu's comment? (that we are dogs)
	Temasek Times	Feb 22, 2012	NUS Provost: I have "counselled" our (beloved) PRC scholar Sun Xu
	Temasek Times	Feb 22, 2012	Your view on whether MOE should revoke the scholarship of NUS PRC Sun xu
	Temasek Times	Feb 22, 2012	NUS PRC Sun Xu apologises to Singaporeans on Facebook
	Temasek Times	Feb 21, 2012	Celebrity Tay Ping Hui scolds NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu: You are an impertinent ingrate!

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
Sun Xu Incident	Temasek Times	Feb 21, 2012	Alex Tan lodged police report against NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu over alleged threat
	Temasek Times	Feb 20, 2012	NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu remains unrepentant: I am only complaining
	Temasek Times	Feb 20, 2013	Netizen filed complaint to NUS against PRC scholar's offensive remarks about Singaporeans
	Temasek Times	Feb 25, 2012	Majority of Singaporeans want NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu's MOE scholarship to be revoked
	Temasek Times	Feb 24, 2012	Baey Yam Keng no worried about losing votes: I stand by my view on Sun Xu
	Temasek Times	Feb 24, 2012	Baey Yam Keng: Scholarships should be based on merit and not nationality
	Temasek Times	Feb 24, 2012	NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu saga rambles on as NUS alumni urged to stop donations to NUS
	Temasek Times	Feb 23, 2012	Sun Xu saga: Tay Ping Hui on why he spoke out against Sun Xu: Because it's about Singaporeans
	Temasek Times	Feb 23, 2012	Baey Yam Keng on NUS PRC Scholar Sun Xu saga: Singaporeans should accept criticisms openly
	Temasek Times	Feb 23, 2012	MOE "disappointed" with NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu, but no concrete disciplinary action taken against him until now
	Temasek Times	Feb 23, 2012	Police report against NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu: Alex Tan told to lodge Magistrate's complaint for "intentional harassment"
	Temasek Times	Feb 22, 2012	Baey Yam Keng defends NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu: His comment about dogs "might mean something else"
	Temasek Times	Feb 27, 2012	Vice Dean Prof Victor Shim NUS does not condone Sun Xu's behavior
	Temasek Times	Feb 27, 2012	NUS graduate student "strongly urged" NUS to withdraw PRC scholar Sun Xu's scholarship
	Temasek Times	Feb 27, 2012	Sun Xu to attend NUS disciplinary hearing on 13 March as PRC students rally to support him
	Temasek Times	Feb 27, 2012	Oh... what more can I say about NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu?
	Temasek Times	Feb 26, 2012	NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu seeks help from Chinese embassy for a second chance to repay Singapore

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
Sun Xu Incident	Temasek Times	Feb 26, 2012	Baey Yam Keng's PR nightmare continues as angry netizens flock to lampoon him on Facebook
	Temasek Times	Feb 26, 2012	Baey Yam Keng now reflects: I (finally) understand why Singaporeans have strong views on the Sun Xu saga
	Temasek Times	Feb 25, 2012	Cherian George speaks to BBC on Sun Xu saga: Real "target" of Singaporeans is the government
	Temasek Times	Feb 29, 2012	Baey Yam Keng "apologises" to those his words have "hurt" but continues to "defend" Sun Xu
	Temasek Times	Feb 28, 2012	An open letter to Baey Yam Keng on the Sun Xu saga
	Temasek Times	Feb 28, 2012	Local media analyst told BBC: NUS unlikely to expel PRC scholar over a trivial incident
	Temasek Times	Feb 28, 2012	Baey Yam Keng calls for more "leeway" to employ foreigners in certain sectors
	Temasek Times	Feb 28, 2012	My thoughts on the Sun Xu saga
	Temasek Times	Feb 27, 2012	Breaking News: Schlumberger has severed all ties with NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu!
	Temasek Times	Feb 27, 2012	Education Minister Heng Swee Keat "tai chi" decision on NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu back to NUS
	Temasek Times	Feb 27, 2012	Netizens put up local version of Hong Kong "locust ad" to protest against NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu
	Temasek Times	Mar 1, 2012	Exposed: PRC punk who scolds Singaporeans "stupid cunt" after punching Singapore man is also a student like Sun Xu
	Temasek Times	Mar 1, 2012	China's netizens rally behind Sun Xu and agree with him that Singaporeans are DOGS
	Temasek Times	Mar 1, 2012	Exclusive: Ex-MOE PRC scholar chose US instead of Singapore to pursue his tertiary studies
	Temasek Times	Mar 1, 2012	Time to forgive and bring Sun Xu saga to a close
	Temasek Times	Feb 29, 2012	Local singer Lydia Tan scolds Singaporeans for biting on Sun Xu like a dog
	Temasek Times	Feb 29, 2012	Tay Ping Hui publicly calls for NUS to show "true leadership" and expel PRC scholar Sun Xu

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Sun Xu Incident	Temasek Times	Feb 29, 2012	NUS engineering student: Schlumberger's move to "discontinue" its connections with Sun Xu is only "symbolic"
	Temasek Times	29-Feb-12	Another PRC man after Sun Xu insults Singaporeans: you are not worth even a fart
	Temasek Times	Feb 29, 2012	Ex-MOE PRC scholar in United States slams Sun Xu and calls for review of Singapore's overseas scholarship recruitment programme
	Temasek Times	Mar 5, 2012	Baey Yam Keng shuns questions on Sun Xu saga during his "live" Facebook chat
	Temasek Times	Mar 5, 2012	Why Sun Xu's (孙旭) NUS scholarship should be revoked for the good of everyone, including Sun Xu
	Temasek Times	Mar 4, 2012	Singaporean scolds PRC sales assistant "dog" in public as Sun Xu saga rambles on
	Temasek Times	Mar 4, 2012	Baey Yam Keng to conduct "live" facebook chat with humans (not dogs) tonight
	Temasek Times	Mar 3, 2012	PRC undergraduate "Ares Lin" apologizes to Singaporeans for calling them 'worthless fart'!
	Temasek Times	Mar 3, 2012	Baey Yam Keng: I have "reflected" myself, but netizens remain unconvinced
	Temasek Times	Mar 2, 2012	PRC girl living in Singapore despises Singaporeans: "quality" of its people is too "poor"
	Temasek Times	Mar 2, 2012	Exclusive: Ex-MOE PRC scholar left Singapore for good to start company in China
	Temasek Times	Mar 2, 2012	Why we should not let Sun Xu off easily
	Temasek Times	Mar 11, 2012	Your view: What is the acceptable punishment for NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu?
	Temasek Times	Mar 11, 2012	Vietnamese student in Singapore: I believe my country has a brighter future than Singapore
	Temasek Times	Mar 10, 2012	Baey Yam Keng rapped for suggesting Singaporeans provide "home stay" for foreign students to help them "assimilate"

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Sun Xu Incident	Temasek Times	Mar 10, 2012	PRC woman scolded by Singaporean uncle for putting child on food court counter
	Temasek Times	Mar 9, 2012	Baey Yam Keng wants Singaporeans to put in more efforts to “assimilate” foreign students
	Temasek Times	Mar 9, 2012	Yee Jenn Jong wants government to restrict intake of foreign scholars
	Temasek Times	Mar 6, 2012	NUS Vietnamese scholars bully local students and chased them away from soccer pitch which was earlier booked
	Temasek Times	Mar 6, 2012	NUS students invited to “mentor” newbie PRC MOE scholars like Sun Xu
	Temasek Times	Mar 5, 2012	NUS student: No “unrest” at campus over Sun Xu and campus crusade sagas
	Temasek Times	Mar 5, 2012	Law student defends Baey Yam Keng and reminds Singaporeans that their forefathers were foreigners too
	Temasek Times	Mar 13, 2012	MOE continues to “hide” behind NUS in Sun Xu saga: Students must exercise “sensitivity” when posting comments online
	Temasek Times	Mar 13, 2012	Massive outcry in cyberspace over NUS postponing decision on PRC scholar Sun Xu
	Temasek Times	Mar 13, 2012	No immediate action taken against PRC scholar Sun Xu: NUS to make decision one to two weeks after inquiry
	Temasek Times	Mar 13, 2012	NTU PRC scholar: 50 per cent of my schoolmates break their bonds and return to China for good
	Temasek Times	Mar 13, 2012	Outcome of NUS disciplinary hearing: “Nothing happened” and Sun Xu remains a MOE scholar
	Temasek Times	Mar 13, 2012	Media blackout imposed on Sun Xu’s disciplinary hearing by NUS?
	Temasek Times	Mar 12, 2012	Tay Ping Hui: Voices of people need to be heeded on 13 March where Sun Xu’s fate will be decided
	Temasek Times	Mar 12, 2012	NUS PRC student: Sun Xu is “focused” on the final year exams right now and not “bothered” by disciplinary hearing

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
Sun Xu Incident	Temasek Times	Mar 12, 2012	Open letter to NUS by over 3,000 Singaporeans to pass a “deterrent” sentence on PRC scholar Sun Xu
	Temasek Times	Mar 12, 2012	NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu to attend disciplinary hearing tomorrow for breaching Code of Conduct for students
	Temasek Times	Mar 18, 2012	Sun Xu saga and immigration issues not discussed during Baey Yam Keng’s “kopitalk” session
	Temasek Times	Mar 17, 2012	PRC wives complain that life in Singapore is boring and frustrating
	Temasek Times	Mar 16, 2012	Baey Yam Keng: I (finally) realized the “deep resentments” of locals against foreigners
	Temasek Times	Mar 15, 2012	Tay Ping Hui on Sun Xu’s “verdict”: NUS needs to reflect on what it really stands for
	Temasek Times	Mar 15, 2012	Video: Singaporean student scolds Sun Xu: Ask your conscience if you deserve our scholarship
	Temasek Times	Mar 15, 2012	Singaporean studying overseas “writes” to NUS PRC scholar Sun Xu
	Temasek Times	Mar 14, 2012	Exposed: Sun Xu’s academic schedule in the next two months before he graduates from NUS
	Temasek Times	Mar 26, 2012	Sun Xu apologizes again: My last month has been filled with great regrets and remorse
	Temasek Times	Mar 26, 2012	Your view: What do you think of Sun Xu’s punishment?
	Temasek Times	Mar 26, 2012	Misleading title or embarrassing error by Yahoo News on Sun Xu’s scholarship being “terminated”?
	Temasek Times	Mar 26, 2012	NUS circular on punishment for MOE PRC scholar Sun Xu
	Temasek Times	Mar 26.	NUS: Decision on Sun Xu sends a “strong” signal that we do not “condone” his actions
	Temasek Times	Mar 26, 2012	Breaking News: Sun Xu fined only \$3,000 and reprimanded for posting offensive remarks about Singaporeans online
	Temasek Times	Mar 24, 2012	PRC netizen rants at two elderly Singaporean aunties for cutting his queue at NTUC supermarket

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
Sun Xu Incident	Temasek Times	Mar 20, 2012	Sun Xu No 2: PRC man says there are more “dogs” than humans in Singapore and Singaporeans have no mothers
	Temasek Times	Mar 19, 2012	Baey Yam Keng: I do not think NUS is playing “delay tactics” over Sun Xu
	Temasek Times	Mar 30, 2012	Baey Yam Keng slammed for “sympathizing” with PRs for paying more for upgrading
	Temasek Times	Mar 30, 2012	Nicole’s running mate Abdul Salim wants to use “insecticides” to get rid of PRC “locusts”
	Temasek Times	Mar 29, 2012	Photo: Sun Xu on his graduation day
	Temasek Times	Mar 29, 2012	PAP MP Indranee Rajah commended NYP student Lai Shimun for apologizing for her “insensitive” comments on Twitter
	Temasek Times	Mar 29, 2012	Sun Xu had job interview cancelled as ex-PRC scholar promised to give him a job in China
	Temasek Times	Mar 28, 2012	Why Singaporeans should be upset with Sun Xu
	Temasek Times	Mar 27, 2012	Video: PAP MP Lim Biow Chuan urges Singaporeans to accept Sun Xu’s apology and move on graciously
	Temasek Times	Mar 27, 2012	Photo: 7 years of FREE education for Sun Xu starting in the class of 2005, River Valley High School
	Temasek Times	Mar 27, 2012	Why not send Sun Xu to help MP Baey Yam Keng in his weekly Meet-the-People session?
	Temasek Times	Mar 26, 2012	Police report lodged against NYP student Lai Shimun for posting racist remarks on Twitter
	Temasek Times	June 26, 2012	Baey Yam Keng: CDAC to reach out to new immigrants
	Temasek Times	May 18, 2012	Foreign student in local polytechnic: Even animals can speak better than Singaporeans
	Temasek Times	May 7, 2012	Does Baey Yam Keng allow his Facebook page to be used by online lynch mobs to attack others?
	Temasek Times	April 27, 2012	Baey Yam Keng penned his name on petition to vouch for Lee Lip Hong’s character in court
	Temasek Times	April 12, 2012	Photo: Tampines residents present PAP MP Baey Yam Keng with banner

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Sun Xu Incident	Temasek Times	April 10, 2012	Heng Swee Kiat: 15 percent of foreign scholars take up Singapore citizenship within 5 years
	Temasek Times	April 4, 2012	PM Lee raps Singaporeans for “over-reacting” to Sun Xu saga: We should have “moved on”
	Temasek Times	April 4, 2012	Singaporean complains to Chinese Embassy about PRC Chinese behaviours in Singapore
	Temasek Times	July 1, 2012	Your View: What do you think of Sun Xu's punishment
	Temasek Review Emeritus	April 19, 2012	Police: No further action against PRC scholar Sun Xu
	Temasek Review Emeritus	April 23, 2012	Sun Xu incident triggered anti-sino sentiment in the Lion City
	Temasek Review Emeritus	July 17, 2012	The China that can do no wrong
	Temasek Review Emeritus	June 23, 2012	Chased out by pinoy II — next to NPP & SPH!
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Feb 22, 2012	MOE scholar from PRC finally apologised
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Feb 22, 2012	Of dogs and men
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Feb 27, 2012	PRC Scholar Sun Xu seeking help from Chinese Embassy
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Feb 27, 2012	Schlumberger lists PRC Scholar Sun Xu as “persona non-grata”
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Feb 28, 2012	PRC student community in NUS plans protest in support of Sun Xu
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Feb 28, 2012	Rumour of PRC students planning protest squashed
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Feb 29, 2012	Singapore’s unique approach on “foreign talent”
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Feb 21, 2012	Prominent blogger Alex Tan to make police report on scholar for criminal intimidation
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Feb 21, 2012	NUS confirms investigations into PRC scholar “dogs” remark

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
Sun Xu Incident	Temasek Review Emeritus	Mar 1, 2012	PAP MP Ellen Lee admits there is pent-up resentment among Singaporeans
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Mar 1, 2012	I am now doubly mad over MP Baey's "apology"
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Mar 1, 2012	My concerns on some Singaporeans' reaction to PRC Scholar's comment
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Mar 13, 2012	PRC Scholar Sun Xu let off with a warning
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Mar 6, 2012	NUS going all out to make PRC scholars feel welcome
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Mar 13, 2012	NUS_ Decision on Sun Xu's case to be made in 1-2 weeks' time
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Mar 14, 2012	Don't vent your anger at foreigners — blame PAP
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Mar 5, 2012	Why Sun Xu NUS scholarship should be revoked
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Mar 17, 2012	MP Baey now realised the deep sentiments of locals against foreigners
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Mar 26, 2012	Talent buy becomes sore point
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Mar 27, 2012	Sun Xu Saga: Did NUS get it wrong
	Temasek Review Emeritus	June 5, 2012	Nothing more than a culture of self-interest, Vivian...
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Feb 23, 2012	Just "Intentional Harassment" nia, says police
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Mar 30, 2012	PAP must abolish the foreign scholarship policy
	Temasek Review Emeritus	April 5, 2012	Sun Xu apologizes again to Singaporeans for his "dogs" remark
	The Straits Times	Mar 29, 2012	Netizens quick to condemn offensive acts
	The Straits Times	Mar 30, 2012	Netizens too quick to cry foul?
	The Straits Times	Feb 23, 2012	Chinese scholarship student apologises for insulting

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
			comments
Sun Xu Incident	The Straits Times	Mar 30, 2012	Did NUS student get what he deserved for online rant?
	The Straits Times	Mar 28, 2012	Chinese students upset over compatriot's blog
	The Straits Times	Mar 27, 2012	NUS scholar punished for Net posting
	The Straits Times	Mar 14, 2012	Student faces NUS panel for derogatory blog post
	Yahoo! News	Feb 22, 2012	S'poreans outraged over PRC scholar's "dog" comment
	Yahoo! News	Mar 13, 2012	Chinese scholar Sun Xu faces NUS disciplinary board
	Yahoo! News	Mar 6, 2012	"Address seething anger against foreigners"
	Yahoo! News	Mar 27, 2012	NUS student Sun Xu punished for "dogs" comment
Lai Shimun Incident	Yahoo! News	Feb 23, 2012	Scholarships should be based on merit, not nationality: Baey
	Publichouse.sg	Mar 29, 2012	We must speak out against racism and discrimination: Hri Kumar
	The Online Citizen	Mar 26, 2012	Racially insensitive comment by poly student
	The Online Citizen	Mar 28, 2012	Advantage of growing up a minority in Singapore is that you adapt
	Temasek Times	Mar 28, 2012	Good friend of Lai Shimun now regrets sabotaging her "racist" tweet
	Temasek Times	Mar 26, 2012	Police report lodged against NYP student Lai Shimun for posting racist remarks
	The Straits Times	Mar 30, 2012	He filed police report as a "good citizen should"
	The Straits Times	Mar 29, 2012	Polys, varsities to get racial harmony "diplomats"
	The Straits Times	Mar 27, 2012	Poly student's offensive post sparks online furore
	The Straits Times	Mar 29, 2012	Harmony Unit wants to Engage Student
	Yahoo! News	Mar 28, 2012	"Expletive online post about Indians hurtful, wrong and uncalled for"
Wang Peng Fei Incident	Yahoo! News	Mar 28, 2012	"Don't stereotype youths based on latest incidents"
	STOMP	Jul 24, 2011	So insensitive! Chinese national mocks S'poreans in online video rant
	STOMP	Jul 25, 2011	It's only for comedic relief, says Chinese national who insulted S'poreans

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
Wang Peng Fei Incident	STOMP	Jul 26, 2011	Expelled: Chinese national who insulted S'poreans in video
	STOMP	Jul 27, 2011	Guy who insulted S'poreans flies back to China: Police report made against him
	STOMP	Jul 28, 2011	Guy who insulted S'poreans: Even China netizens say he's a disgrace
	The Online Citizen	Aug 2, 2011	Wang Pei Fei video's no more offensive than comments of S'poreans along racial lines
	Temasek Review Emeritus	July 31, 2012	PRC netizens used Lee Kuan Yew's words to attack Singaporeans
	Temasek Review Emeritus	July 11, 2012	The return of "Foreign Talent" PRC Wang Peng Fei
	Temasek Review Emeritus	July 27, 2012	PRC "talent" Wang "fled" Singapore right under the police's nose
	Temasek Review Emeritus	July 26, 2012	PRC "talent" expelled from school for making "racist" videos on Singaporeans
	Temasek Review Emeritus	July 25, 2011	Police report lodged against PRC "talent" for self-made video clip
	Yahoo! News	Jul 26, 2011	Student apologises for video parody of S'poreans
	Yahoo! News	Jul 29, 2011	Netizens from China: video parody disgraceful
Others	Channel News Asia	Nov 17, 2011	Young PAP member quits over offensive remarks on Facebook
	Channel News Asia	Nov 18, 2011	Young PAP to have more stringent checks on members
	Channel News Asia	Nov 19, 2011	Young PAP leaders stress importance of multi-racialism
	Channel News Asia	Nov 22, 2011	Blogger under investigation for racially offensive posting
	Channel News Asia	Nov 20, 2011	Mindef takes serious view of NSF conduct in public
	Channel News Asia	July 1, 2012	2 youths arrested for racist online remarks
	Publichouse.sg	Nov 17, 2011	Racism has no place in S'pore: YP vice-chair
	Publichouse.sg	Mar 29, 2012	Racist postings - a sign of detachment?
	The Online Citizen	Nov 16, 2011	Highly racist and offensive caption — YPAP member?

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
Others	The Online Citizen	Nov 18, 2011	Jason Neo: Kid with outstretched arms “inspired my thoughts”
	The Online Citizen	Nov 21, 2011	Racist posts on FB by blogger — police investigates
	The Online Citizen	Nov 18, 2011	Sedition Act report filed against SAF personnel
	The Online Citizen	Nov 18, 2011	Comments like those expressed by Jason Neo has no place in SDP — Dr Chee Soon Juan
	The Online Citizen	Nov 18, 2011	Jason Neo controversy: NSP’s response
	The Online Citizen	Nov 29, 2011	Discrimination online and the MICA verdict
	The Online Citizen	Nov 29, 2011	Storms in teacups over hurt, not harm
	The Online Citizen	Nov 21, 2011	The politics of race
	The Online Citizen	Nov 17, 2011	Who is the mainstream media protecting?
	Yahoo! News	Nov 23, 2011	Blog editor under investigation for racist posting
	Yahoo! News	Nov 20, 2011	Ex-Young PAP member apologises for offensive photo
	Yahoo! News	Nov 19, 2011	WP confident of avoiding Young PAP embarrassment
	Yahoo! News	Nov 20, 2011	Police investigating another Facebook post criticising Islam
	Yahoo! News	Nov 20, 2011	Racist — or just a symptom of wider malaise?
	Yahoo! News	Nov 18, 2011	Multiculturalism’ in Singapore merely skin deep?
General commentaries/ Reportage	Publichouse.sg	July 6, 2012	Is xenophobia in Singapore a serious issue?
	Publichouse.sg	Nov 22, 2012	Patriotism — leaving daggers aside
	Publichouse.sg	June 26, 2012	STOMP — A cesspool of disgrace to citizen journalism
	The Online Citizen	Mar 3, 2012	Prejudice and discrimination — The prices others pay
	The Online Citizen	Mar 4, 2012	Prejudice and discrimination: The differences we make
	The Online Citizen	Dec 20, 2011	The irony of racism
	The Online Citizen	Nov 24, 2011	Even an imprisoned racist’s thoughts are free
	The Online Citizen	Jul 15, 2011	An unhealthy preoccupation with race
	Temasek Times	June 23, 2012	State media jumps to defence of Sri Lankan “FT” engineer responsible for causing death of Singaporean granny

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
General commentaries/ Reportage	Temasek Times	June 22, 2012	Sri Lankan “FT” engineer driver rammed into family on pavement killing 64 year old granny
	Temasek Times	May 28, 2012	Sexy “chiobu” Sharmaine Liang sparks outcry with racist tweet against Indian
	TemasekTimes	July 16, 2012	PRC designer calls Singaporeans “PIGS” and hurls insults at Malay community
	Temasek Review Emeritus	July 27, 2012	Nearly one million China nationals living in Singapore?
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 14, 2012	Growth at all costs — Unregulated influx of FTs causing local workers woes
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 28, 2012	70 per cent of 122,600 jobs created in Singapore last year went to foreigners
	Temasek Review Emeritus	June 22, 2012	My frustrations dealing with some of these foreign workers here
	Temasek Review Emeritus	July 22, 2012	A “Foreign Trash’s” review of TR Emeritus
	Temasek Review Emeritus	April 6, 2012	Government should stand up for Singaporeans
	Temasek Review Emeritus	April 6, 2012	PM Lee flags out the wrong worries
	Temasek Review Emeritus	July 17, 2012	Ministers talk about integration of new citizens at racial harmony events
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 3, 2012	DPM Teo, your 'radicalised lone wolves' are already here in Singapore disrupting our peace and harmony
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 18, 2012	Welcome To Hotel Singapore
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 27, 2012	Will PR stay here for good
	Temasek Review Emeritus	June 19, 2012	PRC forum “Living in Lion City” crashes after being “featured” in Chinese tabloid

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
General commentaries/ Reportage	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 27, 2012	Will PR stay here for good?
	Temasek Review Emeritus	June 22, 2012	TRE's response to ST article on anti-foreigner sentiments
	Temasek Review Emeritus	July 7, 2012	Unacceptable nearly 40% of population is made up of foreigners
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 19, 2012	5,000 Years of Chinese Civilization Explained
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 5, 2012	Is it the government or Singaporeans who are xenophobic
	Temasek Review Emeritus	July 6, 2012	Are Singaporeans xenophobic
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 2, 2012	Xenophobia isn't about politics it is about our conscience
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 29, 2012	Our nation has gone to the dogs
	Temasek Review Emeritus	July 9, 2012	Why train PRs for free and find them a job
	Temasek Review Emeritus	July 11, 2012	Please close this TR Emeritus website
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 29, 2012	China-born Singaporean has no wish to be associated with current PRCs
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 31, 2012	Singapore still hostile to immigrant
	Temasek Review Emeritus	June 3, 2012	PAP & MSM now blame S'poreans for being intolerant and harboring "anti-foreigner" sentiments
	Temasek Review Emeritus	May 27, 2012	Will PR stay here for good
	Temasek Review Emeritus	Aug 11, 2011	NHC to probe "insensitive" comments posted by "FT" clerk Rachele Ann Beguia
		Aug 12, 2011	Police report made against FT Rachele Ann Beguia

Issue in brief	Name of media	Date of article or online post	Title of article
General commentaries/ Reportage	Temasek Review Emeritus	June 9, 2012	"War" between Filipino and Singaporeans on FaceBook
	The Straits Times	June 21, 2012	Anti-foreigner sentiments stir bloggers to action
	The Straits Times	July 10, 2012	PM Lee: We have to make sure we are not overwhelmed by foreigners
	The Straits Times	June 2, 2012	Dr Vivian Balakrishnan: Please stand up against anti-foreigner tirades on the Net
	The Straits Times	June 26, 2012	Negative views of S'pore "a way of coping"
	The Straits Times	April 14, 2012	LIFE; Build tolerance through greater interaction status updates
	The Straits Times	April 14, 2012	Youth can take the initiative in combating xenophobia
	The Straits Times	June 7, 2012	Analysis: Chinese drivers pose fresh risks for foreign insurers
	The Straits Times	June 17, 2012	Secret diary of a teenager? Not in cyberspace
	The Straits Times	Mar 28, 2012	Racist posts: Culprits 'tend to be young'
	The Straits Times	May 9, 2012	Online social norms need time to evolve
	Yahoo! News	Jul 2, 2012	Is Singapore turning into a xenophobic society?
	Yahoo! News	Jul 4, 2012	"Unacceptable nearly 40% of population is made up of foreigners"
	Sammyboy Forum	Jan 8, 2012	BK pinoy mgr sneer at NSmen... sinkies damn pathetic!!!
	Sammyboy Forum	Jan 26, 2011	I am veri sure she is a damn bloody pinoy!

Appendix C: List of Interviewees

	Name	Designation	Organisation	Date of Interview
	<u>Community groups</u>			
1	Lim Boon Tan	Director	Singapore Federation of Chinese Clan Associations	23 July 2012
2	Nikhilesh Gupta	President	Bengali Association Singapore	24 July 2012
3	Azmoon Ahmad	Chairman	Association of Muslim Professionals	26 July 2012
4	Ron Celestial	Managing Director	PinoySG	26 July 2012
	<u>Online media</u>			
5	Richard Wan	Co-Editor	Temasek Review Emeritus	30 July 2012
7	Little Fish	Writer/Editor	Every Cloud Has a Silver Lining	2 August 2012
8	Kumaran Pillai	Ex-Chief Editor	The Online Citizen	6 Aug 2012