



LADIES IN THE HOUSE
PODCAST SERIES

MOAD

Museum of Australian Democracy
at Old Parliament House



LADIES IN THE HOUSE EPISODE 12: NYADOL NYUON

Lesson Plan

Learning Intention:

Understand the issues faced by people in the disability community.

Success Criteria:

Write a letter to your future self, outlining how aspects of society should change in the future.

Before Listening:

Activity

One:

Pre-Listening
Vocabulary

Write up or project the following words on the board:

- advocate
- amenities
- objectify
- inclusivity
- accessible



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Activity

One:

Pre-Listening Vocabulary

In groups ask the students if they can put the words into one of the 4 categories.

- Don't know it at all
- Have seen or heard, but don't know the meaning
- I think I know the meaning
- know the meaning and can explain it

If any of the students are in the 3rd or 4th category, see if they can explain it to the people in your group or to the class.

Share the following definitions for the vocabulary.

Definitions:

- **Marginalise** - to make a group of people feel isolated.
- **Prejudice** - an unreasonable dislike of a particular group of people or things, or a preference for one group of people or things over another.
- **Advocate** - If you advocate a particular action or plan, you recommend it publicly.
- **Minorities** - groups that are different racially, politically, etc, from a larger group of which they are a part.



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Activity

Two:

Before listening
discussion
questions

1. What is a refugee?
2. Have you ever heard of the Second Sudanese Civil War?
3. Can you name some challenges that refugees and migrants might face when moving to Australia?
4. How do you think the media can impact the perception of migrants and refugees?

After Listening:

Activity

Three:

After listening
reflection
questions

1. Why was Nyadol inspired to become a lawyer?
2. How did Nyadol's teachers discourage her from pursuing a career as a lawyer?
3. How did Nyadol support herself while attending university?
4. How did Nyadol respond when the media and politicians began targeting the South Sudanese migrant communities?
5. What is the goal of the Harmony Alliance?



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Activity Four:

Choose one or more of the following activities to complete with your students.

- **Discussion:** Have students discuss the challenges that refugees and migrant face when they come to Australia. Who in their community is underrepresented? What are some things that your community could do to give this group more representation?
- **Debate:** Divide the class into two groups and have them debate the topic of whether it is necessary to point out someone's race when reporting crime stories.
- **Writing Activity:** Ask students to write a letter to Nyadol Nyuon expressing their admiration for her work and the impact it has had on the community.
- **Research Activity:** Have students visit the eSafety Commissioner's website. Visit the Young People section of the website. In pairs, choose one of the categories that most interest them. Give a short presentation to the class. One student presents about what the issue is and the other student presents about what steps you can take if the issue happens to you.



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Episode Transcript:

Hi, this is Kelly Chase and you are listening to Season 4 of a Museum of Australian Democracy and History Detective Collaboration: Ladies in the House. In this 3-part series we are celebrating the lives of trailblazing women who have made significant change to Australian society. I am excited to talk about lawyer, refugee and migrant rights activist, writer and commentator, Nyadol Nyuon.

Before I begin, I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which this podcast is being recorded today. I pay my respects to the elders and knowledge holders past, present and emerging.

Nyadol Nyuon is a powerful voice for members of the Australian migrant community and she is not afraid to stand up for the rights of those people who are often marginalised by mainstream media. Nyadol was born in a refugee camp in Ethiopia in the midst of the Second Sudanese Civil War that went for 22 years and displaced more than 4 million people. She moved a second refugee camp in Kenya and lived there until she was 18. This refugee camp, while not necessarily safe, was able to provide her with both a primary and high school education. While in these camps, she met volunteer human rights lawyers who inspired her to one day become a lawyer herself.

When she, her mother, and siblings were accepted for resettlement in Australia in 2005, Nyadol worked incredibly hard at gaining her high school senior certificate. But it wasn't easy combatting the prejudice that she was faced within Australia. Because English was her second language, some of her teachers discouraged her from taking the more academic subjects that would allow her to become a lawyer. Luckily, she was persistent and ignored these discouraging voices and she was accepted into university. At university, Nyadol worked three jobs to support herself and graduated becoming a commercial lawyer.

In 2022, Nyadol Nyuon was awarded an Order of Australia medal, which is awarded to Australians who have demonstrated exceptional achievements and service to the community. But it was not her work as a lawyer for which she received this award, it was for her work as an advocate for migrant communities in Australia.



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Being a migrant and moving to another country with a different culture and language is a difficult experience. It could be argued that the mainstream media unfairly links migrant communities with many of society's problems, this makes the transition to Australian life even more difficult. When the media and politicians began particularly focusing on the South Sudanese migrant communities around criminal activity, Nyadol could not sit back and remain quiet. She maintained that it was not necessary to point out someone's race when reporting crime stories, but instead we needed to look at the deeper societal issues that are causing the problems. Issues such as; lack of access to adequate housing, employment, and education. Nyadol appeared on television programs such as The Drum and Q&A and wrote many opinion pieces for many prestigious newspapers in Australia, giving a voice to those people whose stories do not often get highlighted in the mainstream media.

Unfortunately, speaking up for minorities against systemic racism comes with a down side. Nyadol has often been the target of online hate. The abuse was so bad that the Australian eSafety Commissioner reached out to her to offer assistance from this online abuse. Despite this harassment, Nyadol has continued to tirelessly advocate for the rights of migrants and she has been the recipient of many nominations and awards for her work empowering migrant and refugee women and her human rights advocacy work.

Nyadol is currently the chair of Harmony Alliance, which is an organisation that provides a voice for migrant and refugee women in Australia. Their goal is to highlight that every migrant and refugee who comes to Australia has a different experience and they hope to be a voice for these women and agitate for change. Her current job is Director of the Sir Zelman Cowen Centre which is a faculty of Victoria University which provides legal education, training and research, focusing on law and cultural diversity.

Nyadol Nyuon has continually given a voice to people in the community who are marginalised and may not have the resources to speak up for themselves, however she is often targeted with online abuse. What I would like you to think about today is how we can protect ourselves from this kind of online behaviour when we want to be a voice of change?

This is Kelly Chase, on the case.
See you next time!