

REVIEW

Dunn, W., Pham, S., Grainer, Phoebe (Eds.) (2021). *Racism: Stories on Fear, Hate & Bigotry. Sweatshop*. Western Sydney Literacy Movement.

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In *Racism: Stories on fear, hate & bigotry*, editors Winnie Dunn, Stephen Pham and Phoebe Grainer make the bold decision to eschew expected narratives of identity and belonging so common in Australian migrant and diasporic literature. Instead, they present a unified and forceful demonstration of antiracism in the Australian settler-colonial state, a place that is globally recognized as one of the best examples of successful multiculturalism. I call this anthology an exercise in antiracism following anthropologist Ghassan Hage's (2016) identification of a "6-part typology of anti-racism: (1) reducing the incidence of racist practices, (2) fostering a non-racist culture, (3) supporting the victims of racism, (4) empowering racialized subjects, (5) transforming racist relations, and (6) fostering an anti-racist culture". In what follows I lift a select few excerpts from the anthology that powerfully illuminate this typology in straightforward and subversive ways, and which collectively put to rest with certainty any denials that racism exists in Australia.

In 'Receipts' by Sydnye Allen we are witness to how mundane everyday daily tasks, such as shopping at the supermarket, becomes a public arena where black and brown mothers carefully manage the potential of being accused of stealing; she always makes sure to leave with her receipt. Material evidence is always required of the victims of racism to disprove underlying assumptions of black criminality. The intergenerational trauma of internalized racism is no more evident than when her toddler reminds her at the checkout that she almost forgot to take her receipt. Kabien Parker and Chris Tupouniua relay some of the racial slurs they've encountered on account of being Tongan "they like horses, really really loud, we both are huge" (p. 127); "people thinking I was dumb and mean just because I was Islander" (p. 129). In each of their pieces, the response to this stereotyping isn't anger, hate or even resilience in the way that sociologists are prone to diagnose young people who are able to bear racism and continue to survive. Rather, they accept, they resign and succumb to a reality they have no control over – "I guess this is life now" says Chris (p. 129). In Jannette Chen's 'Sydney Asian limericks for selective school gimmericks' we are reminded once more that the great Australian national narrative of 'a fair go for all' is an inherently racialized one. For the children of migrants, this fair go involves overwork and burnout, intense training and competition. Young people of color must overcompensate for the difficulties their non-English speaking parents endured trying to make life in Australia as well as being always acutely aware that no matter how hard they might work and regardless of their educational and professional accomplishments they will likely remain treated as the "Chinks that steal jobs" (p. 45). And despite this, Janette's character Betty must remember to "give thanks" for all that Australian life has afforded her and her family who 'starved' in 'the Old country.'

Whether it is made explicit or not, the authors in this anthology are caught in the double bind of racism in Australia – moving through their lives with caution and suspicion for the next hurtful insult, action, aggression they will experience as racialized minorities and simultaneously cultivating an antiracist disposition where their own words, actions and relationships are treated as productive opportunities to transform society into a more equitable and just one. Whether this is a real possibility in these authors lifetime is, as Max Edwards says in the essay ‘Proximity to Blackness’ one that “only time will tell” (p. 178).