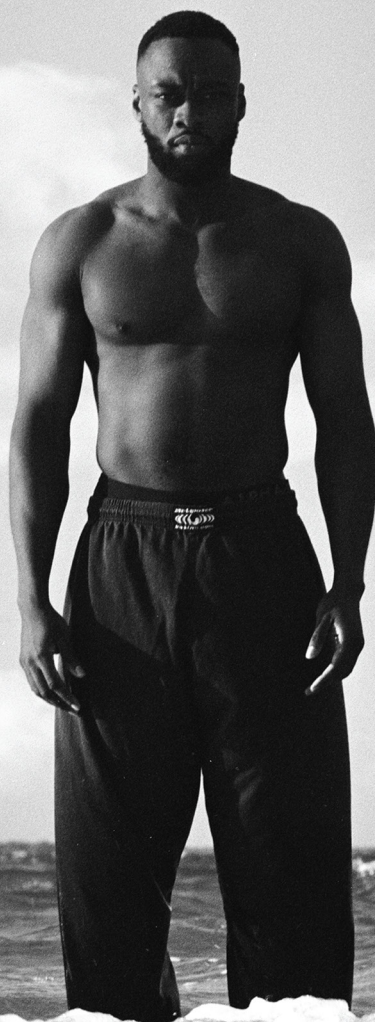


RACISM

Stories on fear, hate & bigotry



Edited by Winnie Dunn, Stephen Pham & Phoebe Grainer

RACISM

RACISM

Stories on fear, hate & bigotry

Edited by Winnie Dunn, Stephen Pham & Phoebe Grainer

First published in 2021

by Sweatshop Literacy Movement Inc.

I.C.E. (Information & Cultural Exchange)

8 Victoria Road, Parramatta NSW 2150, Australia

www.sweatshop.ws

Text copyright © to the authors

Printed and bound by McPherson's Printing Group

Cataloguing-in-Publication data is available from
the National Library of Australia

ISBN 978-0-9924886-6-6 (paperback)

No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any
form or by any means electronic, mechanical,
photocopying or otherwise without the prior
permission of the publisher. The moral rights of
the authors have been asserted.

Design and typesetting by Elaine Lim
and Henry Lo 2021



PACKER FAMILY
FOUNDATION



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This anthology has been developed by Sweatshop: Western Sydney Literacy Movement in partnership with Campbelltown City Library as part of the Campbelltown Youth Literacy Initiative for Diverse Writers. Proudly supported by the Crown Resorts Foundation and Packer Family Foundation.

Sweatshop is supported by I.C.E. (Information & Cultural Exchange), the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, Diversity Arts Australia and Red Room Poetry.

PRODUCTION TEAM

EDITORS: Winnie Dunn, Stephen Pham & Phoebe Grainer

ADVISORY EDITORS: Michael Mohammed Ahmad & Sarah Ayoub

COMMISSIONING EDITOR: Sydnye Allen

SUB-EDITORS: Mark Mariano & Divya Venkataraman

DESIGN & TYPESETTING: Elaine Lim & Henry Lo

COVER ARTIST: Jonathan Tumbel

COVER MODEL: Akwasi Appiah

SCHOOL WORKSHOP FACILITATORS: Winnie Dunn, Sydnye Allen, Michael Mohammed Ahmad, Keanah Scholes, Phoebe Grainer & Stephen Pham

SPECIAL THANKS: Paula Pfoeffler, Lina Kastoumis, Francisco Lopez, Kate Clarkson, Rosemary Ferris, Yvette King, Anne Loxley & Lena Nahlous

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	11
Winnie Dunn, Stephen Pham & Phoebe Grainer	
INVASIONS	17
Tyree Barnette	
ACTS OF FAITH	31
Meyrnah Khodr	
ROUND EYES WHITE ASIAN	35
Adam Phillip Anderson	
CASA SENDAS	39
Guido Melo	
SYDNEY ASIAN LIMERICKS	45
Janette Chen	
JUST BROKEN	47
Riley Ingersole	
RECEIPTS	49
Sydnye Allen	
CALM DOWN	57
Ayoub Jama	
ACT LIKE A FILIPINO	59
Rizcel Gagawanan	
HIJAB DAYS	69
Amani Haydar	

SUBTLE RANTS	75
Christine Shamista	
SOME WORDS	77
Krisneth Paddy	
GHOST GIRL SUMMER	79
Ting Huang	
ZOOPER DOOPER	85
Heikmah Napadow	
MAGIC PANCIT	89
Mark Mariano	
TOURNAMENT OF THE ETHNICS	97
Daniel Nour	
SUPERBROW	107
Monikka Eliah	
LOOKING CLASSY, WHAT ARE YOU?	115
Shirley Le	
FUSI	125
Kabien Parker	
PALANGI	129
Chris Tupouniua	
GHEEBAH IN THE OFFICE KITCHEN	131
Ferdous Bahar	
MELANIN	135
Ayusha Nand	
VIOLETTA	137
Pamela Asare	
THE DEVIL'S DRINK	141
Natalia Figueroa Barroso	
BEIT SAMRA	149
Sara Saleh	

MICRO AGGRESSIVE FICTION

THE WHITE DON'T LIKE THE BLACK Nellie Tapu Nonumalo Mu	161
TRUMP IS AUSSIE Cassandra Taylor	162
CHINA IS EVERYWHERE Noor Abuzamaq	163
NOT RACIST? Dezheen Shivan	164
WALK AWAY Fiti Fainifo	165
SHE WHITE SKIN Elisha Toese	166
HIGH SPEED Mahran Asghari	167
MEDIUM WHITE Lara Ahmed	168
AUNTY MOE Sopanha Chea	169
POLITZIER Yash Bab	170
AUSSIE AUSSIE AUSSIE OI OI OI Zoyal Dahal	171
UNFINISHED UNTANNED Cleveland Brown	172
PROXIMITY TO BLAKNESS Max Edwards	175
CONCLUSION Sarah Ayoub	179

INTRODUCTION

Winnie Dunn, Stephen Pham
& Phoebe Grainer

We begin by acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of the land on which each writer wrote these stories. We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. These stories are now part of the big story that is in the earth that we live, sleep and eat off. Aboriginal Land. Bama Butcheree. Land of the Black Nations of this big island. We would like to acknowledge that the stories in this collection are inherently connected to the realities that we live each and every single day of our lives. Aboriginal sovereignty has never been ceded. These are Aboriginal lands, Aboriginal rivers, Aboriginal seas and Aboriginal oceans. Always was. Always will be.



Australia is racist. Since 1991, at least four hundred and seventy-four Indigenous people have been murdered in custody. In 2019, fifty-one Muslims peacefully conducting their Friday prayers were gunned down at Al Noor Mosque and Linwood Islamic Centre in Christchurch by an Australian-born White supremacist. In 2020, the Brereton Report recorded that Australian special forces had committed at least thirty-nine unlawful killings of Afghan civilians.

In the wake of COVID-19, more than one thousand Asian-Australians reported incidents of racial discrimination. And to date, almost two thousand refugees are held and denied basic human rights in detention facilities across the country and in off-shore detention; over ten Pacific seasonal workers have died on Australian farmlands due to squalid living conditions, mistreatment and insufficient medical assistance; and in the suburbs of North Melbourne and Flemington, African-Australians are two-and-a-half times more likely to be stopped by police than any other group.

In spite of these figures, many Australians still deny that racism is a problem in this country. In 2005, over five thousand White Australians chanted 'Fuck off Lebs' on the shores of Cronulla, physically assaulting anyone they recognised as 'Middle Eastern'. Shortly after the infamous Cronulla Riots, then-Prime Minister John Howard proclaimed, 'I do not accept that there is underlying racism in this country. I have always taken a more optimistic view of the character of the Australian people. I do not believe Australians are racist.' More recently, Prime Minister Scott Morrison claimed that the Black Lives Matter movement, an internationally renowned and respected protest against state-sanctioned violence inflicted on Black communities, should not be 'imported' to Australia. And, just eleven days into 2021, NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian said in a press conference, 'I don't believe that we have an inherent problem with racism. I don't.'

We created this book to set the record straight.

Racism: Stories on Fear, Hate & Bigotry is an anthology for Australians, all Australians, who require an honest reflection of the racism that is present and prevalent in the lives of so many of our citizens. Through these stories, we seek to provide a personal and intimate record from First Nations people and people of colour, across all

ages, that demonstrates the pain, despair, confusion, complexity and rejection that comes with being the 'other'.

Since 2013, Sweatshop Literacy Movement has been facilitating three distinct literary collectives: the Western Sydney Writers Group, the Sweatshop Women Collective, and most recently, the Black Lives Workshops. Now, at last, we have brought together every writer from every collective in our entire organisation for this one single anthology.

From the outset of the project, we knew that we wanted to create a book that was raw, honest, provocative and compelling. This began with a title that had no literary pretensions. *Racism: Stories on Fear, Hate & Bigotry* is not abstract, figurative, ironic or satirical. It is a title that lets you know, before you open to the very first page, that we are here to have a serious conversation with Australia about race.

To complement the title, we equally recognised that the cover image needed to speak to this moment in time, representing the struggle, as well as the strength, courage and beauty, that comes with being a person of colour in the year 2021. The image for our cover was taken by Indonesian-Australian photographer, Jonathan Tumbel, and features Ghanaian-Australian model, Akwasi Appiah. Jonathan and Akwasi drew inspiration for the image from the anthology's opening story, 'Invasions', which was written by African-American writer, Tyree Barnette. Tyree's contribution to this publication explores the diversity of the Black diaspora — held together by the waters of Santo, Vanuatu.

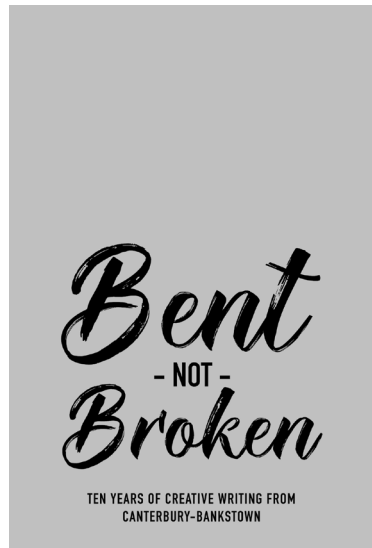
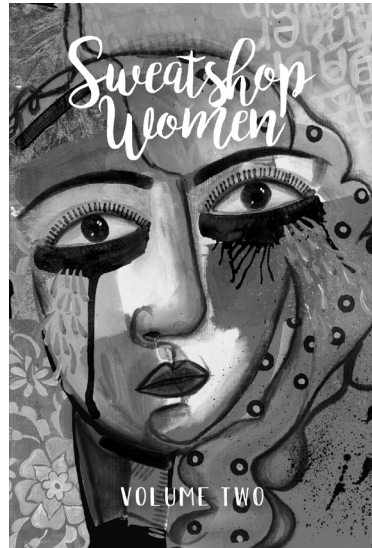
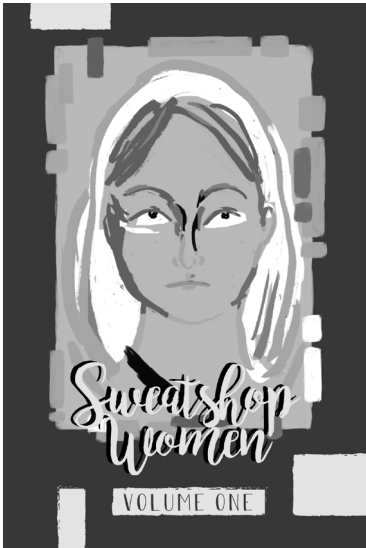
Alongside Tyree, the writers of Sweatshop, both new and familiar, dissect racism in all its forms. For Sara Saleh, racism is war, displacement and the disconnection from our motherlands. For Sydnye Allen, racism is passive-aggressive, predictable and

ever-present. For Mark Mariano, racism is self-hatred. For Rizcel Gagawanan, racism is performance. For Daniel Nour, racism is shame. For Janette Chen, racism is lyrical. Natalia Figueroa Barroso calls racism colonisation. Christine Shamista calls it a one-sided dialogue and Meyrnah Khodr calls it Islamophobia. Guido Melo and Heikmah Napadow show us that racism begins in childhood and Adam Phillip Anderson demonstrates how it follows us into adulthood. In the stories by Ferdous Bahar, Monikka Eliah and Ting Huang, racism is stereotyping, pre-judging and discriminating. In Shirley Le's piece, racism is divided across socio-economic lines as much as it is based on the colour of one's skin. For Amani Haydar, racism is subtle and for Pamela Asare, racism is invisible. Wiradjuri writer, Max Edwards, identifies racism as White supremacy, violent colonisation, the ongoing oppression of First Nations people; and Arab-Australian author, Sarah Ayoub, who takes us home with her breathtaking conclusion, identifies racism as 'the Australian story'.

Racism: Stories on Fear, Hate & Bigotry is also graced with the voices of the next generation of Sweatshop Writers. Our team had the honour of working with First Nations, migrant and refugee students from Lurnea IEC and Leumeah High School. Over a period of six months, these inspiring young people unpacked the intersections between race and teenagehood in modern-day Australia: what it means to be 'Aboriginal', what it means to be 'Aussie', and what it means to be 'ethnic'. They also explored White privilege, colourism, White male violence, Trumpism and the 2020 US elections. Several of these pieces are interspersed throughout the anthology, while others are featured in a special collection of nanotales called 'Micro Aggressive Fiction'. Through their work, these students demonstrate that it is never too early to learn about racism, talk about racism, write about racism, and prepare ourselves for a world that is too often built on fear, hate and bigotry.

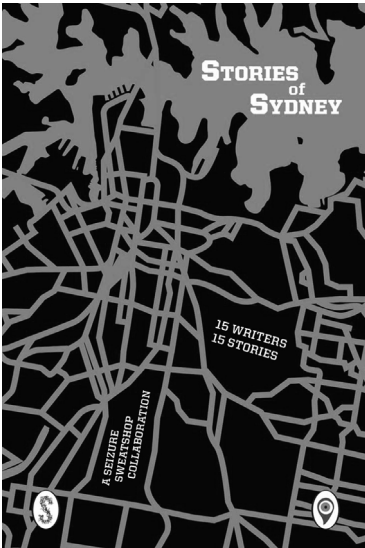
As the editors of this anthology, we represent Aboriginal, Pasifika and Asian communities. Our assistant editors represent Arab-Muslim, Arab-Maromite and African-American identities. The writers of this book come from Indigenous, Palestinian, Māori, Tongan, Sāmoan, Assyrian, Lebanese, Bengali, Somali, Vietnamese, Chinese, Ghanaian, African-American, Iraqi, Sri Lankan, Afro-Brazilian, Uruguayan, Indian, Iranian, Nepali, Indonesian, Greek, Afghan, Filipinx and Egyptian backgrounds. The production team, including the designers and sub-editors, herald from Cambodian, Chinese, Indian and Filipinx communities. As a collective, we represent the voice of three generations of Australians who have experienced racism. In this book, we share these experiences with you. No longer can anyone deny that racism exists.

MORE FROM SWEATSHOP



WWW.SWEATSHOP.WS

MORE FROM SWEATSHOP



WWW.SWEATSHOP.WS

WWW.SWEATSHOP.WS

**Are we a nation of racists?
Thirty-nine writers confront
our darkest truths in this
fearless collection of short
stories, poems and essays
from the margins of
Australia.**

Featuring Tyree Barnette, Meyrnah Khodr,
Adam Phillip Anderson, Guido Melo,
Janette Chen, Riley Ingersole,
Sydney Allen, Chris Tupouniua,
Rizcel Gagawanan, Amani Haydar,
Christine Shamista, Krisneth Paddy,
Ting Huang, Heikmah Napadow,
Mark Mariano, Daniel Nour, Monikka Eliah,
Shirley Le, Kabien Parker, Ayoub Jama,
Ferdous Bahar, Ayusha Nand,
Pamela Asare, Natalia Figueroa Barroso,
Sara Saleh, Nellie Tapu Nonumalo Mu,
Cassandra Taylor, Noor Abuzamaq,
Dezheen Shivan, Fiti Fainifo, Elisha Toese,
Mahran Asghari, Lara Ahmed, Sopanha Chea,
Yash Bab, Zoyal Dahal, Cleveland Brown,
Max Edwards & Sarah Ayoub.

