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I'm not racist, but ... is a collection of social observations, thoughts and conversations the author has had over 15 years travelling Australia and the world; as a tourist, as a writer, as an academic, and always as a proud, strong, contemporary Aboriginal woman.

From the home of the largest Indigenous population in Australia – the city of Sydney – to the Mohawk Reserve of Kanhawake, Quebec, the work considers issues of Aboriginal identity, both imposed and self-defined, the process of reconciliation and issues around saying ‘sorry’, notions of ‘truth’ and integrity, biculturalism and invisible whiteness.

Poems like “My Best Friend’s White” demonstrate the way in which racism is entrenched in every day Aussie phraseology, while the saturation of political correctness, the increased need for ‘token Kooris’ and the unreal expectations of Aboriginal people are highlighted in the short radio play, “Token Kooris: Blackfellas for Hire”.

In this collection, Heiss challenges her reader to consider what it is they are doing when they research or write about Aborigines, what role Aboriginal Studies plays in academia and what indeed, anthropologists actually study. Heiss questions what the spirit of Australia is and offers a “10 Point Plan for A Better Australia”, which will possibly only come about after digesting her “A-Z of First Contact”.

Some may consider Heiss’ work as experimental. She considers them words that may help readers understand the issues that impact daily on the ways in which we all relate to each other regardless of heritage.

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