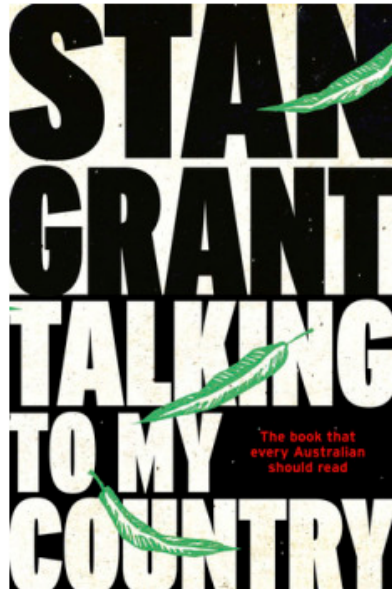


June 2018



At our June meeting, we discussed [Talking To My Country](#) by [Stan Grant](#).

This book is a readable and thought-provoking work. It begins with the author taking his son back to his ancestral homeland, a place now named Poison Waterholes Creek. From there we move into the past and meet Stan's mother and father. In all the story telling he gives a powerful and eye-opening revelation of what it means to be an articulate, educated and driven WIRADJURI man in today's Australia.

The story goes back to the poverty of his childhood, his shame and anger at the plight of his people, his career success as a reporter for CNN, his pride and empathy with indigenous sporting greats. It was racially motivated incidents with the football great Adam Gedes, which acted as a catalyst for Stan Grant to write more to instill a greater understanding of the past and current struggle of his fellow countrymen. He highlights the policy failures of successive Australian governments and his writing is an open letter to us all. He cites the grim statistics of indigenous lives, taking the reader behind those statistics to those whose lives have been shaped by racism.

While the stain of dispossession may be part of Australia's past, the author urges us not to turn away, but to work to address the wrongs. Yet in posing important questions, there are only hints of potential pathways for action. Far better strategies are given by articles written by this author, they are well edited and address more pertinent points.

A fault with this book is that it tends to be very heavy on internal reflection due to being part memoir and part meditation. Some sections are disjointed, and our book group found the repetition diminished the reader's engagement. It would have been better if there had been more editing and less anger.

Talking to my country was difficult to assess as a creative work. The discussion motivated by our study of this work was informed. Our group consensus was that, in order to progress on the discussion of Indigenous issues, we need to acknowledge the past and to be more informed about the present.

Our recent Commonwealth Games Opening ceremony with its tribute honouring the Indigenous People was hopefully a catalyst to shift consciousness. The essence of Makaratta: making peace.

The Uluru Statement calls for an indigenous "voice" to be enshrined in The Australian Constitution.

Summary by Denise.

Ratings: Claudia 2, Denise 3.5, Di 3.5, Gail 4, Janet 3, Judith 3, Margie 2.5 and Nicola 3.5.

Other Books We Read

June 2018

Our books of the month was [Talking To My Country](#) by [Stan Grant](#). but we also read other books.

Maximum rating is 5.

The Left Hand of Darkness by Ursula le Guin, 3

The Dispossessed by Ursula le Guin, 4

My Life as a Fake by Peter Carey, 3

The Heart is a Lonely Hunter by Carson McCullers, 5

Danger Music by Eddie Ayres, 3

A Life Apart by Mariapia Veladiano, 3.5

The Lucky Galah by Tracy Sorensen, 3.5

A gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles, 4

Snake by Kate Jennings 4

Remembering Babylon by David Malouf 4

Little Princes by Conor Grennan,3

Elizabeth Macarthur – A Life at the Edge of the World by Michelle Scott Tucker, 3

Girls at the Piano by Virginia Lloyd, 2.5

The Fiery Cross by Diana Gabaldon, 3.5

A Breath Of Snow and Ashes by Diana Gabaldon, 3

I Feel Bad About My Neck by Nora Ephrin, 3