

Media Release

Has “where are you from?” become an offensive question?

Melbourne, Australia, 30 October 2018 – A friend is upset. How dare people ask her where she is from – or worse where she is *really* from. She is from here, alright?! “I JUST HATE THIS QUESTION!” she shouts above the music. Amongst Melbourne’s incredibly cosmopolitan population, I bet many would agree with her statement. Based on 2006 census data, 34.8% of the city’s residents were born overseas compared to a national average of 23.1%. Together, we represent 200 different countries and territories and speak over 200 languages and dialects.

Her reaction – and that of many others before – resonated with me and I began to wonder: has “where are you from?” really become an offensive and thus unacceptable question? Reflecting on my own experience and that of others around me, I quickly realise that it isn’t the question itself that causes such grief, it is the context and the way in which the question is being asked.

There is indeed a big difference between the open-ended and positively curious “where are you from” and the judgment-loaded alternative I personally often hear “you’re French, aren’t you?” The latter is an attempt at putting people in tight and stereotypically labelled boxes when the other is actually an invitation to tell one’s personally story and all of the complexity that might come with it.

With that in mind, I decided to go against the politically correct trend of avoidance and use this somewhat controversial question as the title of my second book. *Where Are You From?* is children’s story about two little ones from multicultural families who travel the world in order to find out the answer for themselves. It is suitable for children from three to seven years old. With it, I hope to open up discussions in families and schools about the concepts of identity, diversity and multiculturalism.

If you wish to find out more, please **JOIN my upcoming book launch on Friday 30 November at Billy Lids from 11 AM to 12:30** by registering on [Facebook](#).

Alternatively, you can BOOK an author’s interview by contacting me on 0478692529.

A BIT MORE ABOUT ME...

Solène Anglaret is a world travelled storyteller. Having dreamt about it since childhood, she left home to explore the globe when she was only 18 years old. Just over 10 years later, she has lived in six countries and travelled to nearly 50. This life beyond borders and everything that comes with it, is the inspiration behind her books *Where to Next?* (a travel memoir) and *Where Are You From?* (a children’s story) as well as her [blog](#) full of tips and stories.

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