

Race and the Crisis of Humanism

By Kay Anderson

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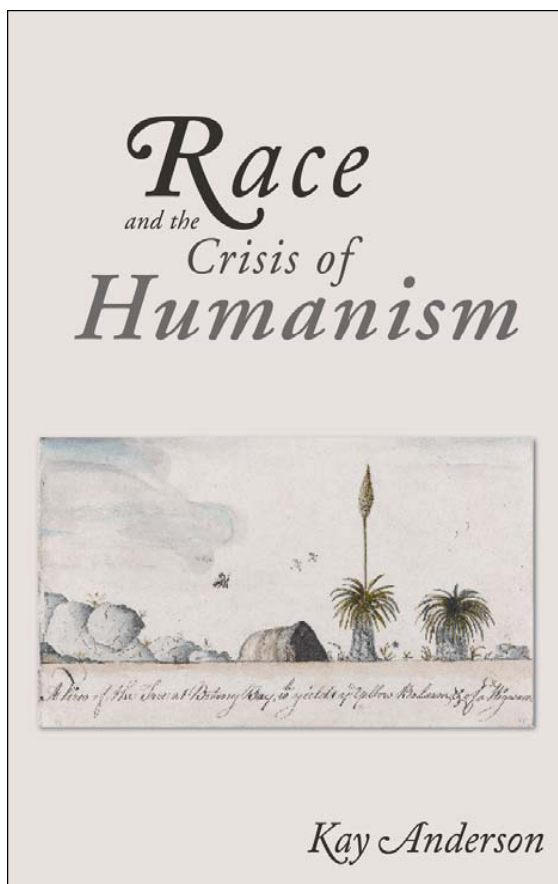
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***Race and the Crisis of Humanism* offers a fresh perspective on the rise of racial discourse in the nineteenth century. This book will become essential reading for geographers, historians, anthropologists, and cultural studies scholars of race/culture/nature and colonialism.**

In Kay Anderson's provocative new account, she argues that British colonial encounters in Australia from the late 1700s with the apparently unimproved condition of the Australian Aborigine, viewed against an understanding of "humanity" of the time (that is, as characterized by separation from nature), precipitated a crisis in existing ideas of what it meant to be human. As consternation grew not only about their inclination but about their very capacity for improvement, and particularly for cultivation, the Aborigines challenged the basis upon which the unity of humankind had been assumed. The intractable Aborigine came to supply seemingly irrefutable evidence for an essential, permanent and innate racial difference; and so came to provide the strongest support for those who maintained the intrinsic inferiority of the "dark-skinned" races more generally.

Kay Anderson is Professor of Cultural Research at the Centre for Cultural Research, University of Western Sydney. She is a leading scholar in the field of cultural geography and is internationally recognized for her contributions to the development of the "cultural turn" in Geography. She is the author of *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada 1875-1980* and co-editor and contributor of the *Handbook of Cultural Geography*. She is elected Academician of the UK Academy of Learned Societies for the Social Sciences, and is editorial board member of journals including *Cultural Geographies*, *Australian Geographical Studies*, and *City*.