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Tolerance, Prejudice and Fear by Christos Tsiolkas, Gideon Haigh and Alexis Wright. Allen and Unwin, 2008.

Reviewed by Gillian Dooley for the *Adelaide Review*, July 2008.

This is a production of Sydney PEN, with three essays by major Australian writers, introduced by J.M. Coetzee. Tsiolkas tackles tolerance: for minorities, which he sees as being tainted by inequalities of power, for free speech, especially in art – romantic, impossible, dangerous, essential, and the horrible ironies of zero tolerance. Haigh gives what Coetzee calls ‘a very handy historical account ... of nationalism and patriotism’ and analyses the uneasy narcissism of the Howard years. Wright’s essay is on fear between communities, especially white and black. Hers is the least compelling contribution: though the content is no less valid, it doesn’t match Haigh’s intellectual clarity or Tsiolkas’ bleak magnificent rhetoric.