Is Multiculturalism Accepted In Melbourne?

Me: I think that multiculturalism is generally well accepted in Melbourne. Why else would there be street after street filled with Vietnamese, Italian, Greek and Chinese food? Why else would refugees spend months on damaged boats to get to Australia, when the safest option is to travel to a neighbouring country? Why else would it be such a rare occasion when a racist bashing occurs? In Melbourne, people are entitled to their own opinion, no matter their sexuality, race, culture or religion. It is true that most people are open the idea above, but there are some outlaws who don’t believe that other ethnicities should have the same rights as us when they’re in our country. Honestly, I think that is unfair. Though the immigrants may be different, but it is our responsibility to be tolerant, and try to imagine ourselves in their shoes. My belief is that some may not be as open to new cultures, the overwhelming majority is, and I hope it stays that way.

Friends: As I started talking to my peers about this issue, it became very obvious that they had very similar views to me. Though they do believe there are problems with discrimination and blending, they agree that in general Melbourne is a great city for all people. Most of them thought that the current situations don’t particularly need to be changed, and that there are more important things to focus on like heath care, homelessness and education.

Family:

My father is somewhat against the idea of a Multicultural Melbourne. He believes though there are multiple benefits such as food, festivals and exposure to difference, it is just too complicated to have so many different traditions and religions in the same city. He explained that he had this opinion because with different cultures comes conflict, and “that is not really what Melbourne needs more of right now.” He doesn’t think that absolutely no-one, no matter their current situation, should be allowed into Melbourne; but instead thinks that the government shouldn’t be forcing the public to believe that it is directing us to a safer, united society. My mother on the other hand, is willing to look past those dilemmas, and cherish multiculturalism in Melbourne. “Without multiculturalism, our city would be bare. People tire of the same foods, same rituals and same cultures. You’re lucky because in Melbourne a different culture is no more than a block in any direction.” Though she does have this strong opinion that was previously stated, she still agrees with my father that there are indeed quite large problems with a multicultural city. When a person immigrates to a country, they cannot help but take a portion of their culture with them. This usually isn’t a problem; instead the problem is the uncomfortableness they feel because of the change, or “culture shock”. This forces them to stick to a group or clan of people who are in a similar situation to them. These clans then practice their beliefs, traditions and religions; but that can sometimes startle people who aren’t used to their antics. These clans may also get into fights or conflicts with people who have different opinions, and this is seen as the main problem with a multicultural Melbourne. There are two different ways that cultures can go when they’ve immigrated to another country; they can either be preserved and continue to flourish in a city, or to be diluted and become part of the country’s culture. Melbourne has decided to go with the first option, but with that comes risks. There is a higher chance of racial discrimination if the different cultures are presented to the public, and sometimes that discrimination can be violent. Sometimes it seems the fear of change is worse than the change itself.