OUR BROKEN DREAMS, by Panagiota Halvatzis. Richmond Workers Health Resource Centre, Melbourne, 1986. $2.00 paperback, 22 pages.

Our Broken Dreams is an all-too-brief autobiography by a woman who came to Australia in her youth with a dream of a better life in a new country. In fact, she was to spend 23 years working in textile factories, usually in the most primitive conditions on antiquated machinery, and usually on piece work, until Repetitive Strain Injury made it impossible for her to continue working. In part, this is a record of her coming to terms with that experience, including her struggles with the medical profession to get proper diagnosis and treatment. It also provides an account of her work with the Workers Health Resource Centre trying to change conditions in factories so that others do not suffer the same injuries. It is an often grim story and it is made grimmer by current threats to the funding of the centre by a state government department which apparently prefers to pay its money to health professionals who are never likely to see the working conditions which produce their steady flow of patients.

Available from Richmond Workers Health Resource Centre, 246 Church St, Richmond 3121.

BROWSING

Ken Norling


Since its beginning in 1984, the Living Museum has tried to record the lives of working people in Melbourne’s western suburbs. This volume continues that project by presenting an oral history of what was once Footscray’s biggest employer, as told by thirteen men and women who started working there in the years before World War II. It is not just an account of what it was like to live as an Aborigine in white Australia. The author was a Kalkadoon, born in north-west Queensland, but sent with her family (except a brother who was old enough to work on the station) to Palm Island, where she spent her childhood. Her story is often a sad one, but it is also the story of a woman of strength and determination making her way in a world where her abilities and her humanity were almost constantly ignored or denied.

Available from Book and Film Services, Box 226, Artarmon 2064.


This is a short version of a yet-to-be-published history of the A.N.C. It is intended to provide both a history of the struggle for Black liberation in South Africa, and a statement of the current goals and strategies of the movement. The history of the A.N.C. is very much the history of modern South Africa. It begins with attempts to petition the British government for equal rights for non-whites in the new Union of 1910, catalogues the continual frustration of constitutional and non-violent attempts to get reforms, and concludes with a description of the politics of armed struggle. It is a good short account of why that struggle became necessary, and a clear statement of the position of one of the world’s most prominent national liberation movements.

Available from A.N.C., Box 683, Ringwood 3134.


Now and then commercial publishers will produce a book by an Aborigine, or about Aboriginal life, but such occasions are rare. The A.I.A.S., however, has been publishing such works for many years now. This, like many of its publications, is a memoir of what it is like to live as an Aborigine in white Australia. The author was a Kalkadoon, born in north-west Queensland, but sent with her family (except a brother who was old enough to work on the station) to Palm Island, where she spent her childhood. Her story is often a sad one, but it is also the story of a woman of strength and determination making her way in a world where her abilities and her humanity were almost constantly ignored or denied.

Available from Living Museum of the West, 42-44 Ferguson St, Williamstown 3016.


These pamphlets are aimed primarily at secondary school students, but could be used far more widely, given how little knowledge there is of the realities of Southern Africa. They might be a little dated, particularly in the light of the growth in strength of the Black opposition over the last two years, but they still deserve wide circulation. They provide an invaluable summary of the ways in which apartheid works, and of how South Africa exploits Namibia. All the facts are here, sharply and clearly, and are supported by a photographic record which makes it plain why people are willing to face any suffering for an immediate end to the systematic barbarism of the white regime.

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