Browsing


First of the South Australian Jubilee 150 publications, Jim Moss’s Sound of Trumpets: history of the labour movement in South Australia merits Brian Dickey’s comment “the first fully developed account of working class experience in South Australia”, an area which has received scant attention from the general historians. Packed with recordings of telling facts, with recurring flashes of shrewd analysis, the book examines the process of class formation from English settlement, class consolidation, Labor in politics and the unions, reformism and socialism up to the present day.

“The socialists,” Moss concludes, “face a challenge to unite their ranks ... the aim .... to create a new society without a new bureaucracy, to end class divisions and combine political and social liberation with economic democracy.”

— Joan Goodwin.


Two hundred and fifty major entries, and 21 pages of index, from Abstract Labour to Working Class Movements, covering a veritable galaxy of subjects and individuals. The Dictionary itself has been assembled by a bevy of contemporary marxist intellectuals from Alavi to Sweezy (and including Eugene Kamenka??). And, finally, the suggested readings after each entry are listed into a 32-page bibliography at the end of the book which features the best of contemporary western marxist thought.

This book is a must as a handy crib for students who still have teachers in the academy who have not yet totally succumbed to flabby social democracy or to creeping right-wingism; for the lazy academics who teach them; for leftwingers who have been wanting for years to slip “pauperisation” into their apres ski conversation; for communists who get their Internationals mixed up and for that enterprising (‘I’m only doing it for the cause’) entrepreneur who will turn it into a Marxist Trivial Pursuit.

— Mike Donaldson.


This book is based principally on interviews with and letters from 37 nurses who trained and worked at Wollongong Hospital between 1926 and 1984. Written by Josie Castle, an historian at the University of Wollongong, the book reflects some of the pressure of writing an institutional history for a particular group of people, in this case the Graduate Nurses Association of Wollongong Hospital. It remains, though, both careful and readable. The book will be of interest to nurses, and those with an interest in the labour process, gender and labour discipline will find the chapters ‘Work on the Wards’ and “Living-In” and Appendix 3, ‘Recollections of Nursing’ valuable, as will activists within the profession.

— Mike Donaldson.


The tide of deregulation has risen and swamped many of the most familiar landmarks of the old financial system.

The ability of the left to resist and to counterpose its own alternatives to the changes in the financial system proved to be poor.

This special issue of the Journal of Australian Political Economy seeks to examine the background to the current changes in the finance sector. In particular, it is concerned to assist in sparking off a more serious discussion of these changes within the labour movement and to lay the foundations for a more concerted socialist analysis of the likely developments and possibilities for intervention in the finance sector.

— Mike Donaldson.