



The Australian Journal of **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

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REVIEWS

Reviewer - D.B. Barry*

Cass, Ann-Marie and David King, Co-editors
Black Voices - Volume 1 Number 1 April 1984. James Cook
University of North Queensland, 1984
ISSN 08 12-8405

Black Voices grew out of the Aboriginal and Islander Teacher Education Program (AITEP) at James Cook University. Its first edition includes an invitation to Aborigines and Islanders throughout Australia to contribute.

The only problem with this edition of *Black Voices* is that Leanne Hollingsworth's photograph and biographical notes appear on the inside back cover rather than page 28 or 29 where her contribution is.

Topics in *Black Voices* range from serious essays about such subjects as the South Sea Islander labour trade to compositions describing childhood pranks. *Black Voices* should be encouraged. The contributors write with insight and a style which illustrates both their educated backgrounds and the story telling ways of their peoples' traditional culture.

Upper Secondary
Tertiary and Teacher's Reference

Highly Recommended.

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Clark, Julia

The Aboriginal People of Tasmania. Hobart, Tasmanian Museum
and Art Gallery, 1983, 54pp., illustrations.
ISBN 7246 1165 7

1.

I. Title

Excellent introduction to the technology, social organisation
and regionally distinct culture of the Tasmanian Aboriginals.

* Davina Barry, a qualified Primary teacher who, as an Aborigine, has
a special interest in the education of and the education about
Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

Contact with Europeans is explored through the themes of invasion and resistance. Dispels the myth "that the last Tasmanian Aboriginal died in 1876" (p.51).

It is hard to examine in detail specific aspects of Tasmanian Aboriginal tradition as much has been lost. This book presents us with a number of opinions and theories regarding this missing information, and as such is a welcome source of discussion and argument.

The hypothesis which alleges that Aborigines arrived from Asia is mentioned on page 8. It should be stressed that this is only a hypothesis and not a fact as it has not been proven. On page 24 the subtitle "The Tribe" is inaccurate. "Tribe" suggests that there was one leader or chief which is not how Aboriginal society operates. The word "group" is more appropriate.

Finally, a most important aspect of *The Aboriginal People of Tasmania*, is the much needed inclusion of the contemporary Tasmanian Aborigines as they live today.

Secondary through to Tertiary and Teacher reference

Recommended

Price: \$9.95.

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Langton, Marcia

After the Tent Embassy: Images of Aboriginal history in black and white photographs.

n.p., Valadon, 1983, 120pp. illustrations bxw photographs

ISBN 0 9594202 31

1.

I. Title

A unique photographic essay depicting our recent Aboriginal struggles and progress towards our aspirations. Written by an Aboriginal woman. Historical awareness of Aboriginal achievements is important to our identity. A positive recognition of Aboriginal contributions to contemporary Australian society. The theme of Aboriginal resistance to deculturation, including the dispossession of our lands, is balanced by illustrations of Aborigines determining and managing our own affairs, frequently in wretched conditions.

Upper Primary through to Upper Secondary

Price : \$ 9.95 pb

Highly Recommended.

\$20.00 lb

Lofts, Pamela

Dunbi the Owl. Gosford, Ashton Scholastic, 1983, unpagged, illustrations.

ISBN 0 86896 2651

1.

I. Title

A moral tale warning children against the senseless ill-treatment of animals. The vibrant illustrations by Aboriginal children extend the text which is based on a story by an Aboriginal story teller.

We feel that this tale may have been Christianised, or perhaps the tale may indicate that there is a parallel between this Aboriginal tale and the Christian biblical tale of the great flood.

Of particular importance is the reference to the specific Aboriginal group and area from whence this tale originated. Suitable for pre-school and lower - primary students. Text and illustrations recommended. However, the publishers would have been better off publishing the book in hard cover because of the purchasing criteria given to pre-school teachers.

Infants & Primary

Recommended.

Price: \$2.95

Lofts, Pamela

How the Birds Got Their Colours. Gosford, Ashton Scholastic. 1983. Unpagged. Illustrations.

ISBN 0 86896 264 3

A Dreamtime tale which explains how birds became colourful. The text is complemented by the vibrant and expressive paintings of Aboriginal children who originally had this tale related to them by Mary Albert of the Bardi Tribe in Western Australia. The text is relatively short and the print could be easily read by a lower-primary student. Pre-school children will enjoy having the book read to them.

A tale to capture and captivate a young child's interest and imagination. Text and illustrations highly recommended. However, the publishers would have been better off publishing the book in hard-cover because of the purchasing criteria given to pre-school teachers.

Infants & Primary

Recommended

Price: \$2.95

Moon, Cliff and Bernice

Australia Is My Country. East Sussex, Wayland, 1984, 64pp.,
maps, illustrations
ISBN 0 85078 3690

Australians from several ethnic backgrounds and locations around the country describe their work and interests. It is good that ethnic minority groups as well as Aborigines and mainstream Australians are mentioned. The "facts" section, pages 62-63 would be useful for primary school children needing an outline for a project or class talk.

From an Aboriginal perspective it is appreciated that the author has included us, and twice at that. However, it should be pointed out that "groups" is a better word than "tribes" for referring to us because our kinship system makes us a harmonious whole and we have never had chiefs. It would have been more productive if the author had interviewed a successful urban Aborigine as well as Wenten rather than including outback Aborigines again in the Flying Doctor section. If a teacher takes the above points and the fact that the map is inaccurate into account and compensates for them, then the book can still be used as a resource.

Primary, Upper Primary

Some parts usable.

Price: \$9.95

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Roughsey, Elsie (Labumore)

An Aboriginal Mother Tells of the Old and the New. Edited by
P.Memmott & R.Horsman
Fitzroy, McPhee Gribble, 1984, 245pp. map, b&w illustrations.
ISBN 0 14 0072446

The book is Elsie Roughsey's (Labumore) autobiography. It describes her life as a Lardil from Mornington Island. Labumore was born in 1923 soon after the first missionaries arrived. She was raised both in a dormitory mission and in the traditional life of her people. The book enforces the fact that Aborigines still do practice traditional culture and that traditionally orientated Aborigines can become successful in non-Aboriginal terms.

Secondary, upper secondary.

Recommended

Price: \$7.95

Watson, Maureen

Kaiyu's Waiting. Richmond, Hodja, 1984,

16pp., col. photographs

ISBN 0 949575 186

1.

Kaiyu is waiting for the day she is to receive a gift from her great-grandmother - it is the forthcoming National Aboriginal Day. She participates in family activities preparing for the Day's celebrations. The photographs reinforce and extend this positive and reassuring story.

This story will help fill a space in children's literature that has been empty for far too long. It shows a little of life through Urban Black eyes and portrays a number of contemporary social issues facing Black Australia today. The language and style of this portrayal should help bridge the communication gap that too often exists between literature and the Aboriginal child.

It should be noted that "Koori" is a term used by Southern Aborigines to describe themselves. The equivalent term in Queensland is "Murri".

A note to the publishers - because of the purchasing criteria given to pre-school teachers, books are better published in the hard-cover form.

Infants and primary

Highly Recommended.

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Willis, Ray *et al.*

Issues in Australian History. Melbourne, Longman Cheshire.

ISBN 0 582 66327

1. Australia - History

I. Title

QCRS

An earnest attempt to portray Aboriginal history from 1788 to present day. Issues (Land Rights, contact with European society, Missions, etc.) have been handled judiciously.

Reference for Senior level studies of Australian History.

p.367 Some important facts. A theory exists which claims Aborigines arrived from Asia and should be stated as such, as this theory has not been proven.

Upper Secondary

Recommended

Price: \$14.50