



The Australian Journal of **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

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Koutsoukis, A.J.

Queensland Social Studies: Year 6 Living in Societies.

Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, 1984.

117p, maps, b&w photos, activities.

The first few sentences of the book are incorrect. It is *only an hypothesis* that Aborigines migrated to Australia. It is *NOT a fact* as the book suggests. The majority of Aboriginal Religions profess that we were created here.

In the third paragraph the author implies by the use of past tense that Aborigines no longer live traditionally. This is incorrect, as is proven by the lifestyle of people in Arnhem Land. 'Simple' is used several times in describing Aboriginal technology; 'efficient' would have been a more appropriate word. The word 'tribe' and its derivatives should not be used to describe traditional Aboriginal society. There are no Chiefs. The use of Elders as leaders fits in better with the use of the word 'group'.

On page 2 you find the caption to the photograph starting off with "The Aborigines did not keep animals". Some groups keep dingos. Thus the caption is incorrect.

A section on page 4 entitled "Housing" opens with "Since they were constantly on the move". The author does not explain the need for a nomadic lifestyle. An explanation is needed if readers are to see that the wanderings are not aimless but are closely connected not only with food and water supply or hygiene, but also with religion. A generalization such as the one on page 4 which states "On the whole, though, the Aborigines seem to bear the cold well" is condescending. One reads in the second paragraph on page 8, "Botany Bay which had been discovered by Captain Cook". Cook did not discover Botany Bay. Aborigines of over 40,000 years would have been the first to 'discover' any place in Australia. Cook simply rediscovered Botany Bay.

The sentence opening paragraph 5 of page 8 is another hypothesis not a fact..

The author could have improved his/her work if he/she had expanded the segments on firestick farming, firemaking and contemporary Aboriginal lifestyle.

A reasonable attempt has been made to explain an Aborigine's relationship to his/her land in the section "The Sacred Places", page 7. However, the explanation is not complete or totally correct.

The bracketed statement in activity 2 pages 12 to 13 is not completely fair. Such generalizations, whether they be about Aborigines and Islanders or Non-Aboriginal and Islanders, support prejudice.

Not Recommended

Price: \$4.95

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North Coast Aboriginal Studies Kit

North Coast Institute of Aboriginal Community Education.
Lismore, 1984.

TRADITIONAL ORIENTED CULTURE - The kit shows the hard work put into it by its compilers. It has a great potential as a basis for an Aboriginal Studies Program using, in the situation of Queensland schools, the case study approach.

The student workcards have been well thought out. However, the illustration on the "Possum Hair String" and "Fish Poisoning" cards could have been improved, as the possum looks more like a kitten and the fisherman appears to be sticking out his tongue. Paragraph three of the "Possum Hair String" card could possibly be worded so that it does not suggest that all Aboriginal men are either predominantly right handed or ambidexterous.

The paper used for the making of the wall charts is of exceptionally high quality, however, this may have been sacrificed to allow money for coloured illustrations which would capture the attention of the pupils.

There also seems to be a horizontal line missing on the Marsupials chart. The Dreaming stories which have been selected should appeal to a wide range of children. However, they are not acknowledged specifically enough.

Generally the kit is well worthwhile having in your classroom.

Primary/Upper Primary/Secondary

Highly recommended.