

Routine work gets a voice

PUNCH ON PUNCH OFF

Geoff Goodfellow
(The Vulgar Press
\$14.95)

WORKING-class Australians will be struck by the stark honesty of Geoff Goodfellow's poems in this 72-page collection — most likely because the odd passage is likely to strike a chord with a personal experience.

It is at times brutal, at times sarcastic, but in simple blue-collar language it paints a gripping word-picture of life on the factory floor or the building site and touches an occasional raw nerve.

Goodfellow makes biting appraisals of injustice at work. He talks about stress levels, he brings out the numbing nature of repetitive work day-in, day-out and how it can have a profound effect on the family . . .

*"I don't complain to
the boss*

*Monday to Friday
punch on punch off
but complain to my
partner*

*Monday to Sunday
. . ."*

But also under the surface there is a sensitivity — one drawn from childhood memories, another with a sympathetic lilt about "young blokes with mortgages" having to work overtime to survive, and a somewhat bitter reflection on an old bloke sent "out to the paddock".

This could be a confronting collection to some bosses, but a bunch of workers reading at smoko would nod their heads knowingly at his accurate observations.

— IAN LYNCH

● Geoff Goodfellow has travelled extensively on reading tours around the world. He will be in Launceston at Fullers Bookshop on Friday, May 20.