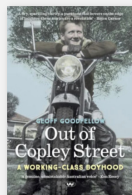


Review Blog

Sep 30 2020

Out of Copley Street, A working-class boyhood by Geoff Goodfellow



Wakefield Press, 2020. ISBN: 9781743057575.

(Age 14 - adult) This is a powerful memoir that tells the story of the young Geoff Goodfellow growing up in a working-class suburb of Adelaide in the 1950s and 1960s. In an innocent, intelligent and brutally honest narrative, Goodfellow tells the story of his boyhood in the northern suburbs. The narrative plunges us into the reality of Geoff's life with his family, their struggle to make ends meet, and his determination to find work to help the family by earning an income, even though he knows that he ought to complete his schooling. We are positioned to see the man he will become in the photograph on the book's cover, his grin suggesting a friendliness and sense of humour that is very much reflected in his narrative. Deciding to make a life for himself that is true to his personality and apt for his situation, he initially takes on work as a milkman. Finding that this does not work

for him either, he works with a local butcher for a short while but finds that this too is not right. We are aware of his father's struggle to work, his experience fighting in the war having left him deeply troubled. Geoff's decision to take on work on an oil rig shows his determination to find a way to earn an income, and thus to help his family by supporting himself.

This narrative is vividly persuasive, as it becomes evident to the reader that Goodfellow's talent lies in his ability with words, in his vivid evocation of his experiences throughout his childhood and adolescence, seen so vividly in his storytelling. This compelling narrative would be suitable for all readers from early adolescence through to adults.

Elizabeth Bondar

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