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Fighting Hard – The Victorian Aborigines Advancement League

Fighting Hard (Aboriginal Studies Press, \$39.95), provides fascinating insights into one of Australia's most remarkable organisations – the oldest Aboriginal organisation in Australia, as told by former and current members.

Begun originally as a coalition of all Australians, a black power takeover in 1969 changed the management of the Victorian Aborigines Advancement League to one of Aboriginal community control. From the 1970s community heroes like Bob Maza, Doug Nicholls, Bill Onus and Bruce McGuinness became national heroes and role models for Aboriginal youth.

The League influenced the fight for civil rights and took a stand against the government's assimilation policy. Its activism predates the better-known Tent Embassy and provided a Victorian, national and international perspective on Aboriginal affairs.

Since 1957 the League has provided a voice for Indigenous people, both as a welfare and activist body, spawning a diverse range of other organisations. Its activities have ensured the preservation of Aboriginal culture and heritage.

The League's good governance dispels the pervasive myth that Aboriginal people cannot manage their own organisations.

Fighting Hard is an essential read for those with an interest in Australian history and the place of Aboriginal culture on the national stage.

About the Author

Renowned historian Richard Broome is widely recognised as an authority on Aboriginal history in Australia. His publications include *Aboriginal Victorians (2005)*, *A Man of All Tribes: The Life of Alick Jackomos (2006)* and *Aboriginal Australians*, which has remained in print since 1981 and sold more than 55,000 copies.

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