

Living and Dying on the Factory Floor

From the Outside In and the Inside Out

David Ranney

David Ranney's vivid memoir describes his work experiences between 1976 and 1982 in the factories of southeast Chicago and northwest Indiana. The book opens with a detailed description of what it was like to live and work in one of the heaviest industrial concentrations in the world. The author takes the reader on a walk through the heart of the South Side of Chicago, observing the noise, heavy traffic, the 24-hour restaurants and bars, the rich diversity of people on the streets at all hours of the day and night, and the smell of the highly polluted air.

Factory life includes stints at a machine shop, a shortening factory, a railroad car factory, a structural steel shop, a box factory, a chemical plant, and a paper cup factory. Along the way there is a wildcat strike, an immigration raid, shop-floor actions protesting supervisor abuses, serious injuries, a failed effort to unionize, and a murder. Ranney's emphasis is on race and class relations, working conditions, environmental issues, and broader social issues in the 1970s that impacted the shop floor.

Forty years later, the narrator returns to Chicago's South Side to reveal what happened to the communities, buildings, and the companies that had inhabited them. *Living and Dying on the Factory Floor* concludes with discussions on the nature of work; racism, race, and class; the use of immigration policy for social control; and our ability to create a just society.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Ranney is professor emeritus in the College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs at the University of Illinois Chicago. Ranney has also been a factory worker, a labor and community organizer, and an activist academic. He is the author of four books and more than a hundred journal articles, book chapters, and monographs on issues of employment, labor and community organizing, and U.S. trade policy. His two most recent books are *Global Decisions, Local Collisions: Urban Life in the New World Order* and *New World Disorder: The Decline of U.S. Power*. In addition to his writing, he gives lectures on economic policy and politics and also finds time to be an actor and director in a small community theatre.

ACCOLADES

"David Ranney's is our best account of the New Left's turn to the factory and other workplaces in the seventies. Reading in some parts like a novel, it introduces us to a remarkable cast of working-class characters, while offering a refreshingly critical look at his own experiences. We get compelling views of factory work, including the physical dangers and injuries that came with it, as well as a better understanding of a range of New Left organizing efforts. With the experience of a radical organizer and the insights of a very good social scientist, Ranney writes with particular sensitivity about race relations in the workplace."

—James R. Barrett, author of *History from the Bottom Up & the Inside Out: Ethnicity, Race, and Identity in Working-Class History*

LIVING AND DYING ON THE FACTORY FLOOR

FROM THE OUTSIDE IN AND THE INSIDE OUT

DAVID RANNEY



SUBJECT CATEGORY

Memoir/Labor Studies

PRICE

\$15.00

ISBN

978-1-62963-639-9

PAGE COUNT

192

SIZE

6x9

FORMAT

Paperback

PUBLICATION DATE

04/19

DISTRIBUTED BY

Independent Publishers Group
(312) 337-0747
www.ipgbook.com

DISTRIBUTED IN THE UK/EUROPE BY

Turnaround Publisher Services Ltd
t: 020 8829 3000
orders@turnaround-uk.com

♦ PM PRESS ♦

P.O. Box 23912 • Oakland, CA 94623
www.pmpress.org
info@pmpress.org
(510) 658-3906

PM

PM Press was founded in 2007 as an independent publisher with a veteran staff boasting a wealth of experience in print and online publishing. We seek to create radical and stimulating fiction and nonfiction books, pamphlets, T-shirts, and visual and audio materials to entertain, educate, and inspire you.