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## **SHATTERED LIVES** **MIRIAM MILLER**

Asbestos-related diseases are the scourge of our postwar construction boom.

Asbestos was modernity's dream: a cheap, flexible, light material that was also heat resistant. For those exposed to its fibres, though, it would become a nightmare. In time, they could develop a number of horrific conditions, including asbestosis and the malignant cancer, mesothelioma. Builders, dockers, miners, mechanics, their wives and children – anyone at all who breathed in its dust faced a painful death. Asbestos, in the end, insidiously damaged the nation, just as it built it up.

*Shattered Lives* tells the story of asbestos the product; the companies that profited from it while knowingly risking the lives of whole communities; and those (hopeful immigrants and hard-working family men) who, in the end, succumbed to its effects. Aside from some awkward structuring and a tendency to use clichés, the book is comprehensive and forthright in conveying the sheer injustice of what is surely one of mankind's worst examples of human negligence.

**Nicola Shafer-Redhouse**

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