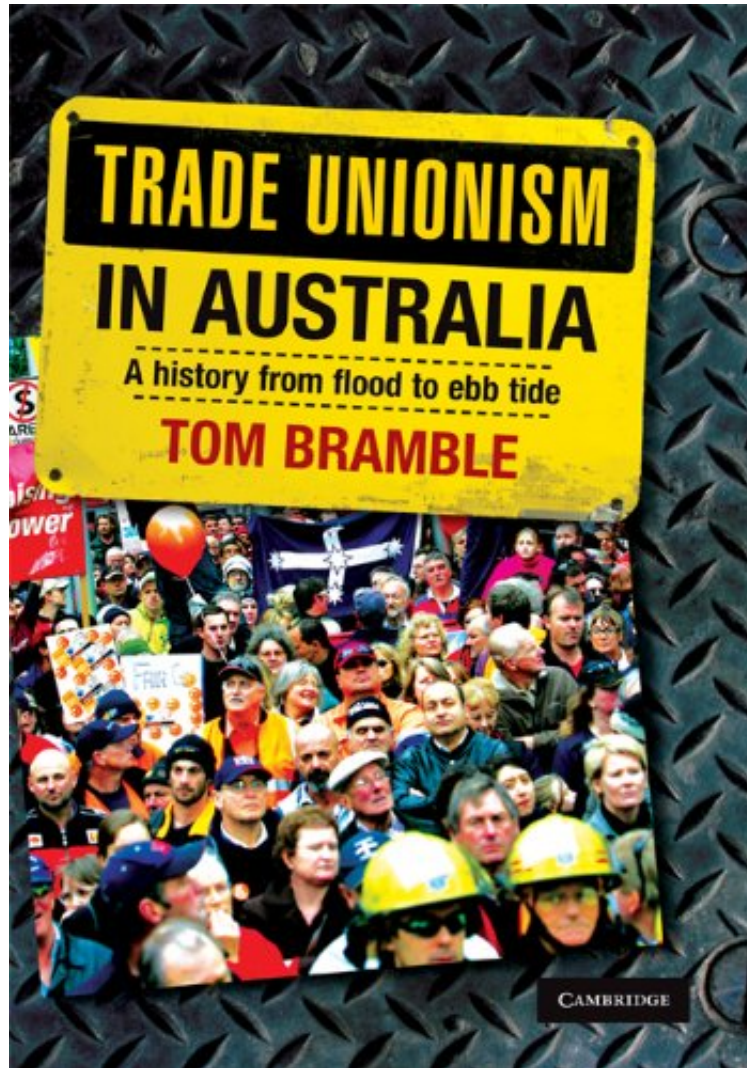


Trade Unionism in Australia: A History from Flood to Ebb Tide

Tom Bramble

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Tom Bramble : Trade Unionism in Australia: A History from Flood to Ebb Tide before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Trade Unionism in Australia: A History from Flood to Ebb Tide:

In the late 1960s Australian unionism was on the flood tide: growing in strength, industrially confident and capable of shaping the overall political climate of the nation. Forty years on, union membership and power is ebbing away despite community support for trade unionism and the continuing need for strong unions. Even the unprecedented mobilisation against WorkChoices, which defeated a government and lost the prime minister his own seat, has done

little to turn the tide. With compelling rigour, Tom Bramble explores the changing fortunes of what was once an entrenched institution. Trade Unionism in Australia charts the impact on unions of waves of economic restructuring, a succession of hostile governments and a wholesale shift in employer attitudes, as well as the failure of the unions' own efforts to boost membership and consolidate power. Indeed, Bramble demonstrates how the tactics employed by unions since the early 1980s may have paradoxically contributed to their decline.

'The history of trade unionism in Australia may well be our true history, with its decent dreams and compliant reality. In rescuing it from the political shadows, Tom Bramble has written an important and fluent reminder that nothing is gained without a fight. An essential read.' John Pilger, award-winning journalist, author and documentary film maker
'Tom Bramble's book title provides a penetrating analysis of the recent history of the Australian trade union movement. It also tells an exciting story of conflict, inspiring mass activity, huge mistakes, defeats and triumphs. It has no competitors in its systematic account of important decades of union activity and provides a superior assessment of specific events and episodes. Trade Unionism in Australia is indispensable to anyone interested in the current state of the Australian union movement and its future, industrial relations policy and labour history' Rick Kuhn, Reader in Political Science, Australian National University, winner of the 2007 Deutscher Memorial Prize
'Trade unions are far too often condemned to the leaden prose of institutional analysis. One of the great strengths of Tom Bramble's book is the way in which he conveys not just the arguments amid the changing fortunes of the union movement, but also the passions and allegiances that lay behind those arguments. This is not just a compelling analysis, but also a very human history, which starts from the strikes, bans and pickets of workers themselves.' Diane Fieldes, Lecturer in Industrial Relations, University of New South Wales
About the Author Tom Bramble is Senior Lecturer in Industrial Relations, School of Business, University of Queensland. He has lectured in Industrial Relations at tertiary level for more than twenty years.