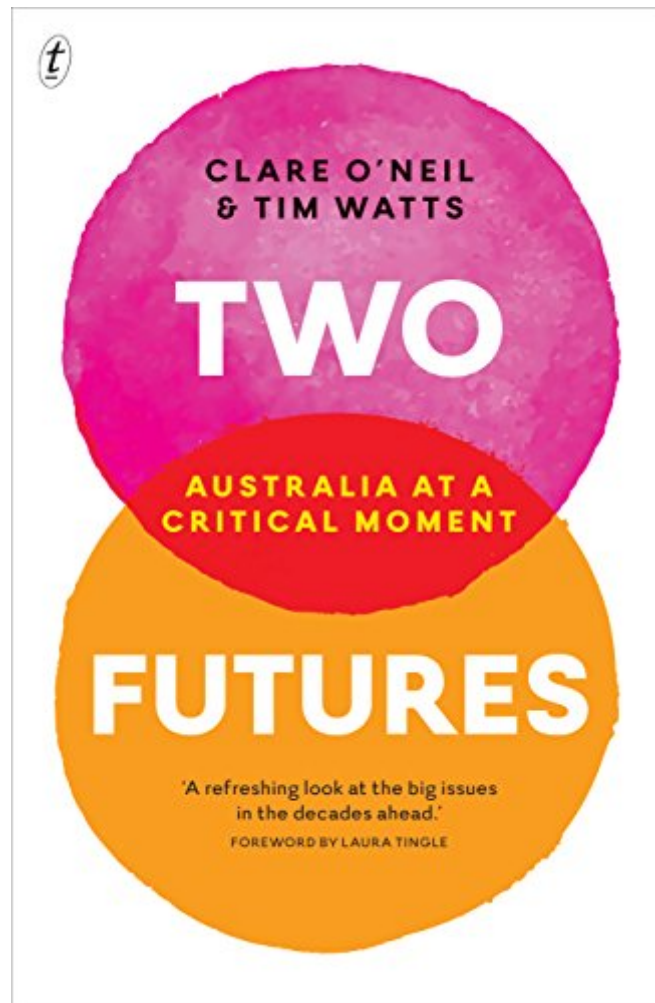


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Two Futures: Australia At A Critical Moment



Synopsis

Beset by spin and the battle to win each news cycle, contemporary politics is mired in short-term thinking. Too little time is given to considering creative ways in which we could tackle key issues—a lagging education system, the destruction of our coastlines, Asia’s economic ascendancy—in the decades ahead. In this agenda-setting book, new federal parliamentarians Clare O’Neil and Tim Watts present a vision for six vital areas of public policy that will determine what life in Australia is like in 2040. They provide fresh insights into the role of government and individuals alike in shaping the future. Optimistic and impassioned, analytical and ideas-driven, *Two Futures* starts the conversation that, at this critical juncture, the nation needs to have. Clare O’Neil is the federal Labor member for the seat of Hotham, in Melbourne’s south-east. She was Australia’s youngest female mayor and has been a management consultant with McKinsey & Company. She studied public policy as a Fulbright Scholar at Harvard’s Kennedy School. Tim Watts is the federal Labor member for the seat of Gellibrand, in Melbourne’s west. Prior to entering parliament he was a senior manager at Telstra. He has been a lawyer at Mallesons Stephen Jaques and studied at the London School of Economics. “A must-read publication from two talented federal members concerned about a better and fairer future for Australia.” Steve Bracks “A refreshing look at the big issues in the decades ahead.” Laura Tingle, Political Editor, Australian Financial Review “An insightful contribution to the policy debate about the future of our country.” Catherine Livingstone, President, Business Council of Australia “Provocative, clear-sighted and jargon-free.” Age/Sydney Morning Herald “This book is a must-read for thinking Australians.” ANZ LitLovers “A welcome, often ambitious and sobering book.” Daily Review

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Customer Reviews

Two Futures: Australia at a Critical Moment by Clare O'Neil & Tim Watts Clare O'Neil and Tim Watts, ALP MPs for Hotham and Gellibrand since 2013, take the long view of Australia to 2040 in "Two Futures" aiming to change our nation. Unfortunately they must be unaware of Gough Whitlam's old quote of "not unsettling the horses". Despite the title, the book does not offer "two futures" only a discussion with optimistic (good) and pessimistic (bad) extremes. The year 2040 is claimed to be "a manageable timeframe" although the discussion is equally consistent for any year from 2020 or even earlier. No evidence is provided that "Australia [is] at a critical moment" except that politicians love to describe "now" as a crisis. There is the usual complaints about the media ("leading to an increase in fanaticism"), communications technology (encouraging a "neat sound grab" rather than policy) and that "our democracy is in trouble". Inequality, tax, education, role of unions, Indigenous Australians, the Digital Revolution or digital disruption (meaning communications & online data "Instead of embracing the Digital Revolution, Australia resisted it"), climate change from greenhouse gases (which they strangely refuse to name except by the general word "pollution"), economic growth, and Australia's place in the world. On our democracy, the authors advocate: "A new institution, in fact many new institutions, within the ALP being the Online Policy Action Caucus (OPAC). Any ALP member could establish an OPAC, or an online group of 50 ALP members, that advocate on specific issues without organizational approval."

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