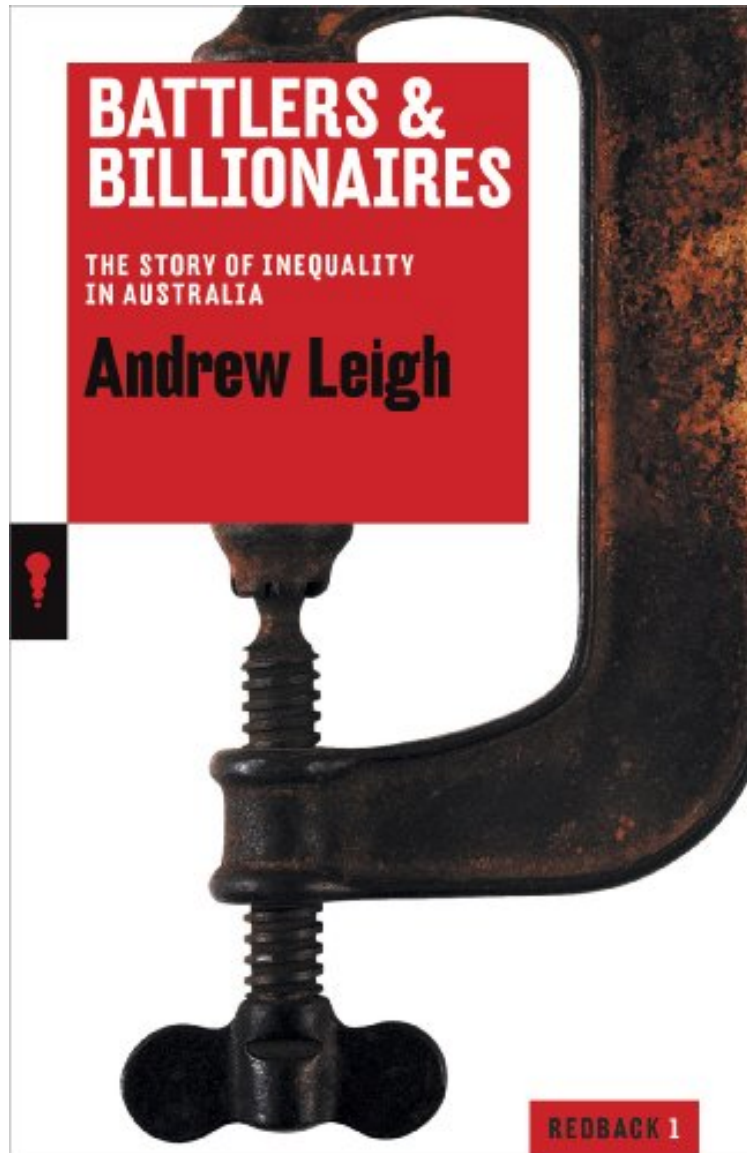


[PDF] Battlers and Billionaires: The Story of Inequality in Australia (Redback Quarterly)

Battlers and Billionaires: The Story of Inequality in Australia (Redback Quarterly)

Andrew Leigh

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Andrew Leigh : Battlers and Billionaires: The Story of Inequality in Australia (Redback Quarterly) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Battlers and Billionaires: The Story of Inequality in Australia (Redback Quarterly):

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. An Instinct for EqualityBy Dean MardenI know this book is at its core a discussion on inequality, but its lasting impact on my mindset has been a little divorced from that. I've always

disliked questions like, 'Aren't you proud to be Australian?', with the usual drawl applied to the middle syllable of the demonym. To me, that's like asking if I'm proud to be blue-eyed, proud to be adopted, or proud to be bisexual: I didn't have a choice in any of these, so can't really feel proud or otherwise about them. After reading this book, I actually felt proud to be Australian, probably for the first time. I have a greater appreciation of the effects the longer-term and ingrained instincts of 'Australianism' (if there's such a thing) have had on my instincts in dealing with the world and other people. I'm a writer myself, but in my only published work, an instinctive cultural cringe had me de-regionalising the piece during its final edit. All references to Australia became 'the nation', with Canberra simply becoming 'the capital'. That instinct speaks to something about Australians that you only recognise about us after returning from overseas trips: it's right there in the airport. Even though people may be flustered or stressed or have things to do, it becomes obvious - after contrasting their actions with those of people overseas - that there's something instinctive in them that knows their frustrations are only temporary - they know that 'she'll be right' in fairly short order. There's an instinctive distrust of anyone who takes anything too seriously, and this includes politicians banging on about issues that people can't recognise the practical impacts of; if they're talking about it so much without communicating practicalities, then they're taking either the issue or themselves too seriously and aren't worth listening to - not when there's actual stuff to be gotten on with by the average punter. From reading this book, I now have a greater appreciation as to how all those instincts in both myself and the people around me have come about, and how it's shaped me as a human being. We're all in this together, which goes back to convict and colonial times when we knew we had to work together if we were ever to make anything of this giant lump of sand in an oft-forgotten corner of the world. Maybe there are quite a few things about our national character and collective instincts that do deserve to be taken a little more seriously and given the applause they deserve.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The gap between rich and poor is increasing in Australia. Can we turn this trend around? By Andrew McCutcheon

Andrew Leigh has wide experience researching this topic over several decades, working with a wide range of colleagues from the OECD, and universities in a number of countries before being elected to the Australian House of Representatives. The book contains a valuable exposition of the gap between rich and poor. Told with sensitivity, and not drawing extravagant conclusions, it is a measured and wide ranging contribution. Leigh's capacity to carry the argument and clarify what the conclusions are to each of the various aspects that he has studied are communicated to the lay person with clarity and logic.

Battlers and Billionaires provides a valuable base for anyone interested in moving public policy toward a more just and fairer society. It is not ideological, but seeks to build an evidence based understanding of where we are today, and some of the difficulties to be encountered in moving to a more equitable place.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. SCHOLARLY YET READABLE

By PAUL MAGGSI

enjoyed reading this book. It is very obvious that Andrew Leigh is a scholarly economist and has partaken in much research with this topic of social and economic equality. Andrew does not ram his opinions onto the reader but guides the reader through a complicated subject that is too often dismissed by the general public with superficial opinions and simplistic solutions.

Is Australia fair enough? And why does inequality matter anyway? In Battlers and Billionaires, Andrew Leigh weaves together vivid anecdotes, interesting history and powerful statistics to tell the story of inequality in this country. This is economics writing at its best. From egalitarian beginnings, Australian inequality rose through the nineteenth century. Then we became more equal again, with inequality falling markedly from the 1920s to the 1970s. Now, inequality is returning to the heights of the 1920s. Leigh shows that while inequality can fuel growth, it also poses dangers to society. Too much inequality risks cleaving us into two Australias, occupying fundamentally separate worlds, with little contact between the haves and the have-nots. And the further apart the rungs on the ladder of opportunity, the harder it is for a kid born into poverty to enter the middle class.

Battlers and Billionaires sheds fresh light on what makes Australia distinctive, and what it means to have a fair go.

Longlisted for the 2014 John Button Prizelsquo;

This is required reading for every Australian who seriously cares about the fair go enduring.rsquo;

mdash;Peter FitzSimonslsquo;

Be warned: this book will open your eyes and prick your conscience.rsquo;

mdash;Ross Gittinslsquo;

A thought-provoking book which emphasises how far we have strayed from confidently discussing public policies that seek to give meaning to our egalitarian spirit.rsquo;

mdash;Laura Tinglelsquo;

A cogent and accessible readrsquo;

mdash;Sun-Heraldlsquo;

An informed study of a serious topic, written with a conversational ease that makes it quite accessible.rsquo;

mdash;the Agelsquo;

This short book is the first in what promises to be a great new series from Black Inc. called ldquo;Redbacksrdquo;. Leigh makes no bones about the fact that he is writing from a particular political standpoint, but his arguments are lucid, detailed and well-balanced. This book will appear to readers of quality political commentary such as the Quarterly Essay and it is especially pertinent in an election year.rsquo;

mdash;Books+Publishing

Andrew Leigh is the federal member for Fraser and the Shadow Assistant Treasurer. Before being elected in 2010, he was a professor of economics at the Australian National University. His books include Disconnected (2010), Battlers and Billionaires (2013) and The Economics of Just About Everything (2014).

About the AuthorAuthors Bio, not available