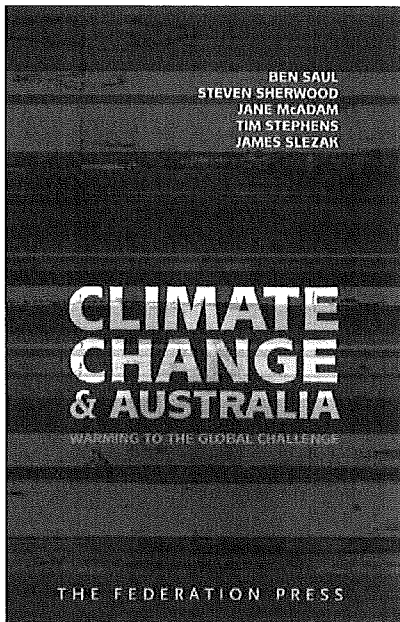


# Climate Change and Australia: Warming to the Global Challenge

By Saul, Sherwood, McAdam, Stephens and Slezak | Federation Press | 2011



This is an engaging and well-written book. A stated aim is to:

... provide a clear, readable account of what climate change means for the future of Australia, its region and the world.

It largely achieves the aim and does provide a clear and readable account of the authors' analysis of several important issues relating to the complex topic of climate change. It is refreshingly honest in explaining to the reader its predominant point of view from the outset:

[t]his book acknowledges where there are indeed scientific uncertainties in the science, but pays no attention to 'sceptics' who deny that global warming is real, or that it is caused by humans.

Notwithstanding this early disavowal, the book does engage with the scientific debate as to the extent of likely climate change due to anthropogenic global warming.

This adds to the interest of the work.

Interestingly, the qualifications of the authors are not recorded anywhere in the book. The average lay reader may have expected and appreciated the inclusion of such a record. However, the authors are well known and respected legal and scientific experts, and the discussion in the book does benefit from the multidisciplinary approach that this mix of scientific and legal expertise has allowed. For example, it enables the book to address the issue of climate change by reference to the geological record, to touch briefly on the various geo-engineering options that may be available to mitigate greenhouse gas caused climate change, at a global scale, as well as to discuss aspects of the international legal framework.

The book commences with an interesting historical summary of the discovery of the greenhouse gas and global warming relationship, and moves onto a discussion of the current and generally accepted position of the scientific community, and to the synthesis of these predictions by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). It is consistent with the work's overall argument that the authors observe that the proportion of climate change scientists that agree that humans are largely responsible for observed global warming has been measured at 97 per cent.

*Inter alia*, the book discusses some possible impacts of climate change on Australia. Most of the predictions are sourced and the footnotes to the chapters form a useful research aid. The chapter on this topic takes

care to present its scenarios by reference to whether they are more or less likely having regard to various possible degrees of warming.

The recent history of international climate change treaty and policy discussions from the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, to its Kyoto Protocol to Copenhagen and Cancun is digested, and the key principles adopted at an international level for allocating emissions reductions among nations are discussed. There is a well-informed discussion of the surrounding international environmental law. The important role of the precautionary principle is discussed, it being observed that while there is no doubt about the greenhouse effect and that it is having an impact on climate, 'there are uncertainties as to when and by how much the climate will change and how resilient natural and social systems will be'. The discussion of the operation of the Kyoto Protocol is informative.

*It is refreshingly honest in explaining to the reader its predominant point of view from the outset ...*

There is generally balanced summary of the Australian legislative and political response to the climate change issue, with both the former CPRS and the present carbon pricing approach under the *Clean Energy Act 2011* (Cth) being analysed, as well as the direct action plan of the federal opposition.

The book does argue strongly for particular policy positions on a number of issues. This is no doubt

difficult to avoid in a general popular work on this topic. However, the book does also make a real effort to include relevant data and contrary positions to facilitate critical analysis of its principal argument. Its analysis of the possibility of issuing free permits to export exposed Australian industries to meet the carbon leakage problem – the possibility that polluting industries will simply move offshore – is a good case in point.

There is an interesting discussion of the extent and limitations of international refugee and human

*The book does argue strongly for particular policy positions on a number of issues.*

rights law in addressing the plight of persons who may be displaced by climate change in future years. The real difficulties, in any attribution of legal responsibility (to a particular country) for the displacement of persons by climate change, are discussed in a forensically precise and worthwhile manner. The book concludes with a thought-provoking chapter on the potential global security implications of climate

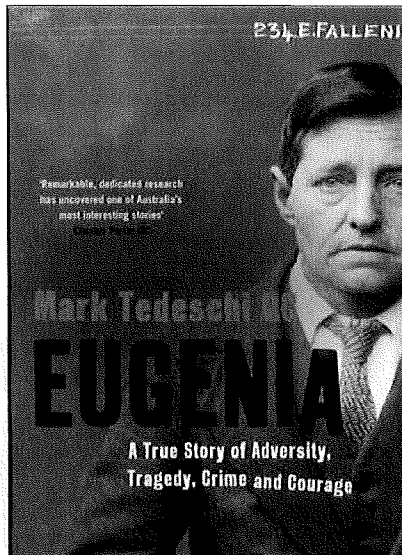
change, in the context of other global problems such as food scarcity related to population.

For anyone interested in climate change and the debate surrounding it, this eclectic and wide ranging work is definitely worth reading, as a well referenced general introduction to many recent issues surrounding anthropogenic global warming and the international and domestic policy and legal response to it.

**Reviewed by Clifford Ireland**

## Eugenia

By Mark Tedeschi QC | Simon and Schuster | 2012



Hilary Mantel has spoken of the revulsion inspired in her when writers play around with facts, distorting something just to make it more convenient or dramatic. The non-fiction work *Eugenia* by Senior Crown Prosecutor Mark Tedeschi QC is written by an author

with similar concern for historical truth. With an historian's skill and a prosecutor's search for proof, Tedeschi QC has brought once again to the public and legal gaze the tragic story of Eugenia Falleni.

Falleni, believing she was a man trapped in the body of a woman, lived for 22 years as a man. Born into an Italian family that immigrated to New Zealand, Falleni took to the high seas and found herself dumped by the Captain in Newcastle, New South Wales. She spent the next twenty-two years passing as a Scotsman and general useful, Harry Crawford. She married twice. Charged with the murder of her first wife, the trial in October 1920 was one of the largest public sensations of the time.

*Eugenia* is dedicated to the late Dorothy Porter, daughter of Chester Porter QC and, as Tedeschi QC describes, one of his oldest friends.

Friendship is not the only matter which connects Tedeschi QC with Porter. Both have produced works which interrogate the seismic consequences the sexuality of their protagonists can have on the development of the criminal story. (Porter's brilliant fictional verse novel *The Monkey's Mask* caused its own sensation in 1994 when published and was awarded the Age Book of the Year for poetry and the National Book Council Award amongst others.)

Where Porter's *The Monkey's Mask* revelled in what has been described as poetry facing profanity on the streets of a harsh modern city, Tedeschi QC's *Eugenia* is the story of a woman who, to her contemporaries, was the profanity on the harsh working-class streets of Sydney. Tedeschi QC's treatment of Eugenia is one of enduring sympathy for someone serially misunderstood in her time and failed