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From: Progressive PR and Publicity on behalf of *Australian Book Review*
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Flicking the switch at MUP

Melbourne University Press – under the leadership of Louise Adler – has an unrivalled capacity to generate publicity. The past week has been exceptionally lively following the University of Melbourne’s decision to (in the words of new Vice-Chancellor Duncan Maskell) ‘refocus MUP and a high-quality scholarly press’ and to reduce its commercial publishing. This decision led to the resignation of Ms Adler (CEO since 2003) and of five board members, including Bob Carr and Gillian Triggs. There has been much commentary, some of it indignant and partisan. MUP author James Curran, writing for Fairfax, lamented ‘the imminent demise of a distinguished publishing house’, and went on: ‘Flicking the switch to stratospheric snobbery will do little for the image of academics in the broader community.’

Writing for *Australian Book Review*, Dominic Kelly – political historian and commentator – approaches the controversy from a different angle. His article aims to fill in some of the gaps in the recent coverage and to provoke a broader discussion of the role and purpose of university presses within the Australian publishing industry. Dr Kelly voices the frustrations of many academics about the direction of MUP and the quality of its titles over the past decade. He also seeks to correct the view propagated by a number of journalists and commentators that criticism of MUP from within academia is motivated by snobbery.

N.B. Dominic Kelly’s article will be online at 11 am on Monday, February 11.

Dominic Kelly is an Honorary Research Fellow at La Trobe University. His writing appears in *Australian Book Review*, *The Age*, *The Monthly*, *Meanjin*, *The Saturday Paper*, *Guardian Australia*, and *Inside Story*.

He is the author of *Political Troglodytes and Economic Lunatics: The Hard Right in Australia* (La Trobe University Press, 2019).

Dominic Kelly is available for interview.
(See below)



Dominic Kelly (photograph by Dan Magree)

Further information

More information about *Australian Book Review* can be found on the [ABR website](http://www.abr.org.au).

Please direct interview requests to Darren Saffin at Progressive PR and Communications on (03) 9696 6417 or darren@progressivepr.com.au