

# 2017 ALEX MACDONALD LECTURE

Professor Frank Bongiorno  
(Australian National University)

## Labor, labour and Australia's 1980s

Wednesday 7 June, 5.30 for 6.00

Level 2, QCU Building  
16 Peel St, South Brisbane

The 1980s were a time of unprecedented Labor electoral success in Australia, but also of soul-searching about party purpose and identity.

The union movement came into the national policy-making process in new ways, yet the era is also recalled a difficult one for organised labour as it struggled to defend living standards at a time of rapid economic, technological and policy transformation, and in the face of an aggressive challenge from the New Right.

The lecture explores these paradoxes of a decade at once recalled as the best and worst of times, and it will explain why our understandings of the 80s still matter for contemporary politics and the labour movement.



Frank Bongiorno is one of Australia's leading labour historians. His books include *The People's Party* (a history of the Victorian ALP), *The sex lives of Australians*, and *The eighties: the decade that transformed Australia*

---

The **Alex Macdonald Lecture** is the major event held by the BLHA each year. It is named in honour of the Left activist and former Secretary of the Queensland Trades and Labour Council (1952-69).



- We publish the *Queensland Journal of Labour History* twice a year.
- We host the annual Alex Macdonald lecture
- We hold regular presentations, seminars, film screenings, walking tours, book launches