



The Failure of the Voice Referendum and the Future of Australian Democracy *By Gabrielle Appleby and Megan Davis*

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Presents analysis and reflections on the 2023 Voice referendum loss to inform future referendums, First Nations reforms and Australian democracy

This book provides the first sustained scholarly and practical analysis of the 2023 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice referendum loss, with a view to informing the future attempts at First Nations structural reform and the practice of Australian democracy.

Key selling points

Provides the first sustained set of analyses on an important constitutional moment in the attempt, and loss, of recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the Voice

Combines diverse set of contributions from authoritative individuals straddling academia, advocacy and policy

Includes contributions from First Nations and non-Indigenous authors, often writing collaboratively. The majority of the views offered, based in expertise and experience, are those of First Nations.

Presents not just an analysis of history, but a set of reflections that has been designed to speak to the future for Australian democracy, constitutional change and structural reform for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Includes key photographs and images from the campaign

About the Author(s) / Editor(s)

Gabrielle Appleby is a professor of constitutional law at the UNSW Faculty of Law & Justice and is currently a Professorial Research Fellow at the Pro Vice Chancellor Society at UNSW (Sydney). She is the constitutional consultant to the Clerk of the Commonwealth House of Representatives, a Director of the Centre for Public Integrity and was a constitutional advisor to the Regional Dialogues and First Nations Constitutional Convention that delivered the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Megan Davis AC is the Whitlam Fraser Chair at Harvard University and Visiting Professor Harvard Law School (2024–2025) and the Balnaves Chair in Constitutional Law. Megan is a Pro Vice-Chancellor Society at UNSW (Sydney) and a Scientia Professor and Director of the Indigenous Law Centre at UNSW Faculty of Law & Justice. Megan has been the leading constitutional lawyer working on constitutional recognition since 2010. She served on the Prime Minister's Expert Panel on Constitutional Recognition of Indigenous Australians (2011) and the Prime Minister's Referendum Council (2015–2017), where she chaired the Indigenous Steering Committee and designed the First Nations Regional Dialogues and the National Constitutional Convention. From 2022 to 2023, Davis served on the Prime Minister's Referendum Working Group and Referendum Engagement Group and the Attorney General's Constitutional Expert Group.

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