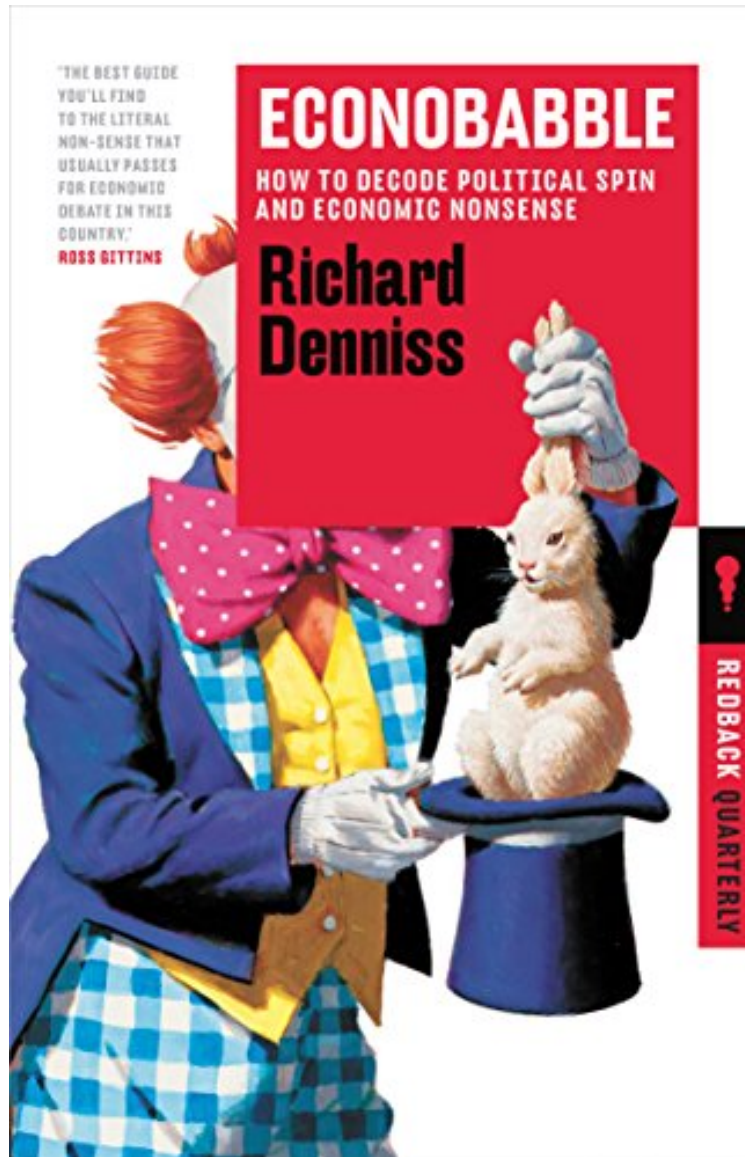


## Econobabble: How to Decode Political Spin and Economic Nonsense (Redback)

*Richard Denniss*

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**Richard Denniss : Econobabble: How to Decode Political Spin and Economic Nonsense (Redback)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Econobabble: How to Decode Political Spin and Economic Nonsense (Redback):

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Must read prior to federal election. By Troy Parsons I hope many Australian's read this prior to the election. Some will feel this book is an attack exclusively on our current government,

however it applies equally to all parties, and really all of our governments in last couple of decades (federal, state, and local). The most important notion put forward by the author is that citizens are being excluded from the debate about what our society should be like. It uses recent examples of massive hypocrisy from current politicians (so yes, our current federal government) and the subversive language they use to shift the debate away from the real issue to achieve their own agendas (or those of rich backers). It will help you identify political spin and see past it. As one of the richest nations in the world, we can choose to achieve a fairly transformative vision of Australia, and not accept the status quo held in place by the rich elite. The most glaring example (for me) highlights the hypocrisy of the propped-up coal industry, subsidized to the tune of \*billions\* of dollars, and its false claims of employing many people, creating wealth, etc. while bleating on about impossibilities of cleaner energy sources, better health services and so on. While this book contains Australian examples, I feel it is equally applicable to most of the Anglosphere (possibly all democratic societies), where we see the same tricks and lies used to shift our focus away from the real issues at hand while politicians serve their rich backers, not the people.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. very engaging and helpful quick read

By Stephen P Healy I saw Richard Denniss present the content of his book at a recent conference in Sydney. The point that comes through most powerfully both in the book and his talk is that (mainstream) economics is predicated upon some fairly straightforward concepts such as opportunity-cost. This concept--investing our time and effort in one thing means giving up the opportunity to invest in another--could provide a context for having a conversation about what we value. Instead, Richard argues, economics in the hands of powerful political actors are used to silence opposing voices, and to render unintelligible other voices or values--this is what Richard terms econobabble. One very familiar example Richard asks us to consider is how the economy is anthropomorphised--when the economy becomes "angry" or "nervous" what we should really be hearing is that wealthy investors don't like a particular policy or practice. Richard draws from contemporary Australian politics to explain how econobabble conceals the interest of the powerful in relation to labor markets, climate change, unemployment and much else besides. Its timely and very readable. On the other hand its also nothing new, other economic traditions--most notably feminist and marxian economists have been making similar arguments for more than a century (the concept of commodity fetishism expresses this same concept in a different way). I say this not to detract from the book--it is an excellent read a powerful tool for progressives, but ultimately there are other tools at our disposal if we want to have a conversation about opportunity costs at this moment in human history. As Richard says we cannot afford to simply allow climate change to happen--but there are powerful actors who see this fatalism coincides with their self-interest. What is to be done about them? For answers, I think we need to look beyond progressive policies around taxation and investment (though they can help) and towards a more total transformation in how economies function.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Australian - a must read!

By Edwin Relf Excellent - a must read for anyone following politics in Australia - and that is everyone because we are all responsible to vote. The sort of crap that the conservative side of politics get away with in economic talk - econobabble - when they don't understand what they are talking about is just so true. The recent election campaign here (2016) and the porkkey fib the Liberals went on with as a notional positive for the country when it is a big negative for the economy is just one example. Too few people understand the principles of economics yet too many people use econobabble to wack others over the head to spread mis-truths. There is a myth here too perpetrated by the Conservatives that they are the best economic managers of Australia yet international measures indicate that the Labor Party in office have actually been the best economic managers.

Economics is like a tyre lever: it can be used to solve a problem, or to beat someone over the head hellip; What is econobabble? We hear it every day, when public figures and commentators use incomprehensible economic jargon to dress up their self-interest as the national interest, to make the absurd seem inevitable or the inequitable seem fair. This book is designed to expose the stupid arguments, bizarre contradictions and complete lack of evidence upon which much "common sense" about the economy rests in Australia. Econobabble is for those who, deep down, have never believed that it makes sense, economic or otherwise, to help poor people by slashing public spending on the services they need. It's for those who have a sneaking suspicion that it would be cheaper to avoid the effects of climate change than to let them happen and then "adapt". And it's for those who think it would be more efficient to reduce unemployment than to ship jobs offshore or blame those who are out of work. With humour and precision, Richard Denniss demolishes the tired and misleading arguments of right-wing economic "experts", empowering you to cut through the babble and reach the truth. Our world abounds with businesspeople and politicians spouting arguments that sound like economics, but aren't. If you fear yours've been taken in -- or have just had your doubts -- this is the book to set things straight. It is the best guide you'll find to the literal non-sense that usually passes for economic debate in this country. -- Ross Gittins This highly accessible and entertaining study, which concentrates on the language of conservative economics, dismantles the mumbo-jumbo that we hear all the time hellip; Sydney Morning Herald Dr Richard Denniss was until recently the head of the Australia Institute, and is now its chief economist. He has spent the last twenty years moving between policy-focused roles in academia, federal politics and think-tanks. He is co-author

of Affluenza and Minority Policy, and writes regularly for the Australian Financial Review, the Canberra Times and the Monthly.

About the Author"