

WHAT IF?

Edited by Peta Seaton

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TIME TO TIP OVER THOSE SACRED COWS

Relying on 'oh sh#!' moments is a bad way to make public policy reforms – but this is increasingly how it happens. Politicians are afraid to speak up, our parliaments and party organisations have lost their policy grunt, and our media caters to shorter attention spans and celebrities. It's not a good recipe for long term ideas about how we live, work, and maintain our freedoms.

What If? offers the answers to questions that others are too afraid to tackle. 30 writers have climbed the fence into the paddock of Australian sacred cows – and tipped a whole lot over.

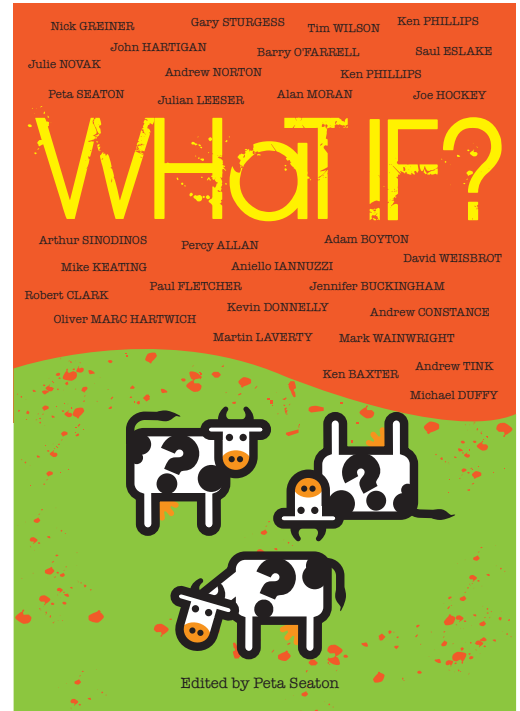
Some of our most outspoken media bosses, former premiers, policy wonks and idea enthusiasts ask the big new policy questions. If you've ever wondered ... What if we had nuclear energy? What if schools could make profits? What if you could review government performance online, like eBay? What if we brought back state taxes? Or how about abolishing states? What if we stopped bribing people to buy houses, stopped propping up industry, let people from different professions be school principals?

What if we had first class rail travel, and school teachers on individual contracts? What if you could sell your share of public services you don't want? What if you could read what Cabinet sees?

The answers might surprise you – and many cows are not as sacred as they may have seemed.

What if we did any of these things? *What-Ifers* show we would have more choice, freer markets, government services that actually took you seriously, a stronger economy, better incentives and greater personal responsibility. Our children would inherit an Australia even better than one we have And having asked the question, at least we won't die wondering.

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