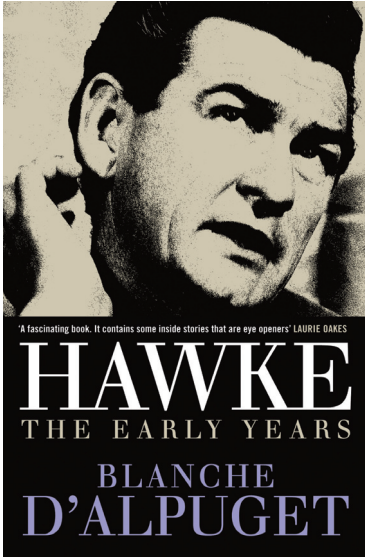


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**01 October 2010**

Blanche d'Alpuget will be available for interview throughout October.

For more information please contact **Terri King** at MUP on 03 9342 0319 or 0406 998 020, or email [taking@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:taking@unimelb.edu.au)

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## HAWKE The Early Years by Blanche d'Alpuget

Blanche d'Alpuget's classic 1982 biography of Robert J. Hawke remains one of the finest examples of political biography in Australian literature.

Robert James Lee Hawke is one of the great men of Australian public life and his story makes compelling reading.

Blanche d'Alpuget's sensitivity and psychological insight into Hawke's early years reveal how the son of devout Christian parents was reared to public duty and to the ambition of political leadership.

Known throughout his life as a tireless campaigner for workers' rights and a man of wild personal habits, Hawke was a Rhodes Scholar, educated in three universities, before rejecting an academic career to commit himself to the trade union movement.

As President of the ACTU from 1970 to 1980 he was a master negotiator and peacemaker in industrial life. He agitated for social and economic reforms, becoming a folk hero and the most popular Australian of his time.

While he was President of the Australian Labor Party he sought to heal its wounds after the sacking of the Whitlam government; as the leader of Australia's unions he held back potentially violent industrial action over this most divisive issue.

To unionists he was a giant killer; to some employers, a crypto-Communist bent upon their destruction. *Hawke: The Early Years* is an intimate portrait of a man of extraordinary achievements who struggles to overcome his drinking and philandering in order to rise to the highest office in Australia.

**Blanche d'Alpuget** is the author of eight books, including four novels--*Monkeys in the Dark* (1980), *Turtle Beach* (1981), *Winter in Jerusalem* (1986) and *White Eye* (1993). These works won a number of literary prizes including the PEN Golden Jubilee Award, The Age Novel of the Year Award, the South Australian Premier's Award and the Australasian Prize for Commonwealth Literature. d'Alpuget's *Mediator: A Biography of Sir Richard Kirby* was published in 1977 to critical acclaim, and *Robert J. Hawke: A Biography* (1982) was a national bestseller. After a long break, d'Alpuget returned to writing with a short work, *On Longing*, released in 2008, and 2010 saw the release of part two of her biography on Hawke, *Hawke: The Prime Minister*.

She has served on the boards of the ACT Arts Advisory Council, the Copyright Agency Ltd, the Australian Film Commission and has been the Chair of the Australian Society of Authors. As Austcare Goodwill Ambassador between 1992 and 1996 she wrote of the plight of refugees from Indochina, the former Yugoslavia and Afghanistan. She is a Patron of the Australia China Friendship Society in New South Wales and the Patron of Inala, a Rudolf Steiner organisation catering for people with severe disabilities.

She lives in Sydney with her husband and son.

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