Book Review: *Mine-Field, The Dark Side of Australia’s Resources Rush*  
by Paul Cleary, 2012, Black Inc Books, Melbourne

If Coles want to grab our attention with the red hand pointing “down, down, down,” then the mining industry could equally declare that their industry is going “up, up, up.” Commodity prices, are up, investment is up, tonnage is going up, up and up. Government and business incomes are going up. So surely this is a good scenario.

Paul Cleary writes this book as a sequel to *Too Much Luck*, and as the subtitle suggest, he draws attention to the dark side of the mining boom. His thesis is that there is a societal disease when mining interests are dominating the agendas-political, social, environmental, legal... He is critical of politicians who are giving in to mining demands, without due regard to the broader implications of grabbing all available resources for a short term bonanza.

He considers that government and industry are acting as if people do not exist. He documents instances of the negative impact of mining on those who live on the edges of resource sites. He is critical of the workplace conditions that entail shifts of 12 hours or longer, and Fly In, Fly out/Drive In, Drive out arrangements which can be detrimental to the health and wellbeing of the miners, and of their families and communities.

He urges the establishment of independent bodies to give approvals and to monitor their implementation without undue influence from those with vested interests in the economic outcomes. He also advocates reform of the taxation system so that it is related to profits.

This book is clearly written and is a must-read for those who are seeking to understand the implications of a two-tier economy for present and future generations and for the environment.

You can borrow this book from Earth Link.