

Alternative Dispute Resolution

Nina Harding reviews the third edition of Tania Sourdin's Alternative Dispute Resolution.

As a good mediator I feel the need to declare my bias upfront – I am Professor Sourdin's biggest fan. I have worked with Tania in various capacities for years and always learn something new every time I hear this exceptional woman speak. As an academic, mediator and teacher she is a leader in the field of dispute resolution in Australia and increasingly so internationally.

It is with this bias declared that I will now make comment on the third edition of Tania's dispute resolution bible, the aptly named 'Alternative Dispute Resolution'.

I have often found myself reaching for previous editions of this book, when presented with complex disputes or when trying to get my head around a mediation problem. Sourdin provides a well researched and referenced book for anyone who wants to know more about resolving disputes, or pondering the field more generally.

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In the preface Sourdin emphasises the importance of a 'productive and just rights-based system' revealing something of her long distant past as a Judicial Registrar and her current appointments. She goes on to

add that this rights-based framework does not necessarily work well when the conflict involves ongoing relationships or interests that lie outside the rights-based framework.

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Sourdin presents the positive image of a future bright with opportunities for the peaceful resolution of disputes. Indeed, Sourdin's unwavering optimism has been pivotal in promoting the use and understanding of alternative dispute resolution in Australia over the past two decades.

This book is an invaluable resource for beginners and experts alike. Providing a detailed overview of the state of ADR in Australia – exploring trends into collaborative practice as well as tips on practical application, this text provides context and substance to the field today as well as projections into the future.

In this edition, Sourdin devotes more time to discussing the mediation process including different models of mediation, key mediation issues and the impact of the new National Approval and Accreditation Standards.

The new Standards for Mediators are covered in detail in a chapter on Accreditation which will help to demystify these new changes to the profession, which although currently optional are already having a significant impact on practitioners.

Always one for looking ahead, Sourdin discusses future trends predicting that ADR will continue to thrive and evolve in the same organic manner that we have seen in past years despite the increasing push towards regulation.

Keep a copy close at hand. An exceptional book from an exceptional practitioner. But I just might be biased.

About the book

Alternative Dispute Resolution, 3rd edition

by Tania Sourdin

Published by Lawbook Co.

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Available from LEADR for \$80.30.

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About Nina Harding

Nina Harding is a mediator for commercial, workplace and large public disputes and community issues. She is a panelist for a range of organisations including the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre. Nina has conducted more than a hundred highly successful training programs in corporate settings, for several Australian universities and law societies and the University of Hong Kong. Nina is one of LEADR's lead trainers in the LEADR mediation workshops.