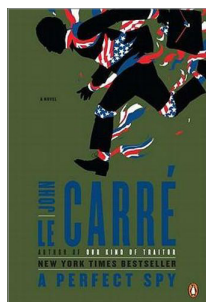


Annual Fellows' Christmas Book and Podcast List 2021

Books

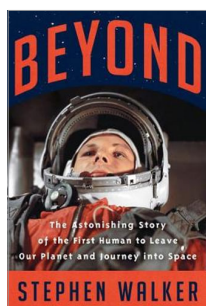


A Perfect Spy

John Le Carré

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor The Honourable Barry Jones AC FAA FTSE FAHA FASSA**

I thought I had read everything by Le Carré but a New Yorker article alerted me that I had missed his masterpiece—a relatively early novel (1986), essentially autobiographical. Disturbing on the subject of moral complicity, but often hysterically funny. It was his longest work.

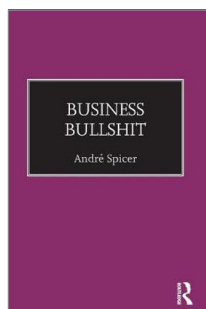


Beyond

Stephen Walker

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Steven Chown FAA**

Sergei Pavlovich Korolev, the man behind the Soviets putting the first person into space, revealed here. The tragedy of that first man in space, Yuri Gagarin, forms the main focus, alongside the US attempts. Fact that is utterly compelling.

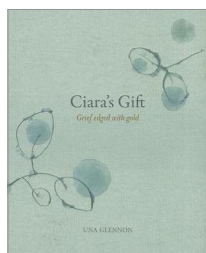


Business Bullshit

André Spicer

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Robert C Williamson FAA**

André Spicer, a professor of business studies at the University of London, has written a book that will give great pleasure and insight to all who work in any organisation of an appreciable size. He dissects and analyses perhaps the most virulent organisational pandemic of our time: the substitution for truth by bullshit. All those who groan under the weight of this affliction will delight in this lively and topical book.



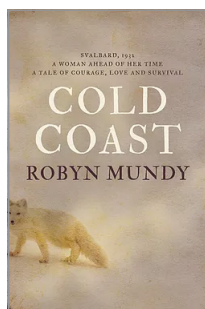
Ciara's Gift: Grief Edged with Gold

Una Glennon

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Cheryl Praeger AC FAA**

This is an intensely moving, beautifully written account of memories and reflections of a mother about her daughter. Ciara Glennon's murder was a lasting scar on the Western Australian community, and totally devastating for her family. Una Glennon's courage in writing this book is a gift to all who have faced the heartbreak of grief.

Books

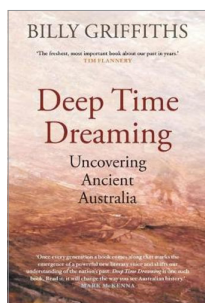


Cold Coast

Robyn Mundy

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor David Lindenmayer AO FAA**

An extraordinary epic story about the first woman fur trapper on Svalbard—based on a real Norwegian. Evocative imagery and a classic narrative of a remarkable person and stunning location.

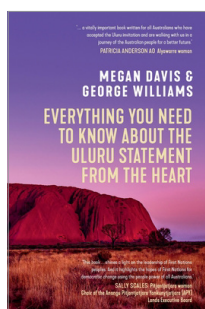


Deep Time Dreaming: Uncovering Ancient Australia

Billy Griffiths

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor The Honourable Barry Jones AC FAA FTSE FAHA FASSA**

I am ashamed to admit not having read this when first published. It explores the paradigm shifts in our thinking about Indigenous archaeology and how Western science came to terms with 'deep time' and 'the dreaming.'

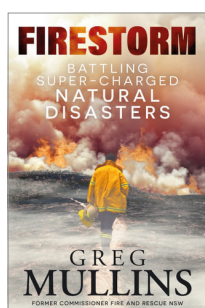


Everything You Need to Know About the Uluru Statement from the Heart

Megan Davis and George Williams

RECOMMENDED BY: **Emeritus Professor John Patrick FAA**

Written by two acclaimed international experts in constitutional law, and deeply involved in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander matters, the text delivers in spades on what the title promises for those not familiar with constitutional law. The reader is taken on an historical journey from 1770 to the present that builds a compelling case for the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the Australian Constitution and the framework upon which this can be achieved—Voice, Treaty, Truth.

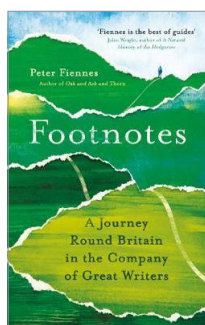


Firestorm: Battling Super-Charged Natural Disasters

Greg Mullins

RECOMMENDED BY: **Emeritus Professor Ross Street FAA**

Greg was the Commissioner of Fire and Rescue NSW for nearly 14 years before the Black Summer fires of 2019–20. Greg met with other retired firefighters, forming Emergency Leaders for Climate Action (ELCA), which implored the Prime Minister to meet with them and learn of the impending firestorms caused by climate change. Firestorm is at first a thriller of fighting fires in Northern Sydney as a kid, then a chronicle of working and learning his way to the top, then a factual presentation of how we must stop subsidising fossil fuel industries and create small scale power grids so that phones work, water is clean, toilets flush, sewage gets treated, refrigerators work, and vehicles run.



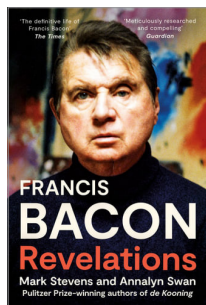
Footnotes

Peter Fiennes

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Lyn Beazley AO FAA FTSE**

If you like biographies, travel books, social history and/or great writers, I think you will enjoy this book: it is Bill Bryson plus literary history. Peter Fiennes has researched and then retraced the adventurous and more everyday travels of famous British writers including Charles Dickens, Dr Samuel Johnson (of Dictionary fame), J.B. Priestley and even Enid Blyton. Insightful commentary, lightened by humour, takes the reader into the lesser-known but revealing aspects of the writers' lives, and across centuries, social structures and landscapes, from those that are unchanged to the totally transformed.

Books

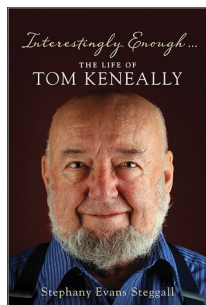


Francis Bacon: Revelations

Mark Stevens and Annalyn Swan

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor The Honourable Barry Jones AC FAA FTSE FAHA FASSA**

Not the scientist/lawyer/philosopher, but a masterly biography of the painter who broke the 'charm school' model in British art and had a risky and destructive life. 870 pages, including notes, but riveting.

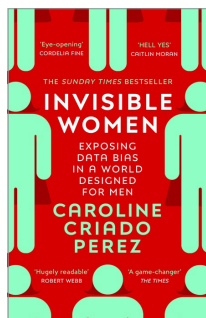


Interestingly Enough... The Life of Tom Keneally

Stephany Evans Steggall

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Lois Salamonsen FAA**

Tom Keneally is one of Australia's most awarded and prolific authors and a great storyteller. This biography provides considerable insight into the influences (particularly of the Catholic church) on his life, his need to be productive in order to support his family, and his unerring nose for a good story. While 'Schindler's Ark' is the best known of his books, this well-written coverage of the widely ranging topics of his books (including a major history of the Irish diaspora and his unforgettable story of Eritrea during its long war) provides insights into Tom's writing that will delight all of his readers.

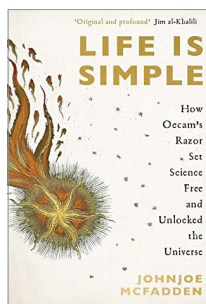


Invisible Women

Caroline Criado Perez

RECOMMENDED BY: **Ms Anna-Maria Arabia, Chief Executive, Australian Academy of Science**

Data is fundamental to the modern world. We rely on it to allocate resources, shape government policies, develop technology, deliver health care and much more. Yet so much data fails to take into account gender. This book comprehensively documents the consequences of data bias on society and reminds us of the need to ensure that these biases are not brought to scale by coding them into AI. Winner of the Royal Society Insight Investment Science Book Prize 2019, this book is a must read. With thanks to Professor Michael Barber AO FAA FTSE for sending me a copy of the book.

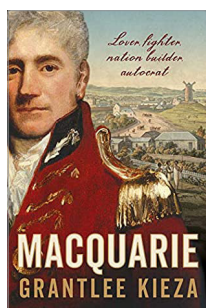


Life is Simple: How Occam's Razor Set Science Free and Unlocked the Universe

John Joe McFadden

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Nick Martin FAA FAHMS FASSA**

A well-researched and very readable account of William of Occam's lasting influence on scientific progress across all fields, from astronomy to biology to particle physics. I hadn't realised that there was an early scientific revolution centered around him in the early 1300s but it was wiped out by the plague and took 2 centuries to revive. The author's erudition across the whole palette of science is astonishing. This is a must-read for anyone who loves science.



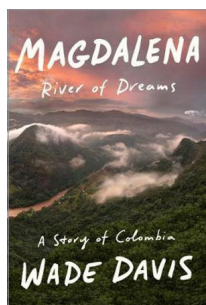
Macquarie

Grantlee Kieza

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Peter Koopman FAA**

Thought you knew Lachlan Macquarie? Grantlee Kieza presents the less explored back-stories in such a way that Macquarie's unorthodox approach to pretty much everything suddenly makes sense. The reader is left wondering how Australia might have fared if chance had not sent this strangely avant-garde character to govern the struggling young colony.

Books

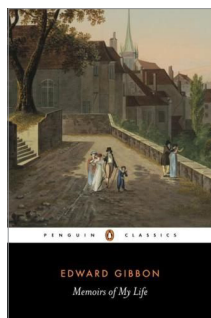


Magdalena—River of Dreams, A Story of Colombia

Wade Davis

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Linda Blackall FAA**

The award-winning writer, photographer, filmmaker and ethnographer, and longtime Explorer-in-Residence at the National Geographic Society, recounts an enthralling journey down Colombia's Magdalena River that illuminates the country's rebirth after decades of political violence, drug cartels and guerrilla warfare.



Memoirs of My Life

Edward Gibbon

RECOMMENDED BY: **Dr Oliver Mayo FAA FTSE**

We're living in a time when mendacity is accepted as normal in public life. It's refreshing to reread an old (1796) book by a largely honest person who illustrates in reminiscence how history is constructed.



Naturalist on the Bibbulmun

Leigh W Simmons

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Leigh Simmons FAA**

Ever wanted to do a long distance walk from your armchair? Join me on a 1003 kilometre walk through the southwest corner of WA, and learn a little of the ecology and evolution of one of the world's biodiversity hotspots. This book is a witness statement of the current state of the natural regions of southwestern WA, and a call to arms to protect for our future generations what little remains of this extraordinary part of the world.

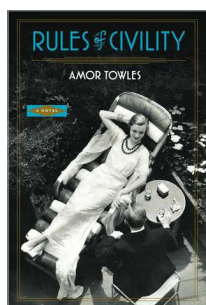


Numbers Don't Lie

Vaclav Smil

RECOMMENDED BY: **Emeritus Professor Harry Poulos AM FAA FTSE**

Is flying dangerous? How much do the world's cows weigh? And what makes people happy? This book contains an illuminating series of relatively brief essays quantifying a wide variety of opinions, conceptions or misconceptions. I found it very enjoyable and stimulating, with the author also providing additional recommended reading on each of the 71 issues discussed.



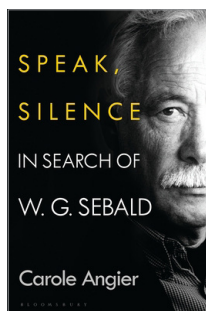
Rules of Civility

Amor Towles

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor David Day FAA**

Set in New York in 1938, the book is essentially about a young woman of Russian background and how she makes the most of her opportunities in the big city. Not as good as the brilliant 'A Gentleman in Moscow', this is nevertheless a great read—it captures the era perfectly. Towles' ability to reveal characters slowly over the course of the narrative is a feature.

Books



Speak, Silence: In Search of WG Sebald

Carole Angier

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Nick Martin** FAA FAHMS FASSA

My non-science book of the year is this simply astonishing and utterly compelling biography of WG Sebald whom the author dubs the greatest German writer of the 20th century—and I can only agree. Sebald, born 1944 in southern Germany, became repelled by his parents' generation's total silence about their Nazi past and the consequent obliteration of their cities by allied bombing. In a series of four powerful 'novels' written in the 1990s and ostensibly about quite different themes, he delves into this painful history in prose which is quite breathtaking. But you need to read the novels first—*Vertigo*, *The Emigrants*, *Rings of Saturn*, and *Austerlitz*, the latter published in 2001, the year in which he died in a car crash.

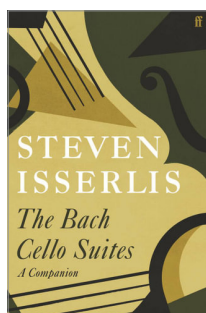


Stalin's Wine Cellar

John Baker and Nick Place

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Allen Kerr** AO FAA FRS

Two Sydney wine men hear a rumour about a fabulous cellar in Georgia containing wines once owned by Stalin and by the last Czar; they decide to investigate. In Georgia, they locate the cellar and it does indeed contain fabulous wines, some more than 100 years old but still sound. The book describes their efforts to get the wines out of Georgia and on to the open market. It is a great read for anyone interested in wine.

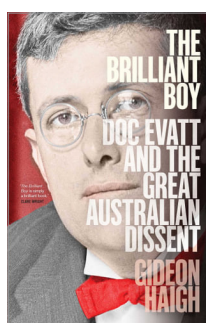


The Bach Cello Suites: A Companion

Steven Isserlis

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Stjepan Marčelja** FAA

The beloved and mysterious music of the cello suites described in a personal view by one of the world's foremost cellists. Part is a very accurate and lively history, but perhaps most interesting are the chapters describing the mood and the message of each dance movement. In spirit, the interpretation agrees with the classical book on Bach by Albert Schweitzer.

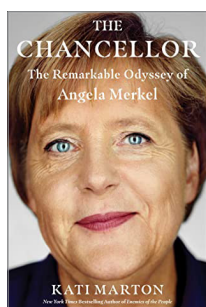


The Brilliant Boy: Doc Evatt and the Great Australian Dissent

Gideon Haigh

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor The Honourable Barry Jones** AC FAA FTSE FAHA FASSA

This is dazzling and disturbing, an account of Herbert Vere Evatt, visionary and failed politician, in his period as a High Court justice as he agonised over a dissenting judgment in a case about the accidental death of a child ('the brilliant boy') and the moral issues of duty of care. Don't miss it.



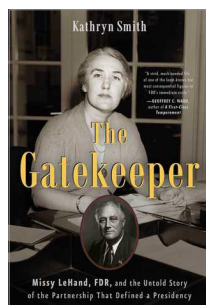
The Chancellor: The Remarkable Odyssey of Angela Merkel

Kati Marton

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Stephen Powles** AC FAA FTSE

This very readable biography traces the life of the truly outstanding Angela Merkel. Raised in austerity in the repressive, pessimistic East-German Stasi-State she knew nothing of the West until the fall of the Berlin Wall and German re-unification. Against all prejudices as a woman, an unsophisticate from East Germany and a scientist nerd she rose rapidly in German politics and proved adept at outmanoeuvring her opponents. Against the odds she became Chancellor and earned the admiration and respect of most Germans, most in the West and worldwide. Despite her national and international success she has remained grounded and humble, while still winning in the daily rough and tumble of politics. Surely, Angela Merkel is one of the most impressive women of all time!

Books

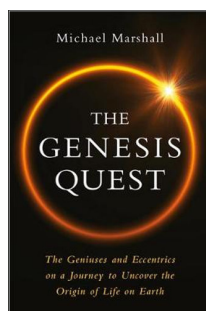


The Gatekeeper

Kathryn Smith

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Matt Wand FAA**

This 2016 book tells the story of Missy LeHand, who came from an Irish peasant immigrant family and grew up in a working class suburb of Boston. As Franklin Roosevelt's private secretary for more than two decades, she became a woman of enormous influence during the Second World War. Ms LeHand was effectively a White House Chief of Staff before that term was coined.

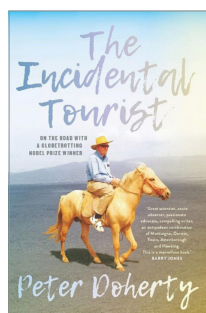


The Genesis Quest: The Geniuses and Eccentrics on a Journey to Uncover the Origin of Life on Earth

Michael Marshall

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor The Honourable Barry Jones AC FAA FTSE FAHA FASSA**

This is a fascinating history of the struggle to explain how life originated from non-living matter, and how early theories, such as the 'primordial soup' of Oparin, Haldane and Miller, came under fierce attack. It won't satisfy the super-specialist but challenges us to think about our own creation myths.

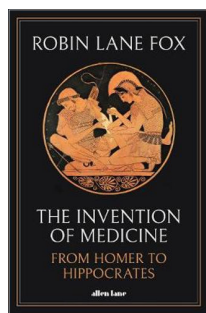


The Incidental Tourist: On the Road with a Globetrotting Nobel Prize Winner

Peter Doherty

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Barbara Nowak FAA**

As the author says, "incidental tourism...is primarily a consequence of the truncated time frames enabled by rapid international jet travel" and many of us experienced this type of tourism before COVID and hopefully we can look forward to it starting again soon. However, this book is much more than a travelogue covering fascinating topics ranging from infectious diseases to politics—I found 'Bugs in Space' particularly topical. It did not matter if I knew the place described in the chapter or if it was one I have not been to, the book was hard to put down.

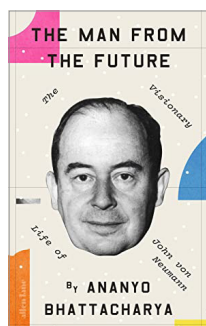


The Invention of Medicine—From Homer to Hippocrates

Robin Lane Fox

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Peter Currie FAA**

A fascinating meander through the history of medicine and the world of the ancient Greeks.



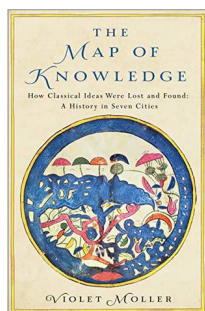
The Man from the Future: The Visionary Life of John von Neumann

Ananyo Bhattacharya

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Gary Froyland FAA**

Von Neumann is one of the most influential scientists to have ever lived. He was instrumental in the Manhattan Project and helped formulate the bedrock of Cold War geopolitics and modern economic theory. He created the first ever programmable digital computer. He prophesied the potential of nanotechnology and, from his deathbed, expounded on the limits of brains and computers—and how they might be overcome.

Books

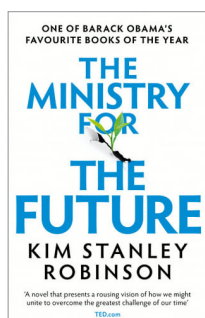


The Map of Knowledge

Violet Moller

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Ross McPhedran FAA**

This book provides a lively and informative account of the passage of knowledge from the Ancient Greeks through the Muslim world to Renaissance Europe. It traces how three key sources were preserved: Euclid's analysis of geometry, Ptolemy's astronomy and Galen's medicine. The Muslim scholars not only preserved knowledge, but also added to it, in a way often overlooked.

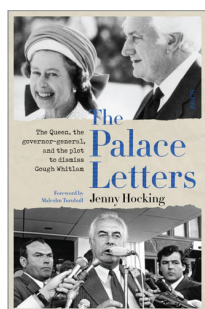


The Ministry for the Future

Kim Stanley Robinson

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Steven Chown FAA**

The Ministry is established to overcome climate change. Fact and speculative fiction credibly interwoven, taking a dystopian present of extremes to a future with a liveable climate. Something of a warning, something of an aspiration.

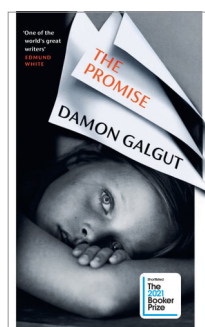


The Palace Letters: the Queen, the Governor-General, and the Plot to Dismiss Gough Whitlam

Jenny Hocking

RECOMMENDED BY: **Emeritus Professor Ross Street FAA**

Professor Hocking had a four-year legal battle with the National Archives to release the 'Palace Letters', the correspondence between the governor-general, Sir John Kerr, and Buckingham Palace which had been wrongly catalogued as 'personal', thereby preventing Australians from obtaining a full record of their own history. The governor-general was in consultation with the Queen, her secretary, Sir Garfield Barwick, Sir Anthony Mason and Malcolm Fraser; that is to say, he confided in the High Court and the Opposition. This exciting, enthralling account by a persistent woman is a disturbing story of how the Crown has power over our democracy and can, indeed, dismiss our elected Prime Minister today.

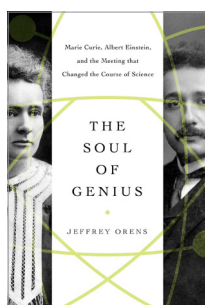


The Promise

Damon Galgut

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Emeritus Michael Hynes FAA**

The story of a white South African family during 40 years spanning the end of apartheid, with each section focused around the death of a family member. A core theme is the promise of the dying matriarch to give the long-term black servant her own quarters as her own—a promise unfulfilled until the end. A book that intrigued me with its story and technique.



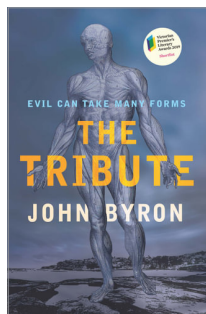
The Soul of Genius: Marie Curie, Albert Einstein and the Meeting that Changed the Course of Science

Jeffrey Orens

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Fiona Stanley AC FAA FAHMS(Hon) FASSA**

This book describes the Solway Conferences, set up in 1911 by a business man (Ernest Solway) passionate about science and how it could improve society (physics, chemistry and even the social sciences). The issue of this time was the realisation that classical physics was giving way to quantum theory—which would change the course of science (in our world and in the universe). It describes the scientific and personal lives of both Marie Curie and Albert Einstein, the appalling way in which Curie was condemned for her affair with Paul Langevin and how Einstein supported her. Beautifully written.

Books

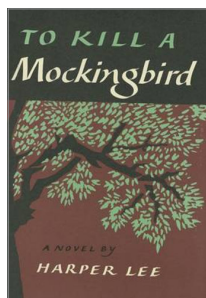


The Tribute

John Byron

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Margaret Sheil AO FAA FTSE**

This first novel written by my colleague John Byron has a theme around the foundation 16th century text of modern anatomy, *Fabrica*, with some highly relevant social and psychological themes. A good holiday read.

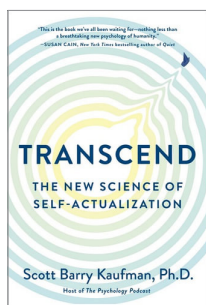


To Kill a Mockingbird

Harper Lee

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Lisa Kewley FAA**

A classic children's novel on race relations which is still highly relevant today. It is a compelling and thought-provoking novel to read now, especially in light of the Black Lives Matter movement and what progress (or rather what little progress) has been made since the 1930s when the novel was set.

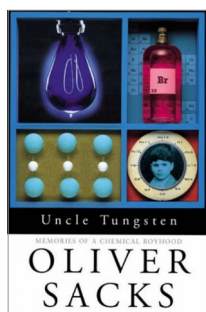


Transcend: The New Science of Self-Actualization

Scott Barry Kaufman

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Robert C Williamson FAA**

Scientists love to talk about their science, but perhaps not their subjective experience of doing it. Kaufman's book is a detailed exposition of psychologist Abraham Maslow's thinking on what makes us human. Any non-scientist who wants to understand what makes scientists work so hard at their science will learn, amongst other things, from this book why they do: they have a purpose; a large goal outside themselves, which they pursue with a passion, and, crucially, which provides intrinsic meaning to their lives.

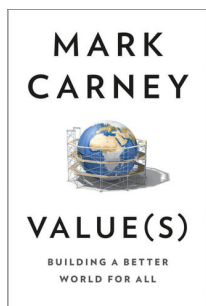


Uncle Tungsten

Oliver Sacks

RECOMMENDED BY: **Distinguished Professor Frances Separovic AO FAA**

In this heartwarming book, Sacks describes his childhood in wartime England and his family connections to chemistry. 'Uncle Tungsten' is named after his uncle who made incandescent lightbulbs and is not only about the hardships faced by the young Oliver but also about the joys of scientific understanding. I loved learning about his chemical heroes, and the historical perspective gave insight into so many amazing discoveries.



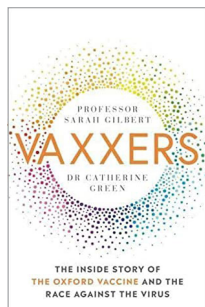
Value(s): Building a Better World for All

Mark Carney

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor The Honourable Barry Jones AC FAA FTSE FAHA FASSA**

Carney was head of the Bank of Canada, then the Bank of England, retiring to devote himself to saving the world. Lucid and compelling, especially powerful on climate change.

Books



Vaxxers

Sarah Gilbert and Catherine Green

RECOMMENDED BY: **Emeritus Professor Neville Nicholls FAA**

What better book to sum up the last two years than this one, by the scientists who led the teams to develop the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine? If you have vaccine-hesitant friends or family who worry about what is in these vaccines, this is the book to gift them. And they will also learn how modern science works.



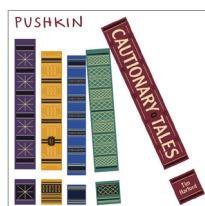
Why You Should Give a F*ck About Farming

Gabrielle Chan

RECOMMENDED BY: **Dr TJ Higgins FAA**

Getting all our dilemmas about where our food comes from and where it will come from in the next century into one thoughtful and easy to read book. If you only have time to read a few chapters start with On Water and do not omit On Natural Value or On Balance. This is (another) wake up call for a national food policy and a sorting out of the many contradictory policies around food.

Audio and video

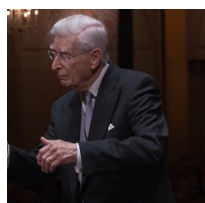


Cautionary Tales (podcast)

Tim Harford

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Brian Schmidt AC FAA FRS Nobel Laureate**

Lessons from history that talk about how people's decisions and the psychology behind them have profound implications—often with a good and bad side, and always a lesson. Very entertaining and thought provoking, they are great case studies for being an academic leader.



Herbert Blomstedt conducting the Vienna Philharmonic in Bruckner (video)

Herbert Blomstedt

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor The Honourable Barry Jones AC FAA FTSE FAHA FASSA**

Even if you are not familiar with Bruckner's symphonies, or if complex music has passed you by, it is immensely rewarding to see a master conducting at an exalted level at the age of 94. Start with Symphony No. 4, filmed in September 2021. Or if Mozart is more to your taste, look for Menahem Pressler playing his Piano Concerto No. 20, in his debut with the Berlin Philharmonic, at the age of 90 (I'm serious).

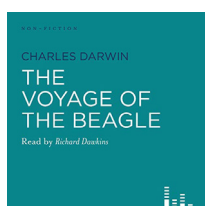


Terrible Lizards (podcast)

Iszi Lawrence and David Hone

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Andrew White FAA**

Professional paleontologist David Hone and dinosaur-obsessed BBC history presenter and comedian Iszi Lawrence were mates at university. They went their separate ways for many years, met up at a party and wished they could get together to do a dinosaur podcast but they didn't have the time... then the pandemic hit. Wonderful, intriguing, amusing, thought provoking—for me this podcast has been the most silver of linings during the pandemic: most highly recommended.



The Voyage of the Beagle (audio book)

Charles Darwin—narrated by Richard Dawkins for Audible

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Georgia Chenevix-Trench FAA FAHMS**

The book needs no introduction, but this is an abridged, beautifully narrated (by Richard Dawkins) version which entertained us as we drove the Dinosaur Trail in Western Queensland.