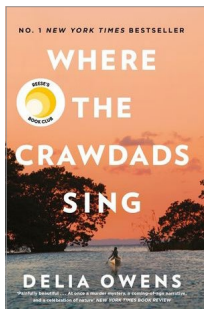


# Annual Fellows' Christmas Book and Podcast List 2020



## Books

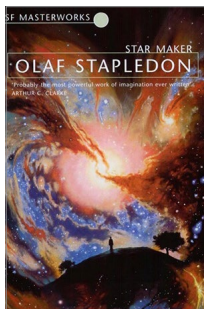


### **Where the Crawdads Sing**

*Delia Owens*

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

Extraordinary book set around the swamps and bayou country of North Carolina in the 1950s. A wonderful volume that captures the essence and marine life of this part of the world but wrapped around a wonderful tale.

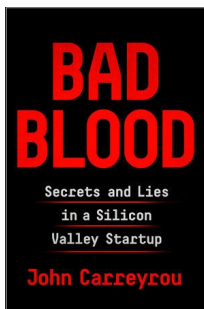


### **Star Maker**

*Olaf Stapledon*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor John Mattick AO FAA FTSE FAHMS**

An oldie but one that I had not come across until recently. Arthur C. Clarke considered Star Maker to be one of the finest works of science fiction ever written. You will never view the universe the same way again.

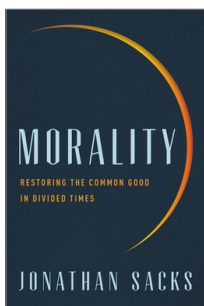


### **Bad Blood: Secrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley Startup**

*John Carreyou*

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

Everyone with an interest in biotech should read this. It is scary how gullible clever men are when faced with a charismatic young woman, and how many people were fooled. The court case is pending but the author tells a gripping story.



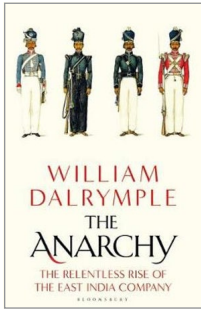
### **Morality**

*Jonathan Sacks*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Steven Praver FAA**

This book reassesses moral philosophy in the face of a society which seems to have lost its way. We in the Academy believe in evidence and truth as the basis for a society in which we want to live, but this notion is currently under threat in the era of post-truth and fake news. Sacks provides a vision of the moral basis for society in which the values which we hold dear can flourish.

## Books

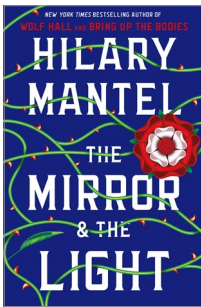


### **The Anarchy: The Relentless Rise of the East India Company**

*William Dalrymple*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Joss Bland-Hawthorn FAA**

A brilliantly evocative book of how a small number of London-based investors and politicians were able to subjugate a continent. This is a portent of unbridled capitalism showing all the hallmarks of what we see go unchecked today. The majesty and beauty of India shines through by the book's end.



### **The Mirror and the Light**

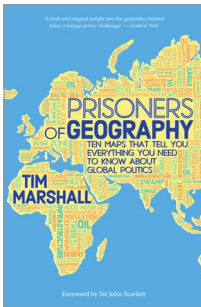
*Hilary Mantel*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor David Day FAA**

The third and final book on the life (and death) of Thomas Cromwell. The first two books in the series won the Booker Prize. This is not quite up to that standard but is still a wonderfully written and detailed account of life in the court of Henry VIII—who makes Trump seem modest and reasonable.

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

At last the third book of the Thomas Cromwell trilogy arrived; it was no disappointment as the writing is equal to the previous books. Inevitably the tone is darker as Henry VIII ages and becomes even more corruptly selfish. Intriguingly, Cromwell is also depicted as getting greedy with power and dynastic ambitions such that his appointment with the block is almost a relief.

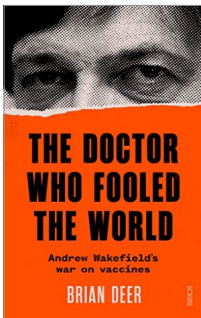


### **Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps That Tell You Everything You Need to Know About Global Politics**

*Tim Marshall*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Robert Graham AO FAA**

'All leaders are constrained by geography. Their choices are limited by mountains, rivers, seas and concrete. Yes, to follow world events you need to understand people, ideas and movements—but if you don't know geography, you'll never have the full picture. If you've ever wondered why Putin is so obsessed with Crimea, why the USA was destined to become a global superpower, or why China's power base continues to expand ever outwards, the answers are all here.'

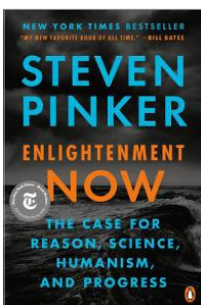


### **The Doctor who Fooled the World: Andrew Wakefield's War on Vaccines**

*Brian Deer*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Emeritus Professor Michael Barber AO FAA FTSE**

A chilling tale that scientific fraud matters. Andrew Wakefield didn't start the anti-vax movement but he sure supercharged it, and science didn't recognise the fraud at the heart of his claims until a persistent investigative journalist prevailed. Scientific integrity is vital and our own house is far from perfect.



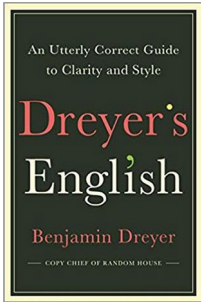
### **Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress**

*Steven Pinker*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Emeritus Professor Tony Klein AM FAA**

If you think the world is coming to an end, think again. People are living longer, healthier, freer, and happier lives, and while our problems are formidable, Steven Pinker believes the solutions lie in the Enlightenment ideal of using reason and science.

## Books

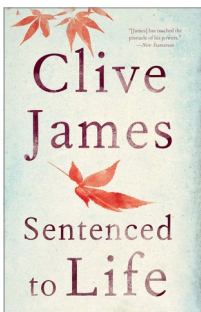


### **Dreyer's English: An Utterly Correct Guide to Clarity and Style**

*Benjamin Dreyer*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Jenny Graves AO FAA**

This book was penned by the Random House editor-in-chief, who knows a thing or two about mistakes made by even seasoned writers. You wouldn't think of a grammar book as a good Christmas read, but this one is useful and engaging. It hits all the little things that give me hiccups in my writing, and his examples are hilarious.

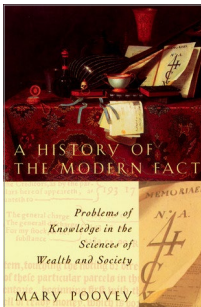


### **Sentenced to Life**

*Clive James*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Emeritus Professor Graeme Clark AC FAA FTSE FRS**

A flowering of the poetry Clive always wished to be known for. A collection of James's heart-stopping poems. His voice twinkles even in his weakened state.

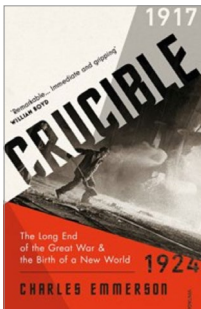


### **A History of the Modern Fact: Problems of Knowledge in the Sciences of Wealth and Society**

*Mary Poovey*

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

'Facts' are literally taken for granted; they are precisely those pieces of knowledge that we choose not to question. Mary Poovey's fascinating book, which I only encountered this year, is a study of where this modern idea came from. Reading her lively and intriguing history will give you a new appreciation for facts, and reinforce the 'fact' that they, and their more recent incarnation as 'data', are simultaneously constructed and controvertible, but also utterly essential for our deeper understanding of our world.

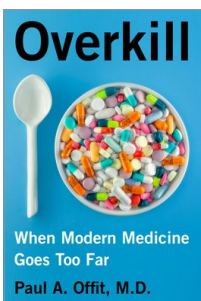


### **Crucible: The Long End of the Great War and the Birth of a New World, 1917–1924**

*Charles Emmerson*

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

An excellent, original and very readable history of pivotal years, 1917–1924, of the early 20th century. The book focuses on a number of leaders and their actions after World War 1.



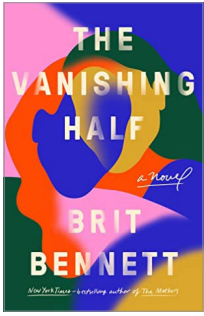
### **Overkill: When Modern Medicine Goes Too Far**

*Dr Paul A Offit*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Dr Simon Poole AO FAA FTSE**

A well researched and argued book which debunks some serious 'truths' of modern medicine. As a non-medico it opened my eyes on a number of areas of received wisdom.

## Books

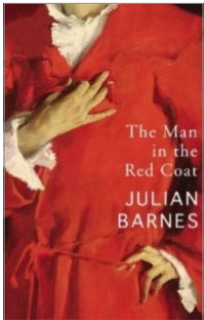


### **The Vanishing Half**

*Brit Bennett*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Louise Ryan FAA**

A real standout among a number of COVID year reads! Excellent 'couldn't put it down' story line combined with thoughtful insights into racism in the US in the 50s and 60s. Touched on broader issues of diversity and tolerance.

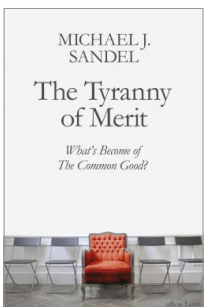


### **The Man in the Red Coat**

*Julian Barnes*

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

A wonderful account of the Belle Epoque (1870–1914) focusing on Dr Samuel Pozzi, the father of French gynaecology, an accomplished womaniser and, famously, the man in the red coat in John Singer Sargent's portrait which graces the front cover. The book is themed around a series of cigarette cards showing photo portraits of all the leading figures of the day—everyone from Oscar Wilde and J-G Huysmans to Marie Curie and the photos are woven in with the text—this is one case where you should not download on kindle but treat yourself to the full, luxuriously produced hard copy. This period is obviously Julian Barnes' special expertise and he writes with affectionate and sparkling prose; brilliant!

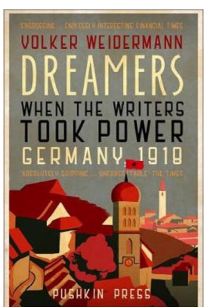


### **The Tyranny of Merit: What's Become of the Common Good?**

*Michael J Sandel*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Robyn Owens FAA**

Sandel argues that we need to re-think the idea of merit, and of building society as a meritocracy, as it leads to hubris in those that rise to the top and defeat for those who don't. Yet so much of 'merit' depends on luck and existing privilege. Meritocracy has expanded the gap in social disparity, and universities are at the core of developing, credentialing and protecting the privilege the meritorious achieve.

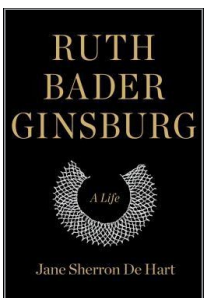


### **Träumer—Als die Dichter die Macht übernahmen. (In English, translated by Ruth Martin: Dreamers—When the writers took power. Germany, 1918.)**

*Volker Weidemann*

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

A people's republic set up and led by writers, a republic torn in two by fighting between socialists and communists, a republic destroyed by right-wing troops: a hundred years ago, can the story tell us anything for today and the future? Volker Weidemann tells the story at a great pace and introduces us to people once famous—poet Rilke, novelist Thomas Mann, sociologist Max Weber—as he guides us through the tumultuous, tragic year after Germany lost the First World War. It's history we ought to know.



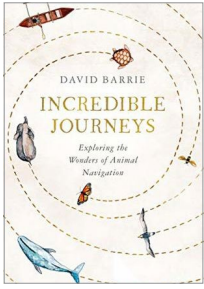
### **Ruth Bader Ginsburg: A Life**

*Jane Sherron De Hart*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Jennifer Martin AC FAA**

A beautifully written, comprehensive and thoroughly researched book. This is the biography of the notorious RBG, who changed the world, one 'I dissent' at a time. One of my s-heroes.

## Books

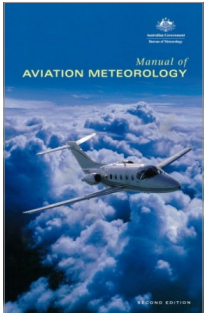


### **Incredible Journeys: Exploring the Wonders of Animal Navigation**

*David Barrie*

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

How can a dung beetle in the middle of the night roll a ball of dung in a perfectly straight line walking backwards? And how can a lobster transported by road 100 km from its normal habitat and released into unfamiliar waters, find its way home?

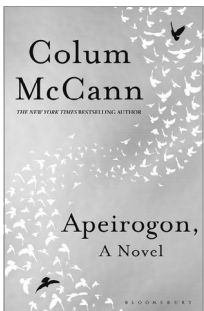


### **Manual of Aviation Meteorology**

*Bureau of Meteorology*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Adrian Baddeley FAA**

A short introduction to weather, at all scales from local breezes to global climate. Beautifully presented, clearly explained, succinct and rewarding.

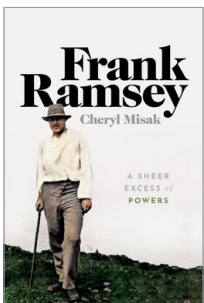


### **Apeirogon: A Novel**

*Colum McCann*

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

This demanding new novel by the great Irish-American author Colum McCann is a complex and compelling collage of fact and fiction about conflict and humanity, focused on two men, one a Palestinian, one an Israeli. It will fill your mind and open your heart.

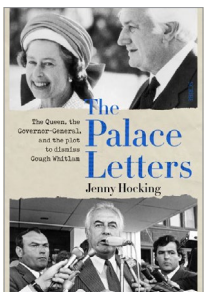


### **Frank Ramsey: A Sheer Excess of Powers**

*Cheryl Misak*

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

Ramsey (1903–1930), elder brother of Michael Ramsey, Archbishop of Canterbury, was a Cambridge prodigy, who died prematurely of a bacterial infection. He developed expertise in mathematics, philosophy and economics, jousting with Russell, Turing, Wittgenstein, Moore and Keynes—and his importance was not properly recognised until the 1960s.



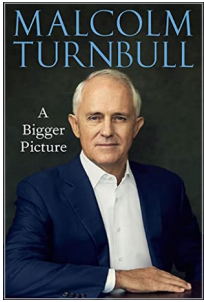
### **The Palace Letters**

*Jenny Hocking*

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

This is the product of Jenny Hocking's tireless efforts to get the National Archives of Australia to disgorge the communications between John Kerr and Buckingham Palace before Whitlam's dismissal in November 1975, and it took a High Court judgement to secure their release. Kerr's obsequious letters are toe-curling, and he was played and manipulated by the Queen's private secretary, Martin Charteris.

## Books

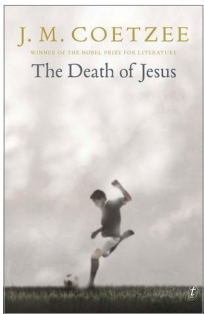


### **A Bigger Picture**

*Malcolm Turnbull*

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

This not just a conventional political memoir. The finest parts are deeply personal where Turnbull writes courageously about his childhood, interior life and the trauma of loss, especially when Tony Abbott became Liberal Leader in 2009. His writing about his mother and the art critic Robert Hughes (Lucy Turnbull's uncle) has rare insight.

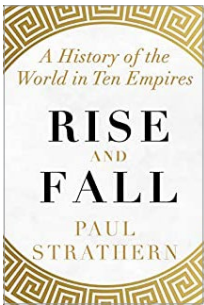


### **The Death of Jesus**

*JM Coetzee*

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

The Death of Jesus is the last of a trilogy. The books are allegorical, unsettling and not about Jesus. The Atlantic Monthly observed that the trilogy 'takes the form of a baffled, anguished, desperate drive, not to be understood, but to understand: to leap the gulf from self to other, to penetrate the secrets of another soul! The writing is mesmerising.

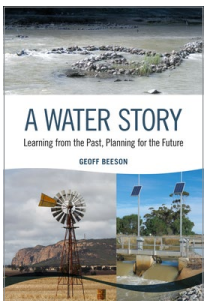


### **Rise and Fall: A History of the World in Ten Empires**

*Paul Strathern*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor John Chalmers AC FAA FAHMS**

From the Akkadian Empire to modern-day America, Rise and Fall charts the history of the world through its ten greatest empires. Through these we examine humanity's will to power in forms both infamous and poorly understood, and trace the evolution of the imperial impulse as it moves from the blunt military aggression of the ancient empires to the subtle but far-reaching cultural influence of today's superpowers.

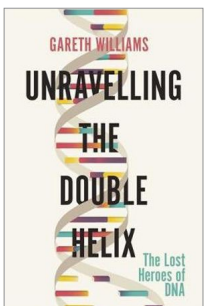


### **A Water Story: Learning from the Past, Planning for the Future**

*Geoff Beeson*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Dr TJ Higgins AO FAA FTSE**

Water is a precious chemical globally and is especially so in Australia. This very accessible book with its excellent illustrations tells of the use and importance of water from ancient times to the present. The focus is on Australia and it covers everything from aquifers to yabbies.



### **Unravelling the Double Helix: The Lost Heroes of DNA**

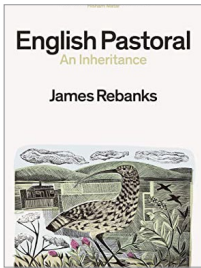
*Gareth Williams*

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

I have loved reading this book because it takes the reader into the lives, ambitions, foibles and even bloody-mindedness of a diverse group of scientists bound together, often unwittingly, in one of mankind's greatest journeys of discovery. Spanning over two centuries, the book takes the reader from the first ideas about the nucleus to realising that nucleic acids rather than proteins contain the genetic information and finally to the culmination of the story, the 'Eureka-moment' of the double helical structure of DNA. The author assumes no prior scientific knowledge in describing the importance of serendipity, coincidence, curiosity and the indomitable human spirit that led to a scientific triumph that now touches every aspect of our lives, from developing a vaccine against COVID19, to impacting much of the food we eat, to tracking down criminals or proving innocence and even to revealing our family ancestry.

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## Books

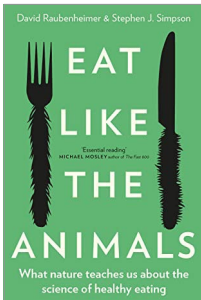


### **English Pastoral**

*James Rebanks*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Dr Jean Finnegan FAA**

A thoughtful account of how the quest for cheap food has changed farming practices and the effect that this has had on farmland in the Lake District. Rebanks tells of his efforts to return to more traditional farming practices and to restore parts of his farm to a 'wild' state with benefits for both flora and fauna.

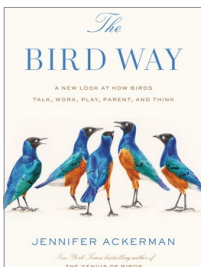


### **Eat Like the Animals: What Nature Teaches Us about the Science of Healthy Eating**

*David Raubenheimer and Stephen J Simpson*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Stephen Simpson AC FAA FRS**

From wild baboons to goeey slime molds, most every living organism instinctually knows how to balance their diets, except modern-day humans. When and why did we lose this ability, and how can we get it back? This epic scientific adventure culminates in a unifying theory of nutrition that has profound implications for our current epidemic of metabolic diseases and obesity. Raubenheimer and Simpson ultimately offer useful advice to understand the unwanted side effects of fad diets, gain control over one's food environment, and see that delicious and healthy are integral parts of proper eating.



### **The Bird Way: A New Look at How Birds Talk, Work, Play, Parent, and Think**

*Jennifer Ackerman*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Simon Gandevia FAA FAHMS**

'Bird brain' is a derogatory epithet exemplifying the belief that the mental capacity of birds is limited, particularly compared to those of the great apes and homo sapiens. After reading Jennifer Ackerman's delightful analysis of the many components of bird behaviour, you should be awestruck by the nuanced complexity and diverse evolution of the bird world. In times of climate emergency, it is illuminating to have the changes in behaviour and survival skills in birds exposed so clearly. After all, they have been around hundreds of times longer than we have! The book is filled with facts about different birds that is an enticing mix of science laced with descriptions of the author's global birdwatching experiences. Australian birds, particularly our various wrens and parrots, feature often, but the chapter devoted to the lyrebird is a must read. The lyrebird is a star of vocal mimicry but also behavioural deception. Across a range of species, birds have higher neurone counts than most mammals of similar size, including great apes. So, update your biases about birds by reading this book.

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## Children's books

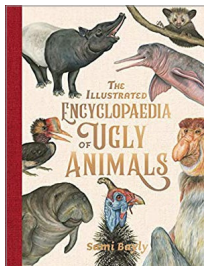


### **Wonder**

*RJ Palacio*

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

'Wonder' is a delightful book recommended for children aged 8 to 12 but its themes of identity, bullying and acceptance apply to readers of all ages. It tells the story of a boy, born with severe facial differences, as he starts school. The power of the book comes from how normal and relatable each character is and the insight into how one person can affect the lives of others.



### **The Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Ugly Animals**

*Sammi Bayly*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Simon Gandevia FAA FAHMS**

This first book by Australian natural history illustrator, Sammi Bayly, is more than a children's book—it is one for all generations. Sixty of the world's ugliest animals are each stunningly illustrated, carefully described, with notes on their size, diet, habitat, and conservation status. Several Australian animals are featured including the ghost shark, brush turkey, and southern cassowary. This book is an eye-opener for youngsters and oldsters. For both, the book is a stimulus to finding out more about the natural world.

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## Podcasts



### **13 Minutes to the Moon**

*Kevin Fong (BBC World Service)*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Ivan Marusic FAA**

Podcast on NASA's missions to the Moon. Gripping interviews and original audio recordings of mission control, astronauts and partners who made the mission possible. Apollo program revised in a refreshing way with theme music by Hans Zimmer.

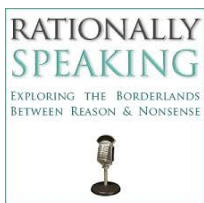


### **Terrible Lizards**

*David Hone and Iszi Lawrence*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Andrew White FAA**

This the podcast about dinosaurs that you have been missing your entire life. It brings together each week paleontologist Dr David Hone, comedian and writer Iszi Lawrence, and an expert guest. Using the latest research, they answer listeners' questions with conversations that are equally entertaining and informative.

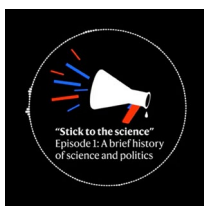


### **Rationally Speaking**

*Julia Galef (New York City Skeptics)*

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor David Balding FAA**

Philosophers critically discuss controversial issues in science and society. From the website: '[the Rationally Speaking podcast] explores the borderlands between reason and nonsense, likely and unlikely, and science and pseudoscience. Any topic is fair game as long as reason can be brought to bear upon it, with both a skeptical eye and a good dose of humor!'



### **'Stick to the Science': When science gets political**

*nature.com*

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

This three-part podcast series presented by *Nature* explores the intimate relationship between politics and science.