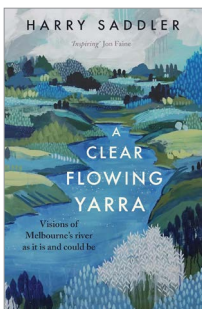


Fellows' reading, listening and viewing list 2023

Books

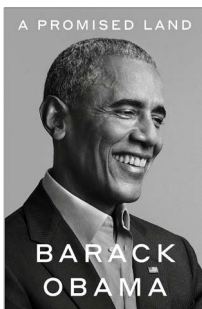


A Clear Flowing Yarra

Harry Saddler

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Doug Hilton AO FAA FTSE FAHMS**

I grew up on, in and around the Yarra in Warrandyte, 30 km or so from Melbourne, and in a way, it's shaped me just as it's shaped the landscape and community. This book is a sort of love letter to the river, a look at breathtakingly diverse and beautiful environments, places worthy of not just celebration but of documentation, discovery, understanding and protection.

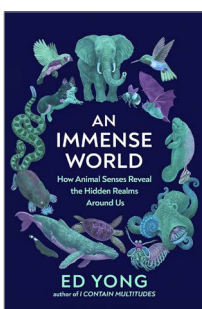


A Promised Land

Barack Obama

RECOMMENDED BY: **Dr Cathy Foley AO FAA FTSE**

A Promised Land is President Obama's autobiography: a mixture of leadership, history and American politics. It was inspiring to read how President Obama got elected, navigated two terms without a single scandal and made massive changes, even though he had to make compromises.

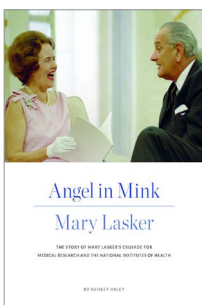


An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us

Ed Yong

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Helene Marsh AO FAA FTSE**

This book is a fascinating tour of the hidden realms of animal senses that transformed the way I perceive the world and made me realise how our cognitive biases about animal senses limit our capacity to develop solutions to reduce human impacts on animals. The work of several Fellows is featured. You will never walk your dog in the same way again.

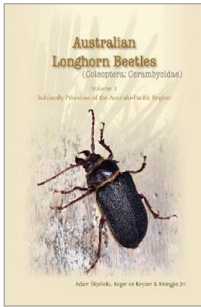


Angel in Mink: The Story of Mary Lasker's Crusade for Medical Research and the National Institutes of Health

Mary Lasker

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

This is a very readable and enjoyable book and to quote Francis Collins, former director of the NIH, 'Mary Lasker can be fairly characterised as the godmother of the National Institutes of Health.' Or to quote President Lyndon B Johnson, 'Humanist, philanthropist, activist: Mary Lasker has inspired understanding and productive legislation which improved the lot of mankind.'

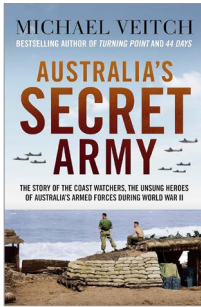


Australian Longhorn Beetles (Coleoptera: Cerambycidae) Volume 3

Adam Slipinski, Roger de Keyzer, Mengjie Jin

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Doug Hilton AO FAA FTSE FAHMS**

'Magnificent' doesn't quite do justice to this just-released book, and the series it is part of! There's a very specific focus in it but more broadly it's impossible not to be struck by the passion, verve, determination and optimism of our incredible undergraduate, PhD and postgraduate researchers and the accomplishment, continuing enthusiasm and mentorship of our more senior researchers.

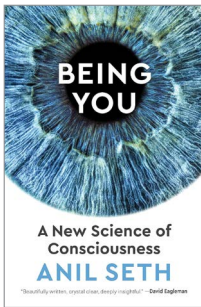


Australia's Secret Army: The Story of the Coastwatchers, the Unsung Heroes of Australia's Armed Forces During World War II

Michael Veitch

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Philip Kuchel AM FAA**

It is about some WWII history that I was shamefully ignorant of: the battles in and around the islands off New Guinea in the 1940s. The tome brims with derring-do; told in an engaging way by the author who was once a member of the satirical comedy team of Fast Forward and Full Frontal. The common attributes of the long list of heroes and heroines seems to have been ingenuity, defiance, and valour, aided by fiercely loyal native folk, in the face of a sadistic enemy.

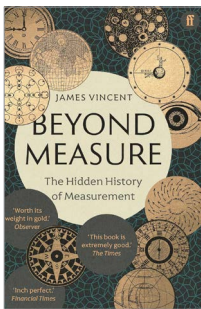


Being You: A New Science of Consciousness

Anil Seth

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Marcello Costa AO FAA**

Anil Seth's quest to understand the biological basis of conscious experience is one of the most exciting contributions to 21st century science. What does it mean to 'be you', that is, to have a specific, conscious experience of the world around you and yourself within it?

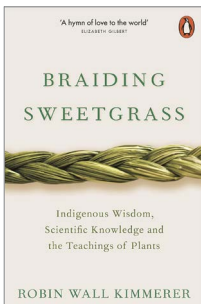


Beyond Measure: The Hidden History of Measurement

James Vincent

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

Accurate measurement underlies every aspect of life, yet we often take it for granted and seldom think how currently used units developed. From the 'nilometer' to measure the height of the annual flood in ancient Egypt, via Celsius' thermometer, carats to estimate the weight of precious gems, to modern super-accurate metric units, this book charts it all in a very accessible way. My favourite was in the 16th century to determine the length of a standard foot (as in feet and inches) 15 men ranging in heights were lined up with 'their left feet one behind the other', the total length of this close-knit conga when divided into 15 equal lengths gave the answer.

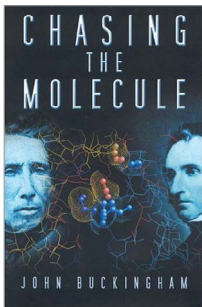


Braiding Sweetgrass

Robin Wall Kimmerer (available on Audible.com)

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Catherine Lovelock FAA**

The book is read beautifully by the author where she describes American Indigenous people's reciprocal relationship with nature. The chapters are examples of how we can improve our relationship with nature for the benefit of ourselves and nature by adopting the perspective of Indigenous people. The book has been around for a while, but it resonates strongly after the Voice referendum.

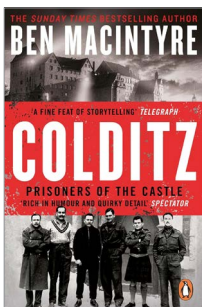


Chasing the Molecule

John Buckingham

RECOMMENDED BY: **Scientia Professor Liming Dai FAA**

Carbon, oxygen and hydrogen are vital elements for all natural products, organic compounds and our life. However, how and why such elements form the foundation for the staggering diversity of our world was unexplained until the discovery of a clear concept of chemical bonding, the vital force that made molecules from elements. Unlocking the natural world's secrets, Chasing the Molecule will make great reading for anyone interested in history of science and scientific endeavour.

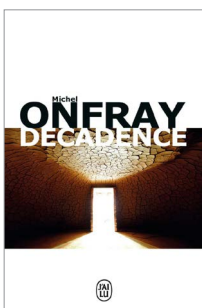


Colditz

Ben MacIntyre

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

Some may recall the excellent BBC TV series Colditz from the early 70s, but what was the actual story? After hearing MacIntyre speak at Mosman Library, I bought and read the book in a couple of weekends. The TV show covered only a small part of the drama—riveting!

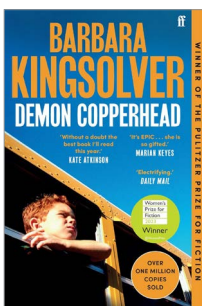


Decadence: vie et mort du judeo-christianisme

Michel Onfray

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Marcello Costa AO FAA**

In French originally, also translated in Italian but does not appear yet in English. Pity! Décadence is the second volume of a trilogy entitled Brève encyclopédie du monde (Brief Encyclopedia of the World). It presents a philosophy of history.

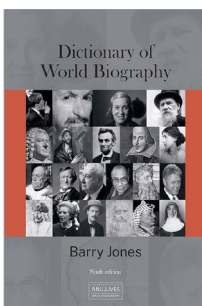


Demon Copperhead

Barbara Kingsolver

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

This wonderful book should be listened to rather than read because the reader does an outstanding job. The book is full of atmosphere and is very inspiring despite the many grim features. Listen to it!

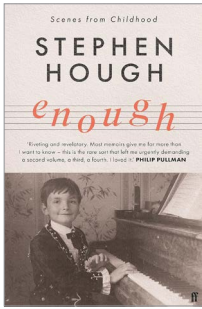


Dictionary of World Biography

Barry Jones

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

It would be grossly improper of me to promote Dictionary of World Biography, 9th edition (ANU Press) but it has been extensively revised and contains (over?) generous tributes for my 90th birthday. It is downloadable, for free, at press.anu.edu.au/publications/series/anu-lives-series-biography/dictionary-world-biography

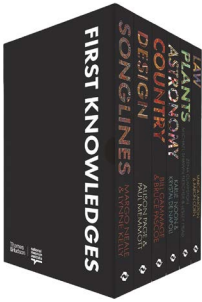


Enough: Scenes from Childhood

Stephen Hough

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

Sir Stephen Hough is an outstanding English pianist, composer and writer, who also holds Australian citizenship. A genuine polymath, his latest book *Enough* describes his weird childhood and invention of his own persona. Wonderfully written, but funny and confronting.

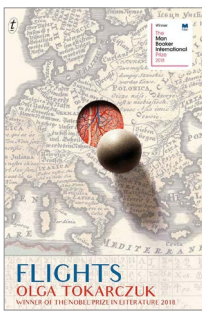


First Knowledges series

edited by Margo Neale

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Doug Hilton AO FAA FTSE FAHMS**

I am in awe of a people who can thrive on this land by doing science—asking questions of the universe about them, seeking answers through observing the natural world, the relationships between animals, plants, place and time, and refining and communicating those answers in ways that transcend generations and allow communities to flourish. When, as academics or researchers, we consider impact, that to me is the benchmark.

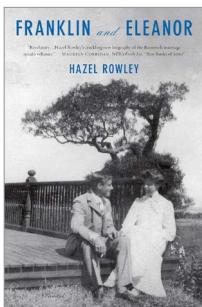


Flights

Olga Tokarczuk

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Barbara Nowak FAA**

This book really fascinates me, possibly because it was the first fragmentary novel I read, and it covers some of my favourite topics, including mobility and curiosity. I share with the narrator her curiosity and the need to travel. Interestingly, the original title refers to runners, a sect of Old Believers, who avoid evil by being in constant motion. Tokarczuk won the Nobel Prize in Literature for 'a narrative imagination that with encyclopaedic passion represents the crossing of boundaries as a form of life,' which is clearly reflected in this book.

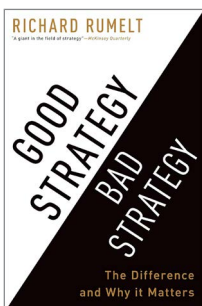


Franklin and Eleanor: An extraordinary marriage

Hazel Rowley

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

I learned so much from reading this important book about Eleanor and Franklin D Roosevelt. It is engrossing and very well written.

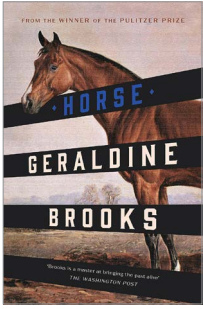


Good Strategy Bad Strategy

Richard Rumelt

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Robert Williamson FAA**

If you have ever felt queasy and uneasy in the presence of strategic plans, with their visions, mission statements, shared values and KPIs, this book shows a better way. Written by a former engineer, who learns from both negative and positive examples, Rumelt shows the essence of strategy is not the common fluff, but coherent action backed by an argument. He also makes a compelling case that developing strategy is the same as doing science; thus this is the perfect book for any scientist who wants an alternative to the torrent of nonsense that now goes under the guise of strategy.

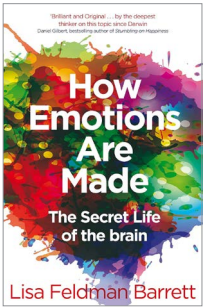


Horse

Geraldine Brooks

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Halina Rubinsztein-Dunlop AO FAA**

A discarded painting in a roadside clean-up, forgotten bones in a research archive, and Lexington, the greatest racehorse in US history. From these strands of fact, Geraldine Brooks weaves a sweeping story of spirit, obsession and injustice across American history. A very interesting story told in a beautiful way.



How Emotions Are Made: The Secret Life of the Brain

Lisa Feldman Barrett

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Thomas Maschmeyer FAA FTSE**

In How Emotions Are Made, psychologist and neuroscientist Lisa Feldman Barrett draws on the latest scientific evidence to reveal that our 'common-sense' ideas about emotions are dramatically out of date. Emotions are not universally pre-programmed in our brains and bodies; rather they are psychological experiences that each of us constructs based on our unique personal history, physiology and environment.



If Science is to Save Us

Martin Rees

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Jeremy Mould FAA**

Well known for his books on a dystopian future (e.g. Our Final Century), Martin Rees has turned that argument on its head and asks, what must society and we scientists do to save the situation? He identifies the global mega-challenges as: food and energy; the biosphere and climate change; biotechnology; and enabling artificial intelligence to transform our economy and society. If science is to save us ('which surely it can'), what are our responsibilities, how can our efforts be optimised, how should we engage with the public and with government, how should we teach and inspire the next generation, and what changes are needed in the organisations where science is done?

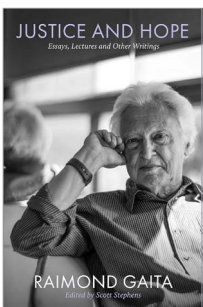


Invention to Innovation

Larry Marshall

RECOMMENDED BY: **Dr Cathy Foley AO FAA FTSE**

Every scientist should read Invention to Innovation: a manifesto of what we—scientists, leaders, investors and policy makers—need to do to translate research into growing innovative, competitive companies and industries that deliver positive benefits to society, the environment and the economy. Larry presents a paradigm shift in thinking about what it means to achieve impact from science. Lots of great case studies.

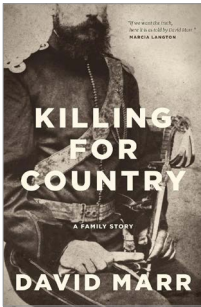


Justice and Hope

Raimond Gaita

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

Rai Gita is an outstanding moral philosopher who agonises over the state of the world. Born in Germany, he arrived in Australia at the age of four and his memoir Romulus, My Father became an internationally honoured film. Justice and Hope is an important collection of his writings.



Killing for Country: A Family Story

David Marr

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

David Marr digs into his family's history and discovers its involvement in the horrific mass killings of First Nations people in Queensland by the Native Police in the unrecorded 'frontier wars'. The timing of publication was unfortunate—just days before the October 14 Referendum on The Voice. It should have appeared months earlier.

ALSO RECOMMENDED BY: **Dr Hugh Tyndale-Biscoe AM FAA**

This is a profoundly important book because it finally establishes the awful truth about how this country was taken by British people from the Aboriginal people. David Marr was horrified to learn the part his direct ancestors had played in it, and, with his great skills as a writer and punctilious scholarship, leaves no possible means to avoid the truth of what happened everywhere. No longer can anyone deny the theft or pretend that Australia was peacefully acquired from those who were living here in a sustainable way.

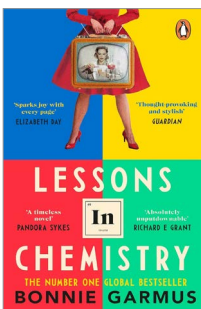


Klara and the Sun

Kazuo Ishiguro

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

An extraordinary novel tackling modern issues around AI, human loneliness, relationships, the massive challenges confronting younger generations of people, and family dynamics.

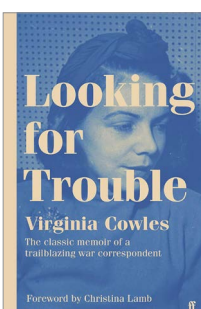


Lessons in Chemistry

Bonnie Garmus

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Barbara Nowak FAA**

This is a very engaging and entertaining novel, which was hard to put down. The main character, Elizabeth Zott, is a research chemist struggling to be successful in patriarchal environment in the early 60s. Forced to resign from her research position, she becomes a host of cooking show, where she applies her research experience which inspires American housewives. This book is the debut novel for the author, who turned 65 a few days after the book was published.

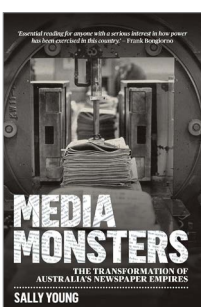


Looking for Trouble

Virginia Cowles

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

An extraordinary autobiography of an American 'society journalist' who became a war correspondent, from the time of the Spanish Civil War, through the Second World War. She was a woman of extraordinary style and courage. I particularly liked her rationale for her love of England.

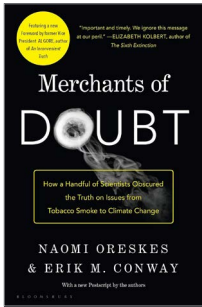


Media Monsters: The Transformation of Australia's Newspaper Empires

Sally Young

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

Sally Young is a professor of political science at the University of Melbourne, and Media Monsters is a ripping yarn, almost a horror story, about the political influence of newspaper magnates from 1941 onwards. The notes and index are exemplary and Young's insights into the Fairfax, Packer and Murdoch dynasties very disturbing. However, (Sir) John Williams and Ranald Macdonald come out of it well.

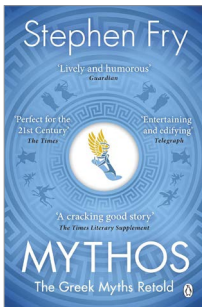


Merchants of Doubt

Naomi Oreskes & Erik M Conway

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Malcolm Sambridge FAA**

How a handful of scientists obscured the truth on issues from tobacco smoke to global warming. A sobering look at what it can take for science, reason and logic to win the day, and how damaging disinformation campaigns can be. The real hero of the story, however, is science, which gets heard in the end.



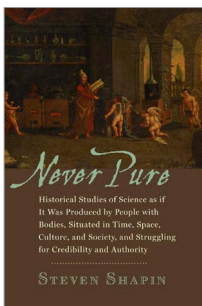
Mythos

Stephen Fry

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

Brilliant re-telling of fabulous Greek mythologies. For those who loved the classics at school or those, like me, who never had the opportunity to study the classics at school.

Audiobook also available, featuring the dulcet tones of the book's author Stephen Fry.

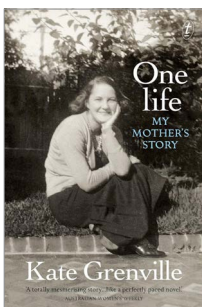


Never Pure: Historical Studies of Science as if It Was Produced by People with Bodies, Situated in Time, Space, Culture, and Society, and Struggling for Credibility and Authority

Steven Shapin

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Robert Williamson FAA**

Steven Shapin's idiosyncratic history of science stands out from the crowd for many reasons, but I think it is worth reading just for its delightful chapter three (How to be anti-scientific) that assembles a collection of outlandish sounding pronouncements on science (e.g. 'there is no such thing as the scientific method', 'scientists do not find order in nature, they put it there'). The punchline is delicious: all these apostatic claims were made by some of the most eminent scientists in history. The rest of the book is just as prickly and fun, and he finishes with the fighting words, 'we're all engineers now, and the authority of science is increasingly based not on what scientists know but on what they can help make happen.' Indeed.

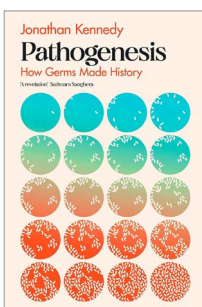


One Life: My Mother's Story

Kate Grenville

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

The story of a girl growing up in the early 20th century who trains as a pharmacist and supports her family at a time when women were meant to stop work after they married. Resonant. Glorious scene-setting. A beautiful tribute to a remarkable woman.

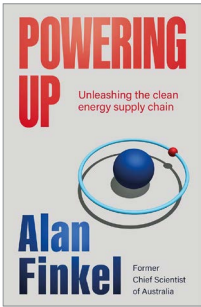


Pathogenesis: How Germs Made History

Jonathan Kennedy

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor David Balding FAA**

A whirlwind tour of world history in which almost everything is explained as a consequence of infectious diseases. The extinction of human species other than our own, prehistoric mass migrations, political instability in Rome, the 'miraculous' Spanish conquests in the Americas and even the triumph of capitalism over feudalism: 'history was not made by great men but by tiny microbes'. The devastating effect of plagues introduced by European colonisers of Australia is not covered, but the corresponding American story is given in some detail, plus a brief account of how infectious disease drove the racialisation of slavery and the rise of racist ideology to try to justify it.

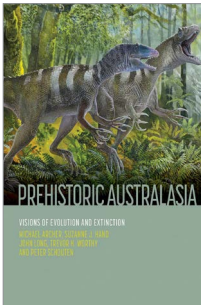


Powering Up

Alan Finkel

RECOMMENDED BY: **Dr Cathy Foley AO FAA FTSE**

Written by a former Australian Chief Scientist, Powering Up is about what is needed to achieve the emissions reduction targets to address climate change. His very first page starts with a bang, when he points out that the world has shaved only 4% off its fossil fuel consumption in the past last 30 years and needs to eliminate the remaining 83% in the next 30 years. It is a blueprint worth reading.

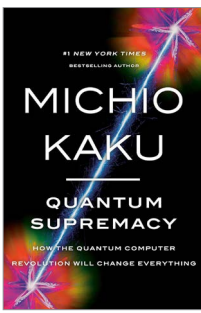


Prehistoric Australasia: Visions of Evolution and Extinction

Michael Archer, Suzanne J Hand, John Long, Trevor H Worthy and Peter Schouten

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Michael Archer AM FAA**

This book just won the Whitley Medal for the best book on natural history published in 2023. It documents the evolution of life in Australia and the surrounding countries including New Guinea and New Zealand. It is illustrated with more than 100 panoramic paintings and descriptive text accounts reconstructing a long sequence of prehistoric periods documented by fossil deposits from all states of Australia.

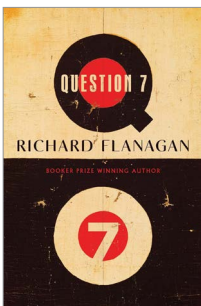


Quantum Supremacy

Michio Kaku

RECOMMENDED BY: **Dr Cathy Foley AO FAA FTSE**

Quantum Supremacy lays out how quantum computers will have the potential to unlock the mysteries of the universe and address humanity's biggest challenges. Michio Kaku, a Japanese American physics professor, is really good great at explaining deep science in ways that makes for easy reading.

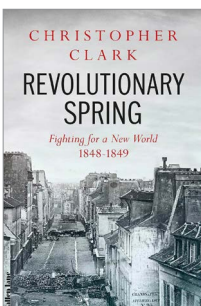


Question 7

Richard Flanagan

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

As diverse and fascinating as Moby Dick (but much shorter), this is part memoir, history, polemic and analysis, essentially about linkages. He writes about his childhood in Tasmania and muses that he has been a beneficiary of the atomic bombs dropped on Japan, because they had saved his father, a prisoner of war. H G Wells, Rebecca West and Leo Szilard get a run too. 'Only connect', as E M Forster wrote. And here it is.

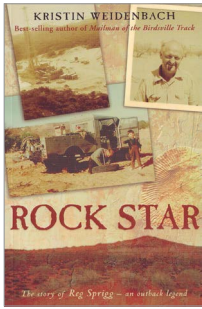


Revolutionary Spring: Fighting for a New World 1848-49

Christopher Clark

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

Sir Christopher Clark, born and educated in Sydney, is Regius Professor of History at Cambridge. His books The Sleepwalkers, Wilhelm II, Iron Kingdom, Time and Power, and his television work are outstanding, but Revolutionary Spring is of an even higher order. Often horrific, often very funny, Clark has a genius for finding unexpected linkages. Acute revolutionary observations by Margaret Fuller and Marie d'Agoult are especially valuable.

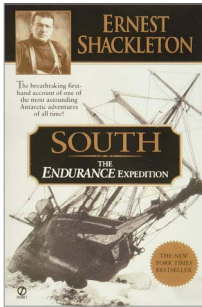


Rock Star: The Story of Reg Sprigg—an outback legend

Kristin Weidenbach

RECOMMENDED BY: Emeritus Professor David Smyth FAA

This is an absorbing biography of South Australian geologist and entrepreneur Reg Sprigg (1919–1994). He was the first to report Australian fossils of multi-cellular organisms now known as members of the Ediacaran fauna, defining a new period of geological time—the Ediacaran (635–538.8 my ago), with the base marked by a golden spike in the northern Flinders Ranges. Never a conventional geologist, he published his Ediacaran record in the Transactions of the Royal Society of SA in 1947 (current impact factor 0.8), only ever received an honorary doctorate, promoted oil and gas exploration including the Gidgealpa/Moomba gas field, and contrarily established the Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary in the Northern Flinders Ranges.

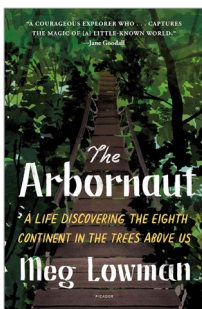


South: The Endurance Expedition

Ernest Shackleton

RECOMMENDED BY: Emeritus Professor Peter Koopman FAA

Perhaps the most gripping story ever published, describing Shackleton's shipwrecked attempt to cross Antarctica in 1914, and written by the man himself based on his, and his crew's, diaries. What happened to these 28 men is a testament to human courage against impossible odds, and to the power of great leadership. Exceptional reading.

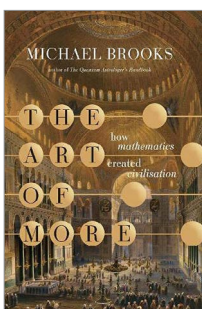


The Arbournaut

Meg Lowman

RECOMMENDED BY: Professor Barbara Nowak FAA

This is an amazing book about forest canopies and their biodiversity and the woman who pioneered this research and did everything she could to do this, including sampling from a cherry-picker bucket while pregnant. From researcher and explorer to storyteller, educator, and mentor, she is now active in global forest conservation, promoting sustainability and forest stewardship. While many of her life stories will be very familiar to women scientists, the scientific content of the book and the fieldwork adventures will excite all readers.

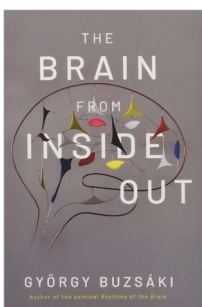


The Art of More: How Mathematics Created Civilization

Michael Brooks

RECOMMENDED BY: Emeritus Professor Harry Poulos AM FAA FTSE

An entertaining and instructive book setting out the history of various branches of mathematics over the past five millennia, and how they have impacted on our lives and led to the development of the civilisations that we now inhabit.

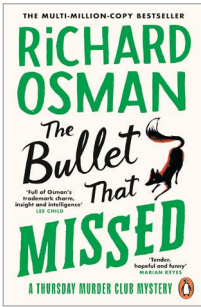


The Brain from Inside Out

György Buzsáki

RECOMMENDED BY: Professor Gerard Milburn FAA FRS

Anyone interested in modern neuroscience should read this book but everyone working in AI and machine learning must read this book.

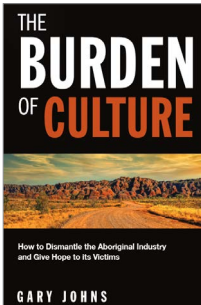


The Bullet that Missed

Richard Osman

RECOMMENDED BY: Professor Jennifer Martin AC FAA

Murder mystery meets aged care resident sleuths. Brilliant premise. Character development exceptional. Third book in the Thursday Murder Club series. Loved it.

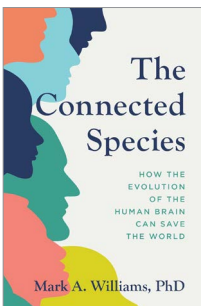


The Burden of Culture: How to Dismantle the Aboriginal Industry and Give Hope to its Victims

Gary Johns

RECOMMENDED BY: Professor Nick Martin FAA FAHMS FASSA

A detailed and scholarly analysis of the reasons for Aboriginal disadvantage. But, as the subtitle implies, with a hopeful message as to how this might be ameliorated. A must-read for those who care about the plight of our Indigenous fellow-citizens.

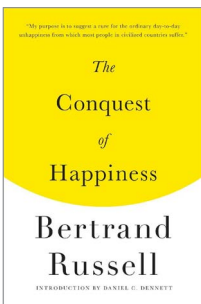


The Connected Species

Mark Williams

RECOMMENDED BY: Dr Cathy Foley AO FAA FTSE

The Connected Species is a book about the evolution of the human brain and how understanding this can have a positive impact on humanity. I found the book particularly helpful during the national conversation I led to inform the draft National Science and Research Priorities. Australians told me they want to understand how our brains work and respond to the digital world, mis- and dis-information, and connect with each other to achieve a cohesive society. Although it sounds very academic, it was a terrific read.

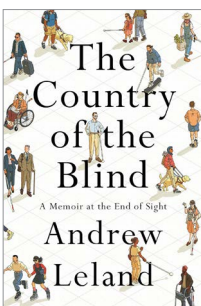


The Conquest of Happiness

Bertrand Russell

RECOMMENDED BY: Professor Hala Zreiqat AM FAA FTSE FAHMS

In each chapter, Russell effectively dissects the essence of unhappiness, yet he consistently finishes these sections with an optimistic perspective.

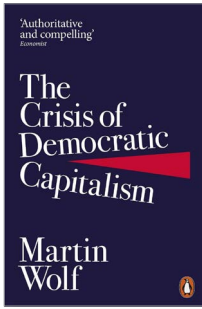


The Country of the Blind: A Memoir at the End of Sight

Andrew Leland

RECOMMENDED BY: Emeritus Professor Neville Nicholls FAA

A memoir of the author's gradual transition into blindness due to retinitis pigmentosa. A history of blindness and those who have worked to improve access and empowerment. A meditation on how people adjust to their changing circumstances.

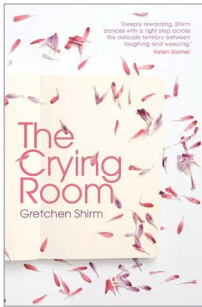


The Crisis of Democratic Capitalism

Martin Wolf

RECOMMENDED BY: **Emeritus Professor Ian Jackson FAA**

A provocative analysis of the challenges currently facing liberal democracies around the world. The huge growth of inequality during the last few decades is attributed to the waning influence of organised labour as the nature of work has changed, combined with deregulation of the corporate sector. Wolf argues convincingly that such growing inequality leads to desperation among those left behind, thereby underpinning the appeal of populists like Trump and Johnson, and is a serious threat to the very future of democracy.

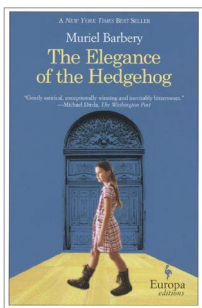


The Crying Room

Gretchen Shirm

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor David Burke AC FAA FTSE**

A young Australian author who writes about emotional repression crossing three generations of the same family. The book explores family dynamics, and the possibilities that life may offer as children grow into adulthood, having been raised in a repressive atmosphere by the mother (Bernie), where expressing emotion is discouraged. The book is essentially a number of interrelated short stories, and has had impressive reviews.

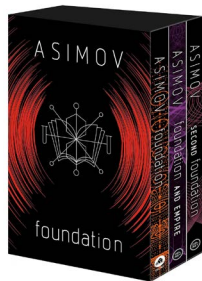


The Elegance of the Hedgehog

Muriel Barbery

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor David Burke AC FAA FTSE**

This book focuses on a concierge, Renée, in a Paris apartment in rue de Grenelle, a lady of considerable self-taught learning but one who dresses down and acts as the building tenants would expect of a concierge. However, Paloma, the precocious but potentially suicidal daughter of wealthy tenants in the building, sees through Renée and her inner refinement.

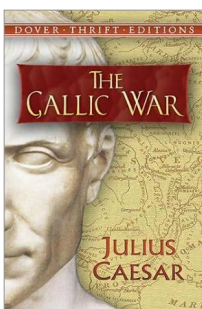


The Foundation Trilogy

Isaac Asimov

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Rod Boswell AM FAA FTSE**

The decay of the galactic empire and then the Foundation closely resembles Australian universities.

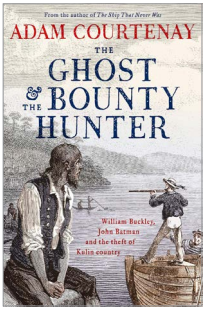


The Gallic War

Julius Caesar (English translation by HJ Edwards, 1917)

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

The eight books of The Gallic War are Caesar's accounts of his strategies and campaigns in Gaul and Britain (58–50 BC), which form an extraordinary narrative and military history. Caesar led from the front and was not only brilliant at tactics and strategy but also a skilful psychologist and politician. His writing is coherent and concise and, although written in the third person, Julius Caesar comes alive as he describes a brutal and unforgiving world.

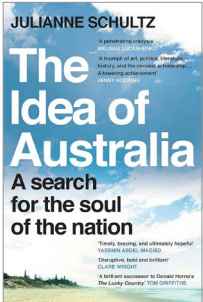


The Ghost and the Bounty Hunter

Adam Courtenay

RECOMMENDED BY: Professor Susanne von Caemmerer FAA FRS

Provides an account of the adventures of William Buckley, a convict who fled a failing colony in the land of the Kulin nation (now Port Phillip Bay). It describes how he was accepted, against the odds, by the Wadawurrung people, and his subsequent life with them. Adam Courtenay clearly has his father's (Bryce's) gift for writing and brings William's account to life. This book also provides an insight to the life of Aboriginal people before European settlement, and the cruel events that led to the theft of Kulin country and the birth of Melbourne.

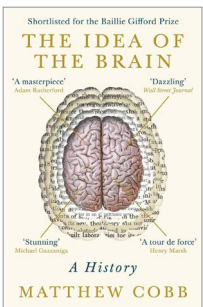


The Idea of Australia: A Search for the Soul of the Nation

Julianne Schultz

RECOMMENDED BY: Professor Robyn Williams AO FAA

It is a very timely update of Donald Horne's *The Lucky Country* published in 1964, the year I arrived age 20, in Australia.



The Idea of the Brain: A History

Matthew Cobb

RECOMMENDED BY: Professor Marcello Costa AO FAA

This is the story of our quest to understand the most mysterious object in the universe: the human brain. Today we tend to picture it as a computer. Earlier scientists thought about it in their own technological terms: as a telephone switchboard, or a clock, or all manner of fantastic mechanical or hydraulic devices. Could the right metaphor unlock its deepest secrets once and for all?

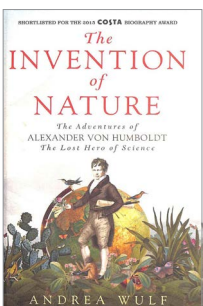


The Idealist

Nicholas Jose

RECOMMENDED BY: Dr Oliver Mayo FAA FTSE

Strong history (Timor Leste's birth travails), strong story (personal loss): in a word, enthralling.

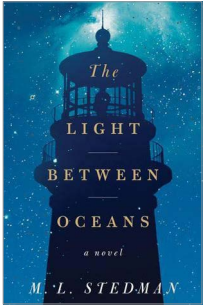


The Invention of Nature: The Adventures of Alexander von Humboldt, the Lost Hero of Science

Andrea Wulf

RECOMMENDED BY: Professor Peter Currie FAA

An extremely well written account of this amazing man's journey both intellectually and physically. There did not seem to be a place he did not go or a fellow scientist he did not influence. *Invention of Nature* became a New York Times bestseller and was praised in *Literary Review* as 'a dazzling account of Humboldt's restless search for scientific, emotional and aesthetic satisfaction.' Will not disappoint.

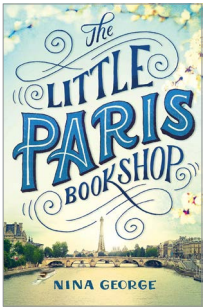


The Light Between Oceans

M L Stedman

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

The book is set in the southwest corner of WA where the Indian and Southern oceans meet. It is about opposites based on the two-faced god Janus looking in opposite directions. The main theme is how one event can bring joy to one person and sadness to another.



The Little Paris Bookshop

Nina George

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor David Burke AC FAA FTSE**

This book is focused on Jean Perdu who operates a bookstore on a barge on the Seine in Paris, France. He is an eccentric middle-aged man. He was once in love with Manon, a woman who was married to another man. A few years into their relationship, she left him and never returned. And he never forgot, until one day he sets off on his barge, navigating France's waterways, south to Provence to find her.

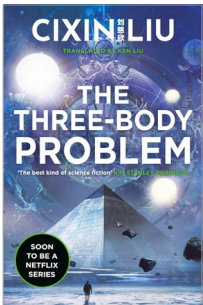


The Pole

JM Coetzee

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

You could say JM Coetzee is a safe choice, but he always adds something beyond expectation. It is a book of stories. I found The Pole (book title also) truly revelatory.

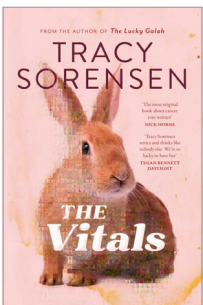


The Three-Body Problem

Cixin Liu

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Peter Taylor FAA**

This is the first (and best) book in a trilogy. It is one of the most original combinations of modern history and science fiction that I have ever come across.

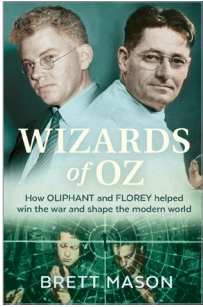


The Vitals

Tracy Sorensen

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

Tracy was our Writer in Residence at the Charles Perkins Centre in 2020. Her novel, The Vitals, written during her residency, is an extraordinary and lauded literary cancer memoir—with anthropomorphised organs and deeply imbued with country Australia, where rabbits are metastases and a ute is, well, a uterus. Deeply moving—literally.

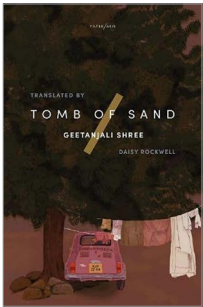


Wizards of Oz

Brett Mason

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

Despite the title, this book has nothing to do with a yellow brick road but describes the roles that Howard Florey and Mark Oliphant played in developing three technologies—radar, atom bomb and penicillin—that arguably won World War II and certainly changed the 20th and the 21st centuries. In very readable prose, Mason weaves Florey's and Oliphant's scientific achievements together and places them in the wider context, often with intriguing juxtapositions. For example, Mason notes that the critical experiment that first demonstrated the effectiveness of penicillin in a living host was carried out on the same day as Dunkirk, leading him to comment, 'Florey's lab may have been the only place in England where people were euphoric!'

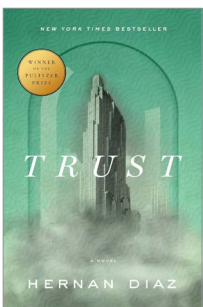


Tomb of Sand

Geetanjali Shree

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Jenefer Blackwell FAA**

An 80 year-old woman slips into a deep depression at the death of her husband, then resurfaces to gain a new lease on life. Rich with fantastical elements, folklore, and exuberant wordplay, this novel explores timely and timeless topics, including Buddhism, global warming, feminism, Partition, gender binary, transcending borders, and the profound joys of life. It's quite a challenging read—an award should go to the translator as well as the author.

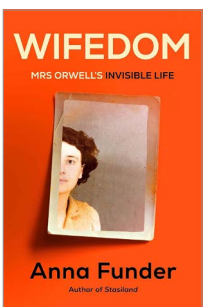


Trust

Hernan Diaz

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Halina Rubinsztein-Dunlop AO FAA**

At once an immersive story and a brilliant literary puzzle, Trust engages the reader in a quest for the truth while confronting the deceptions that often live at the heart of personal relationships, the reality-warping force of capital, and the ease with which power can manipulate facts.



Wifedom

Anna Funder

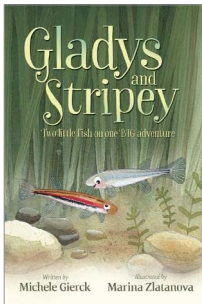
RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Tony Basten AO FAA FTSE**

A must-read for all fans of George Orwell (Eric Blair). Wifedom speaks to the unsung work of women everywhere today, while offering a breathtakingly intimate view of one of the most important literary marriages of the 20th century. It is a book that speaks to our present moment as much as it illuminates the past.

ALSO RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Robyn Williams AO FAA**

The book is about the 'invisible' wife of George Orwell. Anna is a magnificent writer who investigates the seemingly unreachable evidence like the true daughter of a great scientist that she is.

Children's books

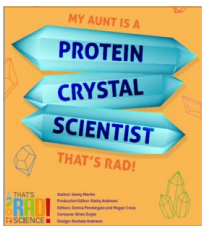


Gladys and Stripey: Two little Fish on One BIG Adventure

Michele Gierck

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Robyn Williams AO FAA**

Lots of science, beautifully done.



My Aunt is a Protein Crystal Scientist. That's RAD!

Jennifer Martin, Brian Doyle, Rachele Andrews

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

Yes, I'm spruiking my own book! Well, it was a big hit at the public lecture I gave in Melbourne this year. If protein crystals aren't your thing, the That's RAD! SCIENCE series has another four science books, all written for children, by women scientists. And they'll soon all be available for free online.



The Wee Free Men

Terry Pratchett

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Rod Boswell AM FAA FTSE**

Armed with only a frying pan and her common sense, young witch-to-be Tiffany Aching must defend her home against the monsters of Fairyland. Luckily, she has some very unusual help: the local Nac Mac Feegle (aka the Wee Free Men), a clan of fierce, sheep-stealing, sword-wielding, six-inch-high blue men.



Wintersmith

Terry Pratchett

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Rod Boswell AM FAA FTSE**

Tiffany Aching put one foot wrong, made just one little mistake...And now the spirit of winter is in love with her. He gives her roses and icebergs and showers her with snowflakes, which is tough when you're 13, but also just a little bit...cool.

Podcasts



Eras: The Beatles with Martin Freeman

Martin Freeman

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

To celebrate The Beatles' last ever record release (Now and Then) in 2023 the BBC trawled through their archives to find long-forgotten audio treasures that track the Fab Four's rise to fame. Narrated by Martin Freeman. If you're a music lover, a history buff, or a nostalgia nut, this is a must.



In Our Time

Melvyn Bragg

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

With over 1,000 episodes, covering subjects as diverse as Gödel's Incompleteness Theorems, through conspicuous consumption in Tudor England to the metaphysical poets in 17th century England, the In Our Time podcast is a treasure trove of wonderfully accessible in-depth knowledge.

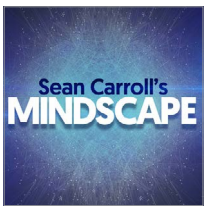


Matters Microbial

Dr Mark O Martin

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Cynthia Whitchurch FAA**

Matters Microbial is a podcast that discusses the wonders of microbiology with the microbiologists that study them. It provides remarkable insights into the latest microbiology research and the enthusiasm of the scientists for their work.

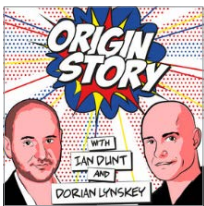


Mindscape

Sean Carroll

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

Sean Carroll was my PhD office mate—a theoretical cosmologist who dabbles in philosophy. This blog is a free-flowing conversation with interesting people across the whole of academia that tries to think across disciplines, and includes everything from the biggest ideas to pop culture.

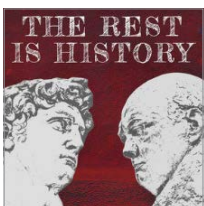


Origin Story

Dorian Lynskey and Ian Dunt

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Louis Moresi FAA**

A politics and culture podcast in which Ian Dunt and Dorian Lynskey dig into commonly used/mis-used terms and clichés with a great deal of laughter, some seriousness and (watch out—not family friendly!) lots of swearing. As it says on the back of the box: 'Ian and Dorian focus their attention on exploring a single over-used (and over-abused) word or phrase. Through a combination of historical, etymological, and contextual analysis, they unmask the true meaning of our most popular misinterpreted expressions.' Personal favourites: McCarthyism/witch-hunts, fascism, woke!



The Rest is History

Tom Holland and Dominic Sandbrook

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

I have become addicted to this enormously popular podcast presented by two English historians. They witter on amusingly about a vast array of historical topics including fun facts such as Empress Josephine's lack of teeth. The range of topics is enormous, and the backlog presents a continuing resource.

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

Historians Tom Holland and Dominic Sandbrook are interrogating the past and attempting to de-tangle the present. They discuss every historical topic under the sun: the birth of modernity, Julius Caesar crossing the Rubicon, and whether Richard Nixon was more like Caligula or Claudius. They're distilling the entirety of human history, or, as much as they can fit into about 50 minutes.

ALSO RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Naomi McClure-Griffiths FAA**

The Rest is History is a wonderfully accessible, entertaining podcast delivered as a conversation between two historians, Tom Holland and Dominic Sandbrook. They take in-depth looks at a variety of different topics. I really enjoyed their two-part series on Captain Cook and its look at Joseph Banks as a scientist and a bit of a 'cad'!

TV series



Good Omens

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Rod Boswell AM FAA FTSE**

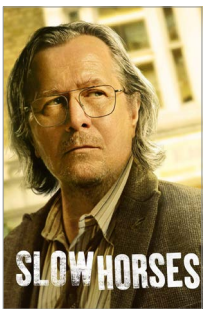
The coming Armageddon but the Devil's child has been swapped...Hilarious.



Ningaloo Nynggulu

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Robyn Williams AO FAA**

Tim Winton takes us on a journey to one of the last intact wild places left on Earth. Its First Peoples call this global treasure Nynggulu. The rest of us know it as Ningaloo.



Slow Horses

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

A third series of Slow Horses, a series about intense and dirty competition among spy agencies, starring Gary Oldman and Kristin Scott-Thomas, both at the top of their form, began in November 2023, on Apple TV+. Fortunately, rivalry and dirty tricks are unknown in the Australian scientific community, but, nevertheless, don't miss it!



Total Control

RECOMMENDED BY: **Professor Rod Boswell AM FAA FTSE**

Very good sarky take on a First Nations woman in politics with backstabbing and pathos all around.