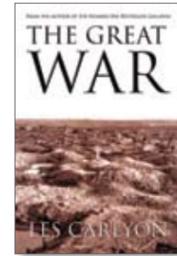


And then there were ten...

IN A YEAR WHEN THE WALKLEY AWARD FOR BEST NON-FICTION BOOK BLOSSOMED WITH A RECORD 75 ENTRIES, TAKE A MOMENT TO GET TO KNOW THE CREAM OF THE CROP...

THE GODFATHER



Les Carlyon, *The Great War*
(Pan Macmillan Australia, RRP \$55)

The big daddy of the bunch in more ways than one, at first glance Carlyon's behemoth was one to strike fear in the hearts of judges and readers alike. But his signature prose makes this a page-turner rather than a door-stop.

In an epic overview, Carlyon chronicles the battles of the Somme, Fromelles and Ypres with stories, letters and diaries that breathe life into those terrible battles of 90 years ago. From military strategy to the day-to-day struggles of men in the trenches, *The Great War* is

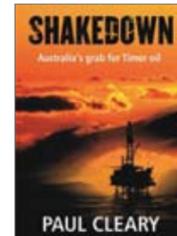
Carlyon's latest addition to a lifetime of prolific writing – and to the annals of Australian history.

And who's to say your biceps won't be considerably bulkier after sustained bedtime reading of Carlyon's 1,000-plus pages?

What the judges said...

"Balancing mountainous research and an impassioned voice, Carlyon has brought events from nearly a century ago back to life. The mythology of the Great War is being constantly reinterpreted and revised in Australia, and Carlyon has built a bridge from the past to the present out of documents and personal visits to the Western Front. Fluently written, mastering the immense challenges of structuring the conflict into a coherent narrative, *The Great War* has become one of the definitive works of Australian history."

THE POWER STRUGGLE



Paul Cleary, *Shakedown*
(Allen & Unwin, RRP \$29.95)

Cleary first visited East Timor on a tourist visa in 1997, sparking a powerful interest in the troubled country. In 2003 he began work for the new East Timor government as an adviser on negotiations with Australia over oil and gas resources in the Timor Sea.

Shakedown is the story of the six-year, \$100-billion power struggle between a fledgling nation and its supposed liberators.

It's a dramatic, David and Goliath-style tussle, and raises questions about how much the fight for economic independence led the East Timorese government to neglect the other foundations for a nation which is once again a battlefield.

What the judges said...

"A disturbing, behind-the-scenes account of the rapacious negotiations between the Australian government and the East Timorese during the carve-up of billion-dollar oil and gas under-sea reserves. An openly biased insider's account which documents meticulously an unseemly chapter in Australian history. A significant story that needed to be widely heard."

THE HOT LITTLE NUMBER



Clive Hamilton, *Scorcher*
(Black Inc Books, RRP \$29.95)

Executive director of The Australia Institute, Hamilton had been writing about climate change for more than a decade when it suddenly became the hot potato *du jour* in 2005.

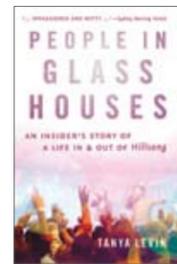
Although he was glad the global warming problem had finally penetrated public consciousness, Hamilton was concerned the public's ignorance about the politics, history and international implications of the issue were

making it easy for the government to distort the public debate. He decided to tell the "dark and disturbing back-story" of the "greenhouse mafia" and *Scorcher: The Dirty Politics of Climate Change* is the result. Climate change may be hot right now, but juicy exposés of the corruption behind the political scenes will never go out of style.

What the judges said...

"Passions run hot in the climate change debate, which makes Clive Hamilton's cool head on the topic all the more admirable. Fact by incriminating fact, detail by detail, he closes in on those complicit in the shameful hijacking of Australian climate change policy by corporate self-interest. *Scorcher* is a devastating study in the corruptibility of political power."

THE GOD SQUAD BOTHERER



Tanya Levin, *People in Glass Houses*
(Black Inc Books, RRP \$29.95)

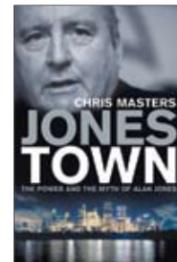
Dropped by original publisher Allen & Unwin due to the legal risk it posed, Levin's book is an insider's account of Australia's "religious corporation", Hillsong Church. Levin grew up in the Assembly of God church which would spawn the all-singing, all-swaying, multi-million-dollar Hillsong empire. She stopped attending regularly at 19, and has now been banned from entering any Hillsong church or land.

In an era where religion is cause for so much suspicion and fear, the rise of a new form of worship with not only immense popularity but big money-spinning potential is an intriguing story. Where do such institutions fit into the broader community? How do religion, money and power intersect, and how does Hillsong reflect the Australian culture? It's a story Levin was better placed than most to write.

What the judges said...

"Tanya Levin exposes some unpalatable truths behind the polished smiles which front the increasingly wealthy and powerful Hillsong 'family'. In doing so, she confronts demons of her own at the heart of her troubled and intensely personal relationship with the church. It's a poignant story told with courage, integrity and wit."

THE OLD MASTER



Chris Masters, *Jonestown*
(Allen & Unwin, RRP \$49.95)

In a controversy to rival Levin's publishing rollercoaster, Masters' long-awaited biography of shock jock Alan Jones was dropped by ABC Books amid legal concerns. Masters, whose 40-year career with the national broadcaster has netted him three Walkley awards, is passionate about investigating power and its abuse. *Jonestown* grew out of a *Four Corners* piece on Jones in 2002, and Masters believes it is an investigative work on par with his groundbreaking anti-corruption reporting of the 1980s.

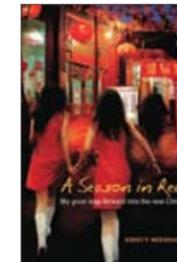
The popular fixation on Jones' sexuality that drove much of the book's publicity is just one element of Masters' study of a complex, enigmatic public figure. Ultimately, Masters' concern is the tense tightrope of populism and politics Jones treads. Arriving at a time when the traditional talkback heavyweights were toppling, it makes for fascinating reading.

What the judges said...

"A finely written, rounded and ultimately sympathetic portrait of the Sydney broadcaster, and a clear standout among this year's entries. Masters deftly cuts across criticism that he had an axe to grind, balancing a rigorous study of

the role and pervasive influence of radio talkback on government and policy makers – and the potential for media corruption – with a richly detailed and human picture of the so-called battler's friend."

THE AWAKENING DRAGON



Kirsty Needham, *A Season in Red*
(Allen & Unwin, RRP \$24.95)

After a stint at the "official" Chinese newspaper *China Daily*, reporter Needham returned to *The Sydney Morning Herald* and was struck by the contrasts for journalists in each country.

In China she had faced daily challenges to report; even an innocuous agony-aunt column she wrote for a *China Daily* spin-off paper for school students wasn't immune to being edited to toe the government line.

Despite the frustrations, Needham grew to love the country with its myriad contradictions and contrasts: rich and poor, opulence and paucity, enthusiastic consumerism and stifling pollution. Here she vividly re-creates that world for us, raising issues including propaganda, surveillance, freedom of speech and the potential for the internet to turn everything on its head.

What the judges said...

"An unusual and refreshing book, deeply observant and sharply written, it documents in the humdrum of everyday life, the constant contrast and tension between state control and the liberation of ideas in modern China. Billed as a travel memoir, this is in fact rather more: an unpretentious and indeed sophisticated account of how the tiniest freedoms still carry an anchor attached."

THE CORRUPTION BUSTER



Caroline Overington, *Kickback*
(Allen & Unwin, RRP \$26.95)

The Australian Wheat Board scandal was a story *The Australian* journalist Overington first came to in 2004. She went on to write more than 150 stories on the kickback imbroglio and covered the Cole inquiry. Overington believed Cole would never fully uncover the true story given the parameters the government had set, and set out to tell the story herself.

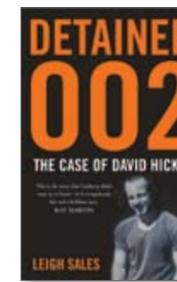
She delved into the Howard government's inaction on the AWB's corruption, which ultimately cost Australia's international trade reputation and billions in business.

Along the way she picked up a Walkley in 2006 for investigative reporting, and caused great annoyance to the Government. In March last year foreign minister Alexander Downer announced at a press conference: "I beg people to read the transcript... not *The Australian*, not Caroline Overington."

What the judges said...

"Caroline Overington's forensic eye for detail and indisputable mastery of both her craft and her subject could hardly have failed to produce the consummate work that is *Kickback*. More than the definitive record of Australia's most shameful trade scandal, it's also a rattling good yarn."

THE JAILBAIT



Leigh Sales, *Detainee 002*
(Melbourne University Press, RRP \$32.95)

In December 2001, Sales was posted to America as the ABC's Washington correspondent, arriving at the height of the US's war on terrorism. Three weeks later, Australian citizen David Hicks was captured in Afghanistan and brought to the Guantanamo Bay detention camp in Cuba, where he spent five years without trial. Sales was on the ground the whole time, and in *Detainee 002* she pulls together a thorough investigation, revealing the intricacies of Hicks' case, the

conditions of his imprisonment, the machinations of the military commissions at Guantanamo, and the plight of an inexperienced Marine, Major Michael Mori, who took on the US president on the Australian's behalf.

Sales was a Walkley winner in 2005 for her radio reporting of alleged corruption in the Guantanamo trials.

What the judges said...

"Leigh Sales' *Detainee 002* is an outstanding example of the power a reporter can bring to her craft when given the time and space to engage with a story in great depth. Sales' forensic examination of the David Hicks' case rests firmly on two of journalism's oldest virtues: diligence and fairness."

THE AFRICAN QUEENS



Sally Sara, *Gogo Mama*
(Pan Macmillan Australia, RRP \$32.95)

In 2000, at 29, Sara became the first woman appointed to the ABC's Africa bureau. After five years covering poverty, war, political unrest and ethnic violence, Sara spent six months travelling across the continent to collect the stories of 12 remarkable women.

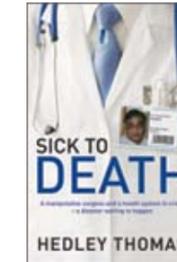
The stars include a Rwandan genocide survivor, Zanzibar's most famous living diva, a Liberian former child soldier and a freed slave from Ghana. From the townships of Johannesburg to the back alleys of Zanzibar, from the frontline of the war in Sudan to the nightclubs of Cairo, Sara's women are the voices of Africa and the oppressed everywhere.

In giving them a voice, Sara hopes to open our eyes to the people who are left to deal with a huge share of the "social and economic debris of the continent's catastrophes".

What the judges said...

"In *Gogo Mama*, Sally Sara profiles 12 African women in simple, visceral, and affecting style. Often she travels to remote and dangerous places to provide a glimpse into the lives of people who have survived genocide and war, recording their stories with sensitivity and heart."

THE BITTER PILL



Hedley Thomas, *Sick to Death*
(Allen & Unwin RRP \$29.95)

Queensland-based journalist Thomas was working at *The Courier-Mail* when he broke the Dr Death story. Rogue foreign-trained surgeon Jayant Patel was horrendously botching procedures at Bundaberg Base Hospital, and more than 17 of his patients didn't survive.

Thomas's investigation began with a Google search that discovered Patel's tarnished professional record in America, and went on to win him a

Walkley in 2005. Research for the book took Thomas to remote India, the United States and towns throughout Queensland as he notched up more than 100 interviews.

It's a story full with human tragedy and a vivid cast of characters, exposing a disturbing culture of silence within the medical profession and a worrying penchant for cover-ups at the highest political levels.

Above all, *Sick to Death* is about the power of truth, and how ordinary individuals can achieve extraordinary change when they have the courage to speak out.

What the judges said...

"Hedley Thomas has his considerable skills as an experienced investigative reporter on display in this book. He has not fallen into the trap of simply reworking his original columns. The writing is engaging and at times emotional without straying into tabloid sensationalism. The subject matter is not simply of interest to Queenslanders, but of national importance."

By Clare Fletcher and Jane Barraclough