



BESTSELLERS

- 1 **Breath**
Tim Winton, Penguin
- 2 **4 Ingredients Cookbook**
McCosker & Bermingham, Gary Allen
- 3 **Hold Tight**
Harlen Coben, Hachette Livre
- 4 **A New Earth**
Eckhart Tolle, Penguin
- 5 **Change Of Heart**
Jodi Picoult, Allen & Unwin

FICTION

- 1 **Breath**
Tim Winton, Penguin
- 2 **Hold Tight**
Harlen Coben, Hachette Livre
- 3 **Change Of Heart**
Jodi Picoult, Allen & Unwin
- 4 **This Charming Man**
Marian Keyes, Penguin
- 5 **Other Queen**
Phillipa Gregory, HarperCollins

NON-FICTION

- 1 **Last Lecture**
Pausch/Zaslow, Hachette Livre
- 2 **Underbelly - The Gangland War**
J. Silvester & A. Rule, Gary Allen
- 3 **Leadbelly**
Silvester/Rule, Gary Allen
- 4 **The Mother's Book**
Elma Van Vliet, Allen & Unwin
- 5 **Home: A Memoir**
Julie Andrews, Hachette Livre

SCIENCE FICTION

- 1 **Host**
Stephanie Meyer, Hachette Livre
- 2 **Twilight**
Stephanie Meyer, Hachette Livre
- 3 **Eclipse**
Stephanie Meyer, Hachette Livre
- 4 **New Moon**
Stephanie Meyer, Hachette Livre
- 5 **Shadow Isle**
Katharine Kerr, HarperCollins

CHILDREN'S

- 1 **Schooling Around Treasure...**
Andy Griffiths, Pan Macmillan
- 2 **Zac Power Volcanic Panic**
H.I. Larry, Hardie Grant Egmont
- 3 **Playing With Fire**
Derek Landy, HarperCollins
- 4 **Zac Power Sky High**
H.I. Larry, Hardie Grant Egmont
- 5 **Alphabet**
Matthew Van Fleet, Simon & Schuster

Source: Dymocks

A tribute to one woman's courage

Ignorance is Bliss or Knowledge is Power: which approach would you take if genetic testing could tell you what sort of diseases you might face, or which ones might kill you?

Jessica Queller faced this choice after watching her mother beat breast cancer only to die a brutal death from ovarian cancer.

At 34, she stumbled into a medical minefield of confronting decisions when, in her grief, she took the test for a BRCA mutation — the genetic marker for breast and ovarian cancer — and found she tested positive. This gave her an 87 per cent chance of getting breast cancer, and a 49 per cent chance of getting ovarian cancer.

Pretty Is What Changes (Vintage, \$29.95) is Queller's captivating memoir about being single and childless and trying to decide what to do with this explosive information — to take a gamble on a probable death sentence, or to take drastic preventative measures and have both breasts and ovaries removed.

But more than that, it's the story of mothers and daughters and body image and ideas about sexuality, and grief and longing. All of these topics add a fascinating layer to an already compelling story.

The first part of Queller's book deals with her own childhood and passage to womanhood, and her often-tense relationship with a glamorous mother who placed great emphasis on accentuating her sexuality.

For a girl who was more interested in hiding her curves and accentuating her intelligence, it was a fraught relationship with both her



mother and her body. As Jessica nurses her mother towards death, she comes to terms with these defining influences, and it is a wonderful journey to behold, told by Queller with great eloquence, tenderness and poignancy.

In describing her mother's illness and death, Queller deftly sets up the context in which she makes a dramatic decision about her body. She faces the depressing reality that, in her mid-30s, she still wants to find the man of her

dreams and have children, but she must lop off her breasts and have her ovaries removed to save her own life.

There are some deeply moving moments, but Queller's light-hearted, humorous touch cushions the horns of her awful dilemma.

Ultimately, Queller's story is one of overcoming fear, of confrontation and bravery, of deeply questioning oneself and also finding the right answers. It's an inspirational and important book.



with Bob Carr

What are you reading?

My serious reading commitment is re-visiting Homer's *Iliad* in a translation by Robert Fagles. It is a terrific account of humanity at war, more precisely the first amphibious invasion mounted by a western country.

Once you get to know the characters — Hector, Achilles, or Helen — you begin to enjoy the experience of walking through this universe.

It's an example of how a formidable classic justifies persistence, and on a re-reading it becomes lighter, more humane. I'm also dipping into a history of the CIA.

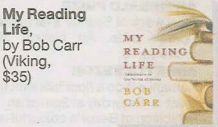
Who are your favorite authors or influences?

I recommend as the most important book of the past 100 years Primo Levi's *If This Is A Man*, an account of the survival of this Italian Jew in Auschwitz. Why? Read the first chapter of my book.

What is your book about?

It's about reading. It's about the best books, the funniest books, the most educational books — American history, great literature, understanding China — and a whole lot more.

It's your reading guide for the rest of your life.



My Reading Life, by Bob Carr (Viking, \$35)

Classic corner

DON QUIXOTE
Miguel de Cervantes

Written at the beginning of the 17th century, over the last two decades of Cervantes' life, *Don Quixote* follows the comic adventures of the deluded landowner Quixote and his peasant offside Sancho Panza. An avid reader of medieval romances, Quixote imagines himself to be a chivalrous knight who must save damsels in distress, in particular his own lady Dulcinea, who never actually appears in the book. Written in episodic form, in two parts, the book is the largest selling non-religious, non-political work of all time, and spawned an adjective (quixotic) that lives on.



WHERE IN THE WORLD IS OSAMA BIN LADEN?

Morgan Spurlock made a name for himself with his anti-fast food documentary, *Super Size Me*, and his next project was to try to find Osama bin Laden. Not exactly a natural progression for someone who isn't a trained investigative journalist, nor even an investigator, but Spurlock positions himself as an everyman, looking for truth and justice in a confusing and fearful world.

For him, it really is as simple as waking up one morning and deciding to "take my complete lack of knowledge, experience or expertise and put it to good use by looking for the most wanted and most dangerous man on earth". Funny and entertaining.



CERTAIN GIRLS

Jennifer Weiner (Atria Books, \$29.95)

The acclaimed author of *Good In Bed* and *In Her Shoes* reprises the smart and sassy character of *Cannie Shapiro* for this, her third novel, which explores all the emotional corners of family life.

Weiner writes about family relationships with intelligence, wit and tenderness; here she captures a mother's relationship with her pre-pubescent daughter with great accuracy.

Cannie's life is turned on its head when her husband decides he wants a last-minute baby and *Cannie* has to wrestle with secrets and lies about her daughter *Joy's* conception. Using alternating mother-daughter perceptions, Weiner gets to the heart of the matter with a snappy narrative and sharp dialogue.



SWIMMING WITH CROCODILES

Will Chaffey (Picador, \$32.95)

It's a strange place, outback Australia. Particularly so, when seen through the eyes of an outsider, which is what makes this book by American writer Will Chaffey so fascinating.

Chaffey left the cold and dark of a New England winter 20 years ago as an aimless 18-year-old and landed in wild Australia, met an enigmatic traveller and, together, the two walked through the Kimberley on a journey never before attempted by white men.

With the benefit of a little bit of age and hindsight, Chaffey elevates a tale of survival and adventure into a beautifully-written meditation on the beauty of the natural world in a unique country.