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Three Crooked Kings: Three Crooked Kings, Book 1



Synopsis

The definitive account of an era that changed Queensland society - a searing story of greed, crime and corruption. 'It was the genius of the system.... From day to day you didn't know who was on the take or not. You didn't know who you could trust.' Three Crooked Kings is the shocking true story of Queensland and how a society was shaped by almost half a century of corruption. At its core is Terence Murray Lewis, deposed and jailed former police commissioner. From his entry into the force in 1949, Lewis rose through the ranks, becoming part of the so-called Rat Pack with detectives Glendon Patrick Hallahan and Tony Murphy under the guiding influence of Commissioner Frank Bischof. The next four decades make for a searing tale of cops and killings, bagmen and blackmail, and sin and sleaze that exposes a police underworld which operated from Queensland and into New South Wales. This gripping story exposes the final pieces of the puzzle, unearths new evidence on cold cases, and explores the pivotal role that whistle-blower Shirley Brifman, prostitute and brothel owner, played until her sudden death. Based on extensive and unprecedented access to Terry Lewis and his personal papers as well as hundreds of interviews with key players and conspirators, award-winning journalist and novelist Matthew Condon has crafted the definitive account of an era that changed a state and is still reverberating to this day.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A wonderfully researched investigation into the history of the Queensland Police Force from the 1950's to the mid 70's. The three corrupt officers otherwise known as the Rat Pack were Glen

Hallahan, Tony Murphy and Terry Lewis. We know it wasn't until the ground-breaking Fitzgerald inquiry in the late 80's that these men (and a few others) were finally caught and penalised for their crimes but here the author reveals their origins and guides us through their introduction to the force and the beginning of their corrupt dealings with criminals and prostitutes. We learn about the Police Commissioner Frank Bischof who ran the force and incubated the trio's dishonest tendencies. His tentacles touching every element of the Queensland underworld included taking payments from illegal brothels and SP bookies. Bischof even managed to get himself awarded the inaugural Queensland Father of the Year.... even though he and his wife had no children!!!!!! The story unfolds across the length and breadth of the state from Townsville to Brisbane and across to the NT border. Innocent men are sent to the gallows, prostitutes are murdered, pimps are blown up, businesses are destroyed and families are ruined all for power and money. This is not Chicago in the shadow of Al Capone and his gangsters prohibition but Brisbane in the 1960's ruled by first, an ALP gerrymander then a Country Party version under the iron-fist of Joh Bjelke-Peterson and his cronies. They say bad things happen when good people do nothing but the corruption in the Queensland Police Force during this time was too much for too many good men. A number of honest Police officers, politicians and average citizens tried to do all they could but were eventually thwarted by three of the most cunning, devious and even deadly Policemen who ever wore a badge. It's a great read and I'm about to get stuck into the sequel, *Jacks & Jokers* which deals with the late 70's and 80's under Lewis as Commissioner and the final years of Joh's premiership.

One reviewer said that it was boring, with long factual passages. There's an element of truth in this, in that there were long factual passages, but it was still interesting, especially for those of us who lived through at least part of this period. I finished it in a day, and am awaiting the sequel with great interest. I remember many of the events of the seventies... the bombing and murders, but even the parts about the 50s and 60s, when I was not aware of what was happening, were interesting. On one hand, they were making teenage bodgies wear white shirts and ties, but on the other, they were taking bribes from brothels and bookies. What a juxtaposition. Nice job Matthew.

For those people who are now age pensioners this story re-tells very recent history and goes into far more detail than did the media stories during the time of the Fitzgerald Inquiry. This book also serves to underline the very real danger of corruption when one takes freedom for granted. Freedom will only be retained through eternal vigilance. Let's hope the painful lessons learned from that time will not be forgotten by the assumption that our freedom is assured and cannot be

curtailed.

Gripping, couldn't put it down. Was up til 2.00a.m. so many nights. Matthew Condon has described what these scumbags did in great detail. I lived through this period in Queensland and felt the jackboot of the Queensland police in my face.....literally! Hopefully this great book causes these mongrels more grief and never lets people forget what happens if you don't stand up and be counted.

interesting little read but only if you hve a living breathing experience of the Queensland of old - where the coppers where unbelievable and the crooks loved it... really something to read if you are concerned about the concept of despot in a democracy and the development of a police as political weapon

Very well researched and a great read about police corruption in Queensland and New South Wales. It confirms that power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely.

This revealing book is an insight to the alleged crooked sections of the Qld. and NSW police systems in the 1960's and 1970's. It also touches on the political oversights that allowed this to happen.

Such an interesting account of Brisbane's history with the Queensland Police. Never knew the extent of what took place stretching so far back in our city. Anyone who remembers the Fitzgerald inquiry should read this to understand where it all began and how it evolved. Amazed!

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