

University of Queensland Press

Three Crooked Kings

Matthew Condon

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 book exposes the final pieces of the puzzle, unearths new evidence on cold cases, and explores the pivotal role that whistleblower 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, *Three Crooked Kings* is the first of two explosive books. Awarded journalist and novelist Matthew Condon has crafted the definitive account of an era that changed a state and is still reverberating to this day.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Matthew Condon is a prize-winning Australian novelist and journalist. He is currently on staff with the *Courier-Mail's Qweekend* magazine. He began his journalism career with the *Gold Coast Bulletin* in 1982 and subsequently worked for leading newspapers and journals including the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Daily Telegraph* and Melbourne's *Sunday Age*. He is also the author of ten books of fiction, most recently *The Trout Opera* (Random House, 2008) and the non-fiction book *Brisbane*, (New South Books, 2010).