

Geraldine Doogue AO

The honorary degree of Doctor of Letters was conferred upon Geraldine Doogue by the Chancellor, Ms Belinda Hutchinson AM at a special honorary award ceremony in celebration of excellence in journalism in Australia at 5.00pm on 5 August 2017.

Citation

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present Geraldine Doogue AO to you for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (*honoris causa*).

Geraldine is a renowned Australian journalist and broadcaster with experience in print, television and radio, who is well-known for her contribution to reporting on religious and social affairs.

Geraldine was born and raised in Perth. She had originally planned a career as a schoolteacher. However, having completed her arts degree in 1972 at the University of Western Australia, she applied on an impulse for a journalism cadetship with *The West Australian* instead. Since then, she has thrived on that impulsive decision.

Within the first ten years of her career, Geraldine had carved out a reputation in print, television and radio, including two years at the London Bureau working for the Murdoch group's *Australian* papers.

During her time in London, Geraldine was interviewed by an ABC television reporter for an episode of the program *Four Corners*. The ABC executives were so impressed with Geraldine's on-screen presence that they offered her a role as the Perth compere of the then-new current affairs television program *Nationwide*. Geraldine soon moved to Sydney to host the NSW edition of the program and established herself as one of the most respected and popular personalities on national television.

Geraldine then worked for a time on commercial radio, with 2UE, and on commercial television, co-presenting Channel 10's main news bulletin *Eyewitness News*. After returning to the ABC in 1990, Geraldine played a major role in ABC TV's coverage of the Gulf War in 1991.

In 1992, Geraldine began presenting *Life Matters*, a new ABC Radio National program which set out to cover the full gamut of social issues in everyday life. In 1998, she also became host of ABC TV's *Compass* program, which looks at matters of spirituality, philosophy and belief every Sunday evening. After 11 years with *Life Matters*, Geraldine moved to Saturday mornings to host ABC Radio National's *Saturday Extra*, a radio program focusing on international politics, Australia's role on the world stage, and business matters. In her ongoing role as presenter of *Saturday Extra* and *Compass*, Geraldine continues to tackle a wide range of subjects with rigour, optimism, humour and warmth.

In recent years, Geraldine has taken a particular interest in the relationship between Islam and the Western world. In 2003, she co-produced the program *Tomorrow's Islam* with Peter Kirkwood, examining the ways in which Western Muslims have been seeking solutions for some of the most pressing issues in 21st century Islam. A co-authored book arising from the program, *Tomorrow's Islam: Uniting Age-old Beliefs and a Modern World*, was published by ABC Books in 2005. Geraldine has also authored several other publications and in 2015 she was editor of *The Climb: Conversations with Australian Women in Power*, published by Text Publishing.

Alongside her work in the media, Geraldine has served on several boards, including the Telstra Foundation, the St James Ethics Centre, the Sydney Youth Orchestra and the Grattan Institute.

Geraldine's contribution to Australian journalism and the community has been recognised with a number of awards. While covering the Gulf War for the ABC, she received two Penguin Awards for excellence in broadcasting and a United Nations Media Peace Prize. In 2000, Geraldine was awarded a Churchill Fellowship for social and cultural reporting. In 2003, she was made an Officer in the Order of Australia for service to the community, particularly as a commentator for social change, and to the media through raising public awareness of issues involving ethics, values, religion and spirituality.

Chancellor, I present Geraldine Doogue AO for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (*honoris causa*), and I invite you to confer the degree upon her.