

Citation – Kate McClymont AM

Monday, 18 May 2026, 2.30pm

Vice-Chancellor and President, it gives me great pleasure to present Kate McClymont AM for an Honorary Doctor of Letters (honoris causa) in recognition of her outstanding accomplishments as an investigative journalist and for her sustained contributions to the University of Sydney community.

Kate attended both Orange High School and Frensham School in Mittagong, matriculating in the top two percent of NSW HSC students. She then graduated from the University of Sydney with a Bachelor Arts with honours, majoring in English Literature.

After university, Kate worked for a publishing company and at the Australian Caption Centre, before being selected, from 1,200 applicants, as one of only 30 trainee journalists to join *the Sydney Morning Herald*.

Over the following decades, Kate remained with *the Herald*, breaking major news stories exposing corruption and abuses of power in the political, corporate and public spheres. Now the paper's Chief Investigative Reporter, she is widely regarded as one of Australia's leading journalists and is often referred to as "the queen of Australian investigative journalism". Of her profession, Kate has said: "*our job is not to be loved – our job is to tell the truth and do so without fear or favour*".

Kate is perhaps best known for her coverage of former NSW Labor politician Eddie Obeid, whose convictions stemmed in part from her investigations. She published a book on the case, *He Who Must Be Obeid*, in 2014.

Her other high-profile investigations have included television star, Don Burke's serious misconduct, concerns about neurosurgeon Charlie Teo's practices, the NRL salary cap scandal, The Jockey Tapes Affair, and allegations involving broadcaster Alan Jones. She also hosted a Walkley-nominated podcast, *Liar Liar*, on fraudster Melissa Caddick, which has been downloaded more than seven million times. Her second book *Dead Man Walking: The Murky World of Michael McGurk and Ron Medich* was published in 2019.

Kate chaired the Walkley Foundation Advisory Board for three years and, in 2013, returned to the University of Sydney as a Fellow of the University's Senate. She served the maximum 10-year term during which she also served as Pro-Chancellor for three years.

Kate was inducted into the Australian Media Hall of Fame in 2017 and over her distinguished career, has received numerous awards including ten Walkley Awards—including the Gold Walkley and the 2023 Award for Outstanding Contribution to Journalism— eight Kennedy Awards, the 2012 NSW Journalist of the Year Award, the Australian Shareholders' Association Award for Excellence in Financial Reporting, the NSW Law Society's Golden Quill Award, the Australian Racing Writer of the Year Award, the Australian Sports Commission Media Award, the 2012 George Munster Award for Independent Journalism; the Australian Press Council's Press Freedom Medal; and she was nominated for the 2024 Graham Perkin Australian Journalist of the Year in the Melbourne Press Club's Quill Awards.

In 2020, she was made a Member of the Order of Australia for significant service to journalism and to the community.

The late journalist Ben Hills wrote of her: "If a journalist's job is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable, you can judge her success by the virulence of her victims." Recognising Kate today underscores the vital role of investigative journalism in democratic societies.

Vice-Chancellor and President, as we stand in this place devoted to uncovering new ways of enriching our knowledge, I present Kate McClymont AM for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa), and I invite you to confer the degree upon her.