

Mr David Ewan Marr

The honorary degree of Doctor of Letters was conferred upon David Ewan Marr, BA LLB *Sydney*, by the Chancellor at the Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences graduation ceremony at 11.30am on 11 October 2013.

Citation

Chancellor, I have the honour to present Mr David Ewan Marr for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (*honoris causa*) in recognition of his outstanding achievement as a journalist and critical commentator.

David Marr graduated from the University of Sydney with a Bachelor of Arts in 1968 and a Bachelor of Laws in 1971. From 1972, after travelling in Europe and Africa, Mr Marr worked as a journalist on the *Bulletin* magazine and in 1980 he became editor of the *National Times*.

Mr Marr joined the ABC's *Four Corners* program as a reporter in 1985. His coverage of the deaths of Aborigines in custody in Western Australia, Black Death, saw him awarded both a Walkley Award and a Human Rights Commission Award.

At the ABC he also worked as a presenter for *Radio National* and from 2002 to 2004 he hosted the ABC's *Media Watch* program.

Mr Marr has also written a number of highly acclaimed books. His biography of the then Chief Justice Sir Garfield Barwick titled *Barwick*, published in 1980, won the NSW Premier's Prize that year. He wrote his second book, *The Ivanov Trail* (1983), after covering the Royal Commission into Australian Security Intelligence Organisation. Mr Marr is best known for his third book, *Patrick White: A Life*, published in 1991, for which he won much critical acclaim.

Mr Marr has also published *The High Price of Heaven* (1999), a collection of essays about the enemies of pleasure and freedom; with Marian Wilkinson, *Dark Victory* (2004), an account of the Tampa, Children Overboard affair and the Howard Government's Pacific Solution; and *The Henson Case* (2008) on the issues raised by Bill Henson's photographs of children. *The Henson Case* was shortlisted for the Alfred Deakin Prize for an Essay Advancing Public Debate in the 2009 Victorian Premier's Awards and the Non-Fiction Prize in the 2009 Prime Minister's Literary Awards.

In 2010, he won a Walkley Award and was shortlisted for the 2011 Queensland Premier's Literary Award, Literary or Media work Advancing Public Debate, for his Quarterly Essay *Power Trip: The Political Journey of Kevin Rudd*. In 2011 he published *Panic*, a collection of essays about the fears that drive Australian politics.

Mr Marr's 2012 Quarterly Essay *Political Animal, the Making of Tony Abbott* won the 2013 John Button Prize. Last month, he published a further Quarterly Essay, *The Prince, Faith, Abuse and George Pell*.

His career as a reporter and writer has been complemented by a sustained social commentary through the pages of the Australian newspapers and TV programs. He has utilised the media to question values, reflect on society, and contribute significantly to the intellectual debate of this century. Moreover, Mr Marr has challenged audiences to confront the key issues of our times, in particular social justice topics such as asylum seekers, media corruption and homosexual equality.

Chancellor, I have great pleasure in presenting Mr David Ewan Marr for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (*honoris causa*), and I invite you to confer the degree upon him.