

Dr Anne Summers AO

The honorary degree of Doctor of Letters was conferred upon Anne Summers by the Pro-Chancellor, Ms Dorothy Hoddinott AO at a Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences graduation at 2.00pm on 3 May 2017.

Citation

Pro-Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present Dr Anne Summers PhD AO to you for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa).

Dr Summers is a best-selling author, journalist, columnist, publisher and thought leader and is best known as a leading feminist, with a long career in politics, media, business and the non-government sector in Australia, Europe and the United States.

Anne Summers grew up in Adelaide and was educated at Cabra Convent. Leaving school at 17, she initially worked in a bank in Adelaide then as a bookshop assistant in Melbourne until she returned to Adelaide, enrolling in 1965 in a Bachelor of Arts degree in politics and history at The University of Adelaide. While at The University of Adelaide, she became a member of the Labor Club, later becoming aligned with the radical student movement. In 1969, she became one of the founders of the Women's Liberation Movement in Australia.

In the early 1970s, Dr Summers was involved in the foundation of *Elsie*, Australia's first women's and children's domestic violence refuge and also *Refractory Girl*, a women's studies journal.

In 1975 she became a journalist, first on The National Times, then in 1979 was appointed Canberra bureau chief for the Australian Financial Review and then the paper's North American editor.

In 1979, Dr Summers graduated from the University of Sydney with a PhD. Her PhD looked at the history of women in Australia and became an acclaimed bestselling book *Damned Whores and God's Police*. This bestseller was updated in 1994 and, again, in 2002 and stayed continuously in print until 2008. A new edition was published on International Women's Day in 2016.

During the 1980s Dr Summers was First Assistant Secretary to the Office of the Status of Women in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet when Bob Hawke was Prime Minister and was an advisor, on women's issues among other things, to Prime Minister Paul Keating for a year prior to the 1993 federal election.

In the late 1980s Dr Summers moved to New York where she was editor-in-chief of Ms. – America's landmark feminist magazine. The following year, with business partner Sandra Yates she bought Ms. and Sassy magazines in the second only women-led management buyout in US corporate history.

Dr Summers joined the Board of Greenpeace Australia in 1999 and was chair of the Board from 2000 to 2006. Additionally, she was Deputy President of Sydney's Powerhouse Museum for 9 years.

Her other books include *The Misogyny Factor*, *The Lost Mother: A Story of Art and Love*, *On Luck*, *The End of Equality*, *Ducks on the Pond*, *Gamble for Power* and *Her-Story: Australian Women in Print* (with Margaret Bettison) and she writes a regular opinion column for the Sydney Morning Herald.

In 2012 Anne began publishing Anne Summers Reports, a free digital magazine that reported on politics, social issues, art, architecture and other subjects not covered adequately by the mainstream media. In 2013 she launched her series of Anne Summers Conversations events with former Prime Minister Julia Gillard in front of a packed Sydney Opera House.

In 1976 Dr Summers was awarded the Walkley award for Best Newspaper Feature Story for her investigation into NSW prisons. In 1989, she was made an Officer in the Order of Australia for her services to journalism and to women and in 2011, was honoured as an 'Australian Legend' with her image placed on a postage stamp.

She has received Honorary Doctorates from Flinders University, the University of New South Wales, the University of South Australia and the University of Adelaide.

Dr Summers has continued to educate, challenge, entertain and inspire those who have followed her. Anne was a leader of the generation and the movement that changed Australia for women.

Pro-Chancellor, I present Dr Anne Summers AO, for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa) and I invite you to confer the degree upon her.