

Emeritus Professor Clifford Turney

The honorary degree of Doctor of Letters (DLitt) was conferred upon Emeritus Professor Clifford Turney, BA MEd PhD *Sydney*, at a conferring of degrees ceremony held on 19 December 2003. Professor Turney was Managing Director, Sydney Academic Press, and Foundation Dean of the Faculty of Education from 1986 to 1993.

Citation

Chancellor, I have the honour to present Emeritus Professor Cliff Turney for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters honoris causa.

Emeritus Professor Cliff Turney is acknowledged as one of Australia's most influential figures in the field of Teacher Education. He is a leader whose legacies will be evident for many years to come. As a scholar Professor Turney has made a major impact on the development of the field of History of Australian Education, with highly influential analyses of educational leadership and influence. As a prominent figure within the University of Sydney, being employed here for more than three decades, Professor Turney is remembered as the foundation Dean of the former Faculty of Education who, probably more than any other individual, shaped the study and promotion of educational studies at this University.

Educated at Fort Street High School, the University of Sydney and Balmain Teachers' College, Cliff Turney embarked on a career as a primary school teacher, holding several positions between 1953 and 1960. He was appointed Lecturer in Education in 1962, and quickly began a career-long dedication to the reform and revitalisation of teacher education. He designed and put into place Australia's first Bachelor of Education degree whose structure, by permitting concurrent disciplinary and educational studies, was revolutionary at the time.

Professor Turney's blueprint for teacher education, evident in Sydney's first Bachelor of Education programs, became the national standard. All universities in Australia providing teacher education today owe much to the Turney model. Professor Turney was wedded to the concept of the 'scholar teacher', whose integrating of scholarship with pedagogical skill and insight provided a sound basis for the emergence and development of teaching as a true profession. Professor Turney insisted on three features of teacher education – that it be grounded in disciplinary depth; that it demonstrate rigorous analysis of educational theory and research; and that it be directly related to the practical realities in the classroom.

In a myriad of ways, Cliff Turney put these principles into effect, not only in this University but also through his national profile as a reformer and scholar. His numerous books and other publications on teacher education were of the highest standard, and were complemented by his membership of several influential committees of inquiry into teacher education, his leadership of several academic and professional societies, and his work in editing scholarly journals. His mentorship of early-career teacher educators and researchers was legendary, as was his inspirational postgraduate supervision and leadership of numerous and diverse research teams. His research and development work, utilising a range of educational technologies as a professional development tool, was ahead of its time and, again, widely influential.

As a historian, Professor Turney helped shape the emerging post-war revitalisation of the History of Australian Education. His edited three-volume masterpiece, *Pioneers of Australian Education*, provided a rich basis for much subsequent scholarship, by Turney himself and his fellow historians. He produced a range of institutional histories, not least that of Sydney Grammar School and, with others, the two-volume history of the University of Sydney. Overall, Turney's prodigious research into the history of education kept a sharp focus on persons and practices that at the time broke new ground and set new standards, providing lessons in educational reform and leadership that remain salient today.

Appointed as a Professor of Education in 1976, Cliff Turney on several occasions occupied positions of strategic importance for the building of Education as an academically rigorous and professionally engaging aspect of the University's profile. He was a head of department and school, and chaired the Board of Studies in Education from 1977 to 1985, at which time his persuasive influence and respect within the University made possible the establishment of a Faculty of Education. As foundation Dean, he led the Faculty through the period of amalgamation with the former Sydney Institute of Education, setting the scene for a creative and effective, if at times difficult, coming together of contrasting traditions in teacher education. Above all else, Professor Turney's resilient defence of Teacher Education as an academically rigorous and demanding process worthy of a proud place in University education was a key to how Teacher Education has developed across Australia and beyond.

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