

PROFESSOR JOHN TULLOCH

My Lord and Chancellor,

Professor John Tulloch is a leading sociologist who has made widely influential contributions to cultural and media studies. He was born in India but his family, along with many other former soldiers and colonial administrators of the Raj, made their home in Bournemouth in 1946 as Indian independence drew near. John went to school in this town, and later taught in its language schools during his Cambridge University vacations. After graduating, and a short period of teaching in a Midland grammar school, he went to Sussex University as a postgraduate student and wrote the PhD which would establish him in the growing field of the sociology of culture. Here, he says, he ‘began to think critically’, and to challenge the conservative views he grew up with. And here too he met his wife, also an academic, who on the front steps of the University Library introduced herself with the stirring words ‘What are your critical assumptions?’.

The rest of John’s life has been spent in UK and Australian universities; he has strong academic footholds in both countries and moves regularly between them. He has held senior appointments at Macquarie University, Charles Sturt University and the University of Newcastle in Australia, and Cardiff, Brunel and Glasgow Universities in the UK. His 20 books (with two others currently in progress) and numerous articles reflect his interdisciplinary interests including theatre and performance theory, film history and theory, with extensive work on Australian cinema; TV drama; cultural approaches to audience theory, embracing his research at the BBC on Doctor Who; and risk and the media. He has played a leading part in establishing sociology as a method of enquiry and developing new approaches to cultural and media studies.

But John Tulloch is best known to the wider public as a survivor and symbol of the 7 July 2005 London bombings. He made front-page news, first as a bandaged and battered victim immediately after the Edgware Road bombing, and later when he was visited in hospital by the Prince of Wales. In the following year he wrote *One Day in July*, which gives an intensely vivid account of his experiences on that day, painting an unforgettable picture of darkness, destruction and death in the wrecked Underground carriage, and the painful years of recovery and reflection which followed (he still suffers post-traumatic stress disorder). But this book, revealingly dedicated to ‘all victims of the “war on terror”’, also presents a powerful discussion of ways in which some newspapers presented the terrible events of 7/7 and their aftermath. In these and other writings, and in broadcast interviews, John has taken the role of a ‘public intellectual’ who persuasively and effectively

challenges the media. Because of his high profile in this field he was widely asked by TV and the press for expert comment on the Leveson report.

John is an academic of global repute, whose career encapsulates much of the intellectual history of the social sciences in the last half century. He is also a longstanding and supportive friend of BU. His love of links between academia and industry is very much in tune with our Media School, and his scholarship addresses a range of themes that are central to its research and teaching interests. Recently he has acted as an advisor to the School as it prepared its submission to the Research Excellence Framework. In view of this, and of John's lifelong connection with Bournemouth, it is highly appropriate that this University should honour his work and achievements.

My Lord and Chancellor, I have the honour to present Professor John Tulloch, and I ask you to confer upon him the degree of Doctor of Letters, *honoris causa*.