

Citation for the award of Honorary Doctor of Medical Science Professor Lorraine Dennerstein AO

Professor Lorraine Dennerstein was appointed to a personal chair at The University of Melbourne, Australia, where she was Foundation Director of the Office for Gender and Health and Professor in the Department of Psychiatry. Her groundbreaking commitment to women's health has led to a therapeutic and social recognition of the staging of reproduction and the needs inherent at each age. She established and directed the first Australian academic centre for teaching and research in women's health and also the first inpatient mother-baby psychiatric unit in an obstetrics hospital. In recognition of her contribution to women's health she was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in 1994.

In 1970 Lorraine Dennerstein graduated MBBS achieving the Exhibition in obstetrics and gynaecology and associated prizes as well as an honour in surgery. She has been a consultant to the Commonwealth Secretariat (London), the World Health Organisation, the Global Commission on Women's Health (WHO) and the International Bioethics Committee of UNESCO. For over 30 years she has researched the relationship of ovarian steroids to mood and sexual functioning. Studies included effects on mood and sexual functioning of: changes in endogenous hormones with menstrual cycle and menopause; hysterectomy and bilateral oophorectomy; oral contraceptive pill and hormone therapy. Her population-based study of women through the menopausal transition has been able to document prospectively the relative importance of hormonal and psychosocial factors in various aspects of women's health.

Her extensive research experience includes surveys, bioavailability studies, double blind randomised clinical trials, evaluation of therapies, the development and validation of questionnaires for assessing female sexual functioning and epidemiological studies. Publications include 24 books, which she has either authored or edited, and in excess of 450 journal articles and chapters (over 260 in peer-reviewed journals). A Fellow of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, she has been president of national and international medical societies and organised national and international scientific conferences. She is a Past President of the International Society for the Study of Women's Sexual Health and is currently Review Editor of the Journal of Sexual Medicine. In July 2005 the World Association of Sexology awarded Lorraine Dennerstein a Gold Medal for Lifetime Achievement in Sexuality Research.

Lorraine Dennerstein is a world authority on menopause and her achievements for medical education in relation to women's health issues have been recognised by the Australian government and by the international medical community with multiple awards throughout her long career. She is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Psychiatry, The University of Melbourne. The excellence she has shown in good practice in women's health, in particular through midlife health projects, has been of inestimable benefit in improving awareness, investigative action and better care for women in Australia and worldwide.