Mr. Chancellor, in presenting Celia Duthie, I am keenly aware that she needs no introduction, for the name Duthie is synonymous with Vancouver. Indeed, many of us here today could not imagine a Vancouver without Duthie Books. For readers and writers west of the great divide, mere mention of the name evokes visions of pleasant hours spent in pursuit of that worthiest of treasures - the perfect book. In honouring her today, we pay tribute to an individual whose unwavering commitment to writers and readers has enriched the cultural life of this province beyond measure.

Celia's father, Bill, founded the company four decades ago. A wise and decent man, he established a tradition of civility, grace, and integrity. When Celia Duthie inherited the management of Duthie Books in 1984, she made that tradition her own, giving it added luster with her wit, her style, and her unshakable belief in the importance of the printed word to the cultural life of this province. Under her guidance, the company expanded to include eight stores, a virtual bookstore known worldwide, a library wholesale company, McNeil Library Service, and BC Book Showcase for the BC Ferries. Today, Duthie Books is pre-eminent among booksellers, and Celia Duthie stands first among equals.

She has used her stature and reputation to benefit those of us who live here. From the very beginning, Duthie Books has been a tireless advocate of Canadian and BC writers and publishers. Celia, herself, is an eloquent and formidable champion not only of writers but also of readers. Her magazine, The Reader, is one of the earliest examples of her dedication to both. Since then, she has sponsored many activities that give writers voice and audiences pleasure. Milestones would include Civitas, a lectures series featuring writers on Canadian politics, the world renowned Vancouver International Writers (& Readers) Festival, The BC Book Prizes, Bard on the Beach, and Savage God's Words Words Words series.

Celia Duthie's many gestures of kindness and support are also evident, here, at Simon Fraser University. She used her considerable influence with writers and publishers to help us realize our dream of launching a Canadian Centre for Studies in Publishing. In the initial days of the Writing and Publishing Program, she sponsored a Readership Club, an important factor in our early success. And she continues her support by encouraging her staff to attend courses and by participating herself as an educator for the industry.

Mr. Chancellor, Celia Duthie once said that the book business is an art that can only get better with time and commitment. Like the writers she champions, she has worked hard to perfect her art. And she has succeeded. I am proud to present Celia Duthie for the degree Doctor of Laws, honoris causa.