Above all else, universities are places of liberty and learning where intellectual curiosity should be set afire, cultivated and passed on with respect to each new generation. Madam Chancellor, it is with deep satisfaction that I introduce to you Dr. Geoffrey Bursill-Hall, a scholar whose life embraces learning at its core and whose residence in the house of intellect is beyond dispute.

One of Simon Fraser University's most erudite researchers and teachers, Professor Emeritus Bursill-Hall served in the Middle East and Germany with the British Army throughout World War II before receiving his Masters Degree from Cambridge and his Doctorate from the University of London in the 1950s. His early and enduring passion has been the study of grammar in the Middle Ages, a branch of linguistic history made rich by thinkers as diverse as Peter Abelard, William of Ockham and William of Nogent who observed twelfth century "viiages, towns and cities afire with the study of grammar." Into this arcane yet vital world came Bursill-Hall's penetrating gaze, opening medieval speculative grammar to contemporary view and discovering rich similarities with branches of contemporary linguistic investigation.

Guided in his earlier work by the great medievalist, Dr. Richard Hunt, Bursill-Hall set himself a near impossible task which took twenty years to complete: the compilation of the seminal guide to medieval grammar, A Census of Medieval Latin Grammatical Manuscripts, published in 1981. While engaged in this remarkable undertaking, in 1971 Dr. Bursill-Hall completed his comprehensive study, Speculative Grammars of the Middle Ages: the 13bctrine of the 'Partes Orationis' of the Modistae, and in 1972 published Thomas of Erfurt: Grammatica Speculativa. So pioneering has his work been that Dr. Bursill-Hall received a festschrift in 1980 from some of the most distinguished grammarians, linguists and historians of the Middle Ages.

As we gather to honour him today, let us not forget that Bursill-Hall is a pioneer of yet another superb undertaking. Arriving at Simon Fraser University in 1964, he founded the Department of Modern Languages and helped build its reputation for quality in the study of modern languages and linguistics. This University's early years were often turbulent ones and the guidance and good counsel given by Bursill-Hall have left their positive and lasting mark. As he presses forward on his immense edition of Roger Kilwardby's Commentary on Priscian or gives spirited leadership in his capacity as Professor Emeritus, Dr. Geoffrey Bursill-Hall provides Simon Fraser University with a scholarly beacon that lights the way ahead.

The rediscovery of Aristotle's Greek translations and the influence of his philosophy on medieval thought makes Aristotle a fitting source to cite when describing Professor Bursill-Hall: "If
happiness is activity in accordance with excellence, it is reasonable that it should be in accordance with the highest excellence." On the strength of this exhortation, Bursill-Hall should indeed be a happy man and all of us the happier for knowing him.

On behalf of the Senate, Madam Chancellor, for his scholarship and for his years of dedicated service to Simon Fraser University, I present Geoffrey Bursill-Hall for the Degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*. 