

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES: Professor Gordon Barraclough Parker

Professor Parker has been a pioneer for advanced study and treatment in his field of mood disorders which he has demonstrated so remarkably as the founding director of the internationally recognised, Black Dog Institute.

As a medical graduate from Sydney University, Professor Parker has been tireless in ensuring we bring to the table a more sophisticated approach to the treatment of mood disorders such as depression and bipolar disorder.

Professor Parker has been a leader in changing the way people think about mood disorders. He argues that we need a 'horses for courses' model that recognises multiple depressive conditions that need to be sub-typed to ensure appropriate treatments, whether biological or psychosocial.

Professor Parker continues to provide the inspiration and drive for the outstanding work of the Black Dog Institute, a not-for-profit educational, research, clinical and community orientated facility offering expertise in the diagnosis, treatment and management of depression and bipolar disorder.

Established in 2002, the Institute is affiliated with the University of NSW (UNSW) and is located on the grounds of the Prince of Wales Hospital at Randwick. The Black Dog Institute grew from an earlier research group, the Mood Disorders Unit (MDU), which had operated from the now defunct Prince Henry Hospital at Maroubra. Professor Parker founded the MDU in 1985 and was also its Research Director.

Professor Parker was also Head, School of Psychiatry, University of New South Wales (UNSW) for 20 years; Director of the Mental Health Clinical Program for 15 years and Clinical Director of the Eastern Sydney Mental Health Clinical Program Directorate for three years.

He is currently Scientia Professor of Psychiatry, University of New South Wales – and has been honoured with reappointment for a second term – in recognition of his outstanding research work and his skilled direction of the Black Dog Institute.

In 2004, Professor Parker was awarded a Citation Laureate, Psychiatry/Psychology, for being the most highly cited researcher in Australia – the then only Australian Psychiatrist listed in the domain's 200 most highly cited scientists. In 2009, the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) Web of Knowledge quantified him as the most productive Australian psychiatrist over the last decade in terms of his output (147 publications) in peer reviewed scientific journals.

In addition to his academic career, where he has: published 10 books and more than 600 scientific papers, with one book (Dealing with Depression) having sold nearly 30,000 copies, Professor Parker has shown his creative talents across a wide spectrum. He published a book of fiction in 1966; has written for The Mavis Bramston television show and OZ Magazine; has been an ABC Science Broadcaster in Sydney and London; reviewed books for the Sydney Morning Herald and The Australian newspapers for a decade; and in 2004 had a play produced by La Mama in Melbourne, shown at the Wharf Theatre in Sydney, and subsequently read at the Episcopal Actors Guild in New York in 2009.

Professor Parker is married to Dr Heather Brotchie, and they have four children and seven grandchildren.