

Living legends Academics in the spotlight

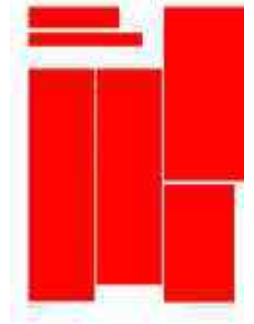
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Living legends Academics in the spotlight

These are the Australian academics, researchers and scholars who loom largest in public discourse world-wide

Germaine Greer

Writer and feminist, formerly University of Cambridge

Peter Singer

Philosopher, Princeton University, University of Melbourne

J. M. Coetzee

Novelist and Nobel laureate, University of Adelaide

Barry Marshall

Scientist and Nobel laureate, University of Western Australia

David Chalmers

Philosopher, New York University

Thomas Keneally

Author, formerly New York University and University of New England

Elizabeth Blackburn

Scientist and Nobel laureate, University of California, San Francisco

Brian Schmidt

Astrophysicist and Nobel laureate, Australian National University

Raewyn Connell

Sociologist, University of Sydney

Christopher Clark

Historian, University of Cambridge

Bruce Pascoe

Writer, University of Melbourne

Sheila Jeffreys

Academic, formerly University of Melbourne

Fiona Wood

Surgeon, University of Western Australia

David Christian

Historian, Macquarie University

Anne Summers

Writer and editor, UTS

Marcia Langton

Anthropologist and geographer, University of Melbourne

Keith Windshuttle

Historian, formerly UNSW

John Hattie

Education researcher, University of Melbourne

McKenzie Wark

Writer, The New School

Geoffrey Blainey

Historian, University of Melbourne

Mem Fox

Author, Flinders University

Gillian Triggs

Law academic, University of Melbourne

Robin Warren

Pathologist and Nobel laureate. University of Western Australia

Ian Frazer

Immunologist, University of Queensland

Michelle Simmons

Quantum physicist, UNSW

Bill Mitchell

Economist, University of Newcastle

Cordelia Fine

Historian and philosopher, University of Melbourne

Philip Alston

Lawyer, New York University

Wang Gungwu

Historian, National University of Singapore

Ghil'ad Zuckermann

Linguist, University of Adelaide

Michael Nielsen

Physicist, Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics

Graham Priest

Philosopher, CUNY Graduate Center, University of Melbourne

Alan Finkel

Scientist and engineer, former Chief Scientist

Glyn Davis

Public servant and political scientist, formerly University of Melbourne, Griffith University

Clive Hamilton

Academic, Charles Sturt University

Peter Godfrey-Smith

Philosopher, University of Sydney, CUNY Graduate Center

Alexis Wright

Author, University of Melbourne

Burkard Polster

Mathematician, Monash University

Graham Oppy

Philosopher, Monash University

Kate Crawford

AI researcher, New York University, USC Annenberg

Frank Jackson

Philosopher, Australian National University

Paul James

Academic, Western Sydney University

Gustav Nossal

Biologist and medical scientist, formerly University



of Melbourne
Genevieve Bell

Cyberneticist and anthropologist, Australian National University

Australia may be better known for celebrating sporting greatness than intellectual achievement but nevertheless it has produced a long list of academics, researchers and scholars who are well known nationally and internationally.

To decide who our best known intellectual achievers are, we counted Wikipedia page views (from 2015 to 2023) of living Australian academics, researchers and scholars to produce this list which is in order of page view count.

At the top is Germaine Greer with over 2.5 million views in the period. Animal liberation philosopher Peter Singer, who began his career at the University of Melbourne but has spent many years at Princeton, is close behind.

We have called the people on this list “living legends” because they attract worldwide attention by virtue of their ideas although many of them have little in common with each other, because they are in very different fields.

Some on the list have ideas which are in deep conflict. Dark Emu author Bruce Pascoe and history wars warrior Keith Windshuttle would not often find themselves in close company. However they are both on this list because their ideas attract

public attention.

Interestingly, the ordering of the list is not

necessarily linked to how well these scholars are known in Australia. Some of those on the list are famous overseas than in Australia, which drives up their Wikipedia views.

The list does include people who have been in the public eye like Nobel prizewinners Barry Marshall, Elizabeth Blackburn, Robin Warren, J.M. Coetzee and Brian Schmidt. But it also includes eminent scholars such as David Chalmers, Raewyn Connell, Christopher Clark, David Christian, Bill Mitchell and Cordelia Fine, even though they are not by any means household names.

Of course many people with academic connections are well known, and attract Wikipedia views, for other reasons. We have tried to limit the list to people whose primary reason of being known is research and scholarship, and who have or have had an appointment at a university or research institution. If, for example, a former prime minister took a short university appointment, that would not quality them for the list. However we concede that judgments on this are subjective.

The list is also limited to Australians, but we have defined this generously. If someone was born here, or spent a substantial amount of their life here (particularly if they worked at an Australian university) we have included them.

