

Patrick Graham, DCL '16

Domine Cancellari; praesento vobis Patricium Graham, ut admittatur ad gradum Doctoris in Iure Civili (honoris causa).

One wonders whether the young Patrick Graham, toiling away at his Foundation Year papers in the mid-1980s, had any notion that he would compose his future dispatches not in a cozy fug, like that of bay room at Kings, but in the denser, and certainly more dangerous, atmospheres of war and revolution throughout the world. A freelance writer who has reported from some of the globe's hottest spots, Mr. Graham might be forgiven for forgoing the literary-philosophical conundrums that challenged him in the FYP or in his subsequent degrees from Columbia and Dalhousie, where he completed an MA in Classics. Yet the journalism he has produced over three decades betrays the early imprint. The man who famously snuck into post 9/11 Afghanistan disguised in a burqa, and who later spent a year with the Iraqi resistance in Falluja, has a courageous thirst and for inquiry that transcends present ephemera. Indeed, the FYppers of this hour, on the verge of completing their own brief tour of the ancient world, will recognize the strong traces of ancient thinking in Mr. Graham's 2012 memoir, *The Man Who Went to War*. In covering the revolution in Libya, Mr. Graham often casts his own experience and that of others in ancient Greek terms. He speaks of *ekstasis*, or standing outside oneself, of Homeric *thumos*, the irrepressible desire in the young for self-expression and recognition, and of the inhumane isolation of the *idios*, the private citizen cut off from community and thus his own emotions.

Patrick Graham's journalism exemplifies complex analysis in a genre too often required to clarify the inherently opaque. He reported from Baghdad during the US invasion of Iraq as a correspondent for the *London Observer*. He has written for the *National Post*, the *Walrus*, and the *Guardian*, and is a sought-after commentator on radio and television. Among his recent achievements was an exclusive interview for the *Globe and Mail* with former Egyptian President Morsi before the military coup that deposed him in 2013. Among his numerous awards is Overseas Press Club award for his 2004 cover story on Falluja in *Harper's*. He has also ventured into film as co-writer of *Afghan Luke*, whose story is drawn in part from his experiences of reporting in Afghanistan.

Like a one-man version of King's itself, Patrick Graham brings humanities and journalism together to inform the present with the past. And yet this student of the human condition, whose writing career began so auspiciously at King's, remains without a King's degree! Is it not fitting, Mr. Chancellor, that this Canadian Herodotus of our age be honoured by the College whose mission he so admirably models? I therefore ask you, in the name of King's College, to bestow upon Patrick Graham the degree of Doctor of Civil Laws (*honoris causa*).