

OSSIE AWARDS FOR STUDENT JOURNALISM 2014 WINNERS

Best Print News Story (\$200) by an Undergraduate or Postgraduate Student

Judged by Anne Denny, Head of Production, The Advertiser, Adelaide

Winner: **Derrick Krusche, University of Melbourne**
 'A sting in the tale'

This piece was of strong interest to its readers; the lead very quickly established what the story was about and it didn't become bogged down in scientific jargon, as can easily happen with stories like this. The reporter gave all sides a chance to have their say, and it was clear he had done solid research.

Highly commended: **Alana Mitchelson, Monash University**
 'Knitting fake breasts to provide support'

Lively quotes backed up good research and made an engaging story out of what could have been a difficult topic to write about.

Best Broadcast News Story (\$200) by an Undergraduate or Postgraduate Student

Judged by Jessica Harmsen, Journalist, Presenter 7PM News SA, Presenter/Producer, The Food Quarter

Winner: **Rose Iser, Citizen TV, University of Melbourne**
 'The zoo's east-west dilemma'

This entry stood out as an engaging longer-form TV news story or shorter current affairs piece. It was well structured, balanced and researched, beginning with a human element at the head of the story and progressing to the argy bargo of the zoo debate. An impressive piece of video journalism with the elements of informative and entertaining TV.

Highly commended: **Lawrence Bull, University of Technology, Sydney**
 'Sixteen-year-old girl in Gaza reports the bombs falling around her'

This entry is to be commended for its skilled use of social media for sourcing and researching talent and the effort to put a human face on a long-running, difficult story.

Best Broadcast Current Affairs or Issues Based Story (\$200) by an Undergraduate or Postgraduate Student

Judged by Philippa McDonald, senior journalist, ABC Sydney

Winner: Su-Lin Tan, University of Technology, Sydney
'Women only'

Su-Lin Tan's investigation into how women travel on public transport in India was a powerful long-form current affairs story which captured the challenges women face because of the constant threat of sexual violence. Ms Tan showed the problem from a series of perspectives: those who have suffered harassment and abuse, the attitudes of young people and the business side of 'women only' transport which is offering opportunities for women to escape violence.

Highly commended: Stefica Bikes, University of Technology, Sydney
'Dyeing China'

This was a compelling account of an environmental disaster in China. Stefica's interview with the 'Erin Brokovich' of a community under threat was astounding: she showed courage and a calm determination to keep telling the story despite the efforts of the authorities to stop her. This was a highly produced film with impact, which deserves a wider audience.

Highly commended: Jazmin Malcom, James Cook University
'Rural depression'

Rarely do we hear so many real voices talking about a problem which is so often hidden until it's too late. Jazmin has demonstrated an outstanding ability to get people living in remote and isolated areas of Australia to open up about the challenges of depression and the impact of suicide on small communities. This was a powerful and extremely important radio current affairs story.

Highly commended: Craig Hoyle, AUT University
'The rise of extremist movements in Greece'

This shines the light on a section of Greece's youth who are turning to extremist groups for answers. The voices - the young paramedic out of work for four years and others - were extraordinary. The access to the parties too made this piece a must-watch piece of current affairs television.

Best Feature Article (Print) (\$200) by an Undergraduate or Postgraduate Student

Judged by Max Anderson, writer and editor

Winner: **Michael Walsh, RMIT University**
 ‘The Shardy Crew’

Michael Walsh’s feature on ice had me hooked from the start. The feature was savvy, a little bit street and totally assured. It also had the thing that so many features lack: pace. Walsh uses a series of raw exchanges with a group of ice-smoking mates that are perfectly rendered – intimate almost – and strangely moving. They juxtapose with carefully paced examinations of the politics, policing and social consequences of the drug in small Victorian towns; they’re so well-judged that the reader’s mind is focused on every detail the writer thinks worthwhile to impart. The profanity used in the writer’s own prose is almost a misstep (it’s not quite Gonzo – in fact I’m not quite sure what it is!) but he does it with such bravura that he somehow draws you that little bit deeper into the demi-world of this ordinary shared house: if you don’t like it, don’t come in. There’s also a sublimely placed confession along the way, dropped in such a small fashion that it has tremendous impact. Walsh is a writer demonstrating full and, I suspect, precocious powers.

Highly commended: **Michelle Pini, Deakin University**
 ‘The Macdonald Age’

Congratulations to Michelle Pini on her piece on Ranald Macdonald. It was a brilliant ‘get’ on the part of Pini and the brief first-person excursion on how she bagged the reclusive ex-executive of *The Age* was a joy. I’d have loved some Macdonald quotes, but the piece was disciplined, well-crafted and careful, and made me feel like I was getting a privileged look behind closed doors. Well done.

Best Feature Article (Online) (\$200) by an Undergraduate or Postgraduate Student

Judged by Carol Altmann, Editor, www.bluestonemagazine.com.au

Winner: **Damon Meredith, University of Technology, Sydney**
 ‘Animal rights v wrongs’

Damon brought a wide range of voices to what is a highly emotive and contentious issue and his reportage was dispassionate, informative and insightful. Damon called upon a wide range of sources that, I can only assume, would have taken considerable negotiation to convince to be interviewed, particularly the farmers. The production quality was excellent and the script well written, with seamless linkages. His story kept me watching for what was a comparatively long video at 17mins and I came away feeling better informed about both sides of the intensive animal farming debate.

interviews and an international radio interview provided a good range of sources and depth in this fascinating insight into a growing subculture.

Best Story by an International Student (\$200)

Judged by Amy Noonan, cara

Winner: Tasha Tania, Edith Cowan University

Tasha's work is of a professional standard, showing excellent reporting, interviewing and production skills. Her engaging pieces were tightly-edited to keep the interest of the audience - an excellent skill. Her subjects were interesting and introduced new information.

Highly commended: Sandrine Captieux, Curtin University
'It's on'

Highly commended: Mads Anneberg, AUT University
'Ricardo Morris and Republika magazine'

Best Use of Convergent Media (\$200)

Judged by Tania Bawden, PIRSA/SARDI

General comments:

The entries showed very impressive and highly creative combinations of media – from web effects to video, music, audio and social media, to complement and enhance key messages and the written word.

Winner: Pacific Scoop, AUT University
'Fiji elections coverage'

Their multimedia experience and background research provided wide-ranging insights into a range of issues and election dramas, in the first democratic elections in Fiji since the military coup of 2006. Their work resulted in 68 print and multimedia stories and 13 YouTube videos. It included coverage of the release of Fijian peacekeepers in the Middle East during the election period. The assignment put the three student journalists in the thick of a difficult and even tumultuous political situation, probably with limited resources, in which they each proved their potential under time-critical and challenging circumstances.

Highly commended: Bec Zajac, University of Melbourne
'Domestic violence series'

Mindframe for Journalism Educators Prize for mental health reporting (\$200) (any medium)

Judged by Jenyfer Locke and Elena Terol, Mindframe National Media Initiative team (Hunter Institute of Mental Health)

Joint winners: **Courtney Robinson, University of Technology, Sydney**
 ‘The Rise of Suicide Prevention Apps’

Courtney’s feature article titled ‘The Rise of Suicide Prevention Apps’ published by SBS The Feed, explores how innovation and technology can raise awareness and impact on suicide prevention in Australia. She talks to people touched by suicide and provides practical information on apps that are currently available, including one aimed at Indigenous Australians, a particularly vulnerable community. She also includes the opinion of experts on the usefulness of these apps. Courtney provides an informative and respectful piece, using appropriate language to reduce stigma around mental health and encourage help-seeking via innovative use of technology.

Krystal Gordon, Griffith University
‘Mental health is back in fashion’

Krystal has produced an innovative multimedia piece addressing the stigma around youth mental health. She produced the online feature story ‘Mental health is back in fashion’ as part of ‘Talkin’ About Mental Health: a news blog about mental health and young people’. The piece is a creative exploration of mental health using a fashion show ‘A Beautiful Mind’ hosted by ‘Think Education’ to raise awareness and get people talking about youth mental health. The story uses the online medium to engage a target audience of students and also encourages responses via a blog. The content was engaging, well researched, accurate and sensitive and has potential to reach a wide audience and stimulate meaningful dialogue about mental health.

Highly commended: **Caitlan Charles: University of Western Sydney**
 ‘Mental Health Support for Western Sydney’

Caitlan has written a feature article which highlights the work young people are doing within the Western Sydney community to help other young people with information and support for mental illnesses. She conducts interviews with volunteers from the Young Women’s Mental Health Support group and was also inspired by the innovation of an online facebook page for Borderline Personality Disorder Survivor Recovery. The piece is illuminating and encompasses an innovative approach to talking about some challenging mental health issues.

Dart Centre for Journalism and Trauma Prize for reporting on violence, disaster and trauma in society (\$200) (any medium)

Judged by Cait McMahon, Dart Centre for Journalism and Trauma

Winner: **Paul Farrell, University of Technology, Sydney**
'Villawood asylum seekers in solitary for more than 24 hours at a time'
'Ariak's life in the Annexe: six months in solitary in immigration detention'

Farrell's two-part report on Villawood detention centre's solitary confinement annexe, combined with the personal experience of one man, Ariak, is erudite and engaging. Both parts display a high level of investigative and literary ability. The first part presents the reader with facts backed with research gained through FoI and lays a foundation that exposes a lack of training and breaches of protocol around the use of such rooms in Villawood. The second story humanises the trauma of solitary confinement and the resultant despair and mental torment through the experience of one man. The story is sensitive and thoughtful without being sentimental. Farrell presents the reader with an informative, clear and sophisticated set of stories of one aspect of asylum seeker trauma and its institutional causes.

Highly commended: **Emma Watson, RMIT University**
'Indonesia vows to free thousands of chained mentally ill people'

Watson's piece is extremely engaging and moving. Emma presents the disturbing practice in Indonesia of chaining mentally ill people or locking them in small, confined huts or cages. Despite this practice, Watson's report is free of blame or accusation, affirming that families undertaking this practice did not know where to turn. Watson accompanies her report with education about a volunteer group reaching out to those locked away. Watson's interviews range from patients, volunteers, families and the Director of Mental Health in Indonesia. Watson conducts all interviews herself in fluent Bahasa Indonesian to present a poignant and fascinating piece.

Highly commended: **Rebecca Ryan, Edith Cowan University**
'The Little Nation that Could'

Ryan's piece on the Marshall Islands informs the reader of little known recent lawsuits taken out by the islands on the Governments of the US, Russia, UK, France, China, Israel, India, Pakistan and North Korea. Further, the Islands are specifically suing the US Government, President Obama and the US Defence and Energy Secretaries. Rebecca's piece skilfully combines an historical perspective of nuclear testing on the Islands post WWII, with present day personalised consequences of illness and cultural breakdown, and the recent 'David and Goliath' activities of the Marshall Island residents against the US. An informative and well researched piece.

Sally A. White Prize for Investigative Journalism (\$200) (any medium)

Judged by Nance Haxton, ABC, Brisbane

Winner: **Paul Farrell, University of Technology, Sydney**
'Villawood Detention Centre's use of solitary confinement'

Paul's entry was a thoroughly researched standout piece of investigative journalism in a very tight field for this category. His work was published in Guardian Australia, an impressive achievement for a student which indicates the quality of this work. The expose brought to light the use of solitary confinement in Villawood Detention Centre, the extent of which was not previously known. Paul backed up his news story with a separate piece – a moving first-person account from an asylum seeker who was kept in solitary confinement for six months. This powerful story was beautifully written by Paul, who let Ariak's experience take centre stage. He showed comprehensively how this broken system has brought about a broken man, and perhaps many others who we do not know about. This is an extraordinary investigative article from a student working on his own, which was of such quality it could have been published in any number of worldwide platforms.

Highly commended: **Paddy Manning, University of Technology, Sydney**
'The search for the clean coal holy grail'

Paddy Manning's far-reaching investigation into the Australian Government's push for clean coal comprehensively showed how the Federal Government's hopes of cleaning up Australia's coal industry have cost millions of dollars and brought us no closer to the dream of a 'clean coal' alternative. It was a balanced and well put together piece that ran on Radio National's Background Briefing – indicating the quality of the story idea. While the piece was an impressive expose on many fronts, the assistance that Paddy received putting the story together from a researcher and producer was one of the strongest reasons I separated his story from that put together by one student working on his own.

Highly commended: **The Citizen – reporting team of Rose Iser, Chris Shearer, Michael Roddan and Bec Zajac, University of Melbourne**
'Manus Island – a state of despair'

This series of breaking news stories on Manus Island was timely and encyclopaedic in its research. The team of students went through thousands of leaked documents to break stories of despair from within the notorious detention centre, stories that drove further reporting in other mediums for months to come. The team stood fast through challenges such as overwhelming research tasks, a court injunction and legal action to stop the stories going ahead. They gave asylum seekers an important voice in the national asylum seeker debate. Again, while the series was an impressive expose on many fronts, the fact the students worked together as a team to put the stories together was one of the strongest reasons I separated his story from that put together by one student working on his own.