

The History Council of NSW  
is pleased to award the



• MAX KELLY MEDAL •

for  
2012  
to

*Ms Haidee Ireland*

FOR HER ESSAY

*'The Case of Agnes J.: Tracing Aboriginal Presence in  
Sydney through Criminal Justice Records'*

This essay constitutes an impressive piece of historical reconstruction in which the author has used scantily surviving court records to recapture the life of an Aboriginal woman living on the margins of Sydney society in the early twentieth century. The essay is beautifully written and the argument reveals a high degree of sensitivity to subject and to context. The author has carefully set the arguments within a historiographical context which emphasises both the continuing role of Aborigines within an urban context from 1788 onwards, and their capacity to exercise agency to institute survival in the face of racism and over-policing. The overall result is an impressively original to Australian Aboriginal and urban history, and a timely reminder that the two are indistinguishable.

Awarded 8 August 2012

*Judges' Report prepared by*  
Emeritus Professor Richard Waterhouse  
and Dr David Roberts



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