

The History Council of NSW
is pleased to award the



• MAX KELLY MEDAL •

for

2011

to

Miss Rose Cullen

for her essay

*'Empire, Indian indentured labour and the colony: the origins
of the debate over 'coolie' labour 1836-37'*

The judges were unanimous that this essay should be awarded the Max Kelly Medal for 2011. It contributes significantly to scholarship on nineteenth-century Australia and the British Empire, filling surprising gaps in the literature on Australian colonial labour history as well as on the Indian indentured diaspora. The author frames the essay with the public and official debate over Indian indentured labour for New South Wales instigated by the entrepreneur John Mackay in 1836. Its content, however, ranges far beyond local concerns, connecting the issue with general settler-colonial discourses over race and even broader imperial concerns about the connectedness of the empire's citizenry. Against a slim existing historiography, the author has introduced a far more nuanced account of the anxiety over race and labour in settler colonies as a well as a timely reminder of the significance of virtue in all nineteenth-century British controversies. The essay is beautifully presented and paced, combining a mixture of official, popular, and secondary sources.

Awarded 2 September 2011

By:

Judges' Report prepared by
Dr Peter Tyler and Dr Kate Fullagar



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