

The History Council of NSW
is pleased to award the



· ABORIGINAL HISTORY PRIZE ·

for
2016
to

Ms Rachael Simons

FOR HER ESSAY

*“We Will Protect Ourselves’: William Ferguson’s Critique
of the Policy of Aboriginal Protection in NSW, 1937-1938”*

Rachael Simon’s essay is a study of William Ferguson’s testimony and cross-examination of witnesses at the Select Committee on the Administration of the Aboriginals Protection Board in the late 1930s. The essay approaches the study of Ferguson’s role as a prominent figure in the inquiry to tease out the nuanced and complex ways that Aboriginal activists engaged in the formal structures of the state to contest that authoritarian rule and offer an alternate account of Aboriginal agency and power. The author’s rich account of Ferguson’s intervention and exposure of the Aboriginal Protection Board’s maladministration and cruelty to a wider and critical audience also serves to highlight the many layered strategies for achieving change and justice by Aboriginal activists.

Awarded 7 September 2016

Dr Tanya Evans



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