



MEDIA RELEASE

Senator the Hon Joe Ludwig

*Cabinet Secretary
Special Minister of State
Senator for Queensland*

Thursday 15 October 2009

Prime Ministers Centre Fellowships

Cabinet Secretary, Senator Joe Ludwig, today congratulated the recipients of nine Australian Prime Ministers Centre Fellowships.

“Now in its third year, the Australian Prime Ministers Centre Research and Scholarship Program continues to be a valuable initiative that supports interesting and innovative work on Australia’s rich history,” Senator Ludwig said.

“The program allows researchers to explore the history of Australia’s Prime Ministers and their contribution to Australian society.”

“I am delighted the program has attracted such a diverse range of interesting research topics from the highly-qualified applicants.”

Fellowships are selected by an independent panel convened by the Museum of Australian Democracy.

Recipients of the 2009-10 Fellowships are Dr Norman Abjorensen, Dr Anna Cole, Dr Jacqueline Dickenson, Dr Lindy Edwards, Dr Shirley Fitzgerald, Dr John Hirst, Dr Evan Smith, Professor John Warhurst and Dr Auriol Weigold.

The recipients will undertake research projects on topics including the place of religious belief in Prime Ministers’ public and political lives and Australia’s relationship with India under the leadership of former Prime Minister, Sir Robert Menzies.

Senator Ludwig said in addition to the Fellowship program, which is aimed at established researchers, Summer Scholarships are presented to students and graduates just starting their research careers.

“Summer scholars work on research projects which contribute to the Museum’s public history program with a focus on Prime Ministers. This year’s recipients will be announced later this year,” Senator Ludwig said.

The Australian Prime Ministers Centre is a core component of the Museum of Australian Democracy. Information about the Centre can be found at www.apmc.oph.gov.au or www.oph.gov.au

Details of the recipients and their projects are attached.

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Australian Prime Ministers Centre Fellowships 2009-10

Fellow	Project Outline
<p>Dr Norman Abjorensen Researcher, Crawford School of Economics & Government, ANU</p>	<p>Will take a revisionist approach to Deakin seeking to explain the collapse of his social liberal constituency in the first decade of Federation. The project will be loosely based on George Dangerfield's work <i>The Strange Death of Liberal England</i>.</p>
<p>Dr Anna Cole Senior Visiting Research Fellow, Anthropology Department, University of London</p>	<p>Aims to research and document John Gorton's involvement in the first national Aboriginal debutante ball. In using this event, Cole will explore the relationship between Gorton's nationalism and the symbolics of Indigenous cultural politics at the time.</p>
<p>Dr Jacqueline Dickenson ARC Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Melbourne</p>	<p>Aims to raise awareness of the achievements of Whitlam and Fraser in promoting government accountability. The study will start with their support for the establishment of a Commonwealth Ombudsman in the late 1960s.</p>
<p>Dr Lindy Edwards Australian Research Council Post Doctoral Fellow, Political Science Program, ANU</p>	<p>The project will look at the role of ideologies in shaping policies commonly known as 'the Australian Settlement', with particular focus on the world views of Deakin, Reid and Hughes.</p>
<p>Dr Shirley Fitzgerald Independent scholar; Former City Historian, City of Sydney</p>	<p>Research and write material to extend the biographical entries on prime ministers in the online Dictionary of Sydney. The project will focus on those who had a living connection with Sydney in the pre-WWII period including Barton, Watson, Reid, Cook and Hughes.</p>
<p>Dr John Hirst Emeritus Scholar, La Trobe University</p>	<p>Reassessment of Curtin's record as prime minister to determine if he was, as he is commonly judged, the best prime minister. The project will aim to establish criteria for success in the office and examine other claimants to the label.</p>
<p>Dr Evan Smith Teaching Assistant, Department of History, Flinders University</p>	<p>Examination of how Prime Ministers and their respective Governments in the period 1975 to 2007 have viewed the political and social upheaval of the late 1960s and early 1970s in Australia, together with an analysis of how the events of the 'decade of dissent', from 1965 to 1975 have impacted upon Federal Government political decision making in the last 30 years.</p>
<p>Professor John Warhurst Adjunct Professor, School of Social Sciences, ANU and School of Political and International Studies, Flinders University</p>	<p>Named 'The Faith of our Prime Ministers' this study will examine the place of religious belief in Prime Ministers' public and political lives, including their public policies.</p>
<p>Dr Auriol Weigold Visiting Fellow, Faculty of Arts and Design, University of Canberra</p>	<p>Examination of the reasons for the failure of Menzies and Nehru to form a constructive relationship during their shared years as Prime Minister. The research will also look at Menzies' failure to engage with India within the context of his concerns with Cold War alignments and regional alliances. Menzies' relationship with Casey as his Minister for External Affairs, and a supporter of Nehru and regional relationships, will also be examined.</p>