

Report: 2021 Barsby Essay Competition

In 2021, we received 15 submissions of essays for the Barsby Competition. This year's submissions were highly unusual, as 13 of them came from VUW, 2 from Otago and none from the other universities. Usually, we also receive a good number of entries from Auckland and Christchurch and a few from Massey. This year's judges were from Auckland, Otago and Massey Universities.

It may be possible that Covid and the fact that fewer students come to campus may have made it harder to advertise the competition, which could be why some institutions had no students submit essays. The long lockdown in Auckland in the second half of the year and all the stress associated with it, may have been a reason why no essays from Auckland were submitted.

The quality of the essays was excellent, as always, and they dealt with a variety of topics, especially from Greek and Roman literature, history and animals in antiquity, though this year (unlike earlier years) there were no essays specifically on ancient art. Many of the art essays, if I remember correctly, used to come from Christchurch and VUW, so the fact that Christchurch did not send any essays this year may have played a role in the fact that we did not get any, as well as course changes at VUW over the last few years.

Dougal Blyth (Auckland) was the first judge who determined the top 5 essays. Pat Wheatley (Otago) and Anastasia Bakogianni (Massey) then decided on the winner and runner-up from these 5. Both were VUW students.

This year's winner is Elena Louverdis with her essay entitled 'Remembering the Past: Rhetoric of the Past and Historical Allusions in *On the Crown*'. The runner up is Catie Norman with her essay 'Resurrecting the Other: Carthaginian Identity in the *Aeneid*'.

I would like to thank all three judges for all the work they put into judging these essays, our colleagues for encouraging their students to submit their essays and of course the students for their excellent work.

Babette Puetz
(Barsby Competition Coordinator)
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