

Press Release – for immediate release – 12th April 2012

Publishing students think both strategically – and digitally

The winners of the annual Association for Publishing Education Dissertation Prize have just been announced. Three prizes were offered, one winner and two runners-up. This year all three winning students concentrate on digital developments within the publishing sector.

First prize goes to Sarah Blankfield of UCL for *Towards a digital spine: what methods are UK and US publishers, and their representative bodies, using to tackle ebook piracy?* This is a very insightful and extremely timely exploration of what is probably the greatest contemporary challenge to the publishing industry.

There are two highly commended runner-up prizes going to Ian Campsall of Oxford Brookes and Leah Feltham of Kingston University. Ian's dissertation, *From the front line of war to the front line of publishing: digital memory, mini-blogging and the war memorial*, offers a fascinating look into the social and political significance of reporting first-hand from a war zone; how this content can – and whether it should – be made more generally available. Leah's study *Children's book apps. A study of their effect on the children's book market and the publishing industry* provides a much needed analysis of app technology - both on children's book publishing – and children's literacy in the UK.

How the competition works:

The competition is run by the **Association for Publishing Education (APE)** <http://www.publishingeducation.org> with support from The Publishers Training Centre (PTC) and the Worshipful Company of Stationers and Newspaper Makers. UK universities teaching Publishing, who are members of APE, can submit one undergraduate and one postgraduate entry per institution. The final competition consisted of 11 dissertations and the winners receive cash prizes and PTC training. The judges were Sue Pandit (chair) Publishing Consultant and former Dean at the University of the Arts in London; Lynette Owen, Copyright Director of Pearson; Simon Winder, Publishing Director of Penguin Press and Peter McKay CEO of The Publishing Training Centre. They said:

'We were all impressed by the high standard of the dissertations submitted, would particularly praise the detail-orientation of the work and consider the academic standard higher than last year.' (Lynette and Simon were also part of the judging panel in 2011.)

Whilst congratulating the winners, **wider credit must be paid to the role now played by universities in developing and maintaining valuable research and thinking about the publishing industry.** APE commented:

'Universities teaching Publishing Studies now place the industry within a wider framework of thinking; bringing together best practice, a broad awareness of trends within the business environment, and vital historical and international perspectives. What is clear, and emphasised by these excellent dissertations, is that the vibrant teaching, research and development programmes within universities are now absolutely central to the industry's future. We are very proud of all the winners - but also of the wider cohorts they represent.'

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