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From: Progressive PR and Publicity on behalf of *Australian Book Review*

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Joy Damousi and academics speak out on ARC

Recently Australians learned that former Education Minister Simon Birmingham had vetoed eleven Australian Research Council grants despite the Australian Research Council's rigorous peer-review process. In the December issue, **Professor Joy Damousi (who is available for interview)** laments this unjustified attack on academic freedom.

'Senator Birmingham's decision to exercise his right to veto grants, and to do so by stealth and without providing robust academic reasons, severely undermines the independent and rigorous peer-review assessment of applications for funding.'

Professor Joy Damousi FASSA, FAHA is ARC Laureate Fellow and Professor of History at the University of Melbourne. She is the current president of national peak body for the humanities in Australia, the Australian Academy of the Humanities, and president of the Australian Historical Association.

Damousi's article ['Protecting the National Interest?'](#) is now online and appears in the December issue. Also in the issue is [a survey of 13 prominent academics](#) responding to Simon Birmingham's veto.

'When individuals seek to undermine the nature of our collective academic endeavour, we must protest. In Minister Birmingham's secret and ill-conceived derogation of humanities research and researchers, we have reached such a point. We have values to be defend. We demand that these actions not be repeated. We must not let this matter be brushed aside.'

Professor Margaret Gardner AO,
President and Vice-Chancellor of Monash University and Chair of Universities Australia

Other respondents:

Professor Ian Donaldson (ANU and University of Melbourne)

Professor Brian Schmidt(ANU)

Dr André Brett (University of Wollongong)

Professor Stephen Garton (University of Sydney)

Dr Catherine Kevin (Flinders University)

Professor Tom Griffiths (ANU)

Associate Professor Lisa Featherstone (University of Queensland)

Professor Philip Mead (University of Western Australia and University of Melbourne)

Professor Emerita Margaret Harris (University of Sydney)

Professor Mark Edele (University of Melbourne)

Dr Kate Fullagar (Macquarie University)

Professor Robert Phiddian (Flinders University)

Further information

More information about *Australian Book Review* can be found on the [ABR website](#).

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