



◀ From left: Recipients Olivia Smith-Munro, Annie Fewster and (insert) Christine Biju.

Success in Women's Studies

The AEU's Jean Pavy Awards continue to recognise student – and teacher – achievement says AEU Women's Officer Tish Champion.

In March 1997, the AEU presented the first Jean Pavy Awards to four students who had achieved a merit in Women's Studies in 1996. Twenty-four years later, at the Jean Pavy Awards Night on 4 March, students Olivia Smith-Munro from Roma Mitchell Secondary College and Annie Fewster and Christine Biju from Marden Senior College were presented with this important award, taking the total number of recipients to 74.

Jean Pavy, who was president of the Women's Branch of the SA Institute of Teachers (the predecessor to the AEU in this state), is remembered through this award. She was an inspirational and committed campaigner for equality with her most significant achievement coming in 1970 when women working in education finally received equal pay.

Below, the 2021 recipients reflect on their studies.

OLIVIA MUNRO-SMITH Roma Mitchell Secondary College

In achieving a merit in Stage 2 Women's Studies I want to thank my family, from my sister who sat through awkward conversations about menstruation to my grandparents who sat for hours as I deliberated my Year 12 subject selection. I want to thank my father for teaching me that men can cry, and dismantling gender household labour divisions.

I'd also like to thank my Women's Studies teachers. Thank you Ms Securo for finding the time to mark my extremely long assignments, because 16-year-old me didn't like to abide by word counts. And Ms McCormack for teaching me the importance of standing up for what is right. I would also like to thank Principal Ms Carellas for the positive change she has and will make for Roma Mitchell.

There are so many more teachers, friends and family members who have helped me, but I must single out Ms Wood. I genuinely don't know how I could have survived Year 12 without this incredible woman. Her classroom provided me with refuge from the overwhelming stress of Year 12, and her drafting, suggestions, endless supply of feminist literature, and well-planned lessons were the reason I could achieve so much in Stage 2 Women's Studies.

ANNIE FEWSTER Marden Senior College

This award is truly an honour which recognises not only the admirable work of Jean Pavy, but also the teachers and students of Women's Studies who continue to grow from her legacy. It was inspiring being able to relive Jean's story as she endeavoured to achieve gender equality within a system inherently built against women.

The wise and powerful words of Anne Bourke revealed the importance of Women's Studies as a SACE subject, asserting the need for improved education and awareness of feminism and other under-represented areas including Aboriginal cultural understanding and diversity. Women's Studies, for me, significantly re-shaped the way I saw the world, and even the way I saw myself, as a strong, empowered young woman.

CHRISTINE BIJU Marden Senior College

Stage 2 Women's Studies is a subject I would recommend to any student. Within the first week, I instantly found a passion for the subject.

I was able to relate my learning back to my experiences as a young woman and to understand the adversities faced by older women to get to where we are today. The assignments allowed me to recognise and critique the subtle, disempowering influences of patriarchy present in everyday things, such as advertisements, artwork, fairy tales and movies.

It has inspired me to educate others in the hope of creating a more equitable society.