

**VICE-CHANCELLOR'S DISTINGUISHED
RESEARCH MEDAL**

Mr Chancellor, I have the honour of presenting to you
Dr Samantha Wynne Vice,
Senior Lecturer
in the Department of Philosophy,

for the award of the Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Research Medal.

“First-rate philosophy: original, deep, honest, thoughtful, careful, and deeply engaging”. These are the works that a peer reviewer chooses to describe the scholarly writing of Dr Vice.

Colleagues describe her as an outstanding example of the scholarly researcher in the complex field of Philosophy, who produces interesting, thought-provoking, original work, published in quality peer reviewed journals and books, and who engages in dialogue with other researchers, and improves understanding and thinking about difficult questions.

Dr Vice's research addresses extremely profound, difficult, and abstract questions in the field of moral and ethical philosophy. Her subject matter ranges across issues of ethics, partiality and spirituality, self-understanding and self-concern, narrativity and the role of literature and film in philosophical inquiry.

Dr Vice's writing deservedly enjoys both national and international standing, as is evidenced by the National Research Foundation awarding her, at first application, a B rating – this signifies the international influence of her work. Her articles over the last eight years, appearing in Journals such as *Philosophy*, *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, and the *Journal of Social Philosophy*, are all internationally recognized. She has co-edited two books: one is an important volume on the work of John Cottingham entitled *The Moral Life*, and the other is a recent collection on *Ethics at the Cinema*. She has received invitations to contribute chapters to books edited by leading scholars, such as Peter Singer, one of the most influential philosophers of the past 40 years. It has been noted by several reviewers that Dr Vice “writes with superb clarity and elegance”.

That her writing is not merely read, but also engaged with, was demonstrated recently when Dr Vice's work became the subject of a popular media debate around the notion of whiteness and the contemporary role of White South Africans. It is relatively rare for the work of an academic philosopher to capture the popular imagination, and she can be credited for challenging not only her students and colleagues both at Rhodes University and in other Higher Education Institutions, but the nation at large to think more deeply.

In addition to her personal contributions to knowledge and those of her students, Dr Vice is co-editor of *Philosophical Papers*, a journal with an international reputation, and she supports her discipline in a number of practical ways, such as running the secretariat of

the Philosophical Society of South Africa, and actively contributing, through her scholarly knowledge, to the practical ethical issues that come before the Rhodes University Ethical Standards Committee.

One of her referees writes that:

“She brings to her work an unusual combination of analytic rigour, and a humane sensitivity to the emotional and cultural dimensions of philosophical issues, as well as an acute scholarly grasp of the relevant historical materials of the contemporary literature.”

While another concludes that

“Dr Vice’s work makes an outstanding, thoughtful, careful, and original contribution to thinking about a number of fundamental topics important for South African Society.”

Mr Chancellor, I request you to award the **2011 Vice-Chancellor’s Distinguished Research Medal** to Dr Samantha Wynne Vice.