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## **Rob Riley book wins the Stanner Award**

The moving story of an Aboriginal activist in an unreconciled Australia has won the 2007 Stanner Award from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.

***Rob Riley: An Aboriginal Leader's Quest for Justice*** by Quentin Beresford (Aboriginal Studies Press, 2006) has already gained critical acclaim, winning the Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission Arts Non-Fiction Award in 2006, the Western Australian Premier's Literary Award, 2007 for non-fiction and being shortlisted for the NSW Premier's Award 2007.

Widely regarded as one of the great Aboriginal leaders of the modern era, Rob Riley was closely involved in the Indigenous fight for land rights, a treaty, self-determination and justice. He tragically took his own life in 1996, weighed down by the unresolved traumas of his exposure to institutionalisation, segregation and racism, and his sense of betrayal by the Australian political system to deliver justice to Aboriginal people. His death shocked community leaders and ordinary citizens alike.

Author Quentin Beresford said he was honoured to win major prizes for the story.

"It's an honour, not just for me but for Rob's family who were very involved in the project from the beginning. I'm also very pleased for the recognition that the prize will bring to Aboriginal Studies Press because of their tremendous support to the project," Mr Beresford said.

"Rob's personal story struck me as a very touching and important one. His emotional struggles as a member of the stolen generations and the ways in which he had tried to overcome his background but eventually succumbed to the damage it had done was a great challenge to understand as a person and a writer.

"Rob's story deserves to be widely known because he was at the centre of the epic struggle for Aboriginal rights at a crucial time in the nation's history. Because this struggle was only partially successful in its aims, there is much to learn from his involvement in politics and that of his co-activists which I also try to acknowledge in the book. "

The other books shortlisted for the Stanner Award in 2007 were ***Shimmering screens: making media in an Aboriginal community*** by Jennifer Deger (University of Minnesota Press, 2006) and ***No free kicks: family, community and football: a Noongar story*** by Eric Hedley Hayward (Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 2006).

The Stanner Award is awarded annually by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) to the best scholarly published contribution to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Studies that reflects the dynamic nature of one of its founders, the late anthropologist Emeritus Professor W.E.H. (Bill) Stanner.

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