

The Sylvia Ostry Prize in Public Policy

Opening Up: Is Sunlight the Best Disinfectant?

The Public Policy & Governance Review (PPGR), in association with the School of Public Policy & Governance at the University of Toronto, presents the Sylvia Ostry Prize in Public Policy. The Ostry Prize is an annual essay competition in Honour of Dr. Sylvia Ostry. The Topic of the essay will change annually, but will always be international in scope. Graduate students, both at the master's and doctoral levels, in policy-related disciplines across Canada and the United States are eligible to compete.

Top essay will be awarded \$1000CDN and publication in the spring 2011 issue of the PPGR. First and Second runners up will also be published.

In 1913, Louis Brandeis, later a US Supreme Court Justice, wrote that “sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants,” referring to the ability of transparency and accountability to ensure good behaviour. Last year Barack Obama used the same phrase to argue that transparency would achieve results and restore faith in government.

From freedom of information requests, to open data, to WikiLeaks, there have never been more ways for citizens to see the workings and results of government. Many see the rise of transparency as an unequivocal gain; yet this is far from a universal view. At the same time, private organizations' levels of transparency can range from the substantial disclosure required of publically traded companies to the secrecy of hedge fund credit-default swaps.

The 2011 Ostry Prize topic is “*Opening Up: Is Sunlight the Best Disinfectant?*”

We are asking students to defend, expand, criticize, assess, re-evaluate, or expose the topic. We encourage broad interpretations of the topic, but focused essays.

Sylvia Ostry Prize Submission Guidelines

- Essay must not exceed 3,000 words
- Submissions should include a cover letter with the author's name, address, email address, daytime phone number, and a brief biography.
- All submissions must be unpublished
- Emailed as a .doc, .docx, .odt, or .rtf
- Citations should be in-text and formatted in the author-date system, according to the guidelines in The Chicago Manual of Style
- All figures, tables and charts must be submitted both in the document and as entirely separate files
- All submissions are subject to editing and revision by the PPGR Editorial Board and will be published using a Creative Commons license.

Please send inquiries or submissions to Brent Barron and Anna Strathy at editors@ppgreview.ca. The deadline for submission is March 1, 2011.