

UW-Madison: Miami Herald's 'Perversion of Justice' wins 2019 Anthony Shadid Award for Journalism Ethics

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"Perversion of Justice" by Julie K. Brown and Emily Michot of the Miami Herald has won the 2019 Anthony Shadid Award for Journalism Ethics from the Center for Journalism Ethics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. This three-part series investigated how Jeffrey Epstein, a wealthy hedge fund manager, struck a secret deal with prosecutor Andrew Acosta - now the Secretary of Labor - to cover up his crimes of molesting and sexually assaulting scores of underage girls.

The award, named for UW-Madison alumnus and Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter Anthony Shadid, honors the difficult ethical decisions journalists make when telling high-impact stories. Shadid, who died in 2012 while on assignment in Syria, was a member of the Center for Journalism Ethics advisory board and worked to encourage integrity in reporting.

Lucas Graves, associate professor in the UW-Madison School of Journalism and Mass Communication and chair of the Shadid Award judging committee, said this year's winner stood out in an exceptionally strong pool of finalists.

"The Herald's in-depth accountability reporting had an immediate impact, including a recent verdict confirming prosecutors broke the law," Graves said. "The Herald team told the stories of dozens of young women who were victimized first by a

wealthy sexual predator and then by the justice system. We are proud to recognize the care they took in their reporting and the challenge of the ethics choices they faced.”

Graves praised the other four finalists for the award:

- Garance Burke and Martha Mendoza, Associated Press, for “The Innocents: How U.S. immigration policy punishes migrant children” – a year-long investigation into the Trump administration’s family separation policy.
- Hannah Dreier, ProPublica, for “A Betrayal” – the story of a teenager and MS-13 gang member who became a government informant, only to face death threats and deportation after federal agents reneged on a promise to protect him.
- David Jackson, Jennifer Smith Richards, Gary Marx, Juan Perez, Jr., Chicago Tribune, for “Betrayed” – an investigative series that exposed Chicago schools’ failure to protect students from sexual abuse and assault.
- Maggie Michael, Nariman El-Mofty, Maad al-Zikry, Associated Press, for reporting throughout 2018 that investigated atrocities occurring during Yemen’s war.

“Attacks on news media seem to come at a fever pitch lately,” said Kathleen Bartzen Culver, director of the Center for Journalism Ethics. “But these winners and all the finalists remind us of the power of courageous journalism practiced with integrity.”

The winning team will be presented with the award May 14 in a ceremony at the University Club in New York City.

Registration for the event is now open.

The Center for Journalism Ethics, housed in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at UW-Madison, provides an international hub to examine the role of professional and personal ethics in the pursuit of fair, accurate and principled journalism. Founded in 2008, the Center offers resources for journalists, educators, students and the public, including internationally recognized annual conferences exploring key issues in journalism.

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