

2018 Best Graduation Essay Awards

Professor Armstrong's Seminar

2018 was another year of strong research on challenging, relevant topics in my seminar. All students worked hard to produce essays of high quality. And so I want to begin by congratulating all for a job well done. Writing a research essay in a second-language is a daunting task and a significant educational achievement.

A number of students followed their interests in education, especially language education, in Japan and abroad. Eri Aoi looked at the Canadian language immersion program, its development and successes, in order to suggest ways in which it could be implemented in Japanese schools while Hiromasa Yamada focused on the how cooperative learning could be integrated more deeply into secondary education in Japan. Yui Hayashi, Yuka Miyamae, and Kaishu Hijikata focused on social issues and the state of our response to them. Yui explored the issue of women in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and math), in particular, the social and cultural reasons, as well as the biological arguments, why female participation has been low his-

torically in most countries around the world. Yuka Miyamae looked at efforts to conserve biodiversity in Canada, focusing on regulations creating and managing national parks and protecting wetlands. Kaishu Hijikata chose a topic closer to home: the problem of solution isolation and low social capital in Japan, looking at ways in which modern fitness trends could help solve the problem. Shouhei Suzuki followed his interest in social theory, providing a critical analysis of the systems theory of German sociologist Niklas Luhmann. Riki Hotta produced a thoughtful analysis of *Song of Solomon* by African American writer Toni Morrison, drawing on psychological theory and postcolonial theory. Riki discussed the ways in which the novel outlines the larger struggle of African Americans for freedom and equality, in addition to the quest for roots in modern society. The best essay for 2018, based not only on content but also research scope and work ethic, was written by Haruka Kinoshita. Her essay examined differences in communication styles, drawing on the work of key theorists and conducting on-site interviews with foreign and Japanese students. Her research explored the role of culture in language instruction and discussed ways in which cross-cultural training could be implemented in language education in Japan.

Haruka's essay is printed below. All essays written in my seminar can be read in BACS 2018 Thesis Collection.