

Professor Boulanger's Seminar

Despite the continued challenges of the pandemic, students in my Canadian Women's History seminar have worked diligently to produce well researched, well written, and relevant essays largely in the area of women's history, social justice, and gender issues. Students in my seminar approached many interesting topics this year. Hiromasa Koyama drew upon his love of soccer to examine how the popularity of soccer in North America could be increased by drawing on the strategies employed in Europe and the U.K. Tsukika Oyabu looked at the history of women's sport in North America. Her essay highlights the issues that still need to be addressed in women's sports today, in particular media bias and the pay gap. Anuththara Weerasinghe explored the life and work of Canadian feminist writer, poet and activist, Dionne Brand. Ms. Weerasinghe focuses on Brand's ability to express the urban immigrant experience, and her exploration of black, lesbian identities. Koyuki Ishikawa addressed Japan's working shortage and the barriers to accepting international workers as a solution to the issue. She argues that the solution for both new immigrants to Japan, and to resistance by the Japanese populace, is education. Ryo Yamamoto examined an important geographical space, Africville, that was destroyed by the city of Halifax, Nova Scotia. After examining the history of discrimination, mainly in the form of environmental racism, Mr. Yamamoto looks at how the community, and its descendants

have commemorated and celebrated the once vibrant community.

As always it was difficult to choose one best thesis. I believe all my students deserve to be acknowledged. I have taught most of them since their first year, and they are all exceptional for their ethic of hard work, and their willingness to persevere. Several students excelled with well written, well researched and interesting essays. Nanako Doyachi took on a very current topic, choosing to examine the strategies used by the Black Lives Matters movement to raise awareness of the issue of police brutality against the African American community, and how they used social media to expand the movement globally. Yuki Iwatsuki explored the history of residential schools in Canada, a system created in the colonial era, but only dismantled in 1997, which was administered by the government and churches and aimed to assimilate indigenous people. Ms. Iwatsuki focused on the ongoing responses from the Canadian government after multiple complaints of abuse by former students and calls for justice by the indigenous communities. Seisho Takami researched a very local dispute which has wide implications for indigenous Canadians. He researched the history of decisions on treaty rights related to fishing as a means to understanding the current struggles between indigenous and non-indigenous fishers in the Maritime region of Canada. He concludes that non-indigenous claims about the indigenous fishing industry are unfounded, and that, considering the violent behavior against indigenous fishers, discrimination must be considered a factor in the dispute.

This year's best thesis is awarded to Yuna Kasai Ms. Kasai focused on the mental issues of LGBTQ+ youth in Canada and the U.S. Ms. Kasai explores the history of LGBTQ+ community, including the history of LGBTQ+ rights and the issue of medical discrimination. She reveals that despite increased acceptance and support in Canadian society, there continues to be barriers to health care for LGBTQ+ youth, and that they are more prone to mental health issues than non-LGBTQ+ young people. She concludes with suggestions of how Canadian society can address health problems of the LGBTQ+ community. Ms. Kasai's essay is well organized, well researched, and provides a thorough overview of an important issue. She worked independently, while still consulting with me in the process.