

2015 Graduation Thesis Awards

Each year, the Department of British and American Cultural Studies recognizes academic excellence by awarding prizes for the Best Graduation Essays in English. The essays published here have received this recognition not only for a high level of research, skillful organization and clear expression but also for the dedication of the students to the completion of their work, including working with supervisors, meeting deadlines for submission, and responding to suggestions for revision. Congratulations to the winners for 2015. A selection of the essays completed this year, both in English and in Japanese, can be found in the department's collection of graduation essays.

Armstrong Seminar

Students in this year's research seminar focused almost exclusively on Canadian themes, with essays on film, and literature, art, politics and social policy, and language education. Two essays, however, were comparative, in whole or in part, addressing Canadian and Japanese contexts. Tsuyoshi Kudo and Erika Honda chose to write about two important works of Canadian literature. Tsuyoshi discussed French-Canadian writer Marie-Claire Blais' 1965 novel *Une saison dans la vie d'Emmanuel* (A

Season in the Life of Emmanuel) in the context of the growing criticism of Quebec's conservative society during the Quiet Revolution while Erika Honda discussed Joy Kogawa's award-winning novel *Obasan* (1980), which inspired the Japanese Canadian redress movement. With the aim of showing how aboriginal language and culture were preserved in the face of assimilation, Maho Yamada researched aboriginal art in Canada, focusing on West Coast Haida artist Bill Reid (1920-1998) and his mentor Charlie Edenshaw (1839-1920), in addition to Alberta aboriginal modernist Alex Janvier (b. 1935). In the field of politics, Daiki Karasawa looked into the Canadian federal government's response to the Quebec independence in a well researched piece on the creation of the Clarity Act (2000), a law to define the conditions under which a vote for independence would be accepted by Canada's federal government. Chiaki Shinohara wrote about the recently released Japanese language film *The Vancouver Asahi* (2014), which deals with the baseball team that formed the backbone of the Japanese Canadian community before the Second World War. Rena Adachi researched English language education in Japan, drawing on the experience of Canadian immersion education in order to suggest ways to increase motivation among Japanese junior high-school students through diary writing.

This year's award for Best Graduation Essay for 2015 goes to Rika Suzuki for her "Support for Filipino Migrants in Canada and Japan: A Comparative Analysis," which evaluated education, work and community support for nurses and care-givers in

the two countries. Rika conducted original research, including interviews with local program organizers in Nagoya and officials in Victoria, B.C., and provided a comparative analysis of the strengths and weakness of programs of support for migrant workers in the two countries.