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Young Historians Conference 2015

Apr 28th, 12:00 AM

25th Annual Young Historians Conference

Portland State University History Department

Portland State University Challenge Program

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25th Annual Young Historians Conference



2014 winner, Stephanie Lippincott from Lakeridge High School, and Young Historians founder, Karen Hoppes

Sponsored by Portland State University's
History Department & Challenge Program

April 28, 2015

Young Historians 2015 Schedule

8:00-9:00 WELCOME & BREAKFAST

9:00-10:15 FIRST SESSIONS

10:30-11:45 SECOND SESSIONS

11:55-12:55 LUNCH

1:00-2:15 THIRD SESSIONS

8:00-9:00 CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST SMSU 355 (Ballroom)
8:45 WELCOME: *Louis Livingston*, President, Friends of History

9:00-10:15 FIRST SESSIONS: Choose from two sessions

SMSU 328/9: **Wars Hot and Cold**
Commentator: *Desmond Cheung*

Elizabeth Berry The Trojan War as Propaganda in Classical Greece
Riverdale High School

Jalena Post The Enigma of the Spartan Woman
Clackamas High School

Rushil Vora Media, Government, and Space Race Perceptions
Sunset High School

Kai Klocke The Tet Offensive: To what extent can the Tet Offensive be
Sunset High School considered a success for the forces of North Vietnam?

SMSU 338: **Women and Children First (and Last)**
Commentator: *Jennifer Kerns*

Nate Klein Power Structure
Riverdale High School

Tori Allen Livia's Power in Ancient Rome
Clackamas High School

Holly Scrugham Misogyny in the European Witch Trials
Riverdale High School

10:30-11:45

SECOND SESSIONS: Choose from three sessions

SMSU 328/9:

Colonial Conflicts

Commentator: *David Johnson*

Lance Crafton

Lakeridge High School

U.S. Supported Corporations and Modern Imperialism:
America's Takeover of Hawaii

Iris Smith

Grant High School

Implications of Imperial Power: Japan's Comfort Women

Larissa Banitt

St. Mary's Academy

The Irish Hunger and its Alignments with the 1948
Genocide Convention

SMSU 338:

Sex and Religion

Commentator: *Thomas Lockett*

Jennie Jiang

Clackamas High School

Christianity's Influence on Attitudes towards Homosexuality in
the Roman Empire

Amber Harvey

Clackamas High School

The Dichotomy of *Pudicitia*

Patricia Torvalds

Riverdale High School

Secularism and Sex Work in Early Modern Italy

SMSU 327:

The Politics of Fear

Commentator: *David Horowitz*

Sophia DeLeonibus

St. Mary's Academy

Rocking the Third Republic: The Succession of Political Crises
That Led to the Rise of Xenophobic Nationalism in France

Paige Hall

Sunset High School

Seeing Red: Senator Joseph McCarthy's Influence in the
Red Scare

Katie Li

Sunset High School

Domino Theory: A Catalyst of Fear

11:55-12:55

LUNCH

SMSU 355 (Ballroom)

Announcements: *David Coate*, Digital Collections Technician, PSU Library; PDXScholar

Commentary: *Professor Jennifer Tappan*, History Faculty

Awards: *Professor John Ott*, History Faculty, Young Historians Coordinator

1:00-2:15

THIRD SESSIONS: Choose from three sessions

SMSU 328/9: Empire and its Discontents

Commentator: *Brian Turner*

Shawn Lee
Clackamas High School

Celtic Romanization: Cultural Assimilation or Cultural Exchange?

Weiyi Zhou
Clackamas High School

The Roman Army: Strategy, Tactics, and Innovation

Lindsay Swanson
St. Mary's Academy

Inevitable Rebellion: The Jacobite Risings and the Union of 1707

SMSU 338:

Space Invaders: Law and the "Other"

Commentator: *Patricia Schechter*

Jessie Yan
Sunset High School

To what extent did the internment of Japanese Americans after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941 reveal the xenophobia of the American people?

Jamie Rehlaender
Lakeridge High School

A Howl of Free Expression: The 1957 Howl Obscenity Trial and Sexual Liberation

Dylan Wells
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The Limits of Tolerance: The Equal Treatment Act and Discrimination in The Netherlands

SMSU 327:

Systems of Knowledge

Commentator: *Richard Beyler*

Isabelle Gilges
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The Female Body as a Religious Tool

Eliza Kamerling-Brown
Grant High School

The Pursuit of Pleasure: An Intersection between Aristotle's *Poetics* and Sixteenth Century Renaissance Music

Sophie Hamilton
Riverdale High School

Rationalism and the Understanding of Irrationality

ABSTRACTS

9:00 – 10:15
SMSU 328/29

FIRST SESSIONS
Wars Hot and Cold
Commentator: *Desmond Cheung*

The Trojan War as Propaganda in Classical Greece

This research looks at the influence of the Trojan War on propaganda in Classical Greece. It includes research on political leaders of the time and how they used the Trojan War, historians, and Greek plays using the Trojan War as a way to critique Classical Greece. Those plays came from the work of Euripides, Aristophanes, and Aeschylus. The information was collected from a variety of sources both secondary and primary source documents. All of which prove that the discussion surrounding the Trojan War focus not on its existence, but its influence on politics in Classical Greece.

Elizabeth Berry, Riverdale High School

The Enigma of the Spartan Woman

Active in both social and economic spheres, Spartan women possessed much more mobility than their counterparts in Athens. In the areas of education, the arts, land ownership, marriage, and family life, the women of Sparta enjoyed a large amount of sovereignty when compared to their contemporaries. The absence of Spartan men during almost constant times of war necessitated women taking on more responsibility than they would have otherwise, but to what extent? This paper strives to characterize the unique role of the women of Sparta during the classical period of Greek history, especially as in contrast to their Athenian neighbors.

Jalena Post, Clackamas High School

Media, Government, and Space Race Perceptions

The intent of this investigation is to assess the extent to which media sources and government policies instilled a positive view of the space race on Americans. In order to evaluate the American perceptions, the media campaigns and themes of press coverage will be examined in regards to both the positive and negative views reported by mainstream media. Additionally, government policies and initiatives enacted during the Johnson era from 1963 to 1969 will be taken into account in order to determine the extent to which the government deliberately shaped its initiatives around influencing the American perceptions of the space race.

Rushil Vora, Sunset High School

The Tet Offensive: To what extent can the Tet Offensive be considered a success for the forces of North Vietnam?

Beginning January 30th, 1968, the North Vietnam Army and the Viet Cong carried out attacks across all of Vietnam. But to what extent can this so called Tet Offensive be considered a success for the forces of North Vietnam? To answer this question the military outcomes and social political ramifications of the campaign will be assessed, both in Vietnam and in America. By comparing and contrasting the outcomes and the goals of the Offensive, the degree of success will be determined. Particularly important to this investigation will be documents from the CIA, media reports from American outlets, and military statistics.

Kai Klocke, Sunset High School

9:00 – 10:15
SMSU 338

FIRST SESSIONS
Women and Children First (and Last)
Commentator: *Jennifer Kerns*

Power Structure

By today's standards morally reprehensible subjects are difficult to examine, however, from a historical perspective topics such as infanticide offer insight into individual behavior, therefore reflecting societal norms. This paper explores the practice of infanticide used during the course of the 7th century BCE to reinforce the power structures of the period. Infanticide was far more than a simple way to dispose of unwanted offspring; it was a tool that was used by ancient Greek societies to maintain systems of control and promote social values upon which society depended.

Nate Klein, Riverdale High School

Livia's Power in Ancient Rome

When one thinks of the ancient Roman heroes, Caesar and Augustus come to mind. We picture Roman men on the front lines in culture and society, while the women are kept back and oppressed. And while women definitely faced obstacles in ancient Rome, it didn't stop them from making an impact. This paper argues that Livia, wife of Roman emperor Augustus, was able to make a significant impact on Rome as a mother and a wife, as seen in honorific statues, Ovid's poetry, and honorific titles.

Tori Allen, Clackamas High School

Misogyny in the European Witch Trials

Somewhere between forty thousand and nine million people were executed in the witch trials of the Early Modern era, about eighty-five percent of which were women. Early Modern literature and witch hunting manuals make it clear that witchcraft was a markedly feminine pursuit, stemming from inherent female subservience, weakness, and tendency to sin, all of which led to a proclivity to serve the devil by performing witchcraft. While most research looks into the impetuses behind the trials being mass-hysteria and lapses in due process, both of which are valid, the lack of exploration in traditional scholarly research into the clear links between misogyny and witch trial persecution detracts from a comprehensive understanding of what fueled the trials: hatred and fear of women.

Holly Scrugham, Riverdale High School

10:30 – 11:45
SMSU 328/9

SECOND SESSIONS
Colonial Conflicts
Commentator: *David Johnson*

U.S. Supported Corporations and Modern Imperialism: America's Takeover of Hawaii

In 1893, the constitutional monarchy of Hawaii was overthrown and replaced with a government backed by the United States, opening the door for America to claim Hawaii as a territory and later annex it as the 50th state. The story of Hawaii illuminates the extent of U.S. influence abroad and reveals the true nature of how America began its 20th century imperialism. This paper explores the takeover of the islands as well as various American reactions to it, uncovering the social, political, and economic factors that shaped Hawaii's future.

Lance Crafton, Lakeridge High School

Implications of Imperial Power: Japan's Comfort Women

This paper argues that the “comfort women” system is an iconic aspect of Korean and Japanese relations and in the Eastern Pacific chapter of World War II. From the time that Japan took Korea as a colony to the end of WWII, Korean women and women from the surrounding areas of the Japanese military's bases were brought into brothels where they became the sex slaves of the Japanese Imperial Army. Comfort women were treated in a cruel manner with no respect to human rights. After WWII the Japanese government has attempted to censor the event from students of history.

Iris Smith, Grant High School

The Irish Hunger and its Alignments with the 1948 Genocide Convention

The Irish Hunger of the mid nineteenth century began when a potato blight ruined most of Ireland's crop. While this was indeed a natural crisis, Britain's ineffective response exacerbated the suffering the Irish endured. Widespread discrimination of the Irish, economic and moral ideologies all contributed to the British government's reaction to the famine. This paper evaluates how British adherence to these ideologies increased Irish suffering and align with the definition of genocide as defined by the 1948 genocide convention.

Larissa Banitt, St. Mary's Academy

10:30 – 11:45
SMSU 338

SECOND SESSIONS
Sex and Religion
Commentator: *Thomas Luckett*

Christianity's Influence on Attitudes towards Homosexuality in the Roman Empire

Attitudes towards sexuality are deeply influenced by the intricate interplay between religion and social values. How do polytheistic and monotheistic societies differ in how they view sexuality? In the pre-Christian days of the early Roman Empire, polytheism fostered a remarkable tolerance toward both same-sex relations and various expressions of sexuality, as evident in social expectations, literature, and written law. In contrast, a closer examination of the Roman Empire's transition from a polytheistic to Christian society in the 4th and 5th centuries reveals that the rise of Christianity corresponded with, and likely contributed to, increasingly strict attitudes towards homosexuality.

Jennie Jiang, Clackamas High School

The Dichotomy of *Pudicitia*

The lives of women in the Roman Republic were incredibly restricted and controlled by their male counterparts, yet key counters to this restriction are often overlooked, mainly that of a woman's *pudicitia*. *Pudicitia* was a defining moral quality that encompassed state, familial and sexual duties, as well as many more, a woman had in society. These qualities, are shown in the mythical Rape of the Sabines, and allow female participation in the Conflict of the Orders and the defiance of the Vestal Virgins. These allowances are countered by aspects of *pudicitia* that restricted rights and participation, ultimately yielding a system that paradoxically encouraged and prohibited female political and social action.

Amber Harvey, Clackamas High School

Secularism and Sex Work in Early Modern Italy

This paper focuses on the response to and monetization of sex work by private houses run by wealthy women; public offices; the Medici dukes; and the responses to this by wealthy courtesans in early modern Italy. It asserts that, unlike in the Middle Ages, when morality was dictated by the Catholic Church, the practice of sex work from 1400 to 1600 marked the beginning of regulation by secular institutions focused on personal gain. The paper also focuses on the role of wealthy sex workers, called courtesans, and the establishment of regulatory measures purely for monetary gain.

Patricia Torvalds, Riverdale High School

10:30 – 11:45
SMSU 327

SECOND SESSIONS
The Politics of Fear
Commentator: *David Horowitz*

Rocking the Third Republic: The Succession of Political Crises That Led to the Rise of Xenophobic Nationalism in France

In July of 2014, demonstrations in Paris against Israel's action in Gaza turned violent. The growing strength of anti-Zionism in France, as indicated through recent events, has led to a fear that anti-Zionism is bringing back the anti-Semitism of yore. Throughout the past century, the level of intolerance towards Jews and any outsiders has become an unseemly component of French culture, notably illustrated through the evolution of a nationalistic outlook in France. This paper explores the beginnings of this modern nationalism and traces its origins to the French loss of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 and the subsequent rise of revanchist ideology. As a succession of crises rocked the post-war Republic, a new branch of right-winged thinkers, characterized by xenophobia and anti-semitism, emerged and mobilized, thus cementing xenophobic, anti-Semitic, and revanchist ideals into the mindset of France by the turn of the century.

Sophia DeLeonibus, St. Mary's Academy

Seeing Red: Senator Joseph McCarthy's Influence in the Red Scare

Throughout the 1950's, Senator Joseph McCarthy was able to influence millions of Americans to participate in a witch-hunt for Communists working in the US government. The scope of this investigation includes the background of the Red Scare before McCarthy's time, other anti-Communist activists, and the basis of McCarthy's own beliefs. The time span ranges from the Russian Revolution of 1917 to the Senator's death in 1957. Most of the sources are either biographies about the life of Senator McCarthy or analyses of the Red Scare.

Paige Hall, Sunset High School

Domino Theory: A Catalyst of Fear

The investigation centers around one question: To what extent did the domino theory justify the outbreak of the Vietnam War? The topic was selected to better understand the domino theory since it was one of the most significant causes of the Vietnam War. In order to reach an effective conclusion, the investigation centered around 1945 to 1956, and focused on four areas: origins of the domino theory, events that led to the outbreak of the war, reasons of the U.S.'s involvement, and conditions in the Southeast Asia on the brink of the Vietnam War.

Katie Li, Sunset High School

1:00 – 2:15
SMSU 328/9

THIRD SESSIONS
Empire and its Discontents
Commentator: *Brian Turner*

Celtic Romanization: Cultural Assimilation or Cultural Exchange?

The rise of the Roman Empire created not only a military but also a cultural hegemony over colonized populations. While this interaction is often portrayed as a primarily unidirectional process of cultural assimilation, this may not be the case for Celtic peoples following their colonization in the mid first century BC. An examination of Roman perception of Celtic culture, perceived compatibility of Celtic culture, and mixed Romano-Celtic culture indicates that the cultural exchange between Romans and Celts was bi-directional.

Shawn Lee, Clackamas High School

The Roman Army: Strategy, Tactics, and Innovation

The Roman Empire at its peak covered millions of square miles of ground, encompassing a vast variety of cultures of people. In order to ensure continued peace and stability in such a mammoth multiethnic empire, the Roman Army was forced to engage and repel a variety of foreign opponents utilizing different tactics across a wide spectrum of terrain, from Macedonian phalanxes on flat plains to Gallic barbarian hordes on forested ground. Simultaneously, the Roman Army also had to avoid compromising internal stability and maintain a force capable of putting down a large range of insurrectionist forces. Even today, with the improved mobility, communication capability, equipment, and logistical infrastructure that modern technology provides, such a task seems dauntingly difficult. This paper will examine the factors that allowed the Roman Army to effectively accomplish such a task, namely the Army's tactics and formations, adaptable troop composition, and flexible strategic deployment.

Weiyei Zhou, Clackamas High School

Inevitable Rebellion: The Jacobite Risings and the Union of 1707

In the beginning of the 18th century, the landscape of Europe was changed with the proposal of a legislation to unite Scotland and England. While the Union of 1707 served as an important starting point in the English quest for unification, it was not powerful enough to truly prevent insurgency among Scottish natives. This paper explores the problems associated with and Scottish opposition to the Union of 1707, and the measures it took to truly join the two nations under the name Great Britain. It also highlights the endurance of a Scottish identity, examining resistance to empires and questioning the longevity of such superpowers.

Lindsay Swanson, St. Mary's Academy

1:00 – 2:15
SMSU 338

THIRD SESSIONS
Space Invaders: Law and the “Other”
Commentator: *Patricia Schechter*

To what extent did the internment of Japanese Americans after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941 reveal the xenophobia of the American people?

This investigation will explore to what extent the internment of Japanese Americans after the bombing of Pearl Harbor revealed the underlying xenophobic nature of the American people. The investigation will focus on the justifications made for the internment of Japanese Americans after the bombing of Pearl Harbor by examining why American people did or did not protest the actions of the government. To determine the extent to which the internment revealed the xenophobic nature of the American people, the investigation will reveal racial tensions that existed before the war as well as the motivation of actions that followed the attack.

Jessie Yan, Sunset High School

A Howl of Free Expression: The 1957 Howl Obscenity Trial and Sexual Liberation

The 1957 “Howl” obscenity trial, which covered the constitutionality of utilizing obscene words in literature, was largely influential in the development of literary free expression in America. This case centered on Allen Ginsberg’s *Howl and Other Poems*, a work which represented the ideals and culture of the literarily experimental and sexually promiscuous Beat Generation. The expansion of free expression can be discerned through the tolerance of these sexual implications in literature, which is documented throughout the history of sexual suppression in past censorship cases. The victory of the “Howl” obscenity trial was essential for liberating the use of sexual references in literature, which consequently opened the gates to the cultivation of free expression.

Jamie Rehlaender, Lakeridge High School

The Limits of Tolerance: The Equal Treatment Act and Discrimination in The Netherlands

The Netherlands has a reputation for being one of the most liberal and accepting nations in the world. However, when analyzing the traditions, politics, education, and other aspects of everyday life in the country, a long-lasting history of racism and prejudice is revealed. This paper explores the possible reasons for inequality in the Netherlands, and the Equal Treatment Act of 1994, the first explicit Dutch anti-discrimination legislation. This paper will discuss the potential reasons why the Equal Treatment Act ultimately failed to curb bias based on race, ethnicity, and religion—challenges still faced by many in the Netherlands today, twenty years later.

Dylan Wells, St. Mary’s Academy

1:00 – 2:15
SMSU 327

THIRD SESSIONS
Systems of Knowledge
Commentator: *Richard Beyler*

The Female Body as a Religious Tool

“The Female Body as a Religious Tool” examines the Catholic Church’s sexualization of the female body during the Middle Ages, which allowed for patriarchal dominance within the Church’s hierarchal structure. By stigmatizing femininity, deeming the female body as inherently sinful, and praising female virginity, the Catholic Church systematically oppressed female power within the Church and consequently society. This essay illustrates how the Church drew its doctrine surrounding women and limited female spirituality by relying on prominent male voices from the time period including Saint Jerome, Saint Augustine of Hippo, and theologian Thomas Aquinas. The hyper-sexualization of the female body began with the Catholic Church’s attempt to restrict female power within its hierarchy, and ultimately is a practice that persists in western civilization today.

Isabelle Gilges, Riverdale High School

The Pursuit of Pleasure: An Intersection between Aristotle’s *Poetics* and Sixteenth Century Renaissance Music

Aristotle’s *Poetics* is unparalleled as one of the most translated texts in history. The Greek philosopher’s cross-cultural influence can be traced through the evolution of countless practices over time, ranging from Late Antiquity to philosophy of mind to political theory. Yet far beyond the work’s commonly-known political, dramatic and philosophical influences, the components of *Poetics* were essential in shaping the distinctive style of sixteenth century Renaissance music; a medium whose aim of reviving the ethical power of the ancient past has helped Aristotelian concepts survive through the centuries.

Eliza Kamerling-Brown, Grant High School

Rationalism and the Understanding of Irrationality

The Scientific Revolution is an era heavily scrutinized by historians and history teachers alike; the works of Francis Bacon, Andreas Vesalius, and Isaac Newton are included in nearly every textbook and course covering the Enlightenment era. But many people don’t realize that the scientific discoveries of the Enlightenment were not limited to mathematics, astronomy, and anatomy; a revolution in psychiatry was also occurring.

“Rationalism and the Understanding of Irrationality” explores how the rationalist movement in the Enlightenment, which emphasized the use of reason and individualism, enabled leaders in the mental health industry to raise living standards and redefine treatment for mentally ill people. By examining the way that the witchcraft phenomenon and asylums perpetuated the mental illness stigma in the Renaissance, this research paper speaks volumes to the alienation that mentally ill people experienced and the way that the rise of Enlightenment Rationalism made Western Civilization more open-minded to them.

Sophie Hamilton, Riverdale High School

Thanks to all those who make The Young Historians Conference possible:

Challenge Program Instructors

Megan Balzer & Peter Pommer:
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David A. Horowitz
Jennifer Kerns
Thomas Lockett
Brian Turner

Other Participating History Faculty

Richard Beyler
Desmond Cheung
David Johnson
Patricia Schechter
Jennifer Tappan

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Alexandra Hawes
Kira Lesley
Cathy Valentine
Justin L. Vipperman

Friends of History

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