Seven 2020 graduates awarded library prizes for outstanding research and writing

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Despite the disruption of the COVID-19 shutdown in March, the class of 2020 completed a wide range of original research projects using Yale Library collections and resources. Seven students wrote senior essays that were recognized with one of three annual library prizes. The winning essays have been published on Eli Scholar.

The Harvey M. Applebaum ’59 Award is for an essay using the library’s collections of government documents and information. This year, a first prize of $500 and a second prize of $250 were awarded. The Applebaum Award is chaired by Kenya Flash, government information librarian. The 2020 submissions were judged by Barbara Esty, data librarian; Cate Kellett, catalog librarian; Scott Matheson, associate librarian for Technical Services; Youn Noh, digital information research specialist; and Jennifer Snow, librarian for anthropology, sociology, and women, gender, and sexuality studies, producing these results:
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• First prize: William Horvath, Berkeley College, for The 1950s “War on Narcotics”: Harry Anslinger, The Federal Bureau of Narcotics, and Senator Price Daniel’s Probe. [1] Jennifer Klein, professor of history, was Horvath’s senior essay adviser. Horvath, the prize judges wrote, “had an engaging essay that presented historical materials in novel ways. He used a variety of types of resources, specifically varied government information resources including hearings, legal cases, archival materials, and more.”

• Second prize: Stephanie Higginson, Morse College, for Against Executive-Controlled Administrative Law Judges [2]. Stephen Skowronek, Pelatiah Perit Professor of Political Science, was Higginson’s senior essay adviser. The prize judges said Higginson’s work “provided novel comparisons and a new lens on the intersection of mid-century ‘teen panics’ and the promotion of increasingly severe anti-drug laws.”

The Manuscripts and Archives Diane Kaplan Memorial Prize is for an essay based substantially on research in any Yale Manuscripts and Archives collection. The $500 prize was presented to two students this year. The Kaplan Prize is chaired by Bill Landis, associate director for Public Services. Jennifer Coggins, archivist for collection development; Mike Lotstein, university archivist; Steve Ross, manager for Public Services; Judy Schiff, chief research archivist; and Camila Tessler, archivist, also served as judges for this year’s essay submissions.

• First prize: Heidi Katter, Silliman College, for Railroad Ties: Tracks to the White Earth and Red Lake Ojibwe Reservations, 1860s-1910s [5]. Ned Blackhawk, professor of history and of American studies, was Katter’s essay adviser. The prize judges said Katter’s essay was a “clear and compelling project that uses a variety of archival maps to construct and advance an argument on railroad colonialism, ‘federal geographic consciousness,’ and the dispossession of White Earth and Red Lake lands.”

• First prize: Soledad O. Tejada, Davenport College, for The Public and the Personal: Mapping the NYC Subway System as an Urban Memoryscape [6]. The faculty adviser was Elihu Rubin, associate professor of architecture and of American studies. “This was an ambitious, innovative, and theoretically grounded project that used a variety of cartographic and artistic sources in the paper, which strengthened its points about cartography and mapping memory,” the prize judges wrote. “The artistic component successfully and
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creatively combined the physicality of place with the transient and elusive nature of memory.

- Honorable mention: Peter A. Luff, Jonathan Edwards College, for Social Agglomeration Forces and the City [7]. This project had two faculty advisers, Costas Arkolakis, professor of economics and Sun Kyoung Lee, postdoctoral associate in economics. “The author used a rigorous methodology, and thoroughly described the process to generate and geocode data from historic NYC archives,” the judges wrote. “Merit is given to the use of GIS-based maps, including 3D visualization, to demonstrate the veracity of the argument while providing an intriguing glimpse into New York City’s Gilded Age.”

*Image: Marschner Map of Original Vegetation, cited by Heidi Katter ’20 in her essay “Railroad Ties”*

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**Links**
[1] https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/applebaum_award/21/
[2] https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/applebaum_award/20/
[3] https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/mssa_collections/21/
[4] https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/mssa_collections/22/
[5] https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/library_map_prize/6/
[6] https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/library_map_prize/7/
[7] https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/library_map_prize/8/