



Undergraduate Research Symposium May 17, 2019 Mary Gates Hall

Online Proceedings

SESSION 1J

UNDERSTANDING OUR WORLD: DATA-BASED APPROACHES

*Session Moderator: Walter Andrews, Near Eastern
Languages and Civilization*

MGH 251

12:30 PM to 2:15 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

Torn In Transition: the Decolonization of New Caledonia

*Ethan Thomas Walkley, Senior, French, Human Centered
Design & Engineering*

UW Honors Program

Mentor: Maya Smith, French and Italian Studies

New Caledonia is a French collectivity in the South Pacific that transitioned from colony to territory in the 1940's, like many other former French colonial holdings. However, unlike other overseas territories of France, New Caledonia has been on an unofficial transition towards decolonization that began in 1998 with the Nouméa accords, stipulating a vote to take place in twenty years that would decide whether or not the islands would remain French. Despite a slim loss for independence when this long-awaited vote took place last year in November 2018, future referendums to challenge this decision are on the horizon. The objective of this research is thus to understand why the situation in New Caledonia is so different from that of other French territories. In particular, how do contemporary issues in the archipelago and the question of race complicate the decolonization process? To effectively answer this question, this study will analyze academic literature comprising subjects on foundational postcolonial theory, New Caledonian history, and race in the French-controlled South Pacific. Peculiarities of New Caledonia include its relatively late colonization compared to other French territories and the fact that the native society residing on the island continues to hold a strong presence. These factors along with a turbulent past may explain in part why New Caledonia finds itself in a slow process of decolonization. However, rich mineral reserves and the rise of neocolonialism may also complicate this event. Ultimately, this research hopes to bring a better understanding of New Caledonia to a wider public while serving as a foundation for continuing conversations around neocolonialism and efforts to combat it in the French

territories and elsewhere.

SESSION 1S

USING ANTHROPOLOGY TO UNDERSTAND OUR PAST AND PRESENT

*Session Moderator: Stephanie Selover, Near Eastern
Languages and Civilization*

JHN 111

12:30 PM to 2:15 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

Sociocultural, Political, and Historical Factors Affecting Maternal Health Outcomes in Korhogo and Abidjan, Ivory Coast: An Ethnographic Country Report

*Christelle Nidafolo Silue, Senior, Public Health-Global
Health, French*

Mentor: Richard Watts, French & Italian Studies

Maternal Health is an important topic, especially in developing countries, because of the significant inequality in access to healthcare in places such as the Ivory Coast (West Africa). This presentation presents a one-month research conducted in the Ivory Coast, with the aim of analyzing how sociocultural, political, and historical factors affect maternal health i.e. quality and access to care. To conduct this research the history of the country dating from its independence to his present day were assessed. Secondly, sociocultural factors such as one's culture norms were also covered by talking to hospital staff and local women about their experiences. Additionally, the political state of the country such as the civil wars that it has endured were discussed. All the data for this project were gathered using ethnographic field research methods such as site visits and key informant interviews with two politicians, two physicians and locals. In order to provide a comparative analysis, the research was conducted in two distinct locations, Korhogo and Abidjan which have differing economic status and government help. Interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, and analyzed to look for common themes around barriers to maternal health. Site visit notes were transcribed and analyzed, and pictures were documented for further descriptive analysis. Key themes from analysis include high healthcare costs and culture barriers as

negative impacts on maternal health. The study revealed that when treating a patient, it is important to take into consideration their culture norms and it will also be beneficial to have free care for pregnant women which will in turn hopefully encourage them to seek care. We hope to conduct further research, which allows governments and people to recognize that community health is crucial in healthcare and that breaking the inequitable cycle in access to healthcare is essential.

SESSION 2C

ASSESSING THE SOURCES: WOMEN, IDENTITY, AND PRACTICES OF EMPIRE

Session Moderator: Mira Green, History

MGH 231

3:30 PM to 5:15 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

Cultural Amnesia: Decolonization of Indochina and the Vietnamese Diaspora

Kimberly Meilin Yee, Junior, French

Mentor: Maya Smith, French and Italian Studies

Twenty-seven years ago, the movie *Indochina* debuted and brought up interesting questions about the direction and future of France's colonies. Almost three decades later, the continuing presence of France's colonies and influx of immigrants to France from countries known formerly as Indochina also raise questions about the effects of colonialism, especially pertaining to immigrant identities both past and present. This essay examines the lasting legacy of French colonization on the Vietnamese diaspora through both a literary analysis of Linda Lê's novel *Les Trois Parques*, which offers an observed history of Vietnamese restaurant workers and scholars and their agency regarding the fight against colonization, as well as a sociological exploration of a study conducted on the success of international students' integration into French universities. Additionally, the paper seeks to illustrate the significance of cultural amnesia —the assimilation into a new culture by rejecting one's former identity — as well as the benefits and motivations that may have guided first-generation immigrants to do so instead of rebelling and continuing their cultural traditions.