

## From Humanist Canada: Regina High School Students Dominate National Essay Contest

Students from Regina, Saskatchewan, took first and third prizes in the English language section of the Humanist Canada Essay Contest, a national contest for high school students. First prize winner Joshua Soifer of Luther College High School, in an essay entitled *The Necessity of a Universal Base Income in Upholding Human Freedom*, argued increasing income disparity between the “uber-rich” and other Canadians “destroys the ability of the individual to maintain freedoms and uphold democracy.”

The contest’s panel of independent judges awarded second prize to William Kirk of London, Ontario, for his essay, *The Right to Knowledge: Using Literacy as a Defence against Tyranny*. Mr. Kirk provided examples of modern and historical tyrannies that repressed the dissemination of ideas and literature. Jasnoor Guliani submitted a philosophical paper entitled *Evaluating the Role of Contrasting Perspectives in the Critical Pursuit of Knowledge* and earned third place. Mr. Guliani argued rational pursuit of knowledge becomes enhanced with the synthesis of contrasting perspectives. He drew examples of this synthesizing process from the hard sciences to the humanities.

Honourable mentions went to Sinead Gibbs from Gimli, Manitoba and Sarah Rensby of Regina for essays entitled *Gender Neutrality: A Step toward a Better Future* and *The Women’s Pay Gap*, respectively.

The Humanist Canada Essay Contest was developed to promote logical thinking and communication skills. Humanist Association of Ottawa (HAO) member Richard Thain demonstrated a need for the contest and donated the prize money. Humanist Canada Vice-President Dr. Lloyd Hawkeye Robertson said, “Given the success we have had with the contest this year, we intend to add a second competition aimed at university undergraduate students in 2020.” Humanist Canada / Association Humanist du Québec has a parallel essay contest for French Essays. Full information of the Humanist Canada Essay Contest can be found at: <https://hc-contest.ca/en/>.

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# Humanist Perspectives

[www.HumanistPerspectives.org](http://www.HumanistPerspectives.org)

Vol. 52, No. 4 Winter 2019-20  
Issue 211

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Canadian Humanist Publications is a non-profit organization with charitable status (Reg. No: 11883 3284 RR0001). Donations are eligible for tax credits from Revenue Canada.

*Humanist Perspectives* quarterly is a member of Magazines Canada indexed in the Canadian Periodical Index and is available on microfilm or microfiche from ProQuest in Ann Arbor, Michigan, 48106, USA.

Articles published in *Humanist Perspectives* magazine will also be available on our website and in online databases partnered with Canadian Humanist Perspectives.

Submissions via digital media are preferred. Manuscripts may be edited for clarity and length, and will be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Writers’ guidelines are available.

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Please return undeliverable magazines for Canadian addresses to the above address of Canadian Humanist Publications in Ottawa.  
(ISSN 1719-6337)

This issue was produced in November, 2019. Printed in Canada