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Library Reflection Paper

The project that I am submitting for the CSUSM Library Award for Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity is a research paper that I drafted for my history course in Spring 2020. My paper attempted to demonstrate the intercultural exchange that existed historically between America and Japan. The 34-page paper, titled “American-Anime: How Japanese Anime Influenced American Cartoons” set forth to answer the question, how did Japanese anime affect American cartoons?

My research focused on how America’s cartoons (and American cartoonists) were influenced in the recent past by Japanese anime. One key source of my paper was a secondary source titled, *The Anime Boom in the United States: Lessons for Global Creative Industries* (2017). This book, which was written by two scholars from two different universities and published by Harvard University, aided in my understanding of the topic and helped me to find more primary sources that I was not aware of at first. The book was not available in the CSUSM library, thanks to the help of my professor and the Librarians, I was able to request the book through an interlibrary loan and borrow it from San Diego State’s library. Other secondary sources which I used for my research came from Google scholar, which the library and my Professor also taught me how to use. For example, our class had an opportunity to meet with Judith Downie, the librarian for history. She showed the students how to search for resources through the library, such as how to use OneSearch and filters to find sources that specifically relate to the research topics each individual student was trying to answer or analyze. One simple but very important research technique that I learned was using quotation marks to make the search look specifically for the words I had typed; for example typing “anime” instead of anime,

which would ensure the computer looks for any scholarly sources such as articles and books with the word anime in their titles.

For my primary sources, I used both different anime and cartoons themselves as evidence with complimentary interview articles verifying that a certain creator of an American cartoon had been influenced by a Japanese anime. For example in the paper, I discuss the American cartoon *Samurai Jack* (2001) and how the creator of it, Genndy Tartakovsky, had used certain animation techniques and camera shots that were reminiscent of Ghibli films made by Hayao Miyazaki. In a later paragraph, I talk about an article from a gaming website called *Polygon* (2019) in which they interviewed the creator of *Jack*. In the interview, Tartakovsky responded by admitting his reverence for Mr. Miyazaki and how he looked up to the famous Japanese director and animator as an influential creator.

The main thesis of the research paper evolved into an analytical process, whereby the paper invites the reader to begin questioning and thinking about the word “anime” itself and what it actually means. I chose to approach my paper through an analytical lens, rather than an argumentative one. The reader is taken through the different phases of anime’s influence on the United States and its cartoon creations. I start with arguably the first official anime ever created, *Astro Boy* (1963) by Osamu Tezuka; I discuss other influential anime and a collaboration cartoon between *Hasbro* (U.S.A) and *Takara* (Japan), *The Transformers* (1984). After the introduction and summarized analyses of these various anime and collaborative cartoons, I discuss “anime-inspired” cartoons, and finish the paper with the discussion on modern “American-anime.” I designed the paper in this format because I wanted the reader to see how historically the influence of anime led America to create its own version of anime. Since this research paper is

about a topic that is visual in nature, I provided the reader with 12 different snapshots from the anime and cartoons in question, to provide context and supporting evidence.