

**Welcome to the**  
**15<sup>th</sup> Annual Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts Undergraduate**  
**Research Conference**  
**Thursday April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

Schedule of Events

**8:30 AM - 9:45 AM**

Conference Registration\* (Bowman Lobby)

**8:45 AM - 9:00 AM**

Welcome Remarks from Dean of Academic  
Affair, Monica Joslin

**9:15 AM - 10:15 AM**

Special Session I A: Silo Busting:  
Interdisciplinary Worlds  
(Bowman 201)

Paper Presentations I B (Bowman 203)

Paper Presentations I C (Bowman 205)

Paper Presentations I D (Bowman 220)

Special Session I D: Art of Medieval &  
Renaissance Britain: Research &  
Creative Projects (Bowman 122)

**10:30 AM - 11:30 AM**

Special Session II A: Beyond the Border:  
Transnational Bodies in Latinx  
Literature (Bowman 201)

Special Session II B: Radical Remixes:  
Exploring Communication in Pop  
Culture Communities (Bowman 203)

Special Session II C: The Power of  
Mindfulness (Bowman 205)

Paper Presentations II D (Bowman 220)

Special Session II E: Divide and Converse  
(Bowman 122)

**11:00 AM – 12:30 PM**

Poster Session (Venable Gym)

Special Session: Armory Art Exhibit  
(Bowman Art Gallery)

Art Exhibit (Bowman 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor  
Corridors)

**12:30 PM - 1:30 PM**

Keynote Address and Luncheon  
(Campus Center Gym)

Welcome Remarks from President Birge

Keynote Address Presented By Kaitlin  
Hallet

Pamela Denis Scholarship Award

**1:30 PM - 2:00 PM**

Meet the Keynote Speaker (Sullivan  
Lounge, Students Only)

**2:00 PM - 3:00 PM**

Special Session III A: Writing the Global  
South (Bowman 201)

Special Session III B: Special Topics in  
Population Issues (Bowman 203)

Paper Presentations III C (Bowman 205)

Paper Presentations III D (Bowman 220)

Special Session III E: Creative Writing  
(Murdock 218)

**3:15 PM - 4:15 PM**

Special Session IV A: The Creative System:  
Artist Talks (Bowman 201)

Paper Presentations IV B (Bowman 203)

**3:30 PM – 5:00 PM**

Philosophy Mini Conference (Murdock 218)

*\*Conference registration will continue in the  
Bowman Hall Lobby until 11:00 AM. The  
Registration table will be moved to Venable  
Gymnasium during the poster session, from  
11:00 AM – 12:30 PM.*

## *Special Session I A: Silo Busting: Interdisciplinary Worlds*

*Bowman 201, 9:15 AM - 10:15 AM*

*Faculty Sponsor: Karen Cardozo*

### **Paper I A-1**

**Title:** Interdisciplinary and the Liberal Arts

**Author:** James Swinchoski

**Abstract:** Although many endorse both interdisciplinary and a liberal arts education, misunderstanding about the value of each persists. Moreover, interdisciplinary is not always supported within liberal arts institutions, where many academic programs are still organized around traditional disciplines. In colleges that offer an IDST major, students and faculty alike may be unsure about what such a program entails. This presentation will review the evolution of both liberal arts institutions and interdisciplinary studies to argue that we must continue to expand and promote the value of each, as they represent ideal modes of knowledge production for the rapidly changing 21st century.

### **Paper I A-2**

**Title:** Rethinking Wolves

**Author:** Alexis Gene Valentin

**Abstract:** Descended from wolves, dogs have come to be known as "man's best friend." Yet we continue to fear the animal known as the wolf, overlooking the evolutionary relationship. In folklore and media, the wolf is one of many animals that is misrepresented as monstrous. This presentation will explore various perspectives on wolves in order to showcase not only their ecological importance, but also how they have had a significant impact on the realm of animal therapy. In learning to see wolves differently, we may also become more informed and open-minded about other species.

### **Paper I A-3**

**Title:** A model and evolution of the metagame of Super Smash Bros

**Author:** Ian Sullivan

**Abstract:** This presentation breaks down the ascension of Smash Bros from party game to professional game. Despite it being one of the most professionally played fighting games of today, there has yet to be a technical breakdown of the competitive metagame at the academic level. However, the "scholars" of this topic are YouTube and online forum contributors, and tournament attendees; not traditional scholarly works. With this presentation, I will explore their findings as well as my own on this modern topic, in order to bring it into the realm of academia for the first time.

**Paper I A-4****Title:** Gender Presentation in the Gothic Subculture**Author:** Angela Hunt**Advisor:** Anna Jaysane-Darr

**Abstract:** The transgender community is now experiencing more visibility than ever before. This has expanded into the recognition of a diverse array of gender identities. However, that does not mean that these gender identities are new. The Goth subculture celebrates expression that challenges conventional norms, and gender presentation is no exception. This twisting of gender stereotypes is exemplified by icons like Robert Smith, Siouxsie Sioux, Anna-Varney Cantodea, and Grace Jones. This study explores how the Goth scene and gender expression intersect and inform one another, and how the subculture makes space for people to express their gender identities over mainstream spaces.

## *Paper Presentations I B*

*Bowman 203, 9:15 AM - 10:15 AM*

### **Paper I B-1**

**Title:** Twitter as News: An Exploration of Political Rhetoric on Twitter

**Author:** Jaclyn Ordway

**Advisor:** Amber Engelson

**Abstract:** Benedict Anderson examines how newspapers create an “imagined community” which helps readers view themselves as part of the larger democracy and society, while scholars like Vidich have examined how various forms of mass media have altered American political rhetoric. However, as the recent 2016 election has shown, social media like Twitter has added new dimensions to this conversation about mass media. My paper will examine political rhetoric on Twitter, which classifies itself as a news application, in relation to political rhetoric in newspapers to explore how Anderson’s theory of imagined community applies in the 21st century.

### **Paper I B-2**

**Title:** Campus Center Renovation Survey

**Authors:** Jess Lovellette & Adam Sams

**Advisor:** Nancy Ovitsky

**Abstract:** The purpose of our research was to determine MCLA campus community current usage and attitudes toward the MCLA Amsler Campus Center as well as desired changes in space design and usage. Data collection included a survey of students and staff as well as an open forum during a Student Government Association meeting. The results reveal what the campus community feels would be the best use of renovated building space to promote more community interaction. Results were shared with the Office of Student Life to help aid MCLA in their decisions regarding the planned renovations.

### **Paper I B-3**

**Title:** The Neuroscience of Love

**Author:** Elsa Mastico

**Advisor:** Sharon Claffey

**Abstract:** This presentation will discuss the recent studies in the field of neuroscience about love, the different types of love, and how love functions in the brain. The presentation will lead into a discussion about the potential importance of studying love in humans and how this new information will be incorporated into a study that I am conducting at MCLA in the fall that will look at passionate love and the frequency of positive emotions that occur when people are asked to think about passionate love. Methodology of the study and predictive benefits will be included.

**Paper I B-4**

**Title:** The Vietnam War: Differences in Ideologies, Differences in Interpretations

**Author:** Morrison Robblee

**Advisor:** Ely Janis

**Abstract:** This presentation explores the dissimilar camps of historiography regarding the Vietnam War that have emerged over the past forty years. These schools of historiography include Wartime Criticism, U.S. Policy Defense, Liberal Realism, Conservative Revisionist, and Radical Neo-Marxism. While each school of historiography will be analyzed, the presentation will argue that the Liberal Realist school of historiographic thought offers the most complete and conclusive analysis of the Vietnam War.

## *Paper Presentations I C*

*Bowman 205, 9:15 AM - 10:15 AM*

### **Paper I C-1**

**Title:** A Historiographical Analysis of the Motivations of European Crusaders During the First Crusade of 1096-1099

**Author:** Rory Parsons

**Advisor:** Ely Janis

**Abstract:** This paper sought to understand and explain the various arguments twentieth and twenty-first century historians have made as to the actual motivations of the European Crusaders during their attempt to retake the Holy Land of Jerusalem during the First Crusade in 1096-1099. It also examines how Arabic and Jewish scholars have interpreted the Crusades as victimized groups, as well as whether religious fervor played as great a role in the Crusades as would be expected, or, on the other hand, more secular political and economic reasons, such as the opportunity to gain wealth, were primary motivators.

### **Paper I C-2**

**Title:** The Legality of Revolution

**Author:** Elizabeth Kurz Michel

**Advisor:** Anthony Daly

**Abstract:** When the law must be broken in order for change to be achieved, what do we do afterward to make the law clear again? This is the dilemma faced in the aftermath of the French Revolution, where the breaking of laws was commonplace and necessary in the revolts. Afterward, however, the readjustment and creation of new laws threw France into an era of legal uncertainty. In this presentation, I will analyze France's system of criminal law during the 1790s and early 1800s to determine the lasting impact of the French Revolution.

### **Paper I C-3**

**Title:** How can creative placemaking foster inclusive, equitable vibrancy in rural America?

**Author:** Katrina Staaf

**Advisor:** Lisa Donovan

**Abstract:** This study examines how creative placemaking--the process of shaping a place around arts and culture--can become more inclusive and equitable, particularly when it occurs in rural locations. As this process becomes increasingly prevalent on a national level, there is a need for greater awareness of how it may undermine community development while promoting economic development. Literature is especially scarce around placemaking in rural areas of the U.S., which pose distinct challenges and advantages to arts-driven development. The findings of this report--derived from a literature review, interviews, and a document analysis--provide insight as to what may democratize placemaking, both rurally and generally.

**Paper I C-4****Title:** Refugees in Combat Sports**Author(s):** Jennifer Wilson**Advisor:** Anna Jaysane-Darr

**Abstract:** In the wake of the current refugee crisis, it is important to learn about the lives and experiences of refugees, as this can help us to better understand their plights. This paper draws on research that seeks to explore former refugees that use combat sports (ex. Mixed Martial Arts (MMA), Judo, etc.) as a way to grapple with resettlement. The goal of the research is to examine the reasons why this phenomenon among some refugee populations exists. Preliminary hypotheses to this question involve the role of trauma and healing, bi-cultural identity, and family in the formation of these refugees' careers.

## *Paper Presentations I D*

*Bowman 220, 9:15 AM - 10:15 AM*

### **Paper I D-1**

**Title:** Who was Robespierre?

**Author:** Stefani Skerry

**Advisor:** Anthony Daly

**Abstract:** Following the execution of King Louis XVI by guillotine in 1793, the French government lapsed into violence and chaos. This was the Reign of Terror, a period in which the ideals of the French Revolution-- liberty, equality, fraternity-- were pushed aside in favor of proscription, or the elimination of enemies of the state. This research seeks the many faces of Maximilien Robespierre, leader of the terror's executive government, advocate for the deaths of thousands, formerly known as the "Incorruptible" voice of the people. Who was Robespierre, and why did he violate the principle ideas he stood for at the expense of his own country?

### **Paper I D-2**

**Title:** Vietnam: The War that Challenged American Diplomacy

**Author:** Zoe Elwell

**Advisor:** Ely Janis

**Abstract:** From George Washington's code of neutrality to Woodrow Wilson's open door policy, American policy makers have struggled to define the nation's relationship with the outside world. The American conflict with Vietnam during the 1960's and 1970's, however, tested American diplomacy in new ways, as questions quickly emerged whether or not U.S. involvement was morally just or necessary. This paper will examine the historiography of the United States involvement in Vietnam, different historians have debated over the role of ideology, strong political figures and economic factors being the main cause for the most controversial war in American history.

### **Paper I D-3**

**Title:** Too Little, Too Late: Is Political Representation Suffering due to Suffrage Laws?

**Author(s):** Kaitlin Wright

**Advisor:** Samantha Pettey

**Abstract:** The number of women in elected office has grown dramatically overtime, but women's descriptive representation is still low. To explore the differences in descriptive representation, this paper examines female suffrage laws and its effect on women in state legislatures. I argue states which enacted women's suffrage laws prior to the ratification of the nineteenth amendment have more women in office today. To test the effect of suffrage on women in office, I will conduct a linear regression. Overall, this paper adds to our knowledge of how laws can have long-term consequences on women's descriptive representation.



**Paper I D-4**

**Title:** From the Shiplside Cannon to Napoleon: Why the British Won at Trafalgar

**Author:** Shane Voci

**Advisor:** Anthony Daly

**Abstract:** On October 21, 1805, twenty-seven ships of the British Royal Navy met in combat against thirty-three ships of Napoleon's navy. The engagement would be remembered as the Battle of Trafalgar, and the decisive British victory cemented British control of the sea over the rest of Napoleon's reign. This presentation investigates why the British won the battle. Much of the credit is often given to the heroic Vice Admiral Horatio Nelson and his tactics. However, there were other key factors that helped dictate the outcome of the battle; political climate, economics, the training of sailors and French and Spanish leadership all influenced the outcome.

# *Special Session I E: Art of Medieval & Renaissance Britain: Research & Creative Projects*

*Bowman 122, 9:15 AM - 10:15 AM*

*Faculty Sponsor: Rosanne Denhard*

## **Paper I E-1**

**Title:** Creative Education and Historical Research: Through the Lens of Viking Society

**Author:** Jason Adams

**Abstract:** History is a less than exciting topic for some students and it falls to the educator to bring the past to life. In addition, students learn in a plethora of different ways in every subject area. Bringing these two ideas together creates the opportunity for creative projects while still educating students on any historical topic. Many times this idea can be used to help educate students on misunderstood topics or topics in which there are opposing ideas to their own. For this example, we will be looking at research done on Viking society in England in order to create a historical fiction short story.

## **Paper I E-2**

**Title:** Magic's Tail in England: Behind the Magic

**Author:** Rachel Capek

**Abstract:** This is an original children's book narrated from the perspective of Magic the cat, who travels mysteriously to England. Inspired by my travel with Professor Denhard's *Arts of Medieval and Renaissance Britain* course, the book includes digitally-edited pen and pastel illustrations. The book itself is handmade, displaying techniques learned from Professor Mowinski's *Painted Papers, Prints, and Book Arts* course. The project gives children opportunities to explore new places and sparks ambitions to travel. The story features Hyde Park, Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, The Tower of London, and King's College in Cambridge, with facts about these places woven into the narrative of Magic's adventures.

## **Paper I E-3**

**Title:** Man's Best Friend: A Study of the Role of Dogs through Medieval and Renaissance England

**Author:** KiLee Fortier

**Abstract:** The history of dogs and humans dates back for over 33,000 years. The cultural significance dogs have in modern societies around the world is easily distinguished. What tend to be overlooked are the historical impacts dogs have had throughout the history of humans. This research explores the role dogs played in society within Medieval and Renaissance Britain particularly among differing social classes. Dogs were seen as loyal, intelligent and hardworking, making them very popular as companions and workers. These roles led to the creation of many of the modern dog breeds and the way dogs are still perceived today.

## *Special Session II A: Beyond the Border: Transnational Bodies in Latinx Literature*

*Bowman 201, 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM*

*Faculty Sponsor: Mariana Bolivar*

### **Paper II A-1**

**Title:** Dreaming in Cuban, Living in the United States: A Transnational Experience

**Author:** Ryan Psutka

**Abstract:** "This project explores the concept of transnationalism through the novel *Soñar en Cubano*. Transnationalism refers to the social and cultural connections between different countries that form a person's identity. The novel deals with three generations of a Cuban family that has been separated by The Cuban Revolution and Fidel Castro's communist regime. Some characters still live in Cuba, while others have fled to the United States. As a result, each character experiences life and heritage in a complex, unique manner. This project analyzes the cross-cultural experiences of various characters in order to better understand the many manifestations of transnationalism.

### **Paper II A-2**

**Title:** LGBTQ+ Representation in Latinx Cinema

**Author:** Dirk Correia

**Abstract:** In this presentation I am going to analyze the intersections between Latinx and LGBTQ+ identities represented in movies. I am going to speak to not only content but to accuracy of representation. I plan to adhere to the theme of crossing borders by framing this in the way of "crossing emotional borders." These movies take place in a wide range of physical spaces, so these issues are not confined by traditional borders. However, a common theme from these films is that it takes a great effort for people to change previously held views and accept and love a queer child.

### **Paper II A-3**

**Title:** Crossing Borders: Immigration Narratives in Trump Era.

**Authors:** Rosy Gil Diaz, & Laurence Wilson

**Abstract:** This presentation will discuss the challenges around the Mexico- US border towns. While immigration has always been a debated issue, with the recent election of Donald Trump it has received more attention. The proposal and approval to build a wall threatens immigrant lives and foreign relations. In particular, border towns struggle the most with social and economic issues due to immigration policies, including agencies such as ICE and programs like DACA. We can see these issues reflected on emerging immigrant narratives. We aim to shed light on and raise awareness regarding immigration concerns that surround the border communities.

## *Special Session II B: Radical Remixes: Exploring Communication in Pop Culture Communities*

*Bowman 203, 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM*

*Faculty Sponsor: Amber Engelson*

### **Paper II B-1**

**Title:** “That Dragon, Cancer”: The Venture into a Videogame as a Source of Literature

**Author:** Michael Masley Hannett

**Abstract:** In 2017, it is difficult to deny the popularity of videogames, especially among young adults. However, there are stereotypes associated with videogames, including violence and lack of purpose beyond entertainment. Yet as Carraciolo shows in his research of a narrative-heavy game Home, some videogame developers have begun to emphasize storytelling as a way to positively impact players. To explore this theory, I took an autoethnographic approach by playing a videogame called “That Dragon, Cancer”; my presentation will illustrate the story-telling function of “That Dragon, Cancer” in the hopes that videogames will be less stigmatized and more accepted by broader society.

### **Paper II B-2**

**Title:** Just A Game?: The Language and Significance of YouTube Gaming Channels

**Author:** Brianna Lamb

**Abstract:** Our society is rapidly digitizing, creating new communication networks. YouTube is one such network, allowing people to communicate about shared interests like gaming. Scholars such as Black and Schreiber have researched how digital communities like these can be beneficial in bringing individuals together both on and off-line through shared discourse; my project extends this research to examine gaming channel video content and what significance it holds to those in its community. Drawing from interview-based research on the channel “Game Grumps,” my presentation will explore the opportunities gaming channels open up for personal expression and comfort through their story-telling functions.

### **Paper II B-3**

**Title:** An Analysis of The Eminem Show: Marshall Mather’s Influence on Rap Identity and Discourse

**Author:** Tyler Lord

**Abstract:** As hip-hop becomes more engrained in pop culture, it has increasing influence on the values, beliefs, and actions of its listeners, making the need to discuss this genre as a platform of communication more prominent. Drawing on research by Cutler, Olson, and others, my project analyzes the musical identity of rap star Eminem to extend the conversation on linguistic choice, appropriation, and authenticity in hip-hop culture. Through text-based analysis of The Eminem Show, my project illustrates Eminem’s ability to negotiate race by prioritizing class oppression, which in turn reworks the discussion of authenticity and white-rapper identity in hip-hop culture.

## *Special Session II C: The Power of Mindfulness*

*Bowman 205, 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM*

*Faculty Sponsor: Karen Cardozo*

### **Paper II C-1**

**Title:** Mindfulness: A Relationship-Building Tool Between Communities and Law Enforcement

**Author:** Laura Lefebvre

**Abstract:** There are many challenges in establishing relationships and understanding between law enforcement and our communities. Implicit biases rest in each individual's unconscious just as explicit bias exists outwardly. Can mindfulness techniques help improve and foster community relationships? This presentation will examine possible causes as well as some of the successful solutions that are being utilized by communities and law enforcement across the country

### **Paper II C-2**

**Title:** Mindfulness as an Alternative Treatment for Opioid Addiction

**Author:** Morgan Valois

**Abstract:** Opioid addiction is commonly classified as a progressive and treatable brain disease characterized by compulsive drug-seeking behavior and use. Yet even with many conventional treatments available, rates of opioid users and overdose deaths increase annually in the United States. The practice of mindfulness may offer an alternative or complementary treatment. Rather than confronting addiction as a disease, mindfulness practices allow an individual more control over the mind and body. This presentation explores mindfulness as a treatment for substance abuse and addiction, specifically opioid addiction, from both spiritual and scientific perspectives.

### **Paper II C-3**

**Title:** Treating PTSD and Trauma through Mindfulness

**Author:** Cedar Robideaux

**Abstract:** Mindfulness practices have been proven to have many health benefits, ranging from reducing chronic pain to reducing addictive behaviors and even the treatment for PTSD and other traumas. Many different Mindfulness practices, such as art, walking or meditation, can be the key for trauma victims and people suffering from PTSD to reclaim their own bodies and minds. This presentation will examine Mindfulness in the treatment of PTSD and trauma and argue the value of Mindfulness in treating PTSD and trauma through these unconventional practices.

## *Paper Presentations II D*

*Bowman 220, 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM*

### **Paper II D-1**

**Title:** The Woman Who has Become Marie Antoinette

**Author:** Paige Brosofsky

**Advisor:** Anthony Daly

**Abstract:** For this project, I analyzed the major differences between the modern film portrayals of Marie Antoinette, queen of France from 1774 to 1792, and the historical record. Marie Antoinette was closely identified with the excess and then collapse of the French Monarchy. Today, media portrayals have transformed her into a fashion icon and a symbol of elegance. This analysis was based on primary and secondary sources along with two recent films, *The Affair of the Necklace* (2001) and *Marie Antoinette* (2006).

### **Paper II D-2**

**Title:** How do historical museums approach putting together displays, to increase visitor engagement, with historical artifacts?

**Author:** Amanda Vernola

**Advisor:** Lisa Donovan

**Abstract:** This study examines the question “How do historical museums approach putting together displays, to increase visitor engagement, with historical artifacts?”. Research methods included a literature review and interviews of three museum staff members. Several themes emerged in the study including the incorporation of technology in historical displays, consideration of how much information to provide in wall text to engage but not overwhelm visitors, and the preservation needs of historical artifacts.

### **Paper II D-3**

**Title:** The Progression of Studying the Confederate States of America Over Time Through a Social, Nationalistic, and Political Lens

**Author:** Logan Brooks

**Advisor:** Ely Janis

**Abstract:** The Confederate States of America (CSA) was a group of states that seceded from the United States in 1860-1861. Since the 1860s, many scholars have drawn conclusions on how the CSA should be viewed from a historical standpoint. Over recent decades, the historiography of the Confederacy and the changing methods of historians have led to significant changes in understanding the ways that social issues, nationalism, and political decisions shaped the Confederacy. This paper explores the changing historiographical debate over how well the Confederacy was run, as well as considering why it ultimately failed.

**Paper II D-4**

**Title:** The subculture of gaming known as “speedrunning”

**Author:** Ian Sullivan

**Advisor:** Gerol Petruzella

**Abstract:** This presentation will go over the subculture of gaming known as “speedrunning”, how it came about and why we break games to play them faster. Going fast is nothing new to video games, but when we can beat Super Mario World in 40 seconds by rewriting the system memory we are taking it to a new level. We will be looking at the history of speedrunning, interviews with runners, and my own personal journey to becoming a speedrunner to examine this method of play.

*Special Session II E: Performance: Divide and Converse*  
*Bowman 122, 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM*  
*Faculty Sponsor: Kelli Newby*

**Paper II E-1**

**Author:** Philip Shedd

**Abstract:** The purpose of this performance is to explore the division that has occurred in American discourse post-election, specifically here on MCLA's campus. We will be devising and producing a short play using lines taken from interviews with students from the College Republicans Club (including Trump supporters), the Black Student Union, the Latin-American Student Union, the Queer Student Union, and other groups within the student body. We hope to portray these views through monologues, dance, and soundscapes. (Performers: Bryanna Bradley, John J. Kelley, and Sebastian Phillips)



## *Poster Session*

*Venable Gymnasium, 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM*

### **Poster 1**

**Title:** North American Model United Nations 2017 – Disarmament and International Security General Assembly

**Author:** Nicholas Bassett

**Advisor:** Amber Engelson

**Abstract:** I plan to present during the poster session my research that took place during my participation in the North American Model United Nations. I was in the Disarmament and International Security General Assembly within the Integrated Simulation for the Global War on Terror. As the representative for Qatar in the General Assembly, I needed to be precise in the country's history with terrorism and the Global War on Terror. I needed to work with other members in the Assembly, and with others also working within the Integrated Simulation all while working within regulations of the UN system.

### **Poster 2**

**Title:** Assessment of the Involvement of Anxiety and Related Personality Characteristics in Risky and Aggressive Driving and Motor Vehicle Accidents

**Authors:** Brianna Sarno, Celeste Gravel, & Baraq Polston

**Advisor:** Maria Bartini

**Abstract:** This study aims to investigate how certain characteristics such as anxiety, impulsivity, and aggression impact individuals' driving behavior. Due to the prevalence of motor vehicle accidents across the developed world and wide range of associated causes, further assessment of traits that motivate individuals to engage in risky and/or aggressive driving behavior is merited. Participants will answer survey questions online about their driving-related attitudes and behaviors, such as their emotional responses to certain situations. We hypothesize that traits such as impulsivity and driving-related anxiety will be associated with more reported driving errors and accidents, and also risky and aggressive driving behavior.

### **Poster 3**

**Title:** Deprived of Sense in Creative Writing

**Author:** James Forgione

**Advisor:** Jeffery McRae

**Abstract:** Creative writing transcends the empirical world. Very often writers forget this and rely on senses. This project is the culmination of a workshop where several writers were asked to produce work on a present object without the use of one or more senses. The work and statements of the writers provides an insight into how feeling and association can be utilized to create meaning and connection in creative work.

#### **Poster 4**

**Title:** Brazil South Americas Leading Country

**Author:** Sam Broderick

**Advisor:** David Cupery

**Abstract:** I will present the experiences and conclusions from my participation in the North American Model United Nations (NAMUN). For NAMUN 2017, I represented the Brazil in a United Nations General Assembly addressing the security issues related to the Global War on Terror during the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century. As a Latin American power, Brazil looked to take a leadership role in the pursuit of international security and find a balance between fighting terrorism and respecting multilateralism. However, at this time, Brazil was emerging from an economic crisis and this impacted the country's participation in UN debates.

#### **Poster 5**

**Title:** Haiti - Learning Through Being

**Authors:** Milena Casamassima, Caitlyn Hunt, Abigail Walsh, & Katherine Howe

**Advisor:** Spencer Moser

**Abstract:** This poster presentation will discuss MCLA's Spring Break Cultural Immersion and Service Program to Haiti. We present the student's collective insights, experiences and learning, particularly how the experience impacted their academic, personal and professional interests and development as undergraduates. Presenters will comment on observed and experienced cultural, social, and environmental aspects. Our study focuses on what value such an experience might have as part of a liberal arts education.

#### **Poster 6**

**Title:** Power of media

**Authors:** Travis Rice, Messaoud Kerris, & Oscar Castro

**Advisor:** Celia Norcross

**Abstract:** Does the impression of a commercial create a higher desire for you to buy a product or service? We create a series of tests to see if a promotional video can make a higher want for a product or service. In these test we would ask whether the individual wants the product/service before the promotional video. Then we would play the promotional video and ask if the video helped the individual form a better/worse opinion of the item/service. Another test is to see what type of promotional videos catch the viewers' attention and make them keep watching. "

#### **Poster 7**

**Title:** Global War on Terror: Coalition High Command and Provisional Authority (Iraq)

**Author:** Nicole LoGiudice

**Advisor:** David Cupery

**Abstract:** At the North American Model United Nations 2017, I represented the Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani in the Coalition High Command and Provisional Authority of Iraq. My committee was asked to plan the Iraqi invasion in 2003, as well as rebuild the state and government. As the Ayatollah, I hoped to use the Islamic religion to guide the actions of the committee. The Global War on Terror is still a relevant issue in global politics today, and this simulation allowed me to understand the difficulty in fighting corruption and terrorism on a political level.

### **Poster 8**

**Title:** Nestling Parasites Overwinter in Bird Nests

**Author:** Amanda Doucette

**Advisor:** Daniel Shustack

**Abstract:** Many bird species build nests to protect their eggs and nestlings from predators and the elements. Although nest building is a time and energy consuming process, most small birds build new nests for each nesting attempt, both within a season and across seasons. Building a new nest, rather than reusing old nests, may be a strategy to avoid nestling ectoparasites that accumulate or overwinter in the old nests. In this study, I reviewed the literature on nestling parasites in various nest types, devised methods to sample overwintering of ectoparasites in open-cup passerine bird nests and present preliminary results.

### **Poster 9**

**Title:** Olfactory Learning in Embryonic Fish

**Author:** Monica Vogel

**Advisor:** Justin Golub

**Abstract:** Environmental cues are critical when searching for food, mates, and avoiding predators. We observed Zebrafish (*Danio rerio*) for the ability to recognize and remember chemical cues, and then react to those cues after hatching. Chemical cues from goldfish fed a diet of zebrafish embryos (GFE; experiment), or invertebrates (GFI; control) were given to zebrafish embryos at 3 and 27-hours post-fertilization, and after hatching fry were given either goldfish (invertebrate diet) or water (control) to elicit behavior. We hypothesized that GFE conditioning cue paired with Goldfish post-hatching cues would elicit a learned response, and other pre/post hatching combinations would elicit no response.

### **Poster 10**

**Title:** Model United Nations: Germany

**Author:** Justin Therrien

**Advisor:** David Cupery

**Abstract:** I present my experience in the 2017 Model United Nations course where each student represented a world entity that would be placed in a mock simulation and given a certain situation. I represented Germany in the Committee for the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The goal was to come to an agreement on issues regarding solar power, mining, and armed expeditions. The simulation demanded forming alignments with as many of the other delegates as possible to reach a consensus. As Germany, I allied with many nations with both developed and developing space programs and created several reliable resolutions

### **Poster 11**

**Title:** Investigating the relationship of coping skills, social supports, and gender and how it effects a students' academic achievement and their general health

**Authors:** Jus'tis Woods, Faith Loyko, & Edna Pires

**Advisor:** Maria Bartini

**Abstract:** Understanding adjustment to college may allow for colleges to help those struggling by giving them techniques to use. We are planning on collecting an online survey of about 100-150 first year students from the MCLA community. We will be looking to see how a student's mental/physical health, first semester GPA, coping skills, social support, and gender will affect a students' adjustment to college. We believe that students with better coping skills and social supports will exhibit better adjustment to college in terms of academic achievement and better mental/physical health.

### **Poster 12**

**Title:** The Qing Court: Boxer Rebellion

**Author:** Michael McAndrew

**Advisor:** David Cupery

**Abstract:** I present my research for the 2017 North America United Nations. At the conference I represented Yuan Shikai, who was a general for the Qing Court during the Boxer Rebellion. Yuan Shikai was an important character in this crisis as his motives were unknown and he commanded China's only truly modern troops. During this simulation, I formed alliances on the Qing Court and with foreign groups to try to shift the outcome in my favor. During the simulation, I used my position to harass foreign powers in China and make intervention more costly.

### **Poster 13**

**Title:** *Diadumene lineata* microbiome

**Authors:** Heather Nielsen & Levon Hilling

**Advisor:** Anne Goodwin

**Abstract:** *Diadumene lineata* is a species of sea anemone native to Asian waters, now found throughout the Northern hemisphere. The purpose of this research was to further examine the bacterial makeup of microbiome of *Diadumene lineata* in an attempt to identify the source of the chlorophyll. With the aid of commercially available protocols we extracted, isolated, and amplified regions of genetic material known to be associated with bacteria from the anemone tissue. An outside lab sequenced the genome of select samples and those results were compared with a database of known species.

#### **Poster 14**

**Title:** A Qualitative Investigation of Prescription Stimulant Diversion on a College Campus

**Author:** Milena Casamassima

**Advisor:** Benjamin Wood

**Abstract:** Prescription stimulants (Adderall, Ritalin, etc.) are generally prescribed to treat ADHD, but are often used non-medically. College students report using these drugs to help them study, stay awake longer to socialize, or be able to drink more alcohol during a longer period of time. Research shows that most non-medical users get these drugs from their peers, yet few studies look at the diversion (giving out and/or selling) of these drugs. The purpose of this study is to examine the experience of diverting qualitatively through interviews. We will be asking students to describe their experiences with and attitudes toward diverting behavior.

#### **Poster 15**

**Title:** Steve Green Scholar Community Service Project

**Author:** Rachel Durgin

**Advisor:** Spencer Moser

**Abstract:** As the 2016-2017 Steve Green Civic Engagement Scholar my project was to design and develop a service program within the Center for Service and Citizenship in which students would be able to serve their community on a regular basis without the weekly commitment that other Center for Service and Citizenship programs required. I present a timeline highlighting relevant learning, tools utilized and conclusion/results. I will also comment on student interest regarding volunteering, especially; availability, access to opportunities successes.

#### **Poster 16**

**Title:** Iran in the Disarmament and International Security Committee

**Author:** Kaitlin Wright

**Advisor:** David Cupery

**Abstract:** I present my research from my participation of the North American Model United Nations Conference at the poster session of the URC. At the conference, I acted as the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Disarmament and International Security Committee of the General Assembly. My poster will detail our discussions on the proliferation of bio-chemical weapons, as well as our discussion on the possibility of the creation of a European Union military. While serving as the Iranian representative, I was able to pass my own resolution on the proliferation of bio-chemical weapons.

#### **Poster 17**

**Title:** Student Produced Marketing Videos

**Authors:** Edith Sherburne, & Kevin Lance

**Advisor:** Thomas Whalen

**Abstract:** BADM 270 Marketing students were divided into "marketing agencies" and assigned a "client" on campus. Their task was to create a 2-minute promotional video. Student teams recorded, edited, and produced the videos. The eight best videos are presented.

**Featured Students:** Kolumbia Cook, Christopher Tetlow, Brigid Downey, Kristen Fontaine, Kaitlyn Swanigan, Lauren Sharer, Samantha Giffen, Caroline Leaver, Miriam Middleton, Michael Bates, Sasha Bain, Shaelyn Tobin, Yi Fu, Rebecca Godbout, Drew Burdick, Andy Bencosme, Austin Frederick, Daniel Burdick, Jennifer Suslo, Alexander Stevens, Logan Mulrooney, Mickayla Riddle, Joseph Kozlowski, Khalil Kareh, and Meaghan Albert.

### **Poster 18**

**Title:** Parenting Style and Parent-Child Relationships on Student Risk Behavior

**Authors:** Victoria Rodriguez & Nina Merritt

**Advisor:** Maria Bartini

**Abstract:** The present study aims to determine if there is a correlation between student's engagement in risk behaviors, their relationship with their parents, and parenting style. We surveyed students across the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts without targeting a specific population. We propose that there will be a significant difference in the alcohol and drug risk behavior among students who have close, authoritative relationships with their parents than those who have a poorer relationship with their parents. We will consider socio-economic status, race, and gender in analyzing the results.

### **Poster 19**

**Title:** Genetic Patterning of Alpaca Coat Color

**Author:** Annie Gagnon

**Advisor:** Justin Golub

**Abstract:** For alpaca farmers, breeding to yield desired coat colors is difficult, yet crucial for business. Genetic sequencing is cost-prohibitive, results are often too complex to interpret without a genetics background, and inconsistencies exist between color designations used by scientists, farms, and official registries (API). The basis of coat color follows Mendelian genetic patterns. The goal of this project was to apply classical genetics, and make information more accessible to farmers. Pedigrees from local alpaca farms were mapped using classical genetic calculations. This information can be used by farmers to make educated breeding decisions to obtain desired coat colors through breeding.

### **Poster 20**

**Title:** NAMUN 2017: Joint Crisis on the Boxer Rebellion

**Author:** Charlie Weissfellner

**Advisor:** David Cupery

**Abstract:** I present my research in preparation for my experience at the North American Model United Nations 2017 Conference. I was a member of the Joint Crisis on the Boxer Rebellion representing Hudson Taylor, a prominent British missionary with a goal of ensuring the safety of fellow missionaries and Christian converts within China during the Boxer Rebellion. I will be discussing the underlying issues of the Boxer Rebellion as well as the outcomes of the Crisis Committee proceedings

**Poster 21**

**Title:** Effects of Ethnicity, Gender and Faculty Interactions on Students' Academic Mindset and achievement in a Small College Setting

**Authors:** Michael Rooney, Mariah Cavallaro, & Emily Held

**Advisor:** Maria Bartini

**Abstract:** Students rely on many people, especially professors, to assist them in their academic pursuits. Students' ethnicity and gender may influence many of these interactions and students' perceptions of the nature of intelligence. MCLA students will complete a survey including demographics questions, the Academic Motivation Scale, Student-Professor Interaction Scale, and Mindset Assessment Profile through an online survey. Similar to past research, we expect to see non-white students have more negative faculty interactions and more fixed mindset views of intelligence. This study should highlight some of the key aspects that affect student development and academic performance in a small college setting.

**Poster 22**

**Title:** Model United Nations: The Philippines and the UNHCR

**Author:** Anika Pommers-Dear

**Advisor:** David Cupery

**Abstract:** I will be presenting on my experience as a student delegate at the North American Model United Nations (NAMUN). I represented the Philippines in the mock UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the General Assembly. The poster will give an overview of my country's involvement in the UN, explain how the UN and Model UN operates, and present the two major crises brought to the NAMUN UNHCR committee for problem solving and debate: The Rohingya Migrant Crisis in Southeast Asia and Oceania and the European Refugee Crisis.

**Poster 23**

**Title:** MCLA Student Perspectives on the Physical Education Requirement

**Author:** Rebecca Godbout

**Advisor:** Deborah Foss

**Abstract:** A survey of 320 MCLA students was conducted to look at their understanding of the college's physical education graduation requirement. The intent was to get student opinions of the value of retaining, changing, or eliminating the current requirement. Most students believe that the requirement should be kept but with modifications (for example, types of courses and inclusion of wellness seminars). We were able to identify the misconceptions of the current requirement, including a lack of understanding of how this requirement fits into a liberal arts education.

### **Poster 24**

**Title:** Management of eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) dominated forests in the wake of climate change and invasive pests in Williamstown, Massachusetts

**Author:** Michael Friedman

**Advisor:** Daniel Shustack

**Abstract:** An invasive pest currently spreading throughout the eastern United States is the hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) (*Adelges tsugae*), a small aphid-like insect from multiple regions in Asia. Feeding on the eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) and triggering defoliation, HWA has caused significant damage to hemlock populations. Studies suggest that HWA infestation can cause severe ecological damage, to the eastern hemlock and the ecosystems it engineers. I reviewed literature to understand these ecological threats and the management practices used to minimize them. With Williamstown Rural Lands Foundation, I developed plans for management and education in hopes of mitigating adverse impacts from HWA.

### **Poster 25**

**Title:** United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees: Global Refugee Crisis

**Author:** Victoria Munoz

**Advisor:** David Cupery

**Abstract:** I participated in the North American Model United Nations Conference. At the conference, I represented Sweden in a General Assembly with the special topic of the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees. The committee debated the European Crisis and the Rohingya Crisis. To prepare for the conference I had to conduct research on the country's history, the history of UNHCR, other UN member states, and the respective refugee crises. I constructed, presented, and passed a resolution that addressed European refugee issues while at the conference.

### **Poster 26**

**Title:** Social Support, Self Esteem, and Physical Health

**Authors:** Elsa Mastico, & Hallie Eidel

**Advisor:** Sharon Claffey

**Abstract:** Psychologists often look at how social support (or lack of) can predict health habits, both physically and mentally. The participants (N=242) in this study were currently undergraduate college students who completed an online survey that measured physical health, social support, and self-esteem. As predicted, increased levels of perceived social support and self-esteem were significantly associated with higher levels of perceived physical health. Heterosexual males reported higher levels of physical health and males also reported higher levels of self-esteem. Future research should use a non-modified self-esteem scale and examine specific types of social support (e.g., emotional and instrumental).



**Poster 27**

**Title:** Functional Movement Screen as a Predictor of Lower Limb Injuries

**Author:** Stephanie Collins

**Advisor:** Marisa Mickey

**Abstract:** Research has demonstrated more than half of injuries in collegiate sports involve lower limbs. The Functional Movement Screen (FMS) assesses limitations in functional movement. The purpose of this study is to investigate the use of FMS scores as a predictor of lower limb injuries in collegiate athletes. A regression analysis using FMS scores and lower body injuries will be performed on data collected over the course of a season from men's and women's teams at MCLA. Based on results of the study, future research aims to identify athletes at risk of lower limb injuries using FMS scores and appropriately intervene.

**Poster 28**

**Title:** United Nations Security Council- Global War on Terror

**Author:** Makayla Parkin

**Advisor:** David Cupery

**Abstract:** I present my research that took place in preparation for my participation in the North America Model United Nations in February. I represented Cameroon and Kenya on the United Nations Security Council as we debated about the validity of the 2003 invasion on Iraq and how to deal with uprising and spread of terrorist organizations. I had to work with 14 other members of the Security Council on what actions to take while preserving human rights and sovereignty of nations.

**Poster 29**

**Title:** Factors Influencing Students Withdrawing from MCLA.

**Authors:** Rachael DiGrigoli & Lindsay Hathaway

**Advisor:** Deborah Foss

**Abstract:** MCLA students who withdraw are asked questions about factors that influence their decision to leave the college. Their answers cover five categories – personal, academic, financial, student life, and general environment. This research looks at students who withdrew from MCLA between September 2013 and December 2016. Responses were analyzed for patterns within categories that were identified as primary reasons for leaving. Other factors (major, class year, GPA, initial intention to graduate from MCLA, was the college a student's first choice) were examined in combination with reasons for leaving. Results will help better understand important factors in why students leave MCLA.

## *Special Session: 1913 Armory Art Show: Exploring the Arrival of European Modern Art in the US.*

*Bowman Art Gallery, 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM*

*Faculty Sponsor: Katherine Carroll*

Students Allison Gregory, Margaret Kase, and Erica Wilcoxon will provide guided tours of the 10-piece exhibit. Students will discuss the artwork, and its history as well as the process that went into researching and organizing the show.

## *Student Artwork*

*Bowman 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Corridors, 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM*

*Faculty Sponsor: Melanie Mowinski*

### **Artwork 1**

**Title:** The Unfoldings of Life

**Author:** Elizabeth Erdeski

**Advisor:** Melanie Mowinski

**Abstract:** People don't consciously see all the spectrum's of life. Daily life is conformed into patterns and semiotic systems. Our world is a mysterious place and we need to be able to take in what it delivers even when it's imperfect. My two sculptures are part of a series of five sculptures that exemplify on the idea how some see nature as an unfathomable thing. I alter books by folding, cutting, ripping, and manipulating pages to create sculptures of birds, trees, and other natural components. Altering books lets me give meaning to things in life that can be good and bad.

### **Artwork 2**

**Title:** Raw

**Author:** Samwise Fox

**Advisor:** Melanie Mowinski

**Abstract:** The focus of art as therapy is the volume and content. The charge of the artist is to create meaningfully, all else is second. Raw by Samwise Fox is a collection of 10 from 80 selected assorted collage pieces detailing the artist's emotional states throughout the beginning months of the new year. Raw stands as a project of documenting feelings without consideration to technique in an art world where technique and pragmatism reign supreme.

### **Artwork 3**

**Title:** Holy Spirit

**Author:** Halie Smith

**Advisor:** Melanie Mowinski

**Abstract:** This sculpture, titled The Holy Spirit, is made of Wood, bark, sticks, and wood glue. With the use of Hebrew letters and research on the context of the Holy Spirit found in the bible, I have illustrated the analogy of a tree in relationship with a Christian. The bible talks about the Holy Spirit as a source of security, direction and comfort. In the same way the force inside a tree makes it grow towards the sun. My faith will grow closer to God with the help of the Holy Spirit, no matter what trials I may go through.

### **Artwork 4**

**Title:** Ode to Basquiat and Kahlo

**Author:** Kaitlyn Russell

**Advisor:** Melanie Mowinski

**Abstract:** Ode to Basquiat and Kahlo is a part of my senior thesis of creating a thank you letter of art and writing for those that have challenged my thoughts on what art is, in any form. These people are ones that I do not know personally and have paved the way for me and influenced me. This particular piece is a journal using that fast paced and raw emotion much like Jean-Michel Basquiat and Frida Kahlo used in their personal journals.

### **Artwork 5**

**Title:** Magic's Tail in England

**Author:** Rachel Capek

**Advisor:** Melanie Mowinski

**Abstract:** Magic's Tail in England started as my final project for the 2016 Arts of Medieval Renaissance Britain travel course. Before I went to England, I shared my destinations with some people and they were unaware of the diverse and beautiful aspects. This book is to give children and others the opportunity to see these places, learn some facts, and travel with a cat that is also new to these places. It is a 6x8 children's book, handmade, including illustrations drawn in pen and pastel pencils, edited in Photoshop.

### **Artwork 6**

**Title:** Alphabets

**Authors:** Elizabeth Erdeski, Kamryn Dunton, Barbara Reeves, Bethany Robinson, Mackenzie Shannon, Kelsey Sherman, Nicole Stearns

**Advisor:** Melanie Mowinski

**Abstract:** Every spring semester, students in Associate Professor of Visual Art Melanie Mowinski's Intermediate Design class invent an alphabet. The project begins by examining historical scripts; codes and symbols; as well as alphabets that use hair, ties, shadows, body parts, medical equipment, etc. Students then invent their own alphabet based on a symbolic or a typographical treatment of the letterform. Students are encouraged to think beyond basic shapes and materials. Inspiration comes from many places including everyday art making tools, food, popular culture, etc.

### **Artwork 7**

**Title:** The Bee in the Bonnet: Clothing Reform and the Suffragist Movement

A Book Arts Exchange and Collaboration between Art, Design, and Music Programs at the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA) and Brigham Young University (BYU)

**Authors:** Alex Gaspar, Alexandra David, ED Bibbins

Gillian Fournier, Isaac Wood, Ivan Geranimo, Kaitlyn Russell, Rachel Capek, Samantha White

**Advisor:** Melanie Mowinski and Josh Ostraff

**Abstract:** This exchange contains prints, artist books and other paper creations made by MCLA and BYU students and faculty during the Fall 2016 semester. The work explores the time period and activities of men and women involved in the Suffragist movement. Artists looked at and considered different aspects of clothing as both a symbol and direct part of the statements suffragist were making during Susan B. Anthony's time.

### **Artwork 8**

**Title:** Intending to Fail

**Authors:** Kendall Archambeau, ED Bibbins, Kailynn Clark, Jacob Davis, Melyssa Fortini, Susannah Frey, Oliver Locke, Naudia Sanchez, William Taylor

**Advisor:** Josh Ostraff

**Abstract:** The ART 335 Digital Art taught by Professor Josh Ostraff has been exploring the aesthetics of intentional failure. Students have been breaking down imagery through manipulation, corruption, and forced errors. Often in the creative process an artist sets out to accomplish specific ideas only to find through complications, mistakes, and failures unforeseen obstacles. *Intending to Fail* purposely reroutes towards uncharted territory. This new territory leads to things outside of habit, ideas not conceived, process not tried, or in other words innovation.

### **Artwork 9**

**Title:** Inspiring people in charcoal and black ink

**Author:** Halie Smith

**Advisor:** Josh Ostraff

**Abstract:** These drawings are done in charcoal and black ink, they portray people who I find inspiring and beautiful, and I wanted to express this on a large scale. Each of these people have such differing personalities and I tried to let their character shine through each artwork. I asked each of the models to send me a quote or poem that defines them after I completed the drawing, and in doing this I found amazing parallels between the writing and my artwork.

### **Artwork 10**

**Title:** Sight, Flight, and Light

**Author:** Stephen Pruzinsky

**Advisor:** Melanie Mowinski

**Abstract:** Sight, Flight, and Light is a narrative collection of surreal oil paintings that explore the duality and beauty of nature. Ranging in sizes from 11x14 to 12x16 inches, they illustrate the journey of an owl as it voyages through realms of nature and people. The timeless owl acts as your neutral guide, guiding the viewer to sights of splendor, simplicity, and chaos found in nature; but is also met with signs of our exploitative and industrious relationship with it.

*Keynote Address\*: Kaitlin Hallet'10*  
*Campus Center Gym, 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm*

Kaitlin graduated *summa cum laude* with degrees in English and Education. She is a Program Manager for Fidelity Investments, where she oversees highly-visible and complex programmatic courses, such as the Risk and Compliance and Management Matters programs. She leads a team of Learning Coordinators, Performance Consultants, Instructional Designers, and Talent Specialists focused on building a supportive and collaborative environment for Fidelity's leaders and customers

*Meet the Speaker: Sullivan Lounge*  
*1:30 pm – 2:00 pm*  
*For Students Only*

Students will have the opportunity to have an informal question and answer session with the keynote speaker following the luncheon. Kaitlin Hallet will be available to answer any questions you have about her experiences both at MCLA and after graduation. Take advantage of this opportunity to learn from someone who has walked in your shoes not too long ago.

\*Lunch is provided for URC presenters and faculty advisors

## *Special Session III A: Writing the Global South*

*Bowman 201, 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM*

*Faculty Sponsor: Jenna Sciuto*

### **Paper III A-1**

**Title:** The Waves of Black (Hi)stories: The Idealistic Works of August Wilson and William Faulkner

**Author:** Bryanna Bradley

**Abstract:** Writers, specifically in the American literature canon, across the color line have tried to encapsulate black life through personal experience. Two visionaries in particular, August Wilson and William Faulkner, are known for their portrayals of the black diasporic individual. Wilson and Faulkner both have created diverse literary realms, The Pittsburgh Cycle and Yoknapatawpha County respectively. August Wilson's Pittsburgh Cycle, also known as the Century Cycle, is a three-dimensional black sphere rooted in idealistic and romantic views of Africa while William Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County is a two-dimensional black circle that idealizes and romanticizes the American South.

### **Paper III A-2**

**Title:** Immigration in “Children of the Sea” and “The Thing Around Your Neck”

**Author:** Stefani Skerry

**Abstract:** “Children of the Sea”: a bright young college student who has just passed his exams is slowly dying on a makeshift raft drifting away from his homeland and the woman he loves. “The Thing Around Your Neck”: a woman who has come to America in search of opportunity in paradise finds a nation complex and imperfect like her own, worthy of more than a single story. These short stories, powerful and timely narratives written by two immigrants, illustrate the complexities of immigration beyond current political rhetoric.

### **Paper III A-3**

**Title:** Amabelle and Quentin: A Comparative Look at Past Traumas

**Author:** Allison Meehan

**Abstract:** We will examine the relationship between the characters Quentin in Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* and Amabelle in Danitcat's *The Farming of the Bones*. Connections can be made between these two characters, despite that they are of different race, gender, countries, and socioeconomic class. One similarity is that they cannot let go of a past that haunts them. Their pasts differ slightly, as Amabelle's is filled with physical and emotional trauma, which stems from the Parsley Massacre in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Quentin never faced any actual trauma; he was greatly impacted by his sister's sexual promiscuity.

**Paper III A-4**

**Title:** Gender Roles in The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao

**Author:** Katrina McColl

**Abstract:** Negative aspects of gender roles are outlined and deconstructed in Junot Diaz's *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* with characters who break away from traditional gender role rhetoric. Dominican hypermasculinity is put into question in the novel and sexual violence occurring from hypermasculinity, which affects the female characters. Junot Diaz combats Dominican gender roles by creating complex and nonconformist characters. The entire novel sheds light on the problems with Dominican hypermasculinity and unequal and harmful treatment of women, and through multiple voices and perspectives these problems are addressed in an eloquent manner.

## *Special Session III B: Special Topics in Population Issues*

*Bowman 203, 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM*

*Faculty Sponsor: Diane Balduzy*

### **Paper III B-1**

**Title:** Hydraulic Fracturing: Is it worth the risk?

**Author:** Matty Blair

**Abstract:** Hydrofracking has become a controversial topic in today's world. It may have the potential to overtake oil and coal as the leading energy resource for the United States. Some say however, that the potential benefits do not outweigh the damages caused by the hydrofracking process. In this presentation, we will examine what hydrofracking is, its potential benefits, if those potential benefits outweigh the costs, and its long-term benefits. We will also critically examine its environmental, social, and economic implications. Lastly, we will compare and contrast hydrofracking to other potential resources, both renewable and nonrenewable.

### **Paper III B-2**

**Title:** Brain Drain Phenomenon: Who wins, who loses?

**Author:** Nzingha Williams-Eugene

**Abstract:** When industries move out of an area; so does its highly skilled working members. In many communities, all that is left behind is a population of disaffected youths and aging citizens. What happens to these communities? This presentation will address the effects of this “out-migration,” paying particular attention to healthcare, education, and taxation issues.



## *Paper Presentations III C*

*Bowman 205, 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM*

### **Paper III C-1**

**Title:** Diversity in Anarchy: A Historiographical Approach To Race in Punk Culture

**Author:** Elizabeth Kurz Michel

**Advisor:** Ely Janis

**Abstract:** Since the popularization of punk culture, the movement has evolved in a number of ways, especially the historical analysis of the origin of the movement. Through the changing historiography of this recently founded counterculture, we can see a shift from a focus on white perspective of racial dynamics in the punk movement to a move towards a look at the often-disregarded community of color within punk culture. Through the analysis of different secondary sources spanning the past thirty years analyzing the culture, this paper will demonstrate the way that the historiography of punk culture has become more expansive over time.

### **Paper III C-2**

**Title:** Freudian Censorship: Taboo, Totem and the Psyche

**Author:** Matthew J. Luz

**Advisor:** Timothy Jay

**Abstract:** Sigmund Freud's book Totem and Taboo (1919) explains the origin of the Polynesian word taboo, meaning "sacred or holy, or dirty or uncanny," denotes immorality and uncleanness. Primitive tribes lack adequate social and moral systems, preventing incest was not necessary. Wilhelm Wundt calls incest "the oldest unwritten code of law of humanity." Freud discovers that these tribes create boundaries to prevent incest: maintaining distance between siblings, mothers, and in-laws under the same totemic system. I will explain psychoanalytic theory and how one does not commit the incest taboo, also explaining taboo-prevention mechanisms in Freudian terminology.

### **Paper III C-3**

**Title:** Hero of Two Worlds: the Story Behind Lafayette's Battle for the Rights of Man

**Author:** KiLee Fortier

**Advisor:** Anthony Daly

**Abstract:** In December of 1781, the "Hero of Two Worlds," Marquis de Lafayette, returned to France following victory in the American Revolution. This project explores Lafayette's experience in both revolutions with heavy focus on his major impacts within the French Revolution and the impacts the French Revolution had on his life. Even during his years of imprisonment in the 1790s, Lafayette's influence continued to be felt in France. Lafayette's experience during the French Revolution and Napoleonic era demonstrate the effects one man can have on the course of history.

**Paper III C-4****Title:** Public Art & Civic Engagement in North Adams, MA**Author:** Rebecca Waterhouse**Advisor:** Lisa Donovan

**Abstract:** This research explores the relationship between public art and civic engagement, considering the relationship between public art projects and community residents in North Adams, MA. The findings suggest that public art can create a sense of community identity, and foster participation in public art projects and a shared ownership of public space, suggesting the potential role of public arts to engage residents civically. The results can conclude that while North Adams' pivotal position brings a collection of public artworks impacting the community in a variety of ways, a greater potential to engage and empower residents civically is within reach.

## *Paper Presentations III D*

*Bowman 220, 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM*

### **Paper III D-1**

**Title:** The Man, the Myth, the Legend: The Search for Jesus of Nazareth

**Author:** Madeleine McKeon

**Advisor:** Ely Janis

**Abstract:** Jesus of Nazareth is one of the most influential people to have ever walked the earth. Despite the vast reach of his teachings and doctrines, there is little evidence of how he lived his life and interacted within his historical moment. As a result of this scarcity of information there has been controversy about the facts of Jesus' life dating back to the original apostles. This presentation examines the search for the historical Jesus from the nineteenth-century until the present and examines how scholars have interpreted the life of a mortal who claimed to be divine.

### **Paper III D-2**

**Title:** Why was Napoleon Such a Successful Military Commander

**Author:** Sam Broderick

**Advisor:** Anthony Daly

**Abstract:** Napoleon Bonaparte is widely recognized as one of the greatest military minds that the world has ever seen. He won countless victories across Europe, often while outnumbered by his enemies. His victories are still studied in military academies today. Why was he such a successful leader that it required virtually all the other major powers in Europe uniting to bring him down? I examined a number of factors that contributed to those victories, focusing on Napoleon's incredible abilities as a strategist and tactician and the quality of the officers and ordinary soldiers who served in the armies that he commanded.

### **Paper III D-3**

**Title:** Brief Historiography of Joseph Stalin

**Author:** Anthony Sabbio

**Advisor:** Ely Janis

**Abstract:** This presentation explores the changing historiography on Joseph Stalin. Stalin was a ruler of the Soviet Union and due to his ideas on censorship, carefully controlled what was written about him. In my presentation, I discuss how this has made it difficult for historians to write about Stalin as well as gave insight into how this problem was eventually solved. I also discuss the what kinds of documents Stalin allowed to be published about him and the problems historians face in interpreting them.

**Paper III D-4**

**Title:** Nationalism during the French Revolution

**Author:** Anthony Corbett

**Advisor:** Anthony Daly

**Abstract:** The French Revolution marks the emergence of nationalism as a force in modern history. The convening of the National Assembly in 1789 and later events such as the war with Britain, Prussia, and Russia demonstrated the power of the people. This presentation explains the impacts that wide-spread nationalism had on France but also on neighboring states. My research drew on first-hand accounts from during the revolution as well as the writings of leading historians over the years.

*Special Session III E: Creative Writing*

*Murdock 218, 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM*

*Faculty Sponsor: Zachary Finch*

This Creative Session will feature 10 MCLA writer who will present select pieces of work in the spirit of invention and fellowship. They are: Steve Amash, Natalie Carpentier, Katherine DuVal, Cricket Essor, Tramel Griffith, Jon Hoel, Rebecca Mendel, Kimberly Murphy, Chris Riemer, and Don'Jea Smith.

## *Special Session IV A: The Creative System: Artist Talks*

*Bowman 201, 3:15 PM – 4:15 PM*

*Faculty Sponsor: Joshua Ostraff*

### **Paper IV A-1**

**Title:** Dear Universe: A Creative Journey through Tarot

**Author:** Isaac Wood

**Advisor:** Joshua Ostraff

**Abstract:** Dear Universe, takes a deeper look at the history and practices of tarot readings through the creation of a tarot deck using inspiration from artists such as Keith Haring, Pamela Colman Smith, and the Bauhaus Movement. This talk will discuss my inspiration for the project, the course of its development over the past year, the silk screening process, history of tarot, and shed light on common misconceptions that are often associated with tarot readings.

### **Paper IV A-2**

**Title:** Ode To...

**Author:** Kaitlyn Russell

**Advisor:** Joshua Ostraff

**Abstract:** *Ode to...* is a senior thesis on creating an artist family tree of those that have and still are paving the way for me. I have dared myself to create works using different mediums than I'm comfortable using and sharing. This project is a thank you letter of art and writing for those that have challenged my thoughts on what art is, in any form.

### **Paper IV A-3**

**Title:** The Unfolding's of Life

**Author:** Elizabeth Erdeski

**Advisor:** Joshua Ostraff

**Abstract:** People don't consciously see all the spectrum's of life. Daily life is conformed into patterns and semiotic systems. Our world is a mysterious place and we need to be able to take in what it delivers even when it's imperfect. My work exemplifies on the idea how some see nature as an unfathomable thing. I alter books by folding, cutting, ripping, and manipulating pages to create sculptures of birds, trees, and other natural components. Altering books lets me give meaning to things in life that can be good and bad, allowing people to discover all the spectrum's that life gives.

**Paper IV A-4****Title:** Perspective: A Graphic Novel**Author:** Samwise Fox**Advisor:** Joshua Ostraff**Abstract:** Artist and writer Samwise Fox explores his creative process and motivation for his debut graphic novel, Perspective. Fox's piece focuses on the practice of using perspective as a method for developing healthy and honest communication in romantic relationships.

Perspective's main characters, Mica and Jasper learn to navigate mental illness and communication differences through the practice of empathy and compassion. The graphic novel serves as a stage for audiences to observe how empathy can be practiced in interpersonal relationships. Perspective will be unveiled during Gallery 51's opening of Insight on Thursday April 27th 2017.

## *Paper Presentations IV B*

*Bowman 203, 3:15 PM – 4:15 PM*

### **Paper IV B-1**

**Title:** Creating “Imagined Community”: African American College Students and Social Media Usage

**Author:** Natalie Herbert

**Advisor:** Sumi Colligan

**Abstract:** This is a study of social media use among African American college students. The research incorporates an analysis of the increasing social impact on this population, with a special focus on Black Twitter. It examines the content of communication of this online black community and the benefits of this sub-culture to its members. The primary methodology applied in this research consists of interviews of African American students at MCLA. Through the interviews, I hope to show that the routine usage of these sites by this group creates an “imagined community” and shapes an individual participant’s self-understanding as an African American.

### **Paper IV B-2**

**Title:** Truman’s Call...Was It Right or Wrong?

**Author:** Mark Guarino

**Advisor:** Ely Janis

**Abstract:** World War II is forever known as the deadliest war in all of human history due to the amount of bloodshed, death, destruction, and the fatal decision made by United States President Harry Truman to drop the weapons on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of the war. Over a hundred thousand people were killed because of these two bombs alone and this paper examines, in depth, how historians have debated Truman’s decision to use those weapons of mass destruction and whether or not his decision was necessary or unjustified.

### **Paper IV B-3**

**Title:** The Problems with Transvestic Disorder in the DSM and Its Social Stigma

**Author:** Allison Gregory

**Advisor:** Benjamin Wood

**Abstract:** Transvestic fetishism has been deemed sexually deviant throughout history for moral, theological, and societal reasons. The DSM-5, the most recent edition of the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, categorizes transvestic disorder (i.e., sexual arousal from crossdressing) as a Paraphilic Disorder. In its prevalence section, the DSM states this disorder is only found in heterosexual males, and the diagnosis is given if, at any time, crossdressing sexually arouses the man. Since the DSM only includes prevalence for one gender and one sexual orientation, one wonders if the scientific research has been limited by what society deems as normal sexual behavior.

**Paper IV B-4****Title:** Historiography of the Cuban Missile Crisis**Author:** Ryan Psutka**Advisor:** Ely Janis**Abstract:** This project looks at the historiography of the Cuban Missile Crisis. My research explores how historical writings on the topic have transformed over time, in terms of their content, purpose, and style. Early writings often tried simply to make sense of this complex and dangerous ordeal, while as time went on, people began sharing their personal experiences, reflecting on the Crisis in terms of its Cold War context, and formulating a thorough understanding of the events of the crisis, minute by minute. My research examines this historiographical development through a variety of secondary sources.



## *Special Session V A: Philosophy Mini Conference*

*Murdock 218, 3:30 PM – 5:00 PM*

*Faculty Sponsor: Matthew Silliman*

### **Paper V A-1**

**Title:** Enframing the Parable: Literary Rhetoric in Postmodernity

**Author:** Devin Snell

**Advisor:** Matthew Silliman

**Abstract:** Philosophy has developed alongside key assumptions of human possibility. Ideological barriers and epistemological discontinuities may disrupt particular paradigms of thought, but assumptive constants preserve philosophy's systemic method. Post-modernism, post-structuralism, and existentialism have each given rise to fundamental challenges within the discipline that question the efficacy of philosophizing as such. This presentation will examine totalizing rejections of metanarrative, value, or objective truth as well as the potential consequences thereof. In contextualizing our current crisis, a new pedagogy emerges. Established literary forms provide a basis for fluent but indirect communication.

### **Paper V A-2**

**Title:** Criminalization of Dissent

**Author:** AJ Cote

**Advisor:** David Johnson

**Abstract:** Dissent is antithesis to the status quo, and the means in which change from the status quo has been possible. Since 9/11, terrorism among many other repeated buzzwords, has been defined to mean dissent. These blurred lines have enabled the dissolution of our basic rights to dissent, such as the freedom to assemble peacefully, in the name of the war on terror. We must understand the relationship between power and dissent if we are to have hope in changing the oppressive forces of society. I would like a computer hooked to a projected for a slide show

### **Paper V A-3**

**Title:** Does Anatomy Determine Autonomy?: The Psychoanalytic Construction of Gender

**Author:** Matthew Luz

**Presentation Type:** Oral Presentation

**Advisor:** Matthew Silliman

**Abstract:** While it is currently fashionable to reject Sigmund Freud's theories, classifying them as unscientific, overly reductive, or unreasonably obsessed with sex, self-proclaimed Neo-Freudian Karen Horney takes a nuanced approach, reinterpreting Freud's concepts of penis envy, female masochism, and the Oedipus complex as socially-constructed gendered power-relations instead of interpreting them literally. In doing this, she demonstrates the ongoing relevance of Freud's theories, shedding light on the outdated and male biased descriptions of his controversial concepts, later facilitating the intellectual feminist movement against traditional psychoanalysis, which provides men and women to see the ways in which gender is constructed and experienced.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The talent, dedication and hard work of the conference participants made it possible. We congratulate them on their fine achievements.

The front cover is the artwork of the students in Melanie Mowinski's ART 218: Intermediate Design: Kelsey Sherman and Kamryn Dunton

The Undergraduate Research Council is composed of faculty, staff and students:

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### Faculty Moderators:

Thomas Byrne

Eric Doucette

Amber Engelson

Ely Janis

Anna Jaysane-Darr

Erin Kiley

Samantha Pettey

Jenna Sciuto

Benjamin Wood

Matthew Silliman

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