

Welcome to the
19th Annual Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
Undergraduate Research Conference
Thursday April 22nd, 2021

Schedule of Events

8:45 AM - 9:00 AM

Welcome Remarks from
Dr. Jenna Grace Sciuto,
Chair of Undergraduate Research, and
Dr. Ely Janis, Dean of Academic Affairs

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Paper Presentations I A
Paper Presentations I B
Special Session: Mental Health in a Box
Special Session: Navigating Intercultural
Communication
Special Session: Urban Changes and the
Creative Economy

10:15 AM - 11:45 AM

Poster Session: 5 Breakout Sessions

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

Welcome Remarks from President Birge
Pamela Dennis Scholarship Award
Feigenbaum Fellowship Awards
Keynote Address by
Ama Bemba Adwetewa-Badu

1:00 PM - 1:30 PM

Meet the Keynote Speaker (Students Only)

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM

Paper Presentations II A
Paper Presentations II B
Special Session: Student Grant Panel
Special Session: The Age of American
Revolutions

2:45 PM - 3:45 PM

Paper Presentations III A
Paper Presentations III B
Special Session: Issues on Race: Some
Practical Applications
Special Session: Artist Talks

3:45 PM - 4:45 PM

Virtual Art Exhibit
Special Session: Interdisciplinary Worlds
Special Session: Creative Writing
Special Session: Speak the Speech!:
Shakespeare's Voices Illuminated

***Please remember to complete the attendee
survey linked to on the Canvas page***

Paper Presentations (I A)

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Title: Northern Ireland and 1968

Author(s): Hannah Soucy

Advisor: Anthony Daly

Keywords: History, Northern Ireland, 1968

Abstract: In 1968, protest movements broke out in countries across the globe. Northern Ireland was no exception to this mass movement, but it is often overlooked in studies of that year. Complex religious and political tensions erupted into protest and violence that continued after the year's end, for Northern Ireland's 1968 was not an isolated moment, but one year in a series of events which led to the Troubles, the ramifications of which are still being felt today. This presentation will examine the events of 1968 in Northern Ireland and the short- and long-term effects of that year in the following decades, all the way into the present.

Title: Listen First, Speak Second: The Power of Storytelling for Environmental Justice

Author(s): Abby Abrahamson

Advisor: Susan Edgerton

Keywords: Climate Change, Communication, Storytelling

Abstract: Effective civic communication about environmental harm is paramount to combatting the developing climate crisis. My presentation will expand upon renowned sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild's research and apply her concepts of the "Deep Story" and "Great Paradox" towards identifying communication strategies for environmental issues that reach our diverse human population most effectively. Previous research, including Moser & Dilling (2012) and Peterson et al. (2019), have identified specific factors of effective climate change communication and sources of climate change denial, yet are not comprehensive. Constructive communication about environmental matters requires a process of thorough listening and purposeful speaking. The listener can then employ storytelling as a means of advocacy personalized to the viewpoints and beliefs of the speaker. My presentation synthesizes past research and publications to provide a well-rounded view of climate change communication strategies by dividing strategies into categories of listening and speaking and highlighting storytelling as a tool for future action.

Title: Aileen Wuornos & The #MeToo Movement

Author(s): Lily Jennings

Advisor: Deborah Foss

Keywords: MeToo Movement, Sexism, Women's Rights

Abstract: This presentation examines infamous serial killer Aileen Wuornos's life (1956-2002) and her connection to the current #MeToo Movement. Aileen Wuornos's case is examined through the lens of sexism, particularly how women are treated in society. Wuornos, like many victims of sexual assault, was mistreated by the criminal justice system. Comparisons are drawn to more recent scandals, including outing sexual harassers and documenting sex abuse scandals. Recognizable patterns are instructive to understanding how Wuornos's life might have been different in the 21st century.

Paper Presentations (I B)

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Title: The Fate of Non-Profit Arts Organizations and Creating a Foundation for Future Entrepreneurs

Author(s): Lindsey Rosa (2020-2021 Feigenbaum Scholar)

Advisor: Diane Scott

Keywords: Arts and Culture, Non-Profit, Entrepreneurship

Abstract: Non-profit arts organizations can help bring together communities and connect people across differences. These organizations can be the heart of the community they reside in. As a young entrepreneur looking to create an arts organization, I want to understand what makes existing organizations work and how they became established in their communities. I selected and examined several arts organizations throughout the United States and spoke with those who lead them. With this information, I have created a guidebook for social entrepreneurs, like myself, who want to start their own arts organization. This is an in-depth guide that includes advice from current arts organization leaders, examines the different operational models within the art world, and also contains interviews with leading professionals in artistic management and leadership.

Title: Understanding the International Response to the 1968 Warsaw Pact Invasion of Czechoslovakia

Author(s): Cameron Wagoner

Advisor: Anthony Daly

Keywords: Czechoslovakia, Soviet Union, the Cold War

Abstract: On the night of August 20, 1968, Czechoslovakia was invaded by the combined forces of five Warsaw Pact countries, led by the Soviet Union. The invasion was conducted to bring an end to the Prague Spring, Alexander Dubcek's plan to free Czechoslovakia from the oppressive communism that had ruled for over two decades. Countries around the world spoke in outrage against the invasion and condemned the Soviet Union for breaching international law, but no country actually aided Czechoslovakia. The United States, Romania, Yugoslavia, and China were potential threats to the Soviet Union during the Cold War in 1968. Any of them could have benefitted from helping Czechoslovakia move in a new direction and work to reduce Soviet domination in Eastern Europe, but none chose to help. This presentation will analyze reasons why these four states did not intervene after the invasion.

Title: Comparing GAAP and IFRS: Investigating the Impact of Convergence on the Financial Accounting Industry in the United States

Author(s): Crystal Wojcik

Advisor: Tara Barboza

Keywords: Accounting, Business, Finance

Abstract: As the world has grown to become intertwined through social connection and global trade, the concern for a universal set of accounting standards is now a pressing issue for the continued success of foreign and domestic markets. The Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) and the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) are working together to mitigate the challenges of the convergence of the United States Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). This thesis investigates how the convergence of GAAP and IFRS will impact revenue recognition for United States-based companies and how the transition from reporting assets at historical cost to fair value impacts investor decisions around capital allocation. A qualitative analysis of these variables provides valuable insight for rising accountants to understand the impact a universal convergence of reporting standards will have on the financial accounting industry.

Special Session: Mental Health in a Box

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Faculty Sponsor: Ingrid Castro

More often than not, mental illness is viewed as something to be covered up, kept close to one's person, kept in the family. For example, we rarely allow others to know that we are on disability for mental health reasons; instead, we protect this information because we believe it will be used to perform discrimination (and it just may well be). For this special URC virtual exhibit, each student in Representations of Mental Health built a diorama that represents a different mental health disorder as listed in the DSM-5 (or an earlier version of the DSM). They then took pictures of their dioramas, which is what is being exhibited for the URC. The "box" that surrounds mental health and illness is twofold here - first, the diorama box; second, the box that surrounds each exhibit on the canvas landing page.

Student Presenters:

Krystal Bailey, Kaci Bruso, MaryHope Coffield, Jady Dunham, Ashley Finkelstein, Carly Garofano, Grace Gaughan, Allie Gibeau, Aliza Gonzalez Valdez, Abigail Headley, Jonna Loomis, Hailey Perkins, Shania President, Hayley Simard, Mackenzie Viola, Cassandra Washburn, Morgan Watson, Brianna Woodworth

Special Session: Navigating Intercultural Communication

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Faculty Sponsor: Hannah Haynes

Intercultural communication is the study of verbal and nonverbal communication between and among cultural groups. This panel will present independent research projects that apply intercultural communication methods and theories to study real-life communication issues relevant to students' everyday lives. The topics covered in this panel include: the queer-coding of cartoons in Japan and the USA, the generational impacts of curse words, Dominican communication in the Dominican Republic and in the USA, the role of cultural competency in accurate translation, the presentation of toxic masculinity in queer communities, communication strategies for neurodivergent populations, as well as sports communication.

Title: Sports Communication

Author(s): Quran Davis

Keywords: Sports Communication, Exploitation, College Athletes

Abstract: My research focuses on the exploitation of college athletes and how cultural differences between players and coaches have an effect on sports communication. Bridging the gap between players and coaches is necessary as people of color are predominantly under-represented within the field of sports communications. A large proportion of college athletes derive from historically marginalized communities that provide sports as a sanctuary for development of adolescence, hoping that person will one day act as a pillar of their community. The over-representation of black college athletes, who lack familiar connection with administration to provide insight on how to prepare for the future, explains why most professional athletes return to poverty after two to five years of retirement. The outstanding financial gain athletes provide these institutions can be seen as cultural exploitation of young adults as my research aims to show.

Title: Queer-Coding in Animation

Author(s): Max Martel

Keywords: Intercultural Communication, Queer-coding, animation

Abstract: This research studies how queer-coding has evolved, primarily looking at cartoons, like The Powerpuff Girls, Pokémon, Steven Universe, and The Legend of Korra, from the mid 1990's to the present day. Queer-coding is the implicit coding that is assigned to a character that is supposed to be seen as queer. The time frame selected notes the major shift of queer coding from being assigned to villains during the 1990's to everyday people and heroes. My research focuses on the tropes and character design, as well as their narrative placement within the show itself, to further analyze the conscious and unconscious intentions of the show's creators in queer-coding. In looking at a handful of shows from each decade, I compare and contrast what queer-coding looks like, as well as how it has shifted.

Title: Where We're Still Messing Up (in Terms of Information Access)

Author(s): R.W. Miller

Keywords: public use; library; innovation

Abstract: This research examines the factors that may impact an individual's ability to consistently access and consider rich sources of information. It will explore factors such as disability, literacy, and logistical issues—including public education and publishing practices, economics, and self-advocacy—

in an effort to highlight what considerations may be vital for the health of public knowledge in our society.

Title: Navigating Intercultural Communication Through the Lens of Translators

Author(s): Fiona Halloran

Keywords: Intercultural Communication, Translation, Interpersonal Communication

Abstract: Translators are a bridge between two cultures, the point of communication between those who would otherwise be unable to communicate and understand each other. I will be looking at how translators balance target and source cultural differences with their duty to convey accurate messages. Many aspects of a translator's education and intentions can impact how well they are able to navigate cultural and linguistic differences to create good translations. Good translations convey information in accurate, natural ways that can be easily understood by the receiver (Daggöl, 2018). The language first learned, where or how they learned the languages they know, how well they understand the target and source languages and cultures, and aspects of translating they believe are most important can factor in to how well translators do their job. Understanding how translators navigate intercultural communication can give us insight into how to be better intercultural and interpersonal communicators.

Title: The Pressure of Societal and Gender Norms on the LGBTQIAA+ Community

Author(s): Kylan Martus

Keywords: Queer, Femininity and masculinity, Gender roles

Abstract: Gender roles in heteronormative society establish how men and women should act and present. This poses as an obstacle for members of the LGBTQIAA+ community. Studies show that heterosexual people prefer gay men to present more masculine and lesbians to present more feminine to fit under the stereotypes of gender roles despite the sexual orientation of a person. With these roles put in place, LGBTQIAA+ members feel the need to conform to those stereotypes to fit into society rather than just be themselves. There are gay men who have a more feminine side to them and lesbians who have a more masculine side, or vice versa. This research uncovers how Western Queer folk adjust to such gendered binaries since they may choose to present as both masculine and feminine, one of the two, or present androgynous where they do not have to conform to the gender roles.

Title: Code-Switching/Borrowing within Dominican-Americans as a Form of Identity

Author(s): Shanet Rodriguez

Keywords: Dominican-American, code-switching, language

Abstract: This paper analyzes instances of discourse between second generation Dominican-Americans and first generation Dominican-Americans, native Dominicans, and Americans outside the Dominican culture, to catalog and analyze the prominence and purpose of code switching in each cultural situation. Code-switching is prominent within bilingual communities. It is often seen as a way to be able to connect to both identities for people who feel as though they are stuck in the middle of two different communities and don't necessarily fit in with one or the other. Code-switching is a way for people who speak more than one language to be able to communicate with someone who has the same cultural background and have something connecting the two. It is also often seen as a mash-up of types of language and can be a way for a generation, or groups of people, to create their own form of identity when they don't have one that they feel truly connected to.

Title: Evolution of Swearing

Author(s): Antoinette Webster

Keywords: swearing, change, time

Abstract: Most people use swearing as a way to express their emotions, usually through frustration and anger. Swear words are expressed through emotion as the literal meaning, and can often have the same meaning but expressed in different ways. In this paper, I plan to show how offensive language changes over time and where such language originated. I will compare and contrast the original versus modern usages. I would like other scholars to see the differences across periods, and inquire if they are worse or better? I will conduct my research as a critical theory because I want to critique our culture and society in order to demonstrate who decide what is offensive, and how it changes over time.

Special Session: Urban Changes in North Adams and the Creative Economy

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Faculty Sponsor: Guangzhi Huang

In the past twenty years, urban spaces in North Adams have changed significantly in order to adapt to the post-industrial era. By embracing what Richard Florida terms the creative economy, the city increasingly caters to tourists who are attracted to the city's art scene. In this panel, presenters will examine in detail how different urban spaces accommodate the creative class. Through their research on places like The Public, Hi-Lo, The Porches Inn, Tourists, and Bowman Hall of MCLA, the presenters show how these places construct a new type of space which assumes a new cultural tastes, architectural style, and social relationship. This new space is very different from the industrial space North Adams used to be. Drawing from archival research of the Sprague Log and a conversation with a former Sprague worker, these interdisciplinary presentations will also discuss the potential gentrification as a result of these urban changes.

Title: HiLo and the Changing Economy: Balancing Tourist and Local Spaces in North Adams

Author: Mairead Noblewolf

Keywords: Urban Space, Creative Class, Change

Abstract: During the past several decades, North Adams has faced extreme economic challenges as traditional forms of industrial work have left the area. In an attempt to revitalize the area financially and socially, North Adams has begun to cater to a new creative class, as evidenced through spaces like Mass MoCA and Gallery 51 and the introduction of music festivals like Fresh Grass. This has created a new North Adams that visibly caters to this creative class, which leaves the question: what spaces remain for locals? This presentation will examine one such space, a bar/music venue/eatery called HiLo. HiLo uses its location, pricing, environment, and diversity of music acts to ensure that the desires of the creative class are being met while still being attractive and accessible to the historically working-class local population, who may feel alienated by a town that no longer prioritizes their needs and desires.

Title: Urban Changes and the Creative Economy

Author(s): Arthur Cox

Keywords: Urban, Space, Change

Abstract: Many urban spaces around North Adams have changed in the past few decades to adapt to the needs and desires of the increasingly present creative class. This larger trend is noticeable in a space as specific as the MCLA campus. This presentation will briefly explore how Bowman Hall's development, from its inception to its present look, reflects larger historical trends within North Adams. It will delve into the ways in which the building's current look has been adapted to fit the needs of the creative class by examining details of its internal and external design following its renovation in 2015.

Title: Tourists' Role in the Gentrification of North Adams

Author(s): McKenna Clark

Keywords: Gentrification, Creative class, Working-class Community

Abstract: In the past twenty years, North Adams has changed from an industrial space to a post-industrial one. Due to this the town now caters to the creative economy through many spaces around the area. Tourists is a modern motel that reflects these changes. It promotes gentrification in North Adams due to its specific style, aesthetic, and use of third space. Drawing on research from the Sprague Log

Archives, a discussion with a former employee of Sprague Electric, and research on the motel itself, I will discuss how it has promoted gentrification and its effects on the older generation working-class community that makes up most of North Adams. I will also draw on this research to discuss the controversial effects such as the changing economy and the growth of the creative class. Tourists, along with many other new spaces in North Adams, continue to change and cater to the creative class, with gentrification as a result of this.

Title: Urban Changes and the Creative Economy: The Porches Inn

Author(s): Ashley Finkelstein

Keywords: Urban Changes, Creative class, The Porches Inn

Abstract: The Porches Inn is a “boutique inn” located on River Street in North Adams. It gets the name from the large covered porches that were built to connect the row of 19th century Victorian houses that now make up the hotel. These houses were once homes to families of the factory workers of Sprague Electric, which worked well for them because the houses were right across the street from the factory. The factory ended up closing down and the mill building soon became Mass MoCA. The investors of Mass MoCA became interested in expanding renovations farther to create the Porches Inn. The creation of Mass MoCA and the Porches Inn was a way to revitalize the city of North Adams. These new social spaces have changed the city both economically and socially/culturally. North Adams has transitioned from a factory/industrial city into a city for the creative class.

Title: North Adams, Public, and the Inauthenticity of Creative Culture

Author(s): Katherine Therrien

Keywords: Creative Class, North Adams, Public

Abstract: North Adams has been through several changes in culture and economy as an urban center in western Massachusetts. Most notably, the shift from the manufacturing economy and family culture, to the new creative economy and individualist culture that has begun to flourish. The Public restaurant in the city center exemplifies these changes by serving the creative class in creating a culture of falsified, intellectual community that often takes advantage of its proximity to Mass MoCA. The creative class looks for authenticity and individualism. These factors are epitomized by the introduction of spaces such as Public, where individualism is prioritized, and authenticity is attempted. Businesses like The Public encourage North Adams to lean into their new tourist base of the creative class. Through this research, I endeavor to examine how the creative economy has changed North Adams and who these new spaces are meant to serve in the urban community.

Poster Session

Interdisciplinary Zoom Breakout Rooms, 10:15 AM – 11:45 AM

We invite participants to move freely between the breakout rooms and interact with the student presenters.

Breakout Room 1

Title: Waste Reduction and Campus Sustainability

Author(s): Meaghan Tully

Advisor: Elena Traister

Keywords: Sustainability, Waste reduction, Covid-19

Abstract: With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic came an exponential influx in the amount of single use products being produced, used, and discarded on a global scale. My intent with this project is to help implement sustainable practices on campus with the goal of decreasing the amount of waste produced here at MCLA. At a time where waste production is at an all-time high due to the pandemic it is important that we look at what improvements can be made to improve the sustainability of the MCLA campus. In attempting to raise awareness of this important issue, I worked with Aramark to implement a composting station at the dining hall and collaborated with MCLA faculty and students to encourage environmentally friendly behaviors, such as bringing reusable bags and to-go boxes to the dining hall. With these initiatives in place, we can work to make MCLA a more sustainable campus.

Title: The Impact of COVID-19 on Opioid Overdoses in Berkshire County

Author(s): Molly Clement, Shiza Zahid, & Sarah Lavari

Advisor: Nicole Porther

Keywords: COVID-19, Opioids, Overdose

Abstract: As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, implementation of restrictions began to take place around the United States in order to minimize the spread of the COVID-19 virus. As a result of these restrictions, preliminary data suggests that the number of opioid-related deaths and overdoses has increased since the onset of the pandemic. Berkshire County, Massachusetts is an area with a high prevalence of opioid abuse, and we aimed to investigate whether the rates of overdoses, both fatal and non-fatal, have increased during the pandemic as data has suggested. We hypothesized that data collected from Berkshire County would be consistent with the results obtained from other data sources showing that the number of overdose incidences had increased. Data for this research was collected from reports from both emergency departments and first responders from around the county. Statistical tests were then used to determine whether our collected data showed that there was a significant increase in the number of opioid overdoses since the onset of the pandemic compared to previous years. We predict that this analysis will show an increase. The goal of this research project is to bring attention to the opioid abuse crisis that is also occurring and make a call for future research in order to help develop solutions to this public health concern.

Title: How Motivation is Affected by Classes and Majors

Author(s): Jonathan LeBlanc, Jessica Halverson & Colin Rousseau

Advisor: Maria Bartini

Keywords: Students, Motivation, Classes

Abstract: Motivation can help students perform better in the classroom. Students may experience motivation within their majors in different ways such as intrinsically, extrinsically, and by being amotivated. By looking into the relationships between a student's motivation and what classes they are

taking, we hope to gain insight about where motivation lies. The expected correlation is that students experience greater motivation in classes they are personally interested in and for majors they are intrinsically motivated for. Study participants are college students 18 years of age and older who attend MCLA and are of any year in school, gender, and major. Participants were recruited through email and social media for their anonymous participation.

Title: Interactions of Religion, Cultural Empathy, and Gender in Evaluating Individual's Attitudes and Beliefs

Author(s): Meaghan Murphy & Sofia Picardi

Advisor: Deborah Foss

Keywords: Diversity Beliefs, Gender & Sexual Identity, Religion

Abstract: The current study examines how both college students and adults view diversity, focusing on the ways that gender and religious affiliation interact with cultural empathy and attitudes toward diversity and provide strict roles for one to adhere to in society. Here the interest lies in how such variables affect one's cultural empathy and how the development of attitudes, through this particular lens, impacts one's interactions with others in society. Another focus of this research will examine the effects of one's gender on empathy and attitudes about the transgender community. We predict that individuals who report being more religious will show increased levels of cultural and gender-related empathy; and, there will be a gender difference in attitudes and empathy towards the transgender community. These data could result in a better understanding of diversity, particularly MCLA students' views. This could help MCLA better understand the needs of our community's programs and services.

Breakout Room 2:

Title: Increasing Bubble Size through Polymer Addition

Author(s): Amalia Badohu

Advisor: Kebra Ward

Keywords: Bubbles, Thin Films, Polymers

Abstract: In this experiment, I will be investigating how to increase the diameter of the thin films that create bubbles and determine if adding polymers to soap solutions will decrease the surface tension of the films, to increase their stretched lifetimes. The solution drop method will be used to test the surface tension of solutions, which uses gravity to pull a droplet of solution until the bonds rupture. I will measure film thickness in two ways: using an infrared spectrometer and shining white light on bubbles to create a color map of their thickness. Based on previous experiments done at MCLA investigating increasing bubble size, I expect to find a significant increase in the lifetimes of bubbles with the presence of polymers, and I expect the films with polymers to have decreased surface tension and an increase in stretch abilities.

Title: MCLA Townhouse Composting Pilot Program

Author(s): Abby Abrahamson

Advisor: Elena Traister

Keywords: Compost, Environment, Residential Life

Abstract: Food waste is a growing problem with social and environmental impacts, such as eliminating food that could otherwise be provided to food-insecure communities and contributing to carbon dioxide emissions in the atmosphere, which contributes to global climate change. According to the USDA, 30-40% of the US food supply ends up in the waste stream. Composting is a solution to this issue. The MCLA Townhouse Composting Pilot Program began in Fall 2020 and has continued through the Spring 2021 semester to reduce food waste on campus. Currently, four on-campus households collect food

scraps in their apartments and periodically empty them into a collection bin maintained by Casella and located in the townhouse recycling area. At the end of each semester, participating students complete a survey about their experience. The survey results will continue to help inform program organizers to improve the MCLA Townhouse Composting Program in future semesters.

Title: Feather Coloration in *Junco hyemalis* (Dark-eyed Juncos)

Author(s): Shannon Welch

Advisor: Daniel Shustack

Keywords: Ornithology, Plumage, Coloration

Abstract: Slate-colored Juncos (*Junco hyemalis hyemalis*) display variation in the shades and amounts of gray, black, and brown in their plumages. Some, but not all, variation is related to age and sex. The goals of my research are to describe the plumage color variation of juncos found in western Massachusetts across all seasons and to test if some color variation is related to breeding latitude. I will catch and band breeding, overwintering, and migrant juncos in western Massachusetts. For each junco, I will measure plumage coloration with a spectrophotometer and determine breeding latitude by sampling and analyzing feather isotopes.

Title: Demographics, Attitudes and Cultural Diversity at MCLA

Author(s): Jonna Loomis

Advisor: Deborah Foss

Keywords: Diversity, Demographics, Survey

Abstract: College students tend to have more experiences with diversity than other groups. What is the impact of being exposed to different racial, ethnic, gender and sexual identities? Research was conducted amongst MCLA students and other participants recruited through social media. Of interest were their beliefs, attitudes and experiences on a number of issues, including race and gender. Information was also obtained about participants' self-esteem, authenticity, and self-efficacy. We hypothesized that people who were more comfortable with gender and racial diversity would also be higher in self-esteem, more authentic, and open minded. The results will help us draw conclusions about the similarities and differences between students and others in their biases and perspectives on diversity.

Breakout Room 3:

Title: The Impact of COVID-19 on MCLA Students' Health Behavior and Well-being

Author(s): Miguel Reicino & Austin Rachiele

Advisor: Katelyn Hatfield

Keywords: COVID-19, Wellness, Health

Abstract: BACKGROUND & PURPOSE: The COVID-19 pandemic has potentially impacted students' health and well-being beyond the normal stress of college. The overall purpose of this descriptive study is to determine if the COVID-19 pandemic had any effect on the physical activity levels and mental health state of MCLA students. METHODS: We conducted an online, anonymous, 46-question survey to gather information relating to educational planning, health behaviors including physical activity and diet, and mental health. We received 93 responses from the student body. ANALYSES: Two-tailed paired t-tests were used to analyze the difference before and after quarantine in the following: moderate physical activity, vigorous physical activity, and the number of days per week spent strength training. Descriptive statistics were performed on the following variables: sleep quality, average stress, stress management methods, emotional well-being, general activity level, time spent sedentary, and emotional well-being. RESULTS: There was a significant decrease in moderate ($p=0.00085$), vigorous ($p=0.01981$), and strength training activity levels ($p=0.00281$) during quarantine compared to normal

levels. Analyses also suggested quarantine led to: worse overall sleep quality, more instances of people experiencing emotional distress without seeking help, elevated stress levels, more time spent inactive, increased levels of multiple negative emotions, and slightly better stress management. **CONCLUSIONS:** After careful analysis of our data, we conclude that MCLA students are facing a clear decrease in mental, physical, and emotional health. Implementation of health and wellness opportunities that would allow for tailored health alternatives, and support for student health should be emphasized going forward.

Title: Resistance in E.Coli to Solution-Based Disinfectants

Author(s): Mahad Ali & Maddison Lamonda

Advisor: George Hamaoui

Keywords: E.Coli, Resistance, Genome

Abstract: Escherichia coli has strains that are both harmless and disease-causing. In the research and teaching labs here at MCLA, strains of E.coli have been observed to be resistant to Lysol disinfectants (active ingredient: 2-benzyl-4-chlorophenol). Based on these findings, we wanted to determine if this E.coli strain contained genetic elements that could confer resistance to phenol-based disinfectants. Using Oxford Nanopore sequencing technology, we sequenced the genome of the E.coli strain we use in the lab. After performing quality control steps on the sequence data, we used an annotation server to map out the genes present in the E. coli strain. Our findings indicate that our E.coli strain has genes related to the degradation of various aromatic molecules with chemical structures similar to that of 2-benzyl-4-chlorophenol. Thus, the resistance of our E.coli strain to Lysol disinfectant may be based in part on having genes encoding for enzymes that can degrade phenol compounds.

Title: COVID-19 Experience: Impacts on College Students

Author(s): MaryHope Coffield and Jonathan Hebert

Advisor: Maria Bartini

Keywords: COVID-19, Psychological, Academic, Impact

Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic places young adults and post-secondary students at higher mental health risks. The isolation of social distancing and displacement from the normal college academic experience have only exacerbated the current mental health crisis. Our objective is to measure the psychological and academic impacts during COVID-19 on college students by measuring academic performance, sleep quality, stress, worries about COVID-19, and academic frustrations. We will recruit college students from the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts through convenience sampling and utilize an online survey via SurveyMonkey. Our purpose is to analyze the prevalence of psychological, academic, and sleeping impacts that COVID-19 has had on the MCLA population and how these compare to the general population of undergraduate students. This study should shed light on potential mental health and academic issues prevalent on college campuses during COVID-19, which could provide the college with valuable information to better meet the needs of their students and help navigate this new normal together.

Breakout Room 4:

Title: Online Therapy: STEM vs. Non-STEM Student Perceptions

Author(s): Jake Daigneault

Advisor: Sara Steele

Keywords: ICBT, STEM, Major

Abstract: Internet-based cognitive behavioral therapy (ICBT) can be a useful alternative to traditional in-person therapy (Peynenburg et al., 2019). In previous research, ICBT was met with overall positive

feedback (Schueller et al., 2017); however, the exploration of perceptions based on students' majors has not yet been addressed. The goal of this study was to see if there are any disparities between STEM and non-STEM majors in their perceptions of ICBT. The data was collected from an anonymous online survey that was sent out to students at MCLA. Our primary hypothesis is that STEM majors will have more a positive perception of ICBT than non-STEM majors. Our secondary hypothesis is that females will have a more positive perception to ICBT compared to males. The results of this study will help to bridge a major research gap in the ICBT field.

Title: MCLA Green Zone Certification

Author(s): Bobita Atkins

Advisor: Elena Traister

Keywords: Certification, Environment, Individual's actions

Abstract: We are creating what we like to call The Green Zone Project. This project will be a new program promoting and encouraging more environmentally friendly behaviors/actions while on campus and specifically in the dorms. By creating a check list, we will provide a list of items that students on campus could possess and questions regarding how their actions could be environmentally friendly. Our goal is to make MCLA students aware of their behaviors/actions and how they could affect the environment. Green Zone dorm room certification will be determined based on a point system, and students will be able to attain one of two levels of certification. We push to make MCLA a greener school by making the biggest population of the school aware that they have a role in protecting the environment.

Title: Implicit and Explicit Biases on MCLA's Campuses

Author(s): Abigail Headley

Advisor: Maria Bartini

Keywords: implicit/explicit biases, growth mindset, prejudice

Abstract: The purpose was to look at the relationship between the campus climate and power evasion/implicit and explicit biases about race. The present study used two similar surveys collected at two time points in the semester from a sample of college students and faculty/staff at MCLA (N1=130;N2=131). Our analyses showed that the more participants denied the existence of continued discrimination, the more inclusive they found the campus climate to be. Participants that felt the campus climate to be more inclusive also found a higher sense of belonging on campus. These results were the same for both sets of data lending that there is more to be done on the MCLA campus to work on equity and inclusion for students and faculty. For future research, it would be useful to have a larger sample size in order to have a more inclusive participant group. The current research did not have a randomized sample; however, for future studies it would be useful to have this randomization for the genuine application of the research methods used.

Title: The Growing Healthy Garden Program

Author(s): Ty Mazzeo, Tyler Phillips, Maxwell Murray

Advisor: Elena Traister

Keywords: Garden Vegetables Program

Abstract: The Growing Healthy Garden Program coordinates a network of community gardens that provide the community with donated garden beds. The gardens will provide residents with hearty vegetables to consume and the practical knowledge to maintain their gardens. The role of our project is to get the seedling plants ready by spring to be planted in various gardens. We will be operating MCLA's CSI rooftop greenhouse to care for these seedlings. Some of the products we will be growing for the program include tomatoes, sunflowers, eggplant, pepper, hot peppers, and broccoli. We will

monitor temperature and humidity levels inside the greenhouse twice daily, in order to maintain proper growing conditions. Our project assists the Growing Healthy Garden Program in its support of healthier, more sustainable lifestyles in our community. This program can inspire the next generation to garden at their homes.

Breakout Room 5:

Title: Gender Community Connectiveness at MCLA

Author(s): Lily Jennings & Sheedan Callahan

Advisor: Deborah Foss

Keywords: Diversity, Gender, Community

Abstract: College communities can be a great support to students. In order to fully understand MCLA's diversity, we decided to focus our attention on community connectedness, with an emphasis on gender minorities, including transgender individuals and those who identify as gender fluid. This study's measures include information about gender-related discrimination, rejection, victimization, and feelings of alienation at MCLA. Gender identity differences may interact with race and self-esteem. We hypothesize that higher levels of gender-related victimization would be detrimental to community connectedness at MCLA. Also, individuals who identify as gender fluid could possibly experience higher levels of discrimination. Elements such as race may increase feelings of community discomfort when intersected with these gender-related issues. Lack of connection to one's community poses a risk to one's self-esteem. The results could help us understand and change the way we behave towards people who suffer from these issues.

Title: Laminar to Turbulent Fluid Flow apparatus

Author(s): Dean Allen Little

Advisor: Kebra Ward

Keywords: Physics, Fluid, Flow

Abstract: Fluids are fundamental to the function of all life, easily observable on both a microscopic and macroscopic level. Though easily observable, apparatuses designed to demonstrate the phenomena of fluids are often very costly. In order to bridge this gap, I built an apparatus that has a vertical flow tube that allows the user to see the change from laminar to non-laminar flow when using water or glycerin. Laminar flow is when the movement of each particle does not interfere with any other, an example being a smooth current. On the contrary, turbulent flow is the opposite. The velocity of the flow was measured by calculating volume drained over time. The resulting velocity measurements were used to calculate the Reynold's number of the given fluid, which is a measurement of how viscous the fluid is. These calculated numbers were in line with the accepted standards for the given fluids used.

Title: Discrimination and Bias Based on Gender and Sexual Orientation

Author(s): Emily Weinstock

Advisor: Deborah Foss

Keywords: Bias, Gender, Sexual Orientation

Abstract: Many people have to deal with discrimination and bias based on their gender and sexual orientation. The purpose of this study is to look at gender and its relation to biased thinking and behavior. The study aims to see if there is a correlation between discrimination and bias and the participants' gender and sexual orientation. The expected result is a higher rate of instances involving discrimination and bias for participants because of their gender and sexual orientation.

Title: Attitudes towards Race and Gender on College Campuses

Author(s): Heath Moran

Advisor: Deborah Foss

Keywords: Gender, race, discrimination

Abstract: Although diversity is a widely discussed topic today, many college students may not be aware of attitudes towards diversity on their own campuses. This study collected responses from both MCLA students and non-students on beliefs and experiences surrounding diversity. The purpose of this is to examine different aspects of racial and gender diversity as they relate to self-esteem, discrimination, self-efficacy, community connectedness, and cultural attitudes. Additionally, this study will also explore the role of intersectionality of race and gender minorities, and the extent to which double discrimination affects responses. It is expected that respondents who report higher cultural empathy will also report higher levels of community connectedness, and responses could vary between minority and majority groups. Additionally, this study aims to find a relationship between people who report higher levels of discrimination and lower levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy.

Award Presentations and Keynote Address

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Welcome Remarks from President Birge

Pamela Dennis Scholarship Award

Feigenbaum Fellowship Awards

Keynote Address by

Ama Bemba Adwetewa-Badu

Keynote Speaker: Ama Bemma Adwetewa-Badu ('15)

Ama Bemma Adwetewa-Badu (MCLA class of 2015) is a Ph.D. Candidate (ABD) in the Department of Literatures in English at Cornell University. While at Cornell, she has been a Digital Humanities Fellow (2019), the director and founder of the Global Poetics Project (2019-present), and the co-founder of the Comparative Black Studies Working Group (2018 to present). During the 2021-2022 academic year, she will begin her tenure as a Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellow.

Ama Bemma was born in Ghana but was brought up in Massachusetts; she currently lives in New York. She is a 2015 Newman Civic Fellow and MCLA's 2018 Alumna of the year. She currently runs a month-long poetry series for residential students at Cornell University, which has been run successfully three times. Ama Bemma also works towards equity and access in higher education for immigrant youth, first-generation Americans, and inner-city students through workshops and talks hosted throughout New England. Prior to Cornell, Ama Bemma received a BA in English & Communications from the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (2015) and an MA in English from Clark University (2017). She recently received an MA in English from Cornell University (2019).

Ama Bemma's research is concerned with the interrelation of poetry and politics, post-1960s literary history, theories of world literature, the digital humanities, and comparative Black studies. She draws upon close readings, archival materials, and digital network modeling and mapping to enthruse her research. Her dissertation, *Literary Intimacies: The Politics and Poetics of Global Anglophone Poetry*, engages with a network of Afro-diasporic poets from the intertwined moments of the Cold War and decolonization to the present day, arguing for a reinterpretation of poetic practice as mediated by institutions and media forms beyond and alongside national and regional borders. Ama Bemma's writing and reviews on contemporary poetry, Afro-diasporic literature and culture, and the digital humanities are published or forthcoming from *Modernism/Modernity Print+*, *Comparative Literature Studies*, and *The Black Scholar*.

Meet the Speaker
1:00 pm – 1:30 pm
For Students Only

Students will have the opportunity to have an informal question and answer session with the keynote speaker following the luncheon. Ama Bemma Adwetewa-Badu 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.

Paper Presentations (II A)

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM

Title: 1968 Olympics, Mexico City

Author(s): Kolby Clegg

Advisor: Anthony Daly

Keywords: 1968 Olympics, African American, Sports

Abstract: On October 16, 1968, two African-American members of the United States Olympic team raised their fists in the air while the American national anthem was played during the medal ceremony for the 200 meter sprint. The 1968 Olympics in Mexico City were one of the first large events to be fully televised on live television. With the many protests happening around the world that year, and most importantly the Civil Rights movement happening within the United States, this image had a powerful impact in sports and beyond. The iconic picture not only started protests within the United States and the Olympic games, but it also serves as a driving factor to many African American athletes today, using the power of sports to stress the importance of voting and peaceful protesting.

Title: Accountability and Environmental Justice Issues Within Extractive Industries

Author(s): Brian Rhodes

Advisor: Susan Endergton

Keywords: Accountability, extractive industries, environmental justice

Abstract: This presentation focuses on accountability and environmental justice issues within extractive industries. As the impacts of extractive industries have become increasingly apparent, accountability has become a serious topic. MSNBC political commentator Rachel Maddow's recent book, *Blowout: Corrupted Democracy, Rogue State Russia, and the Richest, Most Destructive Industry on Earth*, chronicles the troubling history of corruption in the oil and gas industries and is one of several recent works that call for increased accountability. An article from the journal *Crime, Law & Social Change* argues that world governments are either unwilling or unable to conduct more oversight on extractive industries. While there have been some actions to increase accountability, like the formation of the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI), research aiming to determine their effectiveness has shown mixed results. Several researchers attribute this to what they refer to as a resource curse.

Title: A Comparison of Polish Resistance towards the Soviet System during 1968 and 1980s

Author(s): Samuel Levitz

Advisor: Anthony Daly

Keywords: Poland, Protest, Comparison

Abstract: The year 1968 saw an explosion of activism over many of the beliefs and practices of governments across the world. One place in which these protests would occur is Poland. In an event known as the Polish Political Crisis of 1968 many young activists conducted protests across the country over policies of the Polish government, as well as the Soviet system as a whole. What followed were decades of growing unrest which eventually culminated in the Solidarity movement during the early 1980s, which would see the ultimate dismantling of the communist government in 1989. This has caused many people to question the connection between these two movements, and so this presentation will analyze the similarities and differences between the crisis of 1968 and the Solidarity movement of the early 1980s, in order to gain an understanding of what influence the 1968 movement had for future protests in Poland.

Paper Presentations (II B)

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM

Title: If You Were Born A Black Man's Camera

Author(s): Erick Ramos

Advisor: Victoria Papa

Keywords: Visibility, representation, community

Abstract: In his poem, “Self-Portrait as the Mind of a Camera- After Charles “Teenie” Harris,” Terrance Hayes poses the question, “What if in your previous life you were born a Black man’s Camera?” In this presentation, I explore how Hayes depicts the camera as a radical instrument harnessed by people of color to take back an identity stolen by the white gaze. If you were born a Black man’s camera, you would be the decolonizer that captures the brilliance of Black life with its lens. You would be defying everything whiteness has defined you to be. This presentation, thus, illustrates how the camera can show the struggles of people of color, while allowing us to recognize their triumphs. Through analysis of Hayes’ poem and photographs of Teenie Harris, that documented daily life of Black people in mid-century America, this presentation shows the importance of communities of color telling their own stories.

Title: Mao Zedong and the Chinese Cultural Revolution

Author(s): Andrew Lavelle

Advisor: Anthony Daly

Keywords: Mao, China, Revolution

Abstract: Mao Zedong was one of the most powerful figures in Asian history. This presentation will examine Mao’s role in inspiring the horrors of the Cultural Revolution. Mao was very opposed to anything that could possibly threaten his communist ideology and his rule over China. During the Chinese Cultural Revolution, which started in 1966, Mao inspired the Chinese Red Guards which were student military groups that sought to eliminate opposition to Mao, erase Chinese history, and resist western or capitalist influence. Violence by the Red Guards killed many people and oppressed many more. Food shortages were common throughout China, and Mao was willing to politicize food so that his opponents would suffer. Mao developed a powerful cult of personality, and despite all of the evil he perpetrated, he is still viewed as a hero to some, while many others denounce him thoroughly.

Title: Gone But Never Forgotten: Preserving The Holocaust Through Cultural Policy in Germany

Author(s): Crystal Wojcik

Advisor: Jerome Socolof

Keywords: Germany, Holocaust, Cultural Policy

Abstract: 75 years have gone by since one of the most horrific and catastrophic events of history, the Holocaust, which took place in Germany and several other countries. This tragic period of time has become a large part of Germany’s cultural identity and something the country is not afraid of publicly addressing. Through means of cultural policy and collaborating closely with other countries, Germany has actively spent the last 75 years working to preserve and not shy away from this part of their history. The country has taken action to memorialize the former concentration, work, and death camps throughout both Germany and Poland. This paper addresses the various ways in which Germany is working to preserve and confront their history of the Holocaust through cultural policy. The German government’s influence over education within schools, illegalization of Nazi propaganda, implementation of physical memorial sites, and more have been widespread throughout their country and across the globe.

Special Session: Student Grant Panel

1:30 PM – 2:30 PM

Sponsor: Erica Barreto

Students will be invited to answer questions and share stories about how opportunities to fund independent research and student projects help build community, launch careers, and support artistic growth. It is our hope that sharing these stories can and will inspire other students to explore their own creative endeavors by pursuing the variety of funding opportunities available to them at MCLA.

Keywords: Grant Funding, Art, Students

Student Presenters:

Brianna Christie, Quray Clarke, Declan McDermott, Ian Mosher, Destiny Rivera, Kennedy Sobon

Special Session: The Age of American Revolutions

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM

Faculty Sponsor: Amanda Kleintop

Students will present their independent research on a topic from the Age of American Revolutions in this lightning-round session. In short, 8-10-minute presentations, students will explore major themes from the American, Haitian, and Latin American Revolutions, when most of the Western Hemisphere revolted against European rule to build new futures out of a colonial past. The lightning rounds will give audiences the opportunity to learn about the histories of multiple revolutions and consider how revolutionaries simultaneously challenged and preserved class, racial, and gender hierarchies in the new world orders that emerged.

Title: Those in Chains During a Time of Freedom

Author(s): Robin Williams

Keywords: Slavery, American Revolution, Emancipation

Abstract: Slavery is deeply rooted into America's history, in some ways it is the very foundation in which many states came to be. Before the American Revolution nearly all states had some degree of slavery. By 1783 many states chose to abolish slavery all together while others chose to hold onto it. The Reasons varied from state to state. The main focus here will be on slavery in the North and South before the American Revolution, during, and after. We will take a close look at a few states, such as Virginia, Maryland, and areas within New England, to see how slavery evolved. Some questions we are aiming to answer are: Why did some states choose to hold onto slavery while others granted freedom? For some, was abolishing/keeping slavery a choice or were there other factors at play that forced one decision over another?

Title: Mexican War of Social Liberation: a Study into the Role of Caste in the Mexican War of Independence

Author(s): Emily Kelleher

Keywords: Castes, independence, colonialism

Abstract: Was the Mexican War of Independence fought mainly for independence from Spain, or for liberation from the colonial caste system? Early leaders of the war, like Miguel Hidalgo and Ignacio Allende, shared these goals, but they specifically wanted to bring an end to the strict social hierarchies that early Spanish colonialism created. Later leaders of the war worked to continue the fight of freeing society of its colonial restraints while also adding a more organized version of the goal to gain independence. This paper argues that by the end of the war, when the chance for independence was more likely, discarding the caste system was still the main motivation for all Mexicans in their fight for independence from the elitist Eurocentric social standards and the Spanish monarchy. In so doing, this paper adds to the English-language histories of the Mexican War of Independence by exploring the motivations and goals of movement leaders and their success in achieving them.

Title: The Haitian Revolution: Historiography and Contemporary Perceptions

Author(s): Hannah Soucy

Keywords: Haitian Revolution, 17th century, History

Abstract: The turn of the eighteenth century into the nineteenth was a period of radical change in the Atlantic World, not just for what would become the United States, but for many peoples and places as different groups rose up to overthrow colonial rule. This presentation looks at the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804) in the French colony of Saint-Domingue, a multi-faceted and decades-long conflict

between numerous imperial powers. Ultimately, this resulted in the establishment of Haiti as an independent Black nation. Despite the Revolution's significance in its own time period, the conflict and its complexity is often overlooked in the United States. This presentation argues that contemporary reactions of the Revolution as it was ongoing are key to present-day understandings of it.

Title: How Revolutionary was the American Revolution?

Author(s): Arthur Cox

Keywords: Class conflict, American Revolution, Democracy

Abstract: Scholarship surrounding the American Revolution has asked how radical the Revolution truly was and whether the resulting government was truly so different from the older system. Despite embracing democracy, the post-war government was directed by the desires of a conservative American gentry, including the Founding Fathers, who focused on securing their own political power. At the same time, they limited the power of others, particularly anyone who was not a white landowner. Knowing this raises two questions: What did the common people involved in the Revolutionary War actually want out of the Revolution and did they actually get it? This presentation will answer these questions by exploring how class conflict shaped the outcome of the Revolutionary War across the former British colonies in states like Virginia and Pennsylvania. The government that came out of the Revolutionary War could not be considered truly revolutionary because, in the end, it was used by the American upper class to reconsolidate power and limit democracy when it could not be used to secure their own wealth and power.

Paper Presentations (III A)

2:45 PM - 3:45 PM

Title: The French Protests of May '68

Author(s): Roberto Castillo

Advisor: Anthony Daly

Keywords: France, 1968, Protests

Abstract: In 1968, during the months of May and June, France experienced civil unrest that raised the possibility of another revolution. The events of May '68 started as a series of protests by university students as a result of their dislike of France's political and social climate. Soon after, the French workers joined in support of the students and advocated for changes. The government's response was to use the police to suppress the protest. However, it only intensified the protests, leading to violence between the protestors and the police in the streets of Paris. Through strikes, posters, and the occupation of universities, these protestors were able to bring France to a standstill. This presentation will analyze the causes of the French protests in 1968 and the reasons why the protestors failed to dramatically change French society.

Title: The Prague Spring & Warsaw Pact Invasion 1968: Relations between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union

Author(s): Samantha Herrington

Advisor: Anthony Daly

Keywords: Prague Spring, Cold War, Soviet Union

Abstract: The Prague Spring of Czechoslovakia in 1968 was an attempt to create "socialism with a human face." The people of this Eastern European country along with Alexander Dubcek created a movement that echoed others around the world in 1968. Dubcek's own writing and Party documents reveal how powerful this change was following years of Soviet control. The Prague Spring shifted relations between the country and the Soviet Union by challenging what communism looked like – greater autonomy from the Party and the liberalization of society. Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev and other Warsaw Pact governments viewed this movement as counterrevolution and betrayal during the Cold War, triggering the invasion of Czechoslovakia by forces of the Warsaw Pact in August 1968. This presentation will examine the relationship between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union leading up to the August 1968 invasion and the legacy of a movement ingrained in history as a short-lived opportunity for change.

Title: The Escapism of Dreams

Author(s): Emily Sienkiewicz & Brianna McNamara

Advisor: Caren Beilin

Keywords: Dreams, COVID-19, Reality

Abstract: While we all struggle during this COVID-19 pandemic, it is clear that some forces are unmovable. Between civil unrest, tense elections, and hundreds of thousands dead, it can feel impossible to do anything in our current world. However, we have found that the one place where you can escape is in dreams. Not only do we escape in our dreams, but we can foster realities of our own. Dreams often mimic the structures of daily life, but with a distinct distortion of reality that allows freedom from those same structures. The aim of our research is to examine the ways in which dreams provide escape, fantasy, and creative inspiration during a time when there seems to be little. In this session, we will discuss the ways in which dreams can slant and slide you from reality and we will read from our work inspired by our dreams.

Title: Queer Bodies in the Medical Industry: A Study on the Treatment of Gender Non-conforming Bodies in the Medical Field

Author(s): Hannah McCormick

Advisor: Anna Jaysane-Darr

Keywords: Healthcare, Biomedical, Gender-nonconforming, transgender

Abstract: This project surrounds the biomedical struggles faced by gender non-conforming and transgender individuals, including lack of representation in healthcare, open discrimination with medical practices, and the lack of education surrounding queer bodies within the medical field, concentrating on biomedical care and the standard practice of medicine. Cisgender individuals take their healthcare advantages for granted, adding social pressure to “come out” to medical professionals to receive gender-based care, and possess little knowledge with treating gender non-conforming patients. Placing stressors on individuals to fit into the gender binary also increases medical procedures being done, including cosmetic and gender reassignment surgery. Despite such demand for medical intervention, there is still a lack of queer-based healthcare. This can cause healthcare issues when trying to find a medical professional who specializes in gender non-conforming bodies, creating extra expense and further social pressure.

Paper Presentations (III B)

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Title: Student Movements in 1960s West Germany: A Call for Social Change

Author(s): William Walkley

Advisor: Anthony Daly

Keywords: Germany, History, Student Movement

Abstract: Adolph Hitler's Third Reich left the world in disarray and deeply tarnished Germany's global reputation. Upon the appointment of Kurt Georg Kiesinger, who had been a member of the Nazi party, as Chancellor in 1966, Germany was once again tied to its past. The university students of West Germany would not be quieted as they protested for social change. The Sozialistische Deutsche Studentenbund, or Socialist German Student union, offered students an outlet to attempt to cleanse German politics from those with ties to the Nazis. Rudi Dutschke became the voice for the displeased. On June 2, 1967 Benno Ohnesorg, a university student, was killed by German police during a demonstration. This drove many to favor a more violent approach towards social change. This project will examine the roles that Kiesinger, Dutschke, and German students played in shaping German politics and society in this turbulent era.

Title: 1968: The Climax of Tension in Northern Ireland

Author(s): Lauren Combs

Advisor: Anthony Daly

Keywords: History, 1968, Ireland

Abstract: In 1968, protests began in Northern Ireland. Separate from the rest of the island, Northern Ireland was still part of the United Kingdom, and a Protestant majority dominated politics over a Catholic minority. Similar to campaigns that erupted around the world in the same year, citizens led by the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association marched to protest discrimination against Catholics in housing and jobs. However the march towards economic and political equality, as well as governmental change, only united the citizens of Northern Ireland for so long. On October 5th, 1968, peaceful protestors were attacked by a mob, beginning a slide into violence. What followed was Northern Ireland's descent into civil war as divisions in society deepened between religious and political groups. This presentation will examine how Northern Ireland's civil rights movement turned violent, and the lasting consequences of its legacy.

Title: The Philippines and the Moro People

Author(s): Paige Wandrei

Advisor: Anthony Daly

Keywords: the Moro people, Jabidah Massacre, the Philippines

Abstract: This presentation will investigate the influence of how the Jabidah Massacre in 1968 created a domino effect involving the Moro people and tension between the Philippines and Malaysia. The Philippine government gave false promises to Moro army recruits who were being trained to fight against their distant relatives in Sabah. Many of the Moro soldiers were killed when they refused. The Philippines originally agreed that the state of Sabah would join Malaysia, but then President Ferdinand Marcos made the claim that Sabah belongs to the Philippines. The secret operations in the Corregidor region to Sabah led by the Philippine government stirred up tension between the Moros and the Philippines. With false promises and distrust from the government, the Moro people demand independence from the Philippines. Insurgent groups emerged from the massacre, with support from the Malaysian government.

Special Session: Issues on Race: Some Practical Applications

2:45 PM – 3:45 PM

Faculty Sponsor: Frances Jones-Sneed

This presentation is a final project presentation from selected students in CCAP 300-Conversations on Race who will be discussing three practical applications that they have researched about issues on race in the United States and their applications in real-life situations. The three issues discussed will be Equality v. Equity, Allies v. Accomplices, and Intent v. Impact. Each issue will be explained and approached through the means of practical applications that the audience can understand and use in their daily lives.

Student Presenters:

Dean Allen, Emma Bayle, Anayra Colon, Christopher Curtain, Junior Florent, Caleb Hannon, Vanessa Harringan, Kylan Martus, Heath Moran, Kaylea Nocher, Trinity Shellard, Ashanti Thomas

Special Session: Artist Talks

2:45pm – 3:45pm

Faculty Sponsor: Melanie Mowinski

How do you communicate the abstract idea behind a body of artwork in concrete language that broadens the viewer's experience and helps you as the artist further understand your own work and process? This is one of the goals of ART 480: Senior Art Project, a course that all MCLA art majors take as one of their graduation requirements. This special session features students in ART 480 talking about the work they've created, their artist motivations, contexts, historical touch points and more.

Student Artists:

Alex Gasper, Ian Mosher, Tala Rousseau, Andrew Thomas, Ashanti Thomas

Title: Mirrors

Author(s): Alex Gaspar

Keywords: Parasite, Reflection, Healing

Abstract: The traumatized mind at times is like a mirror maze at a carnival of horrors: refracting and reflecting itself and other trauma in the world's most twisted funhouse. My body of work Mirrors is a digitally created semi-autobiographical comic, and part of a greater graphic novel of the same name. Through visual imagery and sparse use of color, I build on reflecting, refracting, and breaking mirror imagery to tell the story of healing and surviving life, while plagued by the parasite of memories you would rather forget. Ultimately, I use the metaphor of breaking mirrors that dominate your mind to demonstrate movement towards healing.

Title: Walker of the Wasteland

Author(s): Ian Mosher

Keywords: Dystopian, Upcycle, Sculpture

Abstract: My artwork utilizes upcycled materials, trash, found objects, and traditional sculpting mediums to create dystopian characters. These characters create a narrative of a future wasteland that warns against modern trends of overconsumption and pollution of the Earth. The work is important to me because of how much and how quickly we as a society are creating negative change in our environment. Soon we will not be viable in the toxic environment we are creating. In this presentation, I will show how I use the upcycled materials, trash, found objects, and traditional sculpting mediums to represent my perspective of the future and how sculpture can be both a creative and educational medium. The overall goal is to raise awareness of our pollution footprint and inspire action to create prevention.

Title: Elements of an Identity

Author(s): Tala Rousseau

Keywords: Identity, Diversity, Inclusivity

Abstract: Elements of an Identity consists of multiple, original characters that explore various realms of what can create an identity through different means of diversity. This project explores sexuality, race, and gender identity through characters that do not appear human but are fully fleshed out and could be related to humanity through one or more of those means. The importance of these characters being so diverse is to show how diversity is important in creating identities for a living, breathing, person of all ages. The arts shape communities. Diversifying the arts allows us to hear narratives and topics that we may not have access to otherwise, and to help create a sense of self in all groups. The artworks I will be

submitting are titled Lilith and Taeyoung. They are watercolor portraits that measure 9 inches by 12 inches. I was motivated to create these pieces originally from a fictional story I was creating, but now have gained more motivation for creating characters that vary in race, gender, and sexuality for the purpose of playing with what makes an identity. While these two characters are cisgender, as my other characters that have different gender identities aren't complete yet, there are still some differences between the two characters pertaining to race and sexuality.

Title: Masquerade

Author(s): Andrew Thomas

Keywords: Freedom, Diversity, Fantasy

Abstract: My digital illustrations focus on finding the magic in the world we live in, expressing that through the use of vivid colors and fantastical elements. My illustrations uncover the unpopular parts of ourselves that we hide from the public, by representing them with fantasy components. In doing so, I undress the irony of how the "perfect lives" we portray publicly is the real fantasy, compared to the actual emotions we feel such as sadness, fear, and insecurity. These digital paintings heavily rely on metaphors and physical features that symbolically represent emotions and sentiments.

Title: MIS-lead

Author(s): Ashanti Thomas

Keywords: Active, Engaging, Informing

Abstract: Over time my work has been inspired by the social realism movement, where artists gave insight on what the working class was dealing with and challenged oppressive systems. In my current series, I explore how our roots affect us as humans in many ways and how it leads us to be put into racial boxes by the government, so they can know how to treat you in society. I will use the human body as my muse to show how roots affect our body. I named this talk *Mislead* because we are trained to believe that our roots do not matter, not realizing that if we learn our roots, it will help us understand ourselves.

Special Session: Student Virtual Art Exhibit

3:45pm - 4:45pm

Faculty Sponsor: Melanie Mowinski

*Some abstracts are the same as above

Student Artists:

Alex Gasper, Heath Moran, Ian Mosher, Tala Rousseau, Andrew Thomas, Ashanti Thomas

Title: Exploring Psychology through Comics

Author(s): Heath Moran

Advisor: Melanie Mowinski

Keywords: Comic, color, psychology

Abstract: It is easier to retrieve stored information from memory if we are able to code it in both semantic and visual forms. This project will aim to present psychological topics in a visually interesting and accessible form—through comics. This digitally drawn series of comics explores color and characterization, in addition to topics within social and cognitive psychology. The purpose of this series is to demonstrate how the flexibility and composition of a comic format can be used to create art that is both educational and reflective of identity.

Title: Ambul_

Author(s): Ashanti Thomas

Keywords: Comfortable, Powerful, Essential

Abstract: A series of performance art pieces captured through a video called Ambul- explores how roots (using the metaphor of hair) connect to how we as humans form a sense of identity. This work is named Ambul- because it means to walk in Latin and it signifies that, with this work, we are taking the correct steps into discussing how our roots define us. Within this series I will use the body as a tool to show how, in every aspect of people's lives, we can feel incomplete or lost if we do not understand our roots. I do this by having people act out movements with pigments on big canvas boards using hair as paintbrushes, paint dancing, and throwing paint on a canvas.

Special Session: Interdisciplinary Worlds

3:45 PM – 4:45 PM

Faculty Sponsor: Rita Nnodim

Understanding, analyzing, and finding answers to the complex issues that people face in contemporary societies within an increasingly interconnected world demands creative pathways toward knowledge, calls for ways of thinking ‘outside the box,’ and requires venturing out beyond established disciplinary boundaries. Emerging interdisciplinary student-scholars presenting in this panel open up such creative, outside-the-box, and integrative perspectives as they engage a plurality of important topics in culture and society.

Title: Menstruation: Biology, Culture and Education

Author(s): Aubrey Bushika

Keywords: Menstruation, Interdisciplinary worlds, Sexual health education

Abstract: My research seeks to better understand the connection between biology, culture, education, and the experience of menstruation. By utilizing an interdisciplinary approach that connects biology, the history of education relating to menstruation, sociological and psychological perspectives, my paper highlights how menstruators are not adequately informed about menstruation and the body, which often leads to negative feelings about body and self. Considering alternative approaches to education, my paper suggests that in order to provide adequate knowledge around menstruation and to eradicate the taboos and myths associated with menstruation, the personal must be made public. Formal education should address the real-life experiences associated with menstruation to help young menstruators build an optimistic sense of embodied self. Social inequality needs to be addressed in order to provide expecting and young menstruators with access to menstrual products and education to enhance self-care and the ability to make informed decisions about their bodies.

Title: Education of Syrian Refugee Children in Refugee Camps

Author(s): Kaylea Nocher

Keywords: Refugee, Education, Support

Abstract: The ongoing Syrian civil war has not only displaced millions of Syrians across the borders to refugee camps in Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon, and Iraq, but has also disrupted the education of a large number of Syrian children. My interdisciplinary paper draws on cross-sectional research insights to discuss how language barriers, minimal emotional support, the experience of trauma and neglect, as well as educational gaps due to interrupted schooling negatively impact children’s educational experience and future opportunities. Findings indicate that refugee children who have received inadequate academic support for an extended period of time fall behind in their cognitive development. The paper inquires into educational programming offered in refugee camps and concludes with reflections on possible alternatives that support children’s education as well as their cognitive and social-emotional development.

Title: Afro-Germans: An Emerging Identity in German Social Discourse

Author(s): Tyler Rockenfield

Keywords: Interdisciplinary, Literature-based, Sociopolitical

Abstract: In the context of recent German cultural and political discourses around migration, minorities, and national identity/belonging, the emergence of an Afro-German movement and contributing writers, scholars, and activists have opened up a space for the greater consideration of the experience of racial and ethnic minorities within German society. Drawing on Benedict Anderson and Arjun Appadurai’s

thinking on nation and national identity, as well as Taiye Selasie's influential concept of Afropolitanism, my paper analyzes how Afro-German writers and activists intervene in public discourses, seeking to deconstruct the idea of a German "Leitkultur" – a buzzword popular within conservative and right-wing circles that rejects cultural diversity and instead idolizes an assimilation-based model of citizenship and "German-ness." To this, the movement counterposes plural conceptualizations of Afro-German and Afropolitan belonging, paving the way for a broader conceptualization of national and cultural citizenship that encompasses racial, ethnic, and national minorities.

Title: Gentrification of Brooklyn, New York

Author(s): Audra Schwalm

Keywords: gentrification, displacement, social spaces

Abstract: Gentrification constitutes a burgeoning problem in the neighborhoods of Brooklyn, New York, where real estate developers turn low-income properties into high-end properties, thus revitalizing the city with devastating consequences for local inhabitants and small businesses. The purpose of my interdisciplinary research that connects insights from economics, sociology, and urban studies is to investigate the impact of gentrification on urban spaces and local neighborhoods. My paper argues that gentrification unfolds as a gradual process that encompasses a range of warning signs, transformations to the urban built environment, and the subsequent encroachment into formerly low income neighborhoods by the affluent class. Along with rising property values, these transformations lead not only to a revitalization of the city, but also to changes in urban cultures and the social uses of space. Ultimately, gentrification disrupts existing local networks in neighborhoods and often leads to the marginalization and displacement of urban residents.

Special Session: Creative Writing

Murdock 218, 3:45 PM - 4:45 PM

Faculty Sponsors: Zack Finch & Caren Beilin

Creative Writing students, working in both prose and poetry, will read aloud from their works-in-progress.

Student Presenters:

Brianna Christie, Gabrielle Osowiecki, Jamie Vachula, Nalisha De Castro, Kristy Yaghy, Shawna Hennessy, Olivia Pressley, Liza Marsala

Special Session: Speak the Speech!: Shakespeare's Voices Illuminated

Faculty Sponsor: Laura Standley

Students from Advanced Acting: Shakespeare bring his famous characters to life. Through a wide range of monologues from Shakespeare's plays, students perform heightened language with style, authority, and lyricism.

Student Performers:

Comfort Acheampong, Alex Aleksandrov, John Archer-Harvey, Abigail Daggett, Georgia Dedolph, Caitlyn Falzone, Bee Kelsey, Dana McCormick, Jessyca Muniz, Neo Valentin, Mak Wagner

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Anna Jaysane-Darr, Associate Chair of Undergraduate Research
Caren Beilin, English
Ann Billetz, Biology
David Cupery, Political Science
Anthony Daly, History
Eric Doucette, Biology
Justin Golub, Biology
Elizabeth Hartung, Math
Kebra Ward, Physics

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