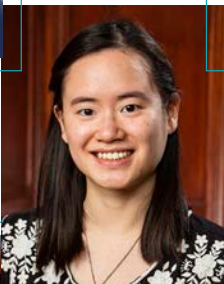
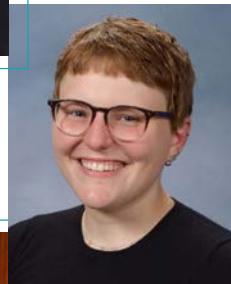
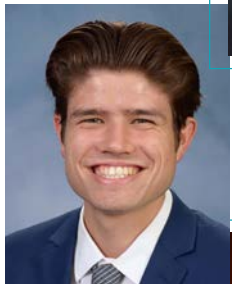
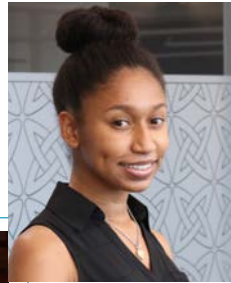




UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME

ARTS & LETTERS



2022

SENIOR THESIS PROJECTS

Study everything. Do anything.SM



Greetings!

I'm delighted to present this collection highlighting senior thesis projects completed by students in the College of Arts & Letters Class of 2022.

Within these pages, 280 seniors describe their 298 theses, capstones and creative projects. This package represents countless hours of original research, practice, analysis, interviews, writing, and creative work.

The projects detailed here are as interesting and diverse as the students who chose them. They include exploring the foundation for cluster algebras, writing a musical comedy, studying the role of faith in political participation, preserving an endangered language, and examining discrimination in the mortgage lending market.

During these endeavors, seniors have worked one-on-one with their advisors, who have provided valuable support, expertise and guidance. Many students also have benefited from generous grants that enabled them to travel, view archived manuscripts, purchase materials, and gain knowledge and cultural experiences. They have also demonstrated tremendous resiliency throughout the many challenges that COVID-19 has posed to their undergraduate careers — including the ways it forced many of them to reshape or recalibrate their projects.

Each year, seniors affirm that both the process and knowledge gained are invaluable, and often transformative.

I am proud of these seniors for pursuing their interests, making discoveries, and contributing to academic scholarship and the creative arts. I'm also extremely pleased that the percentage of Arts & Letters seniors completing theses, capstones, and creative projects has increased from 8% in 2008 to approximately 40% the last few years.

I hope that you enjoy learning about their projects as much as I have.

Sarah A. Mustillo

Sarah A. Mustillo

I.A. O'Shaughnessy Dean
College of Arts & Letters

**Langley Allen**

- Majors: Political Science and Psychology
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Anré Venter

Restorative Justice: A Comprehensive Understanding of its Framework and Implications on Society

In the wake of the violent killing of George Floyd, the police and larger criminal justice system are facing heightened scrutiny as governments attempt to resolve some of the issues that affect police misconduct. Through a restorative justice approach to situations involving crimes, crimes are treated in the context of that individual's environment. This research focused on opportunities that restorative justice can provide and explored possible limitations that come from such a progressive yet compact approach to justice.

This topic allowed me to examine restorative justice within the South Bend community, where gun violence has recently increased. Through this research, I also learned how I may positively impact my own community of Prince George's County, Maryland. Consideration for alternative strategies has become more commonplace and, given the success stories within the restorative justice approach, I wanted to explore its utility on a larger scale.

**Pamela Alvarado-Alfaro**

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Education, Schooling and Society
- AnBryce Initiative Scholar
- Advisor: Luis Ricardo Fraga

A Village Divided: The Impact of Demographic Change on Successful Referendum Passage in Indiana

I addressed how demographic trends allow us to study whether race matters with regard to increases in public school funding.

The study addressed the lack of support for new funding opportunities in the Elkhart, Indiana, school district by examining the influence of demographics on the community's changing sentiments toward education referenda that increase school financing in a district serving a predominant minority population.

I chose this topic after interning at the Center for Civic Innovation and working on a community-based project in which we attempted to find technology-based solutions for the communication gap between non-English-speaking parents and educators in Elkhart.

Being a part of this project allowed me to see the disparities in education that exist within the community, and motivated me to try to address why they exist.

**Camila Antelo Iriarte**

- Majors: Political Science and Economics
- Minor: Computing and Digital Technologies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Hesburgh-Yusko Scholars Program
- Kellogg International Scholars Program
- Advisor: Scott Mainwaring

Explaining Party System Collapse in Bolivia, 2002-2005

In order to explain the collapse of parties in Bolivia and the implications and lessons for parties not in power, I discussed the elements that motivated voters to abandon traditional parties and vote for outsider candidates and parties. Why did voters cease to identify with predominant parties? And why did leaders within the established parties not make strategic choices to preempt voter alienation, or to attract alienated voters?

There is extensive literature on party collapse and party system collapse, yet few of these works deal with Bolivia. Bolivia is an excellent case study because the three main parties from 1982 to 2002 (MNR, ADN, MIR) all collapsed within a short time in the 2000s.

In La Paz, Bolivia, I explored the literature and the streets of the country. I found amazing works of literature that I hadn't heard of before in various street stores, markets, and libraries. I got a deeper understanding of the culture, identity, and economy that influenced Bolivian politics. I also became more aware and knowledgeable of cultures in Bolivia and connected with my traditional practices.

Traveled to La Paz, Bolivia, with funding from the Hesburgh-Yusko Scholars Program.

**Sara Atassi**

- Majors: Philosophy and Political Science
- Advisor: Michael Rea

How Pornography Consumption Patterns Affect College-Aged Males' Ideas of Masculinity and Sex

Using interviews with male undergraduate students at Notre Dame, I looked at how college-aged males think about pornography, how they define it, and how those ideas influence their perspectives on sex.

My thesis is in the field of experimental feminist philosophy and aims to draw conclusions about how pornography — and the lens through which young-adult males view it — subconsciously takes the place of real, empirical knowledge regarding masculinity and sex.

Much literature exists on how pornography affects how men view and interact with women, but there is no philosophical literature on how pornography affects what men think of themselves and of each other. I was curious to know how much of male sexual education is learned, experienced, or simply taken from pornography.

**Peter Baltes**

- Majors: History and Political Science
- Advisor: Daniel Graff

Surveilling the Steelworkers: The Army's Occupation of Gary, Indiana, and the Birth of a Domestic Surveillance State

My project focused on the U.S. Army's three-month occupation of Gary, Indiana, during the 1919 Steel Strike. I used this incident to analyze the evolution of the military's role in suppressing labor strikes from the late 19th century to the beginning of the 1920s. I argued the unique circumstances of World War I led to the creation of a vast military surveillance network targeting the labor movement, and that the Army's crushing of the strike at Gary relied on tactics honed during this period of widespread domestic surveillance.

I chose this topic because I am interested in the history of the American labor movement, as well as the role that the military and the federal government have sometimes played in abridging civil liberties. I also was interested in researching and producing scholarship with regional relevance to northern Indiana.

Traveled to Gary, Indiana, with funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts.

**John Boland**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Philosophy, Politics and Economics; and Classical Studies: Civilization
- Balfour-Hesburgh Scholars Program
- Advisor: Samuel Piccolo

Potawatomi Relations with British and American Governance

My thesis examined the differences in British and American Indian policy from 1754 to 1838 and how various Potawatomi villages resisted removal. Potawatomi villages across the Old Northwest were removed to different areas at different times by the American government in the 1830s, with the Pokagon band successfully resisting removal altogether. This thesis hopes to better understand the reasons behind these disparities, and my research included traveling to the British Indian Department at The National Archives in Kew over fall break.

I became passionate about Native history, in particular the Potawatomi, after conducting research on their history with Notre Dame. I wanted to explore the nuances of Native American removal, and the Potawatomi provided excellent case studies for instances of Native resistance.

Traveled to London, England, with funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts.

**Megan Brinkman**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Russian Studies and the Hesburgh Program in Public Service
- Allan J. and Reda Radwan Riley Scholar
- Advisor: Dan Lindley

Never Say Never: Analyzing the Effectiveness of 'No Negotiation' Policies in Minimizing Terrorist Group Violence

I hoped to answer the question of under what conditions will “no negotiation” policies alter terrorist group strategies. My research focused on why terrorist groups pursue cooperation or escalation with the state in the face of “no negotiation” policies. Finally, I was curious what predictive power these questions hold for ongoing conflicts, more specifically with organizations operating in Central Asia and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, including the Taliban and the Islamic State–Khorasan Province (ISIS-K).

My coursework through the Notre Dame International Security Center and with the Program in Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies encouraged me to consider which factors determine the resiliency of violent non-state actors. In particular, I am interested in how the communication of state intentions affects the strategy of insurgent and terrorist groups.

**Matthew Carranza**

- Majors: Economics and Political Science
- Certificate in International Security Studies
- Advisor: Dan Lindley

International Law and the Arctic Region

I analyzed the legitimacy of international law in settling maritime disputes between states in order to predict the role that it will play in settling Russia's claims to the Arctic region. I focused on the realist and liberal theories of international relations to analyze previous cases and the current conditions in the Arctic.

I chose this topic because academic literature is divided on whether international law can peacefully settle disputes between states. Realists argue there are outside factors that influence states' actions, while liberals argue that international law has legitimate authority. This split interested me, and I wanted to investigate further.

**Robert Christmann**

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Business Economics
- Advisor: Erin Rossiter

Every Man a King, or How the Democratic Party Can Win Back Rural Voters

Republican candidates are hoping to emphasize cultural issues heading into the coming elections. Their reasoning is clear — these issues help them to win over rural communities. Surveys have repeatedly shown that rural voters tend to be more culturally conservative than their urban and suburban counterparts. These same voters, however, tend to hold more liberal economic positions. As Republican candidates seek to drive up rural turnout to win elections, they have undergone an intense effort to emphasize these cultural issues.

This paper evaluated the capability of Democratic candidates to do the opposite. Can Democrats use campaign priming to more strongly emphasize issues of economic populism? I have worked on a variety of campaigns in different states during my college career and developed an interest in vote choice in rural communities. This interest was piqued after reading *What's the Matter with Kansas?* by Thomas Frank, so I decided to conduct a study.

Received funding from the Flatley Center for Undergraduate Scholarly Engagement.

**Sarah Conley**

- Majors: History and Political Science
- Minor: French and Francophone Studies
- Advisor: Sarah Shortall

Fin-de-siècle French Feminism and Empire

I studied how French feminists at the end of the 19th century, including Hubertine Auclert and Louise Michel, viewed and discussed empire. Their views range from pro-empire with great enthusiasm for the French mission and a desire to incorporate women into the colonial project, to anti-colonial in active support of Indigenous uprisings. I chose this topic because I was interested in the historical context of how modern French feminists approach cultural integration and issues such as the headscarf ban in French public schools.

In the summer, I went to Paris, France for two weeks to conduct archival research. At the Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris and the Bibliothèque Marguerite Durand, I read letters, newspaper articles, and manuscripts from the women I studied.

Traveled to Paris, France, with funding from the Nanovic Institute for European Studies.



Kate Connolly

- Majors: International Economics (Russian) and Political Science
- Minors: Computing and Digital Technologies and European Studies
- Advisor: Forrest Spence

Impact of the 2014 Amendment of Federal Law No. 115-FZ on Russian Migration

I did an economic analysis of the impact of a 2014 migration policy change on Russian immigration numbers, specifically on the Commonwealth of Independent States, to see if the policy was effective in bringing in more economic migrants into the Russian Federation.

I am passionate about migration topics and find Russia's approach to migrant policymaking and control to be unique. I believe that understanding how migration policy functions can allow governments to improve policy and allow for more humane management of migrant flows.

**Kate Connolly**

- Majors: International Economics (Russian) and Political Science
- Minors: Computing and Digital Technologies and European Studies
- Advisor: James McAdams

The Constitution as an Authoritarian Tool: Orbán and Hungary

This was a case study of Viktor Orbán's rise to power in Hungary and how he evolved as an authoritarian leader. I identified key characteristics that he exhibits as a leader, and how these characteristics are reflected through his interactions over time with the Hungarian constitution.

I believe that populism and democratic backslides are the biggest threats to international peace. Understanding how authoritarian leaders come to power and how they gain influence is growing even more relevant, and I believe that analyzing Orbán's rise to power can contribute to understanding the populist phenomenon.

**Matthew Cotner**

- Majors: Political Science and Economics
- Minor: History
- Advisor: Brian Fogarty

How Partisanship Affects School Funding in Indiana

Public K-12 schools receive much of their funding at the local level, making local referendums an important factor in their overall funding. It is unclear how much partisanship can affect these local referendums. To examine these relationships, I used data on Indiana school referendums, presidential vote choice, and the U.S. Census data from November 2008 to May 2019.

My father is a high school teacher, so education issues are important to me. Indiana is my home state, and I know how valuable referendums can be to communities and school quality, so I wanted to analyze what factors play a significant role in their results.

**Katie Coury**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Education, Schooling, and Society; Italian; Musical Theatre; Theology
- Advisor: Andrea Christensen

Measuring the Extent to Which Education Initiatives Change After their Implementation in the State of Arizona

This study investigated how frequently education initiatives in the state of Arizona are changed — reinforced, revised, or repealed — after they've been passed and implemented. It additionally sought to determine the most common path that Arizona education initiatives take on their road to revisions.

I chose this topic to begin to demystify political processes that may occur without the community's knowledge following an initiative's success on the ballot that could have a different impact on the community than voters anticipated. I additionally wanted to learn how these policies could be better designed and altered, if needed, to serve their intended functions in our communities.

**Katie Coury**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Education, Schooling, and Society; Italian; Musical Theatre; and Theology
- Advisor: Matt Hawkins

Assistant director for FTT's production of *Cyrano*

For my musical theatre capstone, I was an assistant director for the Department of Film, Television, and Theatre's spring musical, *Cyrano*, which was adapted and directed by Matt Hawkins, with new music and lyrics from Notre Dame graduate Veronica Mansour. I served in this role during the pre-production and early stages of rehearsals and provided insight to the director, production team, and cast. Once *Cyrano* opened, I attended the show and reflected on its final form as compared to earlier stages.

Through the musical theatre minor I have cultivated my passion for performing and directing and have been fortunate to practice both areas in eight campus productions. I decided to pursue directing to better learn how to lead a production, as well as how to best support actors through holistic character development and performances.

**Kyle Dorshorst**

- Majors: International Economics (French) and Political Science
- Minor: Constitutional Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisors: Mary Flannery and Denise Della Rossa

A Comparative Analysis of the French and American Approaches to Competition Policy in the Digital Economy

I compared the approach that France's competition authority has taken to regulate the digital economy to that of antitrust agencies in the United States. In general, the European Union and its member countries like France have brought a greater number of successful cases against Big Tech firms for violating competition rules, while the United States has a lot of political rhetoric regarding the impact of these companies but with comparatively fewer results. I focused on one case, in which France successfully fined Google for abusing its dominance in the digital advertising market.

I chose this topic after researching the role that Facebook played in allowing the French gilets jaunes (Yellow Vests) protests to spread. I did that as part of the Civility in Discourse project with the Nanovic Institute for European Studies and the Dublin Global Gateway during last year's Winter Session. Through this, I discovered how European nations have started to take the lead on grappling with the societal and economic effects that American Big Tech companies have caused around the world.

Received funding from the Nanovic Institute for European Studies.

**Kyle Dorshorst**

- Majors: International Economics (French) and Political Science
- Minor: Constitutional Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Mary Flannery

Taming 'MAAMA': The Role of Competition Policy in the Digital Economy

For my thesis, I extended my earlier research to look more deeply into the ways in which the changing structure of the digital economy has affected competition policy/antitrust enforcement. Big Tech firms like Facebook and Google operate quite differently from more conventional companies, since they don't charge their users a fee to use their main services (eg. social media and search). This makes it difficult for competition authorities to use traditional measures based on price to successfully bring antitrust cases against them. Various efforts are underway to address this —from new laws to a reevaluation of the standard approaches, yet the best path forward is still up for debate.

After taking a class on competition policy the summer after my freshman year, I have been increasingly interested in the intersection between economics and the law. At the same time, developments surrounding Big Tech regulation have been consistently in the news during the past few years. This topic seemed like an ideal way to combine my academic interests with an issue of emerging scholarship and current significance.

While the pandemic limited my ability to travel abroad for research, it also influenced my choice of a digitally focused topic. Big Tech firms gained increased economic and social relevance as our lives moved online during lockdowns and social distancing, which had its own benefits and drawbacks. This shift toward the increasing digitalization of our daily lives was already underway, but the pandemic accelerated the trend and its effects are likely here to stay.

Received funding from the Nanovic Institute for European Studies.

**Matthew Eaton**

- Majors: Political Science and Economics
- Advisor: Sebastian Rosato

Evaluating the 'Nuclear Revolution': Why Nuclear Weapons Don't Explain the Peace Between Nuclear Powers

My thesis explored why states possessing nuclear weapons have not gone to war with one another. It is widely accepted that the nuclear peace is a byproduct of a nuclear revolution, which refers to how the massive destructive power of nuclear weapons has fundamentally changed the landscape of international politics. I challenged the explanatory power of different theories of the nuclear revolution and presented an alternative explanation for the nuclear peace.

I have been fascinated by the scholarship around nuclear weapons since I was first exposed to it as a sophomore. I chose this topic so I could further explore the impact nuclear weapons have had on international relations and gain a better understanding of the role they play in today's world.

**Kieran Emmons**

- Majors: Theology and Political Science
- Advisor: Matthew Ashley

A Positive Definition of the Catholic Laity and Post-Vatican II Developments

With my thesis project, I attempted to offer a survey of the development of Catholic layperson theology integral to the spirit of the Second Vatican Council. I further evaluated the fruits of a positive theology of the laity in the activity of the post-Vatican II Church, tracking a continuity and progression in Church texts alongside developments in lay Catholic self-understanding and participation in recent years.

In my studies as a theology and political science major, I naturally gravitated toward the study of religion in politics. After an incredible class experience studying the texts of Vatican II and the nature of Catholic social and political responsibility in the modern world, I took a greater interest in Church ecclesiology and a theology of the laity, finally landing on my topic after many changes.

**Analie Fernandes**

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Arts & Letters Pre-Health
- Minor: Poverty Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Notre Dame Scholar
- Advisor: Vania Smith-Oka

Caring Communities: Evaluating the Trauma Processing Group Model

My thesis explored the impact of a newly formed women's trauma processing group in South Bend, Indiana, and evaluated its effect in the community, contextualizing the group within existing literature on community healing and trauma-informed care. The thesis focused on themes, including socioeconomic status, access to health care, and clinical mistrust. Recognizing that the impending physician shortage will impact future availability of clinical care, this thesis aimed to shed light on the possible utility of processing groups to supplement traditional clinical care.

I wanted to choose a topic that would allow me to translate the classroom knowledge I've been privileged enough to accrue into real change in my community. I've learned so much about health equity, systemic barriers to care, and patterns of trauma. And I've seen myriad ways in which a community can support its members in healing, which gives me hope. Originally, this was intended to be an exploration of medical mistrust involving data collection in clinical settings for comparison. Due to COVID restrictions, my data collection process changed, and my focus narrowed to trauma processing in group settings.

**Victoria-Katharina Flick**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Business Economics and Constitutional Studies
- Notre Dame International Security Center Fellow
- Advisor: Eugene Gholz

Would the Europeans Deter Russia Against an Invasion of the Baltics?

During recent years, Russia has sought to increase its influence on the European continent. It has especially begun posing a threat to smaller countries such as the Baltics — Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia — as well as to Finland and Poland. Most notably, the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the most recent military action against Ukraine have exhibited Russia's military strength and continuous desire to expand territorially. The continued discussion about one of Europe's main allies — the United States — to decrease its military presence in this part of the world has further aggravated this security menace.

Since the end of World War II, the U.S. has stationed a large number of troops across Europe. Due to the differing perspectives linked to Europe's ability to defend the Baltics, I pose the question: "If the U.S. were to pull out of NATO and withdraw military forces from Europe, could European countries cooperate politically to protect the Baltic states in case of aggressive military action from Russia?" Within this question, I emphasized European countries' ability or inability to cooperate or balance against Russia by looking at their defense strategies and their possibility to align them. More generally, I am interested in the factors that make countries invest in military capabilities and potential reasons that render them more or less inclined to cooperate in order to defend another member of the European Project.

To come up with a sound argument that contributed to existing literature on this topic, I looked at two case studies: Germany and France. Due to my international background, my research is conducted in English, German, French and Russian to provide a more authentic evaluation of the countries' defense policies. Being an international student from Austria, the security situation in Europe is highly relevant and interesting to me. Furthermore, considering recent developments concerning the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, I deemed it to be an aspect that needs to be studied to address it more effectively in the future. As I am planning a career in diplomacy, European security concerns of that nature will play an important role in my job and future life.

**CJ Foronda**

- Majors: History and Political Science
- Balfour-Hesburgh Scholars Program
- Advisor: Paul Ocobock

Comparing Language Policies in the Philippines Under Spanish and American Colonization

My thesis explored the different ruling philosophies, goals, and strategies of the Spanish and American colonial regimes in the Philippines in order to understand how imperial powers handled language in a region with more than 120 indigenous varieties. Using both primary documents and secondary sources, I highlighted factors that made Americans successful in establishing English as a lingua franca despite their considerably shorter tenure as the archipelago's ruling power, and I then highlighted Spain's shortcomings.

I immigrated from the Philippines with my family at a young age, and though I grew up immersed in cultural traditions, language wasn't passed down. I wanted to explore this dynamic and dedicate my thesis to a topic that would help me understand the broader historical context of my personal circumstances.

Many archives were closed during the summer due to COVID-19, and I could not coordinate international travel. Instead, I took advantage of resources near my hometown, conducting archival research at Wheaton College and the Newberry Library in Chicago. At Wheaton, I looked at documents from American 20th-century Christian missionaries, and the Newberry Library provided an opportunity to study Catholic writings and letters from the Spanish period.

Received funding from the Balfour-Hesburgh Scholars Program to travel to Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois, and the Newberry Library in Chicago.

**Grace Harlan**

- Majors: Program of Liberal Studies and Political Science
- Advisor: G. Felicitas Munzel

Truth and Politics: Are These Concepts Oil and Water? Or is a Positive Relationship Possible?

In my thesis, I examined the history of the relationship between truth and politics, one which Hannah Arendt calls “a long and complicated conflict” in her article Truth and Politics. Through the lens of various authors from the Program of Liberal Studies curriculum (i.e., Thucydides, Aristotle, Cicero, Machiavelli, Hobbes), I discovered this conflict is extremely complicated and the nature of factual truth specifically does not hold up well in the political realm.

Nevertheless, it seemed that a careful consideration of the relationship between thinker and actor on the part of the individual could help remedy this problem. Though truth and politics tend to clash with each other, there is some hope for a positive relationship between them. I was inspired by Professor Jim McAdams’ political science seminar, Truth, Politics, and Democracy. We discussed truth and post-truth in the political realm and the consequences that these concepts have on democracy. I was inspired by our readings and discussions to research truth and politics from the point of view of my PLS education. I think that investigation of this topic is vital to the success of truth in the political sphere, especially during this tumultuous time.

**Brigid Harrington**

- Majors: Political Science and Film, Television, and Theatre (FTT)
- Minor: Hesburgh Program in Public Service
- Sorin Scholar
- Advisor: Joshua Kaplan

The Theatre of Politics

Comparisons between politicians and actors are frequently drawn in American political discourse, yet they are often made incorrectly. Such comparisons imply the politician is behaving deceptively. However, acting is fundamentally concerned with uncovering truth. Therefore, the connection between these two fields must be reexamined. I argued that politicians can utilize acting devices, skills, and tropes in a beneficial way to communicate effectively with the American people and become better public servants.

As a professional actor studying both theatre and political science, I wanted my senior thesis to explore the connection between my two fields, as I see it. I went to Washington, D.C., to conduct research and used onsite resources at the Library of Congress.

Received funding from the Center for Undergraduate Scholarly Engagement to travel to Washington, D.C.

**Destiny Herndon**

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs (Concentration in Civil and Human Rights)
- Advisor: Abby Cordova

Redefining the Refugee: Using Policy to Protect Women Against Gender-Based Violence

I examined the effects of the legal inclusion of women as a recognized social group in asylum policy, as well as policy language, on reporting rates of gender-based violence in destination countries among immigrant women.

I am a senior fellow with the Gender Relations Center on campus and have worked with the center throughout my time at Notre Dame. In class and during the summer, I have focused my research and professional experiences on the experiences of immigrants seeking asylum in the United States. For my senior capstone, I wanted to combine these two major interests in my life, which led me to focus on the experiences of female immigrants seeking refuge from violence and how American policies can better prevent compounding their trauma by protecting them upon arrival.

**Jane Hilger**

- Majors: English and Political Science
- Advisor: Ian Newman

The Evolution of Love Letters in the Novel

I looked at the evolution of love letters in the novel, focusing on the introduction of new technology and how the ways characters express their love for each other has changed along with the technological changes. I focused on four novels from four distinct time periods, studying the differences and similarities in the written expressions of love.

I have seen firsthand how quickly technological advancements come about and how they change the way we communicate. I wanted to mix English literature and media studies to examine these advancements and how they affect the everyday life of characters in novels, since life imitates art.

**Clare Hillen**

- Majors: Political Science and Russian
- Certificate in International Security Studies
- Advisor: Christina Bambrick

Russian Foreign Agent Law

In my thesis about Russian foreign agent law, I discussed how the term “foreign agent” has developed and changed over time, and how the law has impacted free speech in Russia. I explained the Soviet Constitution and laws regarding “enemies of the state” and explored how this term is similar and different to the modern foreign agent law in Russia. I analyzed the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the law itself, and Constitutional Court opinions regarding the law.

I major in political science and Russian and became interested in the foreign agent law after speaking with Russians and former Soviet citizens. I am very interested in how the legal and constitutional aspects of the foreign agent law relate to the legal philosophies of the Soviet Union and Russia, and how the legal system is utilized in the name of protecting national security.

**Alesis Juntunen**

- Majors: Political Science and Theology
- Minor: Constitutional Studies
- Advisor: Joshua Kaplan

The American Welfare State and the Christian Church

I wanted a topic that I was passionate about and that would combine aspects from each of my majors. So, I researched the growth of the American welfare state since the Great Depression, in conjunction with the Christian Church's role in providing aid to local communities and "caring for the least of these."

**Matt Kearney**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: European Studies and Digital Marketing
- Advisor: Michael Desch

Examining Reacquisition of Lost Territory in the Context of Russia and its Neighbors

By looking at examples of Russian relations with the Baltics and Ukraine, I sought to answer the question of when countries will try to reacquire territory that they have lost. I hope to use my findings to recommend policy responses for the United States and its NATO allies in the region.

After 2014, Ukraine and Russia had become a hot topic in international relations, so I originally sought to explore something I thought was overlooked: Russia's relationship with the Baltic countries to its West. As the situation in Ukraine escalated throughout the winter and spring, I saw an opportunity to include both cases by addressing the larger question of how states behave toward territory they had formerly owned — by using the Russian example.

**Matt Kearney**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: European Studies and Digital Marketing
- Advisor: Richard Heffernan

Speeches and Public Statements of Vote Leave Leaders during Brexit

For my European studies capstone project, I analyzed speeches and public statements made by key leaders in the Vote Leave campaign in the United Kingdom during the period between the time the Brexit referendum was announced and when it occurred. I used these sources to highlight the strategies used by Vote Leave activists to influence public opinion and ultimately get the United Kingdom withdrawn from the European Union.

Brexit is undoubtedly one of the most notable statements made in domestic world politics in recent years, making its causes and effects important to the future of international organizations and political campaigning around the world. As the capstone project for the minor is centered around primary sources, I was inspired to use speeches and public statements related to such a momentous event and analyze the discourse used by leaders to convince citizens to make such an unprecedented decision.

**Caroline Kelly**

- Majors: Political Science and American Studies
- Minor: Constitutional Studies
- Advisor: Peter Cajka

A Legal, Political, and Cultural Analysis of Pretextual Traffic Stops

I explored the legal, political, and cultural reasons that pretextual traffic stops are a problematic tactic utilized by police officers today in the United States. I presented how these stops represent an erosion of the protections guaranteed by the Fourth Amendment; focused on the inherent potential for racial profiling, as well as the lack of safeguards to protect against this; and highlighted the policy's connection to the destructive media campaign that advanced the zero tolerance drug policies during the Reagan administration. I concluded the paper with possible paths to reform, including banning traffic stops altogether.

After graduating from Notre Dame, I will pursue a legal career dedicated to reforming the criminal justice system in America. The existing system disproportionately impacts those of lower socioeconomic status, along with people of color, and I wanted to deepen my knowledge on one particular policy that requires reform.

**Patrick Kelly**

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Latino Studies
- Advisor: Luis Fraga

Anti-Immigrant Sentiment in the U.S. Over Time

My thesis compared anti-immigrant sentiment through the lens of Congressional speeches, both on the floor and in committee, surrounding six major pieces of immigration legislation from 1790 to 1986. The goals were to find similarities in rhetoric spanning various economic periods, waves of immigration, and cultural trends and to answer the question: Why has anti-immigrant sentiment generally been so consistent throughout American history?

I focused on anti-immigrant sentiment at an institutional level because it was the best way to combine both of my majors. I am passionate about immigration policy and wanted to develop a better understanding of how we have treated immigrants throughout history in the United States.

**Ellie Konfrst**

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Hesburgh Program in Public Service
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Mulva Scholars Program
- Advisor: Christina Wollbrecht

Faith in Government and the 'Freedom to Farm': Policy Feedback Effects and Republican Vote Choice in Rural Areas, 1996-2018

Rural areas have become increasingly favorable to Republican candidates since the 1990s. Using General Social Survey (GSS) data from 1994 to 2018, this paper attempted to understand that trend from a material perspective through the lens of policy feedback effects. I theorized that the failure of the 1996 Farm Bill had a negative impact on rural voters' economic conditions, which decreased their confidence in government and increased the appeal of the Republican Party's anti-establishment rhetoric.

I chose this topic due to a combination of my experience growing up in a primarily rural state and due to my experience in classes that focused on low-income Americans. I believe increased polarization leads some to oversimplify the motives of rural and low-income voters, and I wanted to see whether there is empirical evidence for a more material explanation.

Received funding from the Mulva Scholarship Enrichment Fund.

**Dinah Lawan**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Peace Studies and Studio Art
- Balfour-Hesburgh Scholars Program
- Advisor: Caroline Hughes

The Impact of the Global Oil Market on Peacebuilding in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria

Natural resource/extractivism is considered to be one of the variables that contribute to social, political, and ethnic conflicts. Nigeria has crude oil in the Niger Delta in the southern part of the country, which has been one of the major factors that has triggered conflicts in the region. My capstone investigated how ethnic diversity and crude oil exploitation influence the conflicts in the Niger Delta and how the Nigerian government can govern the oil industry better — politically, socially, and economically.

The Niger Delta is a fascinating case study. Researching the relations between oil exploitation and peacebuilding is interesting and it's also kind of a better way to understand what is happening in the region of the Niger Delta, and in a region that I am not from.

**Dinah Lawan**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Peace Studies and Studio Art
- Balfour-Hesburgh Scholars Program
- Advisor: Ernesto Verdeja

Dismantling Terrorist Networks (Boko Haram, Northern Nigeria): A Review of Post-Conflict and Peace Resolution Strategies

What factors lead to the emergence of terrorist organizations? What are effective strategies for dismantling terrorist groups and promoting long-term peace? My senior project extensively investigated these issues in Africa, particularly in the case of Boko Haram in the North East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. I mainly focused on examining past and current efforts to defeat Boko Haram, including military approaches, civilian self-organizing, peace initiatives program, and deradicalization initiatives.

I proposed to apply the strategic peacebuilding framework, as it offered broader ways to think about the issue of terrorism and imagine possible solutions to dismantle Boko Haram and promote peace in northern Nigeria. One goal was to produce recommendations that can be useful to policymakers in Africa, particularly those of Nigeria. I took a lot of courses in my major and minor that involved research, which I enjoyed. I am also a victim and a survivor of Boko Haram, which influenced me to research this topic on a deeper level.

**Ashley Lizana**

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: French
- Minor: Education, Schooling, and Society
- Advisor: Matthew Kloser

Black Girls and School Discipline: A Story of Adulthood

This study explored the way that school discipline of Black girls' hairstyles, clothing, and body types affects the way they feel about themselves and their sense of belonging in their academic environments, as well as how they change themselves as a reaction to this discipline. Through conducting interviews with 11 Black female college students, I gathered examples of discipline and discrimination from their retelling of middle and high school experiences.

I have personally experienced school discipline in relation to my hair and body type, and wanted to explore this topic in depth and hear from others who have experienced similar or worse situations.

Presented research at the 2022 Human Development Conference.

**Katherine Mansourova**

- Majors: Finance and Political Science
- Minor: Russian
- Kellogg International Scholars Program
- Advisor: Susanne Wengle

Russia's Pursuit for Digital Sovereignty and its Effectiveness

Russia has made a dramatic shift in how it regulates cyberspace over the last decade. Regulations have become more overall stringent over time, yet it is notable that the Russian government has not treated each private actor with the same severity. This study examined the uneven ways in which the government has pursued digital sovereignty, and it answers questions that arise about the effectiveness of Russia's digital sovereignty policy.

I chose this topic because I wanted to combine my interests in political science and business into one project that is relevant in today's environment. The relationship between the Russian state and these private actors in the digital sphere has several important implications in Russia and beyond.

**Nicole Marcinkus**

- Majors: English and Political Science
- Minor: Medieval Studies
- Advisor: Michelle Karnes

The Medieval Quest Narrative in the Modern Day

I aimed to discover, firstly, what the standard medieval quest looked like in its original time period. Then I traced its development over time, through stories set with knights in King Arthur's court, *The Lord of the Rings*, a historical fiction novel set in the American Civil War, and the cyberpunk novel *Neuromancer*. I discussed the significance of the introspective journey that takes place alongside the physical quest, the evolution of the dichotomy between good and evil, and moving from stark to complex.

I studied the quest narrative in my Middle Ages and British Literature classes but discovered that it didn't have a clear or universal definition. Each historian and literary expert has a general idea of it, but the definition changes with each story. I was interested in exploring this evolving narrative and tracking how it changes in the modern day while retaining its identifiable structure.

**John Edward Mariano**

- Majors: Political Science and Program of Liberal Studies
- Notre Dame International Security Center Fellow
- Advisor: Sebastian Rosato

Where Conscience Meets Power: A Theory of Moral Rhetoric in International Relations

How does the use of moral rhetoric affect the likelihood of international conflict? This thesis sought to examine state leaders' use of moral rhetoric in the international system, specifically during times of American conflict escalation. I concluded that the use of moral rhetoric, while seemingly pacifist in nature, hinders interstate cooperation and instead makes nation-states more prone to war.

Departing from the existing literature that regards rhetoric as mere "cheap talk," I claimed that moral rhetoric is a strategic tool of power politics for states to achieve desired political goals. I argued that moral rhetoric increases the likelihood of international conflict through two causal logics.

First, actors who use moral rhetoric risk antagonizing their international audiences, who will be less likely to compromise diplomatically. Second, a leader's moral rhetoric triggers their domestic audience's moralized attitudes, leading to either vehement support or outright opposition. These domestic reactions, in turn, create audience costs, which constrain state leaders to honor their declared ethical obligations. That said, I tested my theory's robustness against the historical record through qualitative case study analysis.

As a PLS and political science major, I wanted to pursue a thesis project that involved applying the philosophical issues found in the liberal arts into the international system. As I researched, I found that moral questions and rhetoric pervade the international arena, and how we use rhetoric has profound implications for the likelihood of cooperation or conflict.



**Mary Ellen (Emmie)
McCabe**

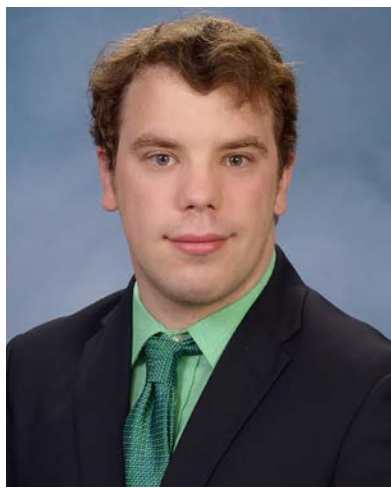
- Majors: Political Science and Psychology
- Advisor: Christina Wolbrecht

Political Partisanship and Social Media

My senior thesis explored the rise of negative partisanship, which is a dislike and distrust of the opposing party, in the American electorate and the role of social media in activating these feelings. In a survey experiment, I saw how feelings toward the opposing party might be activated by viewing an image of a Facebook post supporting that party. My hope is that we are better able to understand the role of social media and political influences.

I chose my topic because after and during the 2020 election, there were many social media posts about political parties, and I wondered how that might affect users' emotional reactions and views of the party. In another class, I was introduced to negative partisanship and wanted to learn more about it. This was a really meaningful way to conclude my academic undergraduate career at Notre Dame, and I am very grateful to my advisor and other professors who have assisted me in this journey.

Received funding from the Rooney Center for the Study of American Democracy.

**Devin McCarthy**

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Susan Rosato

Disarmament and Civil War Recurrence

Over the last several decades, researchers in the fields of political science have noticed a significant trend in the nature of armed conflict. Interstate wars have become less common, causing intrastate wars to be the dominant mode of armed conflict in the present day. Several scholars have sought to explain why certain civil wars recur in order to predict and prevent future conflict in post-civil war states.

While proposed explanations vary immensely, one factor that remains unexplored is the role of post-war disarmament processes in increasing or reducing the likelihood of civil war recurrence. This thesis aimed to develop a theory of successful implementation of sustainable disarmament programs in states that implemented peace accords to terminate civil wars. I was struck by how frequent civil wars have become over the last several decades and wanted to find ways to address this issue.

**Katherine McLaughlin**

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Business Economics
- Certificate in International Security Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Sebastian Rosato

The Clever Combatant: A Theory of Coercion in the Gray Zone

With artificial islands appearing in the South China Sea, uniformed soldiers without insignia entering Ukraine, or jammers interfering with GPS signals, today's battles are not waged solely with pure military might. Instead, the international system has witnessed a shift toward conflicts that blend a range of cyber, military, and space-based instruments.

In this "gray zone" environment, states employ coercive, nontraditional means to advance their political or military objectives, blurring conventional conceptions of peace and war. Although international relations scholars have recognized this trend, the literature on the changing nature of conflict is underspecified. Even within gray zone scholarship specifically, there is disagreement with respect to actors, characteristics, and tactics.

This project sought to define the gray zone and construct a framework for classifying its tactics, as well as answer the question: Why are some gray zone tactics more successful than others? I analyzed this question by applying two logics of coercion discussed by Robert Pape and others, namely denial and punishment. Using case studies, I argued that if a state employs gray zone denial tactics to generate significant costs for a target, it will have a greater likelihood of advancing its strategic objectives than if it pursues punishment tactics.

**Ryan Moore**

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Constitutional Studies
- Advisor: Levi Allen

Elite Sensationalism: Partisan Rhetoric in 240 Characters

My thesis revolved around the U.S. Senate's use of Twitter. I looked at how often senators attacked members of the opposite party on the social network and compared the frequency of their attacks in the Trump and Biden administrations.

Polarization seems like an unstoppable force. If our political elites have started showing their polarized opinions on Twitter (which has hundreds of millions of daily users), it could cause a more polarized voting populace in America. I had to completely teach myself how to code in R (software for statistical computing and graphics), which was pretty unexpected for a political science major. I'm very happy with the way my code turned out!

**Amani Morrell**

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Spanish
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Daniel Philpott

Urban Planning

I examined the features of cities that lead to human flourishing, examined how these features are being applied in South Bend, and expressed my thoughts about future development in the city. I began the thesis by examining the idea of human flourishing and the importance of community and civic friendship. I explained the concepts of walkability and mixed use, and ultimately explained how these principles are being applied in current projects in South Bend, and how they might be implemented in the future.

I live in South Bend and care about the future of the city. Since my sophomore year, I have been intrigued with the idea of creating a built environment that facilitates greater human interaction and produces socially and economically sustainable communities. I wanted to take that interest a step further by deepening my knowledge of the factors that create these conditions and how they might be applied in South Bend.

I walked through several Chicago neighborhoods that are considered highly walkable and mixed use and conducted interviews with citizens and representatives to better understand what makes them successful.

Traveled to Chicago.

**Jim Moster**

- Majors: Program of Liberal Studies and Political Science
- Advisor: Debra Javeline

Climate Policy in Republican-Led Cities

Several large Republican-led cities in the United States have pledged to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. This decision, which runs contrary to political incentives in national partisan politics, merits explanation.

Using a quantitative, medium-N study, I tested whether independence from fossil fuels, the presence of climate activists, and climate vulnerability make local officials more likely to pass a pledge. I supplemented the quantitative analysis with case studies of three Republican-led cities that passed climate pledges: Miami, San Diego, and Fresno.

The global average temperature has risen 1.1 degrees Celcius above pre-industrial levels and continues to increase, making the Paris Agreement seem increasingly utopian. Meanwhile, climate policy continues to stall and fail at the federal government level. Cities may provide an alternative venue for climate action, but the effort will need to involve all cities, not just Democratic-led ones.

**Christopher Mothersill**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Business Economics and History
- Advisor: Susan Rosato

A Comparative Study of the Use of Misinformation in the US and the UK

The use of misinformation by politicians is on the rise. I argued that the spread of misinformation is affected by four key variables: subject matter, political party, susceptibility, and legality. To test my argument, I explored four cases: the 2016 United States election, the 2020 U.S. election, the 2016 UK Brexit Referendum, and the 2019 General United Kingdom election. The evidence suggested the key variables mentioned do play a role in how misinformation is spread.

This research on misinformation by politicians is important and especially pertinent to the ongoing political polarization happening today in politics in the U.S. and the U.K. Furthermore, the comparative nature of this project provides an interesting contrast between misinformation in the U.K and the U.S. to hopefully shed much-needed light on a potential solution.

**Nora Murphy**

- Major: Political Science
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Andrew Gould

The Politics of Patrimony

My senior thesis focused on the connection between ethno-nationalist movements and cultural patrimony. Using Nagorno-Karabakh, North Macedonia, and Spain as case studies, I found that nationalist actors use historical memory and cultural heritage sites as resources to promote political narratives that strengthen territorial claims, bolster in-group identity, and vilify selected out-groups.

My research on this topic drew on my interests in group identity formation and the connection between culture and politics. My coursework on modern migration flows in Europe, research on the Western Balkans, and an internship with an Israeli organization sparked my interest in how past conflicts, competing historical narratives, and perceived differences shape modern-day political processes. I used my thesis to explore these topics in more depth.

**Maggie O'Brien**

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Italian
- Minor: Anthropology
- Advisor: Joshua Kaplan

The Politics of Historical Preservation and its Connection to Controversies about Monuments/Statues

My thesis explored the complexities of historical preservation and connected it to current political issues about statues and monuments, attempting to use the broader context of historical preservation to better understand them. I am from Virginia and have had a lot of exposure to these issues and historical preservation more broadly, so I wanted to explore the connections between them.

**Jackson Oxler**

- Majors: Anthropology and Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: International Development Studies
- Kellogg International Scholars Program
- Advisor: Catherine Bolten

Good Cause Eviction: Tenants' Rights and Structural Violence in New York City

My thesis examined the history and current state of tenants' rights in New York City through a structural violence theoretical framework. Structural violence occurs when systems of power and social institutions directly harm individuals. Tenants have always faced uphill battles in maintaining stable and affordable housing; the COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the vulnerabilities that renters face.

Over winter break, I traveled to New York City to interview tenants, tenants' unions, housing rights organizers, and politicians. These interviews and ethnographic methods provided the bulk of the data for my thesis. I got interested in housing after reading the book *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City* by Matthew Desmond. Inspired by his exploration of the injustices in eviction processes, I wanted to apply a structural violence lens to the general rights renters have to protect themselves.

Received funding from the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program and Department of Anthropology to travel to New York City.

**Jackson Oxler**

- Majors: Anthropology and Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: International Development Studies
- Kellogg International Scholars Program
- Advisor: Catherine Bolten

Queens is the Future: Immigrant Experiences of Structural Violence in Housing in New York City

My capstone in international development studies was an ethnography of three neighborhoods in New York City: Jackson Heights, Corona, and Elmhurst. They're three of the top five neighborhoods for immigrants in New York. During summer 2021, I lived in New York City and interviewed immigrants living and working in the community. I also did research in the public archives, and embedded myself in the community.

Understanding the particular vulnerabilities that immigrants face in the housing industry, my capstone highlights the structural violence present in the housing market. With broad research experiences, my capstone brought together interests in housing, immigration, and development studies. Housing is a basic human right. Without a stable home, the future possibilities an individual has are limited. I wanted my project to shed light on some injustices that American immigrants face in the housing industry.

Received funding from the Kellogg Institute for International Studies and Department of Anthropology to travel to New York City.

**Philip Quinton**

- Majors: Political Science and International Economics
- Advisors: Denise Della Rossa and Davin Raiha

The Impact of Youth Football Academies on the Success of Their Parent Clubs

By examining the entire history of Spanish football clubs and their creation of youth academies, I used a difference-in-differences approach, along with ordered probit and logit models, to analyze nine independent variables that measure the impact of youth academies on parent clubs' success both contemporaneously and with lags.

I found there is a statistically significant relationship between the establishment of a youth academy and the on-field success of the club. Youth football academies produce the top football talent in Europe — players who are worth millions of euros at a fraction of the price that it costs clubs to buy players. This is just one way youth academies impact the decisions of football clubs as economic agents.

**Anna Rask**

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Latino Studies
- Minor: Constitutional Studies
- Advisor: Geoffrey Layman

Anti-intellectualism in Republican Politics

My thesis considered the following questions: Has anti-intellectualism grown in elite Republican rhetoric over the last 50 years? How do voters respond to anti-intellectual rhetoric? To address the former, I analyzed the rhetoric of four significant Republican presidents: Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, George W. Bush, and Donald Trump. I addressed the latter question through a survey experiment.

I was shocked by Trump's repeated disparagement of science and experts during his presidency, specifically during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, I became interested in exploring whether his behavior was a symptom of a larger trend in Republican politics.

Received funding from the Department of Political Science and the Rooney Center for the Study of American Democracy.

**Clara Saint-Denis**

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Business Economics
- Advisor: Joshua Kaplan

The Contentious French: The Yellow Vest Movement and its Significance to France's Protest Culture

My thesis focused on the Yellow Vests movement ("Les Gilets Jaunes") — which started in France in 2018 — and unpacked its significance to French politics and society. As a French citizen, I wanted to explore this movement because I witnessed it firsthand. After centuries of protest, the French have earned a reputation of being "contentious."

I also aimed to better understand the roots of protest culture in France. I argued that France's historical experience engrained protesting as a democratic ideal and first resort method of contention in the citizenry. I linked France's revolutionary history to modern-day protests.

Protests have remained a principal method by which citizens can express their grievances, alter political agendas, and spark debates on pressing topics. I have studied protests in various courses at Notre Dame and continue to be fascinated by the dynamics at play behind protest movements worldwide. My thesis contributes to this important area of research by shedding light on the mechanisms by which demonstrations unfold in France, with a focus on the recent Yellow Vests movement.

**Luke Sisung**

- Majors: English and Political Science
- Minor: Education, Schooling, and Society (ESS)
- Advisor: Sara Marcus

United in Anger: Pedagogical Practices and Transformations of Emotion in the ACT UP Organization

My thesis explored informal learning spaces within the ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) organization, such as civil disobedience training, political funerals, and organizational meetings. I also explored the relationship between the pedagogical practices that occur during these events and the emotions of members of the organization.

I argued that ACT UP effectively used pedagogy in its organizational structure to transform emotions of grief and disillusionment into emotions of anger and pride, which served as the fuel for change for ACT UP. This topic lies at the intersection of my three fields of study at Notre Dame: English, political science, and education, schooling, and society. My interest in the study of emotion, the study of pedagogy, and the study of social organizations converge in this topic.

**Shea Smith**

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Advisor: Darren Davis

Assessing White Perceptions of Black Lives Matter: Racial Attitudes, Police Affect, and Ideology

Since the slogan's use in 2013, Black Lives Matter (BLM) has frequently elicited a negative response among white Americans in the United States. Paradoxically, research suggests a simultaneous decrease in explicit racial prejudice during this time. How is this explained? Using multivariate linear regression in my analysis, I argued that white Americans express negative feelings toward BLM as a result of racial attitudes, ideology, and the movement's challenge to police authority.

After the murder of George Floyd in May 2020, I found myself wondering how Americans could still oppose Black Lives Matter while another explicit instance of police brutality was clearly captured on video. I began to theorize what specifically drives opposition to BLM and whether that is a response to BLM's questioning of police behavior or an implicitly racist reaction to Black Americans demanding justice.

**Joey Speicher**

- Majors: Political Science and English
- Minor: European Studies
- Advisor: Andrew Gould

Football (Soccer) and the German Far-Right Since 1989

A local soccer club both reflects the community and is a projection of it to the rest of the world. Soccer is very popular in Germany and has tremendous power to impact political identities. The far-right has grown in popularity in the former East Germany, and the soccer club becomes a rallying point for these groups and, in some cases, a surrogate for their regional and national identity. The behaviors and activities of these clubs can, in turn, influence their fans' politics as well.

I traveled to Leipzig and Berlin over fall break and attended soccer matches and interviewed club officials, academics, and fans. I also accessed archival material to get a better understanding of the ways soccer and politics intersect.

I have always been a soccer fan, and I was curious about the ways soccer acts as a civic institution and impacts politics in places where it is popular. I have experience studying and researching German politics and saw an opportunity to combine these interests for my thesis.

Received funding from the Nanovic Institute for European Studies to travel to Leipzig and Berlin, Germany.

**Claire Stein**

- Majors: Political Science and Design (Concentration in Visual Communication Design)
- Advisor: Sebastian Rosato

What Are the Effects of Narrative on State Behavior?

I reviewed the theoretical framework of master narratives and examined China's century of humiliation master narrative and territorial disputes.

According to my analysis, whether or not the century of humiliation narrative indicted a disputant state impacted the status of its territorial disputes with China. Therefore, I submitted domestic narratives as a partial explanation for international state behavior.

My interest in Chinese politics began in my sophomore year in Karrie Koesel's Politics of China course. It grew as I researched Chinese direct investments under the direction of Jazmin Sierra. Though I took my first course in international relations as a junior, it quickly became my favorite subfield within political science.

**Luciana Thomas**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Middle Eastern Studies and Journalism, Ethics, and Democracy
- Advisor: Li Guo

Islamic Law and Legal Pluralism

My thesis took a deep look at Islamic law throughout history and now in the United Kingdom. I argued that Islamic law can exist within other law systems and adapt to current changing times, as it has throughout its history.

Islamic law during the Ottoman Empire had many adaptations and interpretations; Islamic law changed and adapted to different regions as Islam spread. Many people have misconceptions about the rigidness of Islamic law that are based on not truly understanding the fiqh tradition. Although there are some versions of strict Islamic law interpretations, by going back to the fiqh tradition, Islamic law has the potential to be flexible, fair, and equal in today's times.

I am interested in law and legal practices throughout history. Because of current immigration to Europe from the Middle East and North Africa regions, and the rhetoric surrounding Islamic Law, I wanted to explore the idea of Islamic law existing within other countries. Since the United Kingdom provides a degree of legal plurality with Islamic law, I thought this would be a good place to start to examine how religious and secular law interact and exist with each other.

**Elizabeth Todd**

- Major: Political Science and Film, Television, and Theatre (FTT)
- Advisor: Ted Mandell

Access to Early Childhood Education

This creative thesis explored access to early childhood education services through conversations with mothers and families in the South Bend area. It provided a verbal and visual account of the difficulties of parenting, the struggles of finding trustworthy child care, and the heartfelt desire of parents to provide a good education for their children.

In education-focused classes that I have taken at Notre Dame, I found myself being grateful for the information that I was receiving, and feeling concerned for those who do not have the means of accessing it. It came to my attention that early child care services are not accessible enough to the families that most need them.

**Elizabeth (Lizzie) Trense**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Business Economics and Digital Marketing
- Certificate in International Security Studies
- Notre Dame International Security Center Undergraduate Fellow
- Advisor: Sebastian Rosato

Chinese (In)divisible Territory and the Likelihood of Resolution

What determines the outcomes of territorial disputes? Under what conditions do territorial disputes end with resolution and under what conditions do territorial disputes remain unresolved? In this research project, I attempted to answer these questions in the context of Chinese territorial disputes.

I traveled to China with Notre Dame in summer 2019 and became fascinated with Chinese politics, international relations, and business. I chose to study Chinese territorial disputes because they are important to the future of United States-China relations.

Traveled to China.

**Madeline Ward**

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Applied Computational and Mathematical Statistics (ACMS)
- Minors: Peace Studies and Catholic Social Tradition
- Advisors: Garrett FitzGerald and Bill Purcell

Where Bottom-Up and Top-Down Meet: A Reading of Grassroots Appalachian Pastoral Letters and Pope Francis' Encyclicals

I examined the dynamics of Church power and hierarchy and what it means to be a member of the Catholic Church, especially through the writings of the Appalachian bishops and the Catholic Committee of Appalachia (CCA) in their three pastoral letters and Pope Francis' two encyclicals.

Questions that came up included: Where do bottom-up and top-down meet? Am I just as much a member of the Church as the bishops? The pastoral letters provide a great window into what a more egalitarian Church might look like, especially when looking at some of the most prominent issues of our time. I wanted to stay in Appalachia for my Catholic social tradition capstone project, and I had been meaning to read these pastoral letters for several months. I decided to start there and look for a strain of theology or recurring theme that could be researched and explored.

What ended up standing out the most were the circumstances through which these letters were written and produced, as joint products of the bishops and the CCA, made up of clergy and laypeople, which led me to questions of hierarchy and power.

**Madeline Ward**

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Applied Computational and Mathematical Statistics
- Minors: Peace Studies and Catholic Social Tradition
- Advisor: Garrett FitzGerald

The Elegy from Appalachia that Matters: bell hooks, Poetry, and Responding to Conditions of Violence with Grace

To combat prominent representations of Appalachia like in *Hillbilly Elegy* by J.D. Vance, I contrasted Vance's book with bell hooks' Appalachian poetry collection *Appalachian Elegy*, as well as with poetry by Black Appalachian women before and within the Affrilachian Poetry movement.

In contrast to Vance's book, and with support from these Black women poets from Appalachia, *Appalachian Elegy* provides an effective, inclusive, and intersectional response to the structural and cultural violence experienced by residents of the region.

I am passionate about representations of regions in the United States, like Appalachia and the South, and when researching different art forms in Appalachia in pursuit of a different topic, I learned of the Affrilachian Poetry movement and became hooked. I already knew about *Appalachian Elegy*, but being able to read so much other wonderful poetry by these women was a joy and a privilege. I want to do my part to change the perceptions of regions like Appalachia.

**Martin White**

- Majors: Political Science and Economics
- Minor: Constitutional Studies
- Advisor: Ricardo Ramirez

Welfare Politics in America During Times of Crisis

Americans have a uniquely negative perspective on social welfare policy compared to other nations. They consider programs that are too generous as damaging to the economy, as encouraging of free-loading, and unnecessary. People can get ahead through hard work, and utilizing the social safety net is considered a sign of weakness.

In times of economic crisis, however, these views may shift or change as Americans need to use welfare. My thesis explored whether crises like the COVID-19 pandemic that cause widespread unemployment and financial strife cause American perspectives on welfare to change and, if so, whether the changes are long-lasting.

Over the summer, a friend sent me a *New York Times* article discussing how the enhanced welfare benefits employed to counteract effects of the COVID-19 pandemic were associated with the largest single-year drop in poverty in American history. The writer interviewed Americans across the political spectrum: Some said we should continue to employ similar programs if they changed people's lives, while others claimed they should only be temporary and might do more harm than good.

I wanted to explore how, why, and for how long American perspectives on welfare change in times of crisis, and what lessons lawmakers can learn from these shifts. I had hoped there might be polling data related to how people felt about the welfare benefits employed during the pandemic once the crisis had ended. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, is ongoing. I adapted by finding new questions and data that still addressed what I was hoping to find.

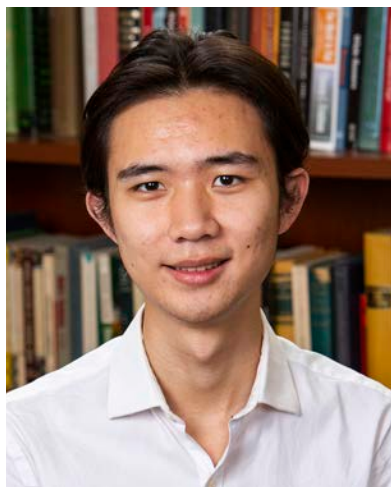


Tyler White

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Education, Schooling, and Society (ESS)
- Advisor: Andrea Christensen

Multi-grade Classrooms

This capstone aimed to discover if there is a difference in the levels of student autonomy in multi-grade classrooms and single-grade classrooms types, and how any difference can affect decisions made by school administrators. I learned in multi-grade classrooms and wanted to learn about their effects on students.

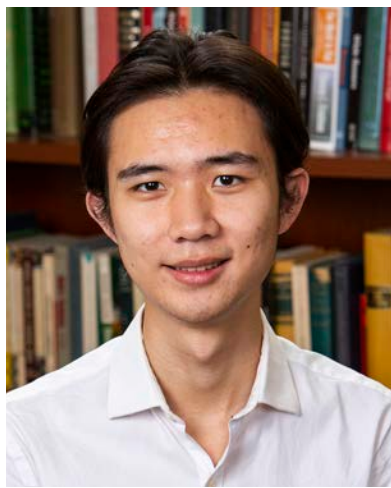
**Xiaosong Yu**

- Majors: Mathematics, Political Science, and Philosophy
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Kellogg International Scholars Program
- Advisor: Brian Fogarty

Faith in Political Participation: Are More Religious People More Likely to Vote?

This research — based on established research about voting behavior and authoritative data from the 2020 surveys of the American National Election Studies — quantitatively analyzed and confirmed the statistically significant correlation between religiosity and voter turnout among the American electorate in the 2020 presidential election. Using rigorous statistical methods, it also sought to identify explanatory factors underlying such a phenomenon.

Religion and voting constitute two of the many major factors that shape American politics. Traditionally, a strong correlation exists between religiosity and voter turnout. But the explanations are not universally agreed upon. The majority of studies on religion and voting behavior focus on voter preference. Relatively little research has been conducted on religiosity and voter turnout.

**Xiaosong Yu**

- Majors: Mathematics, Political Science, and Philosophy
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Kellogg International Scholars Program
- Advisor: Curtis Franks

Constructing the Constructivist Realities: Kripke Semantics for Intuitionistic Propositional Logic

This research, focusing on the philosophical aspect of Saul A. Kripke semantics, surveyed a few instances where certain propositional sentences are provable in classical propositional logic but not in intuitionistic propositional logic. It also employed Kripke semantics to construct proofs that such sentences are unprovable in intuitionistic logic, and translated the highly abstract Kripke constructions into the concrete reality, with the ultimate aim of revealing and articulating the tremendous philosophical insights afforded by Kripke semantics into the constructivist worldview underlying intuitionistic logic.

The majority of the established work on Kripke semantics and intuitionistic logic focuses on the mathematical convenience of Kripke semantics, particularly that Kripke semantics provide a contextual framework in which both soundness and completeness are preserved for intuitionistic logic. This research explored the philosophical profundity of Kripke semantics, namely that the construction of Kripke semantics inherently encompasses the constructivist philosophy of mathematical intuitionism, which remains relatively scarcely studied.