



Conference Presenters:

Lela Ali, *Duke University*

Social Network Analysis of Muslim-led Networks in the Triangle Region of North Carolina

The paper is an exploratory study that examines how the characteristics and attributes of Muslim-led groups in the Triangle region of North Carolina influence the formation of relational ties among the network and identifies how the structures of the ties shape the way in which the groups navigate policy preferences, information, and resources. Historically, Muslim Americans have had limited access to resources, opportunity, and power. Local communities, however, are mobilizing and organizing into networks to ensure their security and mobility, in the face of continued racialization, discriminatory immigration policies, and institutionalized anti-Muslim bigotry. The Research Triangle Park (Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill) area in North Carolina, which serves over 20,000 Muslims, is a great example of a community where there is an increasingly active network of Muslim-led organizations and institutions that are linking local Muslims with information, resources, and support, particularly during times of distress, violence, and significant political changes. Social network analysis (SNA) provides the necessary tool kit for investigating questions involving relational data through the use of networks and graph theory. In this context, it can be used to answer questions like whether or not a network really exists among Muslim-led groups in the RTP area, how cohesive is the network, what are the driving forces that shape the relationships in the network, and what does the structure of the network tell us about how information, resources, and power are navigated by agents of the network.

Lela is a co-founder of Muslim Women For, a Muslim women-led organization in North Carolina that works to create lasting social change and uplift the narratives and voices of women of color and other marginalized communities. She earned her bachelor's degree in International Political Science and Middle East studies from North Carolina State University in 2016. Lela is a current graduate student at Duke University specializing in International Development Policy and Middle East Studies.

Leena A. Ali, *San Diego State University*

Organizing and Moving Beyond the Nation-State

The purpose of this paper will focus primarily on how decolonial and queer organizing around social justice looks, sounds, attracts, survives, and operates. This research uses a discourse analysis approach of examining works related to resistance against injustices upheld by global north nation-states. The two main community/activist organizations and movements of this study are Decolonize This Place (DTP) and alQaws for Sexual and Gender Diversity in Palestinian Society. With this movement and this group being on different continents, a transnational feminist approach will be used, along with post-colonial and queer theory lenses. The work and scholarship of Jasbir K. Puar, bell hooks, and Frantz Fanon are a few major components that my research follows to build an understanding of what resistance from groups and movements are establishing. I find that the existences of Decolonize This Place (DTP), alQaws for Sexual and Gender Diversity in Palestinian Society, and other resistance artists work together, but separate to ensure that the people and communities they are surrounded by have places and ways to live beyond the nation-state's neoliberal grasp.

Leena is from El-Bireh, Palestine and Savannah, Georgia. Her B.A. is in gender studies and sociology. She is currently at San Diego State University in the M.A.L.A.S program (Master of Arts in Liberal Arts and Sciences). Her areas of interest are community organizing, feminist theory, and decolonial theory.

Hussain Al-Ismail, *Johns Hopkins University*

Individualism as a Form of Collectivism

The distinction between individualism and collectivism is commonly drawn along the lines of an ultimate question: should society exist for the sake of the individual good life or vice versa? Maintaining the supremacy of the individual over society is seen as characteristic of individualism, while the opposite is seen as favoring an essentially collective life. Both terms, however, are co-dependent, imagined articulations; they are expressions of complex, interrelated phenomena. Individuals do not exist outside a pre-existing society, and society -regardless of its scope- does not exist without individuals comprising it. Within this view, individualism and collectivism are seen only as expressions of certain types of relationships between members of society. In other words, they are not antagonistic as much as they represent different sets of dominating relationships. The question of what determines the rise of the dominant set pertains primarily to the socioeconomic and demographic circumstances defining group association. The aim of this paper is to explore some of these circumstances in order to transcend the dichotomy and show that individualism and collectivism both misrepresent the complex reality.

Hussain's professional career includes working at Saudi Aramco as a geologist (2014-present), Groundwater Division (July 2014 - January 2015), Geoscience Trainee (January 2015 - June 2016) and Biostratigrapher (2016-present). He received his BS in Geology from Texas A&M University with a minor in history. Hussain received his Master of Liberal Arts from Johns Hopkins University in 2018. He has published the novella *Between Life Pages* - 2015 (ISBN13:9786140116030) and a short-stories collection *The City of Satan* - 2017 (ISBN13: 9781773222745)

Maxwell Anthony, *St. John's College*

Chasing After Larks: the Give and Take of Plato's Euthydemus

The most timely teaching we can recover from Plato is that conversation is the unity of moral and intellectual virtue. To converse is to share in common what is common in two senses: what is shared and what is obvious. To ignore the common, in either sense, is to risk intellectual and moral harm. A close reading of Plato's Euthydemus reveals this double sense of "common" in an analogy of sophistry to tyranny. The sophist brother tag-team, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, behave like tyrants, subordinating all things to their whim and arguments. Their art, eristic, rests on the denial of contradiction. They can prove any proposition and silence any opponent, but to do so they must deny all distinctions. Their beautiful arguments are technically sophisticated but are blind to the naïve look of common things. The brothers defeat Socrates before a teeming crowd. In the face of public ridicule, Socrates cautions two young interlocutors, Ctesippus and Cleinias, to pay careful attention to the brothers' bizarre speeches. The boastful Ctesippus and the coy Cleinias risk falling into a worse state than the brothers. They risk feeling justified in ignoring and scorning the "serious and beautiful things" to be found in so disreputable a source as eristic. My hope is that if the deep metaphysical problems broached by the brothers' arguments are explained, some who hunger for truth and beauty might not be tempted to ideologies but will be fulfilled in the philosophic activity, conversation, and see its strong ally in Democracy.

Maxwell graduated from St. John's College Graduate Institute in 2015. He recently completed a Masters Essay on Plato's Euthydemus, of which his paper is a distillation and expansion which he defended in May 2019. He is now enrolled in a post-baccalaureate program in Greek and Latin at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ.

Joy Hunter Austin, *University of Memphis*

Finding Hopeful Possibilities in a Divided World

So much in our fragmented world, in our society, focuses on the negative. It is not surprising that we continually ponder the questions: What is positive-and where is it? So we search for Truth, but where? Sometimes, through the pages of great literature, the human condition is explained more fully than through the pages of the top-selling anatomy textbook. A timeless art, poetry often provides answers or at least insightful reflections on the meaning of life and, more specifically, ways to assess and ameliorate our

troubles. Robert Frost said that a poem is "a momentary stay against the confusion of the world"; he also argued that "a poem begins in delight and ends in wisdom." Suffering is something we all share, but what we do after or during or because of the suffering and pain of life is paramount. In a world of fragmentation and disharmony, we need reassurance and hope, we long for delight, and we search for wisdom. We want to be refreshed from the rancor, strife, incivility, and division that characterize so many of our individual and collective actions and interactions. And we can find promises of hope, although filled with challenges, through poetry that addresses absolutes in this life like the appreciation of beauty, the possibilities of love, and the meaning of suffering.

Joy has received degrees in English from Lambuth University, the University of Memphis, and the University of Mississippi. She has been teaching for the University of Memphis, on the Lambuth Campus in Jackson, Tennessee, for the past seven years. She teaches interdisciplinary courses in both the MALS program and in the new DLS program at the University of Memphis.

Tom Behrman, *Rice University*

The Real 'Tragedy of the Commons': Privatization, the Cancer on Public Education Reform

The "commons" means different things to different people, depending on the context, whether in economics, environmental, digital, or social science. From its medieval origins to many it means simply "us," a reference to our collective polity. To law professor Robert Reich, the "common good consists of our shared values about what we owe one another as citizens who are bound together in the same society - the norms we voluntarily abide by, and the ideals we seek to achieve." The respective 50 states in the U.S. have seen fit to embody one of those shared ideals of providing for the widespread diffusion of knowledge to their people by establishing free public education systems. The democratic institution of public education is under attack as being characterized over the last 35 years as being in "crisis" and necessitating radical reform, the result of which has been various well-funded efforts at privatization which have resulted in more harm than good to the institution, as chronicled by leading education historian, Diane Ravitch. This presentation will discuss the so-called education reform movement post Brown I and II and the 1984 manifesto A Nation at Risk and the proliferation of market and consumer oriented approaches to solving to the claimed crisis in public education. The current fads of charter schools, vouchers, tax deductions, and scholarships, the overall market-oriented, privatization based remedies, have negatively impacted the original commons nature of the public schooling in America, returning schools in the states to a more segregated and inequitable status than existed prior to Brown. Contrary to their basic claim, charter schools are not "public" schools, rather they are actually private schools in every sense of the word. They end up segregated by race, by socioeconomic status and, more insidiously, by ability grouping. Rather than progressively moving toward more of a commons, we are moving more toward an illiberal, regressive, and individually selfish and self-interested vision of private schooling rather than public schooling. The tragedy of the commons may be an outdated 18th century economic theory of land enclosure but it should not be a guiding principle of contemporary educational policy, the result of which is the destructiveness of the good of the commons.

Tom Behrman was born in Houston, Texas, and has been a practicing attorney for over 40 years, with most of those years involved in civil litigation work. He held 2 board certifications in civil litigation from the Texas Board of Legal Certification for 20 years. He was educated in the public schools of Texas, graduating from Robert E. Lee High School (Houston, 1965), UT/Austin (BA, 1969), UT School of Law (JD, 1972), and Rice University (Master of Liberal Studies, 2018). His capstone was titled: Torture After 9/11: Bentham's Necessity Doctrine American Style. During his career he has been involved in numerous civic, professional, and community activities.

Michael Benson, *Johns Hopkins University*

"Every Epoch Requires a Fresh Start": Daniel Coit Gilman and the Birth of the Modern American Research University

America's system of higher education, particularly graduate education, remains the envy of the entire world. While our country may be facing deficits in trade or a host of other areas, higher education is not one of them. Our system has taken the best of the British university model (teaching and lecturing) and melded it with the German university model (research) to produce institutions which are considered among the finest in the world: colleges and universities that have produced more Nobel laureates and path-breaking research and discoveries than any other institutions in the history of mankind. As Clark Kerr, former president of the University of California, correctly asserts, "United States has, overall, the most effective system of higher education the world has ever known." And all this was launched by a model crafted in Baltimore in 1876 at Johns Hopkins University by Daniel Coit Gilman, a Yale-trained librarian

who served as Director of the Sheffield Scientific School and the 3rd President of the University of California before being recruited back to the East coast. While Gilman's alma mater awarded the first Ph.D. degree in America in 1861, it took the careful shaping of the research university-as effected by Gilman thanks to the beneficence of industrialist Johns Hopkins-to put the United States resolutely on the path toward leading the world in post-graduate education and the discoveries that have followed. This paper will focus on Gilman and his influence on late 19th century American higher education and the model he and his Hopkins' colleagues developed.

Michael Benson is president and professor of government at Eastern Kentucky University and is pursuing an MLA at Johns Hopkins University. At EKV, Benson is responsible for more than 16,000 students-52% of whom are Pell eligible-on three campuses, enrolling more native Kentuckians than any other institution in the state. Michael is author of *Harry S. Truman and the Founding of Israel* (Praeger 1997) and *College for the Commonwealth: A Case for Higher Education in American Democracy* (with Hal Boyd; University Press of Kentucky 2017).

Kayla Bloodgood, *Duke University*

Mapping Harlem: Destabilizing Racial Identity and Solidarity in "The City of Refuge"

Although a significant contributor to the literary community of his time, Rudolph Fisher has fallen out of our contemporary discourse of the Harlem Renaissance. In this paper, I will devote renewed critical attention to Fisher, specifically his short story "The City of Refuge," in order to consider how Fisher grapples with the complexities of modern racial identity and community formation within the bounds of early twentieth century Harlem. In Fisher's text, Solomon Gillis-a naïve newcomer fleeing arrest in the South- arrives in the city of "refuge," only to fall victim to the deceit of his new neighbors and unwittingly participate in illegal drug trade. Solomon's ironic arrest and the relationships of intra-racial prejudice and exploitation problematize Harlem as a refuge, but does Fisher offer us hope that the neighborhood can develop a sense of community across lines of cultural and social difference? In order to consider such a question, I will examine the story within the socio-historical context of the Great Migration and transnational immigration from the Caribbean and West Indies. Given such shifting geographic organization and the role of Harlem in a black artistic revival, Fisher's text leads us to ask: How do aspirations for racial emancipation and newfound identity become mapped onto a site like Harlem? By handling Harlem as both dream and geospatial reality, Fisher considers how the neighborhood functions as a starting place for a modern conception of blackness that offers a sense of solidarity while giving attention to fragmentation, difference, hybridity, and the individual.

Kayla Bloodgood is a second year student in the Graduate Liberal Studies program at Duke University, where her classwork and research interests span twentieth century American literature, feminist theory, critical race theory, and Marxist theory. She holds a BA in English Writing and English Literature from the University of Pittsburgh.

Michael Breger, *Stanford University*

A Bird in the Bush is Worth One in the Mind: Thoreau and Sonic Co-Presence

Regrettably, Henry David Thoreau did not own a tape recorder. Were he alive today, he might be found with microphone in hand, producing amateur recordings of ambient sound. However, he did record sound, perhaps the deepest source of his veneration of the natural world. Pre-empting the fields of soundscape ecology, Thoreau developed new forms of sonic perception which reveal a disciplined ear that was open to the vibrations of an ordered, harmonious cosmos. Thoreau's attentiveness to ambient sound, especially his extensive writings on bird song, reveal his unique ability to perceive the component particulars of a given environmental soundscape, and their relation to a broader acoustic environment. His written descriptions of sonic phenomena signal a development beyond his early transcendentalist consideration of spiritual correspondence toward a balance with a more empirical, universal method of recording. In studying his method of deep listening and subsequent written representation of sound, we can trace Thoreau's development of multiple eco-acoustic theories, including acoustic niche theory and human-animal co-presence. I intend to share ideas on the ways in which Thoreau, who was intimately acquainted with his sonic environment, revealed the veiled contours of human-animal co-presence. I will do so by developing an interpretation of Thoreau's stylistic approach, his journaling, which identified and transmuted bird song and gives us an opportunity to investigate the sonic commons of Thoreau's Concord.

Michael Breger is a Master of Liberal Arts candidate at Stanford and a graduate of the University of Virginia, where he studied history and astronomy. He works at the Stanford Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies.

Siobhan Craft Brownson, *Winthrop University*

Literary Genre as Common Ground - The Contemporary World Novel and Interdisciplinarity

Steven Connors concludes his 2004 essay, "Postmodernism and Literature," by observing that, contrary to "previous eras, [when] the literary text, ... represented an alternative to the world: in order to read, one retreated from the world, or suspended it," in the contemporary world, "fiction and world seem absolutely to interpenetrate, seeming more and more to be woven from the same fabric" (79). Indeed, fiction in the form of the contemporary novel can become for graduate liberal studies The Commons for the twenty-first century. My paper argues that a course in contemporary world literature is a valuable interdisciplinary site for, first, exploring the history, philosophy, politics, and cultural practices of world novelists and their works from around the globe; and, second, for presenting contemporary postmodern theoretical approaches to this same variety of disciplines. Basing the course on novels such as Arundhati Roy's 2017 *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, Mohsin Hamid's 2017 *Exit West*, Anne Enright's 2007 *The Gathering*, Zadie Smith's 2012 *NW*, Chigozie Obioma's 2015 *The Fishermen* and Orhan Pamuk's 2015 *The Red-Haired Woman*, would allow the instructor to encourage students' interrogation of binary East/West biases and stereotypes. Incorporation of texts from postmodernists such as Donna Haraway, Linda Hutcheon, Jean Baudrillard, and Jürgen Habermas will further encourage students, through the study of the novel genre, to discover both theoretical and practical solutions to the current fragmentation and polarization of human existence. Ultimately, I argue that a course in contemporary world novels has the potential to break through the silo of English Studies and instead become a gateway to healthy interdisciplinary engagement that can unite us.

Siobhan Craft Brownson, PhD, is Director of the Master of Liberal Arts Program and Professor of English at Winthrop University in Rock Hill, SC, where she teaches MLA core courses and graduate courses in English Studies. Her most recent publication is an essay on Thomas Hardy's short stories and the *Illustrated London News* in a collection she co-edited with Juliette Schaefer, *Thomas Hardy's Short Stories - New Perspectives* (Routledge 2016).

Meredith C. Busch, *Johns Hopkins University*

Greener Gables: The Historical and Popular Significance of the Feminine Utopia in "Anne of Green Gables"

The feminine utopia is a characteristic of female Bildungsromane, which involves the creation of a community of women that surrounds the heroine and bolsters her development while minimizing the involvement of male characters (Inness 22). L. M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* would not only become a staple of Canadian and international popular culture, but it would also earn its place among Canada's literary canon. This landmark novel features a feminine utopia that embraces Victorian ideals of femininity, emanating a kind of maternal feminism that serves as a firm foundation from which to launch an empowered young woman into the world absent the limitations imposed by the male-dominated society of the time. At the time of publication, the "Anne-girl" presented readers with questions that undermined the domestic, silenced role of women during its Victorian setting and rather demonstrated the turn-of-the-century notion of the role of women in society as they fought for rights in the early twentieth century. This research will utilize feminist criticism to explore the historical and popular significance and lasting relevance of the feminine utopia in *Anne of Green Gables* given the state of Canadian women's rights at the time of publication (1908) and the novel's influence as the beginning of an iconic girls' series.

Meredith Busch is a California native and a student at Johns Hopkins' Master of Liberal Arts program working on exploring the historical and popular significance of the feminism presented in L.M. Montgomery's novels. She works in Los Angeles as an Operations Manager and graduated from UC Irvine with a B.A. in International Studies and a minor in Russian Studies.

Casey Carpenter, *Dartmouth College*

In Defense of the Liberal Arts

The goal of my presentation is to shape a Liberal Arts dialogue in the language of purpose, value and need. This will be accomplished by providing a framework for the creation and delivery method of a value narrative that inspires Liberal Arts students and

professionals alike. Combining pedagogical principles, leadership theory and the foundational Greek tenets of Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric, I argue that Liberal Art's ability to work on behalf of the common good depends on our understanding of its value and our ability to articulate how it positively contributes to society. My argument assumes that teachers and professionals are inherent leaders charged with the duty of advocating on behalf of the Liberal Arts. The first step will be adopting Paulo Freire's pedagogical principle of co-intentionality. By doing so, we teach the inherent value of critical thinking and reflection while empowering the community with a growth mindset that allows them to take an active role in shaping the society around them. The second step will be to write the narrative that ascribes value, purpose and need. This will provide leaders with the rhetorical tools needed to defend Liberal Arts as it combats the fallacious belief that Liberal Arts and technical degrees are mutually exclusive pursuits. The final step is to invoke the power of language and argument in defense of Liberal Art's essential role of shaping and defending the common good.

Casey Carpenter is from Westmont, Illinois and is a current student in Dartmouth College's Masters of Liberal Studies program. After playing collegiate baseball and completing an undergraduate degree in Philosophy he served six years in the United States Air Force (USAF). While on active duty he completed a Masters of Science in International Humanitarian Affairs. Professionally, Casey served on the Board of Directors for Camp Fire AK and currently works as a contractor for the USAF.

Dawn Carpenter, *Georgetown University*

The Theological Nature of Work and Wealth as the Basis of Contributive Justice and the Moral Foundation for a New Social Contract

"Why do we work? For some, this question may seem nonsensical. For most, this question may never rise to a question because the answer seems obvious. We work to live, or said another way, we work to obtain the resources needed to live. At one level this is true. However, this research suggests that this simple question is really four questions-- (1) who are we, (2) what is work, (3) what is our purpose in work, and (4) what is the purpose of the wealth generated by our work? In the discipline of Liberal Studies, we study human values. This thesis argues that the fundamental human value at the center of the question of why we work is the value of "contribution" because without "contribution" none of the other values inherent in this question have a chance to percolate and mature. At its essence, to work is to exert a personal contribution. However, to contribute, one must be in a position of being able to contribute, and at the heart of this issue is the value of justice. This project explores the core values of contribution and justice and links them to the corresponding aspirational value of "human flourishing." This work concludes that contributive justice, derived from Catholic Social Teaching related to the theological nature of work and wealth, offers insights for a moral foundation of a new social contract.

Ms. Carpenter is a doctoral candidate in Liberal Studies at Georgetown University where she serves as a fellow at the Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor. She is the creator/host of the More than Money podcast and serves as a Board adviser to the investment committees of several prominent nonprofit corporations. She is a frequent author and lecturer on issues related to work and wealth in the tradition of Catholic Social Teaching.

Jennifer Carter, *San Diego State University*

Non-Binary Code: Gender, Posthumanism, and Technologies of Power

"Better, faster, stronger" are not just Kanye lyrics but also the promise of cyborgs, androids, and artificial intelligence. This topic will examine how technological advances have complicated politicized definitions of "the human." Whether it is the disciplinary divides between the Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences and STEM fields, or dystopic visions from film, television, and literature, technological developments and applications are deeply mired in gendered practices. By combining theoretical approaches from cognitive science, materialist feminism, transgender studies, queer theory, and posthumanism, I'll explore the politics of representation in field formations, archival practices, and cultural productions, and what may ultimately bring us together in the future of a reconceptualized and redefinition of "human."

Jennifer completed an MA in Liberal Arts & Sciences, focusing her research on gender, popular culture, sociology, ethnic, and LGBTQ studies. She also holds a BA in English - Literature, minor in Women's Studies, and is a German-English translator. Jennifer teaches at several college campuses and her writing has appeared in various publications, which inspired her founding of The California Journal of Women Writers.

Colin Chapell, *University of Memphis*

I Messed Up: Finding Common Ground by Sharing Failures with Students

It can be hard for graduate students and advisors to communicate. Graduate students sometimes feel that faculty and professional advisors do not understand the academic and financial pressures they face, while faculty and advisors may think that graduate students cannot see beyond the tyranny of the urgent. These feelings of missed communication are often exacerbated when students think that faculty and advisors have their personal as well as academic lives completely in check and under control. "I Messed Up: Finding Common Ground by Sharing Failures with Students," presents a model of connection for faculty advisors. Rather than addressing students from a place of perceived achievement, faculty advisors can find common ground by acknowledging and owning their own brokenness and failures. This does not mean that using students as therapy, but it does affirm common humanity. Through the appropriately open acknowledgment of their own failures, faculty advisors can find common ground with students. Drawing from experiences as a faculty member and program advisor, Chapell reflects on how an acknowledgment of identity and perspectives, recognition of student backgrounds, the reorganization of courses and programs, and the use of personal narrative can help students and advisors connect and communicate.

Colin Chapell is the Graduate Coordinator in the University College at the University of Memphis. His first book, "Ye That Are Men Now Serve Him: Radical Holiness Movement and Gender in the South," explores the influence of faith on gender construction among white Protestants at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries in the American South.

Marisa Cleveland, *Northeastern University* and Simon Cleveland, *Georgetown University*

Toward Understanding How Cultural Agility Leads to Civil Discourse

Cultural agility is an important concept in today's digital landscape and global economy. Despite the popularity of politically-charged headlines in the United States media, global corporations erase boundaries and merge cultures. In today's digital landscape, interconnectedness impacts humanity globally, and the challenge facing organizations is finding common ground beyond the rising incivility among individuals. With the age of inclusion and framing intersectionality, marginalized groups are shifting the way humanity interacts and communicates with each other. Some groups consider civility to equal silence, and with the polarization of today's society, civil discourse is a term creating a fragmentation among many. The purpose of this paper is to examine how cultural agility helps leaders produce civil discourse and find common ground. It is critical for organizations to focus on developing leaders capable of engaging in civil discourse.

Marisa Cleveland is a doctoral student at Northeastern University. She earned her M.A.I.S. in Educational Administration in Organizations and her B.A. in Communications from George Mason University.

Dr. Simon Cleveland is a scholar-practitioner and faculty director for Georgetown University's School for Continuing Studies. He earned his Ph.D. in Information Systems from Nova Southeastern University. Dr. Cleveland is a dynamic researcher with over 30 peer-reviewed journal and conference publications and is the associate editor for the International Journal of Smart Education and Urban Society. Dr. Cleveland is a Tropaia Award recipient for Outstanding Faculty at Georgetown University.

Cathy Collis, *Simon Fraser University*

Common People, High Art: Caravaggio and the Courtesan

Italian painter Caravaggio's fame in the 16th and 17th centuries was in part due to his portrayals of traditional religious themes with contemporary people in modern dress—then a relatively new concept. One of the models who often posed for him was the courtesan Fillide Melandroni. For painting her and other known street people and prostitutes in the roles of religious characters, Caravaggio had some of his paintings rejected by the churches that had first commissioned them. Scholars have argued that Caravaggio's use of common people was also influenced by that era's new improvisational street theatre *commedia dell'arte*, writing that "Caravaggio's employment of theatrical stock characters and armed men in his paintings suggest that he shared the Milanese ... love of Carnival, popular theatre, and jousts," and that the use of dark backgrounds, red curtains, and a pillar he used in his paintings may have been inspired by items used on the portable stages those street actors used for their impromptu performances. Why would a painter who lived with a rich patron that moved in the same circles as Galileo and whose work was courted by many church leaders—including the Pope—choose to ground his work in the lives and pleasures of the lower classes? I will examine Caravaggio's use of *commedia dell'arte*

props, each of his paintings of Fillide, as well as the stories behind his connection with her, which eventually led him to commit murder, fleeing Rome and his art connections there forever.

Cathy Collis has completed the Graduate Liberal Studies MA Program at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver. She is a soccer player, college instructor, playwright, actress, and amateur art historian. Her play "OBIT: a deathly serious comedy" was presented at the Vancouver Fringe Festival in 2017 and she last presented an academic paper at Stanford University in 2018 on Restoration Theatre and Audience Participation.

Lauren E. Cooper, *University of Pennsylvania*

Coworking in the Cultural Sector and How to Value It

Between 2016 and 2018, the number of coworking spaces more than doubled from 8,900 to 18,900, serving nearly 1.7 million members worldwide. First envisioned as an alternative to the traditional office space, where technology workers could find community and opportunities for collaboration in a shared workspace, coworking spaces have since begun to differentiate themselves in order to attract niche audiences in an increasingly competitive market. Among these niche audiences are freelance workers in the cultural sector, who are increasingly in need of the stable work environments and support infrastructures coworking spaces can provide. However, the relative scarcity of coworking spaces dedicated exclusively to serving these cultural workers has led many researchers to overlook them entirely. This paper considers the coworking space as a hub for freelance workers. It examines the distinct motivations and needs of cultural workers in an attempt to assess the value of coworking spaces to the cultural field, and to provide a series of recommendations designed to aid coworking spaces in providing the greatest value to members working in the cultural sector. This value lies not only in the purely economic exchange of membership fees for office space, but also in the non-market benefits associated with structured interactions within a community of skilled, at times collaborative, workers sharing similar needs and goals for the future.

Lauren Cooper served as the inaugural Program Coordinator for the Mid-Atlantic Regional Center for the Humanities, a coworking space at Rutgers University-Camden. She has held curatorial positions at museums around the country, and currently works as the Interpretive Planner at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. Lauren is completing an M.L.A. in Museum and Curatorial Practices at the University of Pennsylvania.

Pam Fox Kuhlken, *San Diego State University*

The Last Woman's Bio-Ethics: Contra-Ception for Sustainability in the Sixth Extinction

An interdisciplinary, critical examination of my previously assumed panacea: the "zero population growth" model, and my tendency to promote this among my students. But is it ethical to interfere in the rights of the unborn, however excessive? Even after seeing what happened with population control in China with unwanted females? Are Marx and Engels right that technology will keep up with progress? Is Malthus' theory on track? Starting with Mesopotamian flood myths in which gods give reasons for eradicating the earth of humans, and considering Thomas Malthus' 1798 "Essay on the Principle of Population," in addition to a few philosophers of ethics, and sci-fi short stories by Ursula LeGuin and Orson Scott Card, I will wrestle with the complexity of addressing population growth from an interdisciplinary perspective in a world nearing 8 billion, when I thought it was simply a matter of "zero growth."

Dr. Pam Fox has a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the University of California, an M.A. in Poetics and an M.A. in Theology and has taught in California and Arizona English, Religious Studies, Classics, and Humanities Departments for 20 years. She's an award-winning author and has published journalism and scholarship.

Bryon L. Garner, *Johns Hopkins University*

Pride and Prejudice: The Cult of American Patriotism

What does it mean to be a patriot in America? Patriotism evokes valorous, high-minded civic ideals which form the foundation of American exceptionalism; a concept which, in its broadest sense, includes many if not all of its citizens in defense of the nation.

Nationalism, alternately, tends toward ethno-centric views which are xenophobic and manifest in hostility towards others. But, American patriotism in the 21st century is decidedly nuanced: Patriotism thrives in a White Frame of Reference; while not overtly racist it does operate in a sphere of race, class, and gender hierarchies which define social and political perspectives and deepen divides in the context of identity politics. I assert that American patriotism exists as a multilayered false dichotomy supported by an epistemology of myths and ideals which conflates historical realities and lived experiences regarding race, class, and gender. Patriotism and racism are packed within the same language and symbology. The purpose of this discussion is to extend to the scholarly treatment of patriotic identity construction and adds to two existing framework models of analyzing patriotism. Studies regarding patriotism have heretofore been sparse and most often do not treat patriotism at the intersection of race, class, and social identity.

Bryon L. Garner is a veteran of the U.S. Navy who served during Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM. After his military career, he completed his undergraduate degree in history at California State University San Marcos and he was appointed by the mayor of San Diego to serve as a member of the San Diego Citizen's Review Board on Police Practices. A 2019 graduate of the Johns Hopkins University Master of Liberal Arts program and 2019 recipient of the Roszel C. Thomsen Fellowship, he currently works for the Department of Defense in the DC metro area.

Coleen L. Geraghty, *San Diego State University*

Homeland Insecurity: How Syrian Women Refugees are Rebuilding Their Lives in Trump's America

The war in Syria has raged for eight years, displacing an estimated 13 million people within their own country and to safe havens across the globe. According to the Pew Research Center, San Diego is among the top resettlement cities in the United States for Syrian refugees arriving since 2015. The city has a highly developed infrastructure for resettlement and a history of accepting immigrants from the Middle East. In the popular media, stories of Syrian refugees skim the surface, describing their journeys to the United States and the complex *mélange* of emotions they experience daily—the joy of surviving, the sorrow of leaving family and loved ones behind and the anxiety of adjusting to life in unfamiliar surroundings. Where academic scholars have mined this topic, about 90 percent of their research involves Syrians resettled in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and the European Union. The complex lives of the largest Syrian refugee communities in America—in San Diego, Chicago and Troy, Michigan, (near Detroit)—remain unexamined. Many refugees in these cities have received only temporary protected status (TPS), which can be revoked arbitrarily. As they struggle to rebuild lives, they must contend with growing anti-Muslim sentiment fueled by an overtly racist American president. My research will open a window into the lives of the Syrian community in San Diego. Through in-depth interviews with 6-10 young Syrian women, I will attempt to understand and chronicle their situations: how they deal with poverty, alienation and anti-Muslim sentiment; how they adapt their religious practices to life in a secular environment; how their new Syrian-American identities affect their family relationships, particularly with fathers, brothers and husbands; and how they see their lives unfolding in the short and long term.

Coleen L. Geraghty is a non-traditional student who returned to the classroom after successful career in journalism and a second successful career in marketing for San Diego State University. She has lived on four continents and visited two others. Her interest in the Middle East dates back to an early fascination with the geography of the region and a more recent opportunity to learn and write about the lives of Muslim Americans after 9/11.

Nancy L. Glass, *Rice University*

Would physician participation in lethal injection protect the condemned inmate's 8th amendment rights?

There are currently over 2600 inmates on death row in the United States. Despite concerns about innocent people being convicted of capital crimes, uneven application of the death penalty, and stories about botched executions, the American public remains committed to having a death penalty option for punishing the most violent crimes. While society debates the appropriateness of this punishment, is it appropriate for physicians to participate directly in the oversight of lethal injections? Some critics say that it is a violation of the Hippocratic Oath for physicians to be involved in this activity; some state boards threaten to revoke the license of those who participate. Professional organizations have been unanimously opposed to the practice. Others feel that IF our society is going to continue to support the death penalty, then the executions should be performed in the most humane way possible, consistent with the 8th Amendment to the Constitution. What if your wayward nephew was the individual condemned to death? Would you want him to have a painless death supervised by a physician who was an expert in the administration of hypnotic drugs? In states where

licensed personnel are prohibited from participating, lethal injection falls to those without standardized training or expertise, leading to a prolonged and painful death for the inmate. In this presentation, I will review the historical practice of execution in the USA, present the ETHICAL arguments for and against physician participation in lethal injection, and consider alternatives to current practice.

Dr. Glass is a pediatric anesthesiologist currently practicing hospice and palliative medicine in Houston, TX. She is working on her Master's in Liberal Studies at Rice University, and will present her Capstone presentation in November 2019: a collection of pediatric hospice stories around a framework of Narrative Medicine.

Sara Grabenhofer, *Johns Hopkins University*

Psychological Abuse is Virtually Unrecognized Under Illinois State and Federal Domestic Violence Law Leaving Women Who Share Custody of Children With Their Abuser Vulnerable to Further Cruelty

"You were so embarrassing tonight." When one party in a domestic relationship says this to the other enough times, the second party slowly begins a habitual mental check of their behavior. Compounded with other transgressions over a period of time, it becomes life-altering. Victims of psychological abuse who share custody of children with their abuser are not properly protected under Illinois state and federal domestic violence laws. In my interdisciplinary work, which will be both academic and creative, I intend to explore how the lack of a comprehensive definition of psychological abuse and lack of systems in place to help prove its existence are allowing women to remain under the coercive control of their abusers. In the form of a short novel, I will argue that psychological abuse is just as harmful as physical abuse, that it is improperly defined under the law, and that abusers maintain control of their victims even after the victim leaves the relationship. The fiction format will allow me to illustrate the complexities of psychological abuse situations in a way that an academic paper on its own cannot. Furthering and enhancing the research of scholars K. D. O'Leary, Amy Levin and Linda G. Mills, fiction writers Katelyn Maloney and Sarah Dessen, my research will provide a new perspective on domestic violence issues by illustrating what psychological abuse looks like and how it is complicated further by victim and abuser sharing custody of children.

Sara Grabenhofer is currently a Master of liberal arts student at Johns Hopkins University. She is an advocate for comprehensive domestic abuse laws and a supporter of the fight to believe victims. Her research focuses on the importance of understanding and recognizing psychological abuse against one parent by another within current custody and parenting time litigation in her home state of Illinois.

Kim E. Gudmundson, *Stanford University*

Fish, Cans and War

From the early 1900's, the fishing and canning industries of Monterey, CA drew immigrants from fishing communities around the globe. Living and working together, people of different national and ethnic origins-Italians, Japanese, Austrians, Germans, Portuguese, Spaniards, Norwegians, Irish, Slavonians, and more-formed a cohesive community, sending their children to the same schools, and shopping at the same markets. The diverse community worked together toward the common goal of supplying canned sardines, achieving great success. By 1939, Monterey was the third largest port for fish tonnage in the world. The bombing of Pearl Harbor changed everything. The United States government removed "enemy aliens," Italians, Germans, and Japanese, from coastal areas, dislocating families, and disrupting fishing and canning operations, while demanding increased production. Adding to the challenge, the government requisitioned fishing boats for war and recruited fishermen to fight in the military. Nonetheless, the community rallied to support the new common goal, feeding soldiers to win the war. High school students, soldier's wives, and women who had never worked outside their homes all volunteered on the cannery lines. Everyone worked together in order to supply WWII soldiers with portable protein and meet the demands of the war effort.

Kim Gudmundson is a Stanford MLA student. From rural New York, she earned her BS from Cornell and her MEd from Harvard. Kim initially conducted research on civil rights, healthcare and education at think-tanks on both coasts, and later worked in human resources, communications and management development at technology companies in the Silicon Valley. Fortunate enough to retire early, Kim is enjoying her MLA studies.

Gregory George Guthrie, *Georgetown University*

Labor Solidarity in the Government Shutdown of 2018-2019

The Government Shutdown of 2018-2019 ran for 35 days, from December 22, 2018 - January 25, 2019. It was the longest shutdown in the history of the United States. Most all Federal agencies were affected, and 800,000 federal workers were directly impacted by furloughs and delayed paychecks. The solidarity of Federal unions working in synergy with private sector unions, especially aviation sector unions, played a key role in ending the Shutdown. Private sector unions can strike, in the federal sector, it is illegal. Federal unions, namely The National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE), the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), and the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU) and the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) coordinated efforts in solidarity with private sector Association of Flight Attendants (AFA-CWA), and the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA). Televised interviews featuring Union leaders and federal workers, along with rallies at the AFL-CIO headquarters in Washington, DC featuring AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, union leaders, and members of Congress were followed by demonstrations at the Senate Hart Office Building and arrests outside Leader Mitch McConnell's office. These efforts brought national attention to the shutdown's effect on workers. A specific leader emerged during the Shutdown. Union President and professional flight-attendant Sara Nelson of the AFA-CWA would ultimately throw down the gauntlet to Leader McConnell and the Administration, by threatening to call a strike if an agreement was not reached, citing increasing safety factors to the flying public. TSA workers had been stretched thin - 33 days without pay - some forced to sleep in their cars for lack of gas money. The National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) and the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) joined with AFA-CWA. Nelson called a strike on Jan. 25; a ground stop was ordered by the FAA at New York's LaGuardia airport; and the shutdown ended later that day, approximately a week before the Superbowl. The dynamics of the union solidarity during the shutdown will be detailed in the presentation.

Greg Guthrie, a native of Tulsa, lives in Washington, D.C. He received a B.S. in Natural Sciences from Oklahoma State University, and a Masters in Liberal Studies from Georgetown University. He has worked in the Petroleum Industry in Oklahoma; at the World Bank; and the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress. Currently he is President of the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) Local 1627, at the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) where he is a Management Analyst.

Richard Hackmann, *Stanford University*

Gospel of Thomas Saying 114: Misogyny or Misunderstanding?

The second part of Saying 114 in the Gospel of Thomas states, "Jesus said, 'Look, I shall guide her to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every female who makes herself male will enter heaven's kingdom'" (Meyer, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures* 153). While this saying may appear misogynistic, further analysis shows that the position of women is actually equal to that of men in the text. Saying 114 in the Gospel of Thomas highlights the importance of knowing when a figurative interpretation should be applied to Christian texts by demonstrating the inaccuracy of a literal interpretation. The Gospel of Thomas is a reminder of the importance of understanding the tone and intention of the author when reading a work and creates an opportunity to reevaluate the way that Christian scripture is interpreted and understood. Specifically, claiming that gender equality in Christianity is heretical is incorrect. The Gospel of Thomas conveys original teachings of Jesus that are inclusive, gender neutral, and encouraging of all. The irony of this is that in 21st Century America many of the Christians who claim to be the most adherent interpret the Bible literally. While the literal interpretation of Christian texts is appropriate in some instances, the Gospel of Thomas serves as a reminder that in other cases the most accurate interpretation is figurative.

Richard graduated from the University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign in 2008 with a BA in Communication. While an undergraduate, Richard spent six months abroad in the Czech Republic studying history, psychology, language, and art. Richard is currently studying at Stanford University where he is working on a Master of Liberal Arts degree. Richard is particularly interested in the relationship between government and society in Western Civilization.

Jesse Hamilton, *University of Pennsylvania*

Moral Injury in War and Society's Obligations to the Morally Injured

People often say that soldiers in war risk their lives defending the nation, and this is true. And given that only a select group of individuals participate in violence defending the interests of the nation, society has transferred the risk of death and physical injury to

the soldiers. It stands to reason that society has obligations to those who come home injured or not at all, and this is certainly the case in the United States. The risk of death and physical injury, however, is temporary and disappears once the soldier leaves the battlefield. But war is not merely physically dangerous, it is morally dangerous as well. So in addition to transferring the risk of death and physical injury to soldiers, society also transfers to them the risk of moral injury. In this paper, I argue that the concept of moral injury has a distinct, normative character which imposes special obligations on societies that necessarily transfer this risk to soldiers during times of war. These obligations include: acknowledging the normative character of moral injury, the duty of military leaders to avoid situations in which moral injury is a likely outcome, and helping heal those who suffer from moral injury.

Jesse Hamilton is a graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania and a veteran of the Iraq War.

Gina Haney, *Stanford University*

"Unfinished Business": The Rise of Township Tourism in Southern Africa

In recent decades, post-colonial and post-conflict heritage narratives began to dwell on accounts of victimization. Stories focusing on adversity and atrocity such as poverty, terrorism, and trauma became both popular and profitable draws for visitors seeking to witness uncomfortable presents and pasts. Out of these narratives grew "dark tourism." This paper studies the rise of visitation to sites of "dark tourism," sites of genocide and oppression, while tracking the expansion of the global definition of heritage. This paper also explores tourism as a form of transactions between strangers and ends with an examination of the way in which township tourism in South Africa and Zimbabwe has been constructed, and is being played out. Within considering how stories of victimization are being shaped within these post-apartheid and post-segregation places, "performance theatre" will be juxtaposed with notions of reconciliation and healing; economic and power dynamics will be framed.

Gina specializes in economic development surrounding cultural heritage. In 2008 she founded Community Consortium and began, with the government of Iraq, a stakeholder-driven management plan and World Heritage nomination for the site of Babylon. In addition to working in the Middle East, Gina manages projects in South America and Africa. She is currently pursuing graduate studies at Stanford University.

Karyn Harrington, *Johns Hopkins University*

Chanteur Couture: Michael Jackson's Influence on Black Politics

Billboard magazine critic Nelson George once remarked that Michael Jackson's long recording career from age eight to fifty enabled a unique study of a great performer evolving his craft through the years. While George focused on Jackson's evolution as a vocalist, the same observation could be applied to Jackson's use of wardrobe throughout his career and his impact on social and Black politics in America. Like other famous musicians - The Beatles, Kurt Cobain, Madonna and Lady Gaga, to name a few - Jackson understood the power of creating a unique identity along with fashion visuals to bring his pop star status to life. To date, most evaluations of Jackson's appearance have centered on his physical attributes, yet little research has focused on the following question: How did Michael Jackson's fashion and costume choices evolve and create a musical persona that was connected to his social and black political views? In fact, Jackson's long-time stylist Michael Bush sums up the connection between Jackson's wardrobe and his persona: "His clothing was both reflection of and companion to his lyrics, music, short films, special effects, and tours; it contributed to a greater whole," wrote Bush in *The King of Style, Dressing Michael Jackson*. Through a review of academic literature and primary sources, it is clear that Jackson's fashion and wardrobe choices were inextricably linked to his expressions as an artist - and these choices played critical roles in Jackson's ability to infuse black political and socially progressive views into his mainstream music.

Karyn Harrington is a public affairs and communications professional based in Atlanta, Georgia. In addition, she previously worked for NBC TV affiliates in Missouri and Michigan. She has served on several non-profit boards: Junior Statesmen of America; State Government Affairs Council; and University of Missouri Alumni Association. Karyn graduated from the University of Missouri School of Journalism and earned dual MBA degrees from Cornell University and Queen's University. She is pursuing a Master of Liberal Arts through Johns Hopkins University.

Ashley Brooke Hawkins, *Reed College*

Wrong Place, Wrong Time: The Militarization of Public Spaces

This paper will discuss the militarization of public spaces, the rise of gated communities in the United States and the subsequent manifestation of what I will call gated lives and gated minds. The paper will examine Florida's "stand-your-ground" law as the sole defense of the murder of Trayvon Martin, a young black man gunned down by a resident of a Florida suburb. It will examine the commonalities between this "defense of space" and the turf-wars of the MS-13 and the Avenues 18, prevalent latino gangs in LA and the subsequent 1995 "gun down" of a civilian family who accidentally "trespassed" down a dead-end lane that was locally known as "the avenue of the assassins." These border defenses are emblematic of the ever-increasing segregation and separation of spaces. In particular, the construction, implementation and militarization of public streets, parks and communities highlight the ever-increasing socio-economic, race and cultural divides.

Ashley acquired a B.A. from St. John's College in Annapolis, Md. After graduation in 2009, she completed post baccalaureate work in math and logic from the University of Maryland and Carnegie Mellon University. She started her own business in 2011 and has recently matriculated at Reed College to pursue her masters. She is interested in social equality and public education programs as well as free book and technology initiatives.

Sabine Hoskinson, *Dartmouth College*

Skylines, Window Bars, and Maid's Rooms: Class Divides in O Som ao Redor

This paper discusses the way Brazilian director Kleber Mendonça Filho utilizes the physical common ground of an urban neighborhood to portray visual manifestations of class divides and inter-class interactions. As a Brazilian film made by a Brazilian director about an urban neighborhood in a major Brazilian city, Kleber Mendonça Filho's 2012 feature length debut *O Som ao Redor* is distinctly a film about modern day Brazil set against the backdrop of everyday life in a Recife neighborhood's labyrinth of public and private spaces and properties. In the film, class divides are expressed through physical spaces and structures. These physical manifestations of class divides reveal themselves in the film's Recife neighborhood's cityscape, a neighborhood system of visible borders and boundaries, and in the rooms and spaces of interior apartments. Mendonça Filho's use of visible representations of class divides makes clear that social transgression occurs when bodies move beyond the physical, social spaces they are granted permission to exist in. From the broad strokes of the neighborhood's skyline to the close-up dimensions of a maid's room, *O Som ao Redor* gives a portrayal of a modern Recife neighborhood in which the realities of class division are sewn into the fabric of everyday lives as they play out in the common spaces of both public and private property.

Sabine Hoskinson is a graduate student in the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Program at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire. Sabine comes from California where she studied English Literature and Creative Writing at Santa Clara University. She is currently pursuing her graduate degree in Creative Writing and writing a novel. She hopes to one day teach English Composition and Rhetoric and Creative Writing at the college level.

Naomi Sigler Hunter, *Stanford University*

Data, Disruption and Demographics: How School Ratings are Contributing to Educational Apartheid in the U.S.

Any parent with a smartphone can find out how any U.S. public school is rated in a minute or two; many parents of young children use such ratings to choose schools and shop for homes, and real estate companies embed the ratings into home listings. Few people question how the ratings are calculated or ask who is producing the ratings. Providing parents with easy access to information about their local public school sounds democratic, but the use of such ratings - which assign schools a letter grade or 1-10 ranking -- is eroding the commitment to the common good that has been at the center of our nation's public education system. Parents with means often gravitate toward higher-ranked schools that are nearly always less racially integrated and less economically diverse. This paper will explore the inherent tension between individual educational attainment and the common good, and will consider how oversimplified notions of what makes a school "good" or "bad" are creating a system of educational apartheid in the U.S., where more students are racially isolated than ever before. Racial bias, economic anxiety, and fears about school safety are feeding a reliance on ratings; these factors will be analyzed along with the connection between racial segregation and poor educational outcomes, the correlation between poverty and low test scores, and school funding systems that disadvantage poor and minority students.

After earning her Master of Liberal Arts degree at Stanford University in 2004, Naomi Hunter served more than 10 years as Director of Communications for the Redwood City School District, a K-8 school district in Silicon Valley comprised of a majority of low-income, minority students. In 2017, she launched Naomi Hunter Communications, a firm that provides communication and marketing services to public school districts. Naomi also holds a BA Degree in English from Northwestern University.

Carmen Huxley, *Mount Saint Mary's University*

Communal Role of Melancholy

In literature, psychoanalysis, and popular culture, melancholy has long been considered a negative state. However, negative interpretations of melancholy, i.e., those that suggest it's something to overcome, fail to appreciate its positive potential. In this paper, I focus on examples that suggest that melancholy is a mental state in which one lacks something, and I argue that such characterizations fail to appreciate the way in which it can benefit, not just an individual but a community. I will discuss the communal role of melancholy, the way in which melancholy presupposes and manifests freedom and is a condition of authenticity.

Carmen Huxley is a graduate student at Mount Saint Mary's University in Los Angeles. She is currently a teaching assistant in the Philosophy Department at Mount Saint Mary's. Her primary research interests are mid-20th-century Mexican philosophy and the role of melancholy. Carmen lives in Long Beach, California.

Stephanie Jean Jares, *North Carolina State University*

The Impact of the Potential Dissolution of DACA on Higher Education and DACA Qualified College Students

The potential dissolution of DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) by the Trump Administration could have a large negative impact on higher education institutions who will have to choose between whether to follow the policies of the federal government or protect Dreamer students. If DACA is dissolved by the Trump administration there will be a tremendous negative impact on Dreamers who are college students because their education will be in jeopardy due to the fact they will no longer have legal status in the United States. If DACA is dissolved then College Presidents and Chancellors will have to choose whether to violate the law by placing the rights of their Dreamer students first or follow the law and place the federal government regulations and Executive orders first. While the future of an estimated 800,000 Dreamers remains in the balance, college officials debate over whether they should implement policies to aid Dreamer students. The majority of colleges in the United States have not announced whether they will support Dreamers or the federal government in the event that DACA is dissolved. The purpose of my study is to analyze the impact of the potential dissolution of DACA by the Trump Administration on higher education in the United States and Dreamer college students who have qualified for DACA. Based on my research I recommend that higher education institutions act as student advocates and provide resources for Dreamers in order to support their students without having the higher education institution break the law.

Stephanie Jean Jares lives in Raleigh, North Carolina where she is a staff member of North Carolina State University (NC State). Stephanie graduated in 2003 from the University of Texas at San Antonio with a B.A. in History and from NC State in 2018 with a M.A in Liberal Studies with concentrations in higher education and history. Stephanie is currently pursuing a M.Ed. from NC State. Stephanie is married with a daughter.

Marja Karelia, *Simon Fraser University*

Common Ground through Musical Nationalism: The Significance of National Anthems from the Marseillaise to the Star-Spangled Banner

The French Revolution had an undeniable global impact affecting the history of the whole world by galvanizing and dividing populations across Europe and the Americas. As a result, Nationalism as a significant outcome of the Revolution, became a decisive force towards national consciousness and identity. My presentation concentrates on the emergence of Nationalism and specifically the role of national anthems within that movement. I argue that national anthems were instrumental in laying claim to nations as Nationalism became an increasingly political issue during the 1800's. I also argue that national anthems, including The Marseillaise and the Star-Spangled Banner, tended to be direct results of wartime emotions and were heavily related to patriotism. Furthermore, I

will discuss musical works often referred to as "unofficial" national anthems, such as God Bless America and Finlandia, the symphonic poem by Jean Sibelius, that, perhaps surprisingly, inspired development of common ground by its connection to some of America's important moments, such as the aftermath of 9/11, when the hymn from Finlandia was sung in services around the United States. In associating music with the love of homeland, composers were able to express the hopes and dreams of millions of people. On the other hand, the political implications of musical nationalism were recognized by authorities, who forbade the playing of some anthems and demanded the alteration of others because of the powerful symbolism behind the works. However, national anthems continue to stir profound patriotic and nationalist sentiments within people around the world.

Marja Karelia has a BA (2005) in Anthropology and Spanish from the University of British Columbia specializing in Mesoamerican Music Archaeology followed by Archaeology and Art and Culture Studies at Simon Fraser University (SFU). Currently Marja is an MA candidate in the Graduate Liberal Studies Program at SFU concentrating mainly on the interaction of music and culture from interdisciplinary perspectives, such as history, philosophy and psychology.

Shannon M. Kula, *Georgetown University*

Defying the Odds: The Collegiality and Stewardship of the Bipartisan Women of the U.S. Senate

The United States Senate has long been called one of the world's greatest deliberative bodies yet today, many Americans see a bitterly divided and ideologically polarized Congress. The American public rightfully demands to understand why limited bipartisanship, as well as significant stalemate and obstructionism, persist in hindering legislative work on Capitol Hill. What is urgently needed is an inclusive polity and healthy public institutions that ensure the success of the American democracy. Indeed, a vital resource is found in the values and actions of the bipartisan women of the U.S. Senate who represent a small, yet impactful, twenty-five percent of the legislative body. The examination of the bipartisan women of the Senate is a critical analysis of successful behaviors and belief systems in need of replication for productive governance within the legislative branch. How the women of the Senate work with each other and with their colleagues to be successful in a traditionally male dominated institution and in a political environment that currently makes large and small legislative accomplishments a challenge will be explored at length. This paper illuminates not only the impact of the bipartisan women of the Senate in their formal roles as legislators and leaders, but also the informal, successful yet not widely recognized dynamic impact they have on the legislative body as a whole, despite increasingly divisive partisan rhetoric. Their accomplishments as legislators and leaders rising above the acrimony to drive progress far outmatch their relatively small number.

Dr. Shannon Kula is a successful leader, entrepreneur, public servant, and advocate for women. With nearly two decades of experience in the U.S. Senate -- Chief of Staff to U.S. Senator Barbara Mikulski and legislative aide to U.S. Senator Christopher Dodd -- Dr. Kula has direct experience working within the U.S. Senate. Last year, Dr. Kula also ran for Congress. She received her bachelors from the University of Rochester, masters and doctorate from Georgetown University.

Kristina Kwacz, *SUNY Empire State College*

Finding Common Ground in Reinterpreting the Past

"We are all born into stories that began long before we arrived, and we become self within their borders." Marie Tondreau
We build our life stories incrementally-linking moment to moment--each experience contributing to the construction of our identity. Whereas the tales of the generation before us play a key role in framing our perspective, at times, they overwhelm the story that is ours to convey. How, then, does one reclaim their identity? My parents' story is a dramatic one, weaving war, totalitarian regimes, and the union and ultimate reunion--following two decades apart--of a couple in an arranged marriage.

It is the larger story into which--and because of which--I was born. Though my mother recounted the tale time and time again, important questions remained: Why did she wait so long for her partner--essentially a stranger--to join her? What traumas did each bring to the marriage from their two decades apart? And why did it take twenty full years for my father to emigrate from Poland post-war? With both parents no longer living, researching the economic, social, and political factors that likely influenced them yields clues. Employing Annette Kuhn's methodology of memory work, family photos from different timeframes prompts reflective

narrative. Combined, this methodology and context inspire new interpretations of the past and allow an enlarged understanding to emerge. In this common ground of empathy, I reassert my identity beyond their story and in telling mine, find common ground amongst others.

Kristina Kwacz structured her MALS program at SUNY Empire State College to explore the factors behind the twenty-year separation of her parents during and after the Second World War. Completed during 2017, her capstone project combines family photos, memoir, and artifacts in an exhibition outlining the chronology of her family while weaving in relevant historical information. Kristina has presented her work to academic and general audiences regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Tanya Y. Lewis, *Johns Hopkins University*

How America's Obsession with Comic Book Movies Reveals a Universal Subconscious Need to be Rescued

The film industry has a unique way of telling the stories of the world which quite often can be summed up in a battle between what is good and what is wicked. This battle that we stay in is one of the greatest common grounds of conversation at our disposal, but in a dangerous thirst for power, we miss the opportunity to unify in the shared beliefs of how we are good to gain rights to declare who and what we want to believe is wicked. Enter the world of comic books. There's a euphoric experience of watching the good guys prevail having defeated the evil that had come to rule the world. When people of all cultures gather in theaters to praise The Avengers for saving the world it offers us the appearance of a unified people. However, in this paper, I explore the possibility that America's obsession with comic book movies is a modern-day depiction of Dubois' tragedy of the age in which men know so little of men. I argue that our universal subconscious needs to be rescued, allows society to avoid accountability for the years of bias philosophies that birthed an America dependent on superheroes to restore faith in humanity. Instead of embracing the similarities between us in which our acts of kindness towards one another can heal our wounds, we've elected to escape into fantasy in which men and women of superhuman strength are called upon to tear down the bigoted systems of our society.

Tanya Lewis is the CEO of N.D. Lewis LLC. As an artistic entrepreneur, her work focuses on breaking down societal expectations that limit one's potential and purpose. The creative and performing arts are her primary implantation methods through theatrical and literary production as she is a published author and playwright. Her educational goal is to build a more open relationship between the artistic and academic communities.

Elisabeth Liebert, *LSU Shreveport*

Finding Common Ground between the Liberal Arts and the Local Business Community

In a world increasingly focused on STEM subjects and the apparent merits of technological competency, the choice to pursue graduate studies in the Liberal Arts can seem to lead away from, rather than towards, "real-world" career options. A bias against the Liberal Arts as essentially trivial may be more pronounced in the South than elsewhere. A recent survey of the Shreveport-Bossier business community revealed that 24% of respondents believed a Masters in Liberal Arts to be a "non-specific advanced degree" whose holder "isn't qualified to do much." Ironically, 96% of the same respondents, asked what skills they expect of college graduates applying to their company, listed those skills traditionally produced by a Liberal Arts degree: communication and writing skills, critical thinking and problem solving skills, and a strong work ethic. Quite beyond the problem of invisibility (a general lack of community awareness of the MLA Program at LSUS), this problem of misidentification is something we must address if our program is to foster. In this presentation, I describe initiatives designed to establish common ground between our MLA Program and the regional business community, including observations on challenges, learning curves, and emerging outcomes.

Dr Elisabeth Liebert holds a PhD in English from the University of Otago, New Zealand. She currently teaches seventeenth-century British Literature at Louisiana State University Shreveport, where she is also Interim Director of the Master in Liberal Arts Program.

Xinyi Lu, *San Diego State University*

Uncovering Gendered Violence Through Self Protection in Prisons in the United States

Prison is an institution where gendered ideology of masculinity and violence is ingrained. It is critical to incorporate a gender lens to explore how gendered violence along with the physical violence is produced and reinforced through self-protection in prisons to

unpack a socio-cultural landscape in our society. Traditional masculinity is closely associated with violence and domination, prisoners' self protection strategies on negating violence are constructed based on gender binary. Gendered roles are being promoted in prisons, reinforced by inmates and prison authorities. Prison functions as a social control that oppresses the social the Other, and is place where violence is widespread. There is significance in social and gender aspect in detecting gendering and violence in prisons. First, I examine the history of prisons in the U.S. to discuss that prison is the most sex segregated institution in America, and briefly explore the physical and psychological violence against gender identities, women, and women of color. Followed by investigating self-protection strategies that inmates used to negate violence in prisons, I discuss how inmates's self protection strategies are perpetuating and reinforcing a gendered violence along with physical violence in prisons. One of the main limitation in this paper is the lack of incorporating race into investigation. Future research regarding prison abolishing, race inequalities, violence in prisons, gender ideologies and support for marginalized groups are needed.

Xinyi was born and raised in Suzhou, China until she left to pursue advanced education in the United States when she was 19. Now she has become a qualitative scholar who concentrates in gender and race studies; her work centers on narratives, human communications, and cultural discourses. Also, she is keen on how social justice is distributed in a society and the strategic ways through which we can help the marginalized group to regain their voices. She is currently applying for a Ph.D. in the relative field.

Sapna Marfatia, *Stanford University*

Stanford's Main Quad: "Relic or Relevant" in Discourse and Community Engagement Today?

Today Stanford University's celebrated Richardsonian-Romanesque Revival quadrangle has a traditional feel that appears to contrast with the university's reputation for innovation. Yet at Stanford's founding in 1891, this architecture was a deliberate departure from the dominant trend adopted by peer institutions. Comparative analysis of Oxford, Harvard, and the University of Virginia reveals that Stanford University's strong architectural identity, as exemplified by its quadrangle, has created continuity and balance across time. Within the university's Romanesque walls and Mission-style quadrangle, the founders - Jane and Leland Stanford - aspired to create an experimental pedagogy that combined practical training with a greater commitment to humanitarian ideals. Therefore, instead of a library, Memorial Church located at the terminus of the principle axis dominated the Main Quadrangle and created a common venue for gathering and discourse. However, is this iconic quadrangle a relic of the past or still relevant for student engagement and learning? Exploring the ways in which architecture and pedagogy combine to create a campus and highlighting the voices of students, faculty, staff, and alumni, this paper will discuss the civic discourse, and community function of the Stanford Quadrangle and Memorial Church. Stanford University's quadrangle reflects a unique design and mission as envisioned by the founders and communicated through its architecture. The presentation will trace the design history of Stanford University's quadrangle and establish how the quadrangle, recalls the past, is relevant to the present, and can adapt to the future.

Sapna Marfatia's professional experience spans Architecture, Planning, Urban Design, Historic Preservation and teaching. She is a Director of Architecture at Stanford University's Campus Design Office. She has a bachelor's in architecture, Masters in Urban Design and recently graduated from Stanford University with a Masters in Liberal Arts. She has been a Historical Commissioner for the City of Los Altos, and is currently serving on the Board of Directors for Filoli and Stanford Historical Society.

Emmeline Miles, *Southern Methodist University*

Writing to Reach You: Therapeutic Songwriting and Proactive Treatment of Trauma in Early Childhood

In *Mended by the Muse: Creative Transformations of Trauma*, psychologist Sophia Richman asserts, "creative action is one of the most effective ways of coping with trauma and its aftereffects. Art in all its forms provides us with opportunities to repair what has been torn asunder by events that have overwhelmed us and rendered us helpless. It is in art [...] that our sorrow is given shape and meaning" (Richman 3). The act of creative expression is unique not only because it externalizes suffering, but because it also transforms that suffering into a discrete product that can validate our trauma. Richman explains, "By expressing internal pain, the artist externalizes it, fashions a container for it, and invites others to become witness" (Richman 3). Art restores agency, allowing its creator to move from a space of victimhood to a space of survival. Through art, those who felt helplessly affected by a traumatic event can once again take control. Because music engages the entire brain and reaches aspects of the human spirit that are beyond words, the creation of music is uniquely capable of facilitating post-traumatic healing. The Adverse Childhood Event study conducted by Dr.

Vincent J. Felitti tells us that approximately 50% of American children will be exposed to life-altering trauma during childhood. However, the act of songwriting gives children exposed to trauma the ability to access their feelings about trauma without shame, process those feelings in a safe environment, and shape those feelings into something beautiful.

Emmeline Miles is a musician, teacher, and professor from Dallas, TX. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in English and Music from Scripps College, a Master of Liberal Arts from Texas Christian University, and a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study in Creative Writing from Southern Methodist University. She is currently a doctoral candidate in Liberal Studies at Southern Methodist University. She is grateful for endless encouragement and inspiration from her friends, mentors, and dog, Chloe.

Esosa Frances Mohammed, *East Tennessee State University*

Standing on Common Ground to Advance Sociocultural Change for Marginalized Women

Feminists, human right activists, and social justice advocates all share one thing in common, and that is the desire to advance humanity. This presentation specifically focuses on my qualitative research on oppressive indigenous practices associated with widowhood in Southwest Nigeria. In the course of my qualitative research, I discovered several points of convergence within the narratives of twelve women whom I interviewed, leading to my contention that the commitment to advance humanity and protect fundamental human rights serves as a common ground in the struggle for justice and equality. Regardless of their diverse sociocultural backgrounds, each of the interviewees chose to speak out against outdated and oppressive practices that serve to take away their autonomy and negatively impact on their well-being. My aim is to highlight three main areas in which Nigerian widows find common grounds as they individually and collectively share their experience, discover hidden strengths, and find their voices. This includes a network of supportive adults and female agency. Analysis of my interview data and secondary scholarship support my thesis that by speaking out against unfair practices, and inspiring other women to begin the journey towards deconstructing gendered widowhood norms, Nigerian widows demonstrate a shared goal of creating new and better widowhood narratives. Additionally, then, the results suggest a need for future research that develops the concept of finding common ground as marginalized groups across the globe come together for the shared goal of dismantling oppressive structure

Esosa Mohammed recently graduated with a Master's degree in Liberal Studies from East Tennessee State University (ETSU). Her research interests include African feminism, female agency, social change, and qualitative research methodology. While studying at ETSU, she developed an interest in studying resiliency in marginalized groups and how developing resilience serves as a means not only to empower women but also to bring about sociocultural change, no matter how small.

Alison Morrow, *Johns Hopkins University*

Princes and Wolves: Global storytelling in the K-pop band 2PM's "My House" music video

The K-pop band 2PM's "My House" (2015) music video opens with a clock striking midnight, a ballroom full of guests, and a young woman dashing from the room. From Beauty's beast, to Snow White's apple, to Cinderella's shoe, the music video for the title song from this successful band's fifth album is full of Western fairy tale references, and situates the six band members as princes - and wolves - creating a plethora of idealized men for young women to dream about. The lyrics of the song, however, paint a sexual seduction: "I want to take you to my house." The Korean Waves are credited with building soft power and economic growth for South Korea, and K-pop is a large component of Korea's strategy. 2PM's music video, that positions its members as both heroes and villains of Western stories, illuminates a tactic of borrowing from so-called "universal" stories to situate Korea as part of the global community. Through textual analysis of the "My House" music video and lyrics, this presentation will examine the use of the cultural capital of these fairy tales to create images of the perfect man for both local and global audiences, and the implications of exploiting Western cultural literacy to layer the romance and innocence of storybook heroes with enticement and innuendo, the language of sex that sells.

Alison Morrow is a Ph.D. student in the Language, Literacy, and Culture program at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Her research interest is in transnational adaptations of classical stories on screen, with a focus on Korean adaptations of fairy tales, myth, and legend. Not only does this mean she has the best conversations at parties, but she is also a pro at picking out the perfect seats in

movie theaters.

Andrea O'Connor, *Dartmouth College*

Mindfulness and Human Exceptionalism

Mindfulness practice can break down human exceptionalism and lead to interconnectedness and universality. Through mindfulness, people have the potential to develop as compassionate, collectivist leaders and citizens, and can work to resolve issues of social injustice, violence and environmental degradation in society. In my personal 20-year mindfulness practice, I have experienced the shift from self-limiting, egocentric thinking to universal connectedness. One night at a Vermont mountaintop retreat center, I chose to sit in meditation from 9:30 p.m. until 4:30 the next morning. Through the night, I was plagued by limited thinking such as "I can't do this, I'm wrong, this won't matter". But these thoughts soon became meaningless and fleeting, replaced by a sense of peace, compassion for others, and the loosening of self-identification. Studies increasingly show that mindfulness practice can promote freedom from senseless desires, compassion, and connection with others (Martin, Shane Alan, 2018) as well as benevolent insight and charitable works (Wayment, Heidi et al, 2011) and introduces the concept that universality lies beyond personal need (Verney, Juliet, 2009). In sum, mindfulness practice can contribute to common good, consensus, relationship and a positive destiny for humankind. The talk will include a five-minute mindfulness practice.

Andrea is a Dartmouth College graduate student in the Master of Arts and Liberal Studies Program. With 15 years experience and training, she is a yoga and mindfulness teacher and studio owner with her husband in Burlington, Vermont. She also studies leadership and meditation at the Monastic Academy, Lowell, Vermont. Prior to her work in yoga and mindfulness, she was a marketing manager with sustainable companies her area.

Oluwafisayo Ogundoro, *East Tennessee State University*

Defying All Odds, The Need for Female Inclusion in the Nigerian Technology Sector

Social constructs and the way we have imbibed them established the binaries that plague females and their inclusion in the technology sector. Mothers buy cars or helicopter toys for their sons while they buy their daughters Barbie dolls or kitchen set toys. Also, in the need to be gender specific mothers buy pink clothes for their female child and blue clothes for their male child. There is as well the intelligence-based construct: males are said to be mathematically and spatially intelligent while females are said to be verbally intelligent. The effect of this construct is apparent with male-dominance in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) majors while we have more women in the Humanities majors. Moreover, in the case of Nigeria, patriarchal constructs prevent females from pursuing STEM careers. Therefore, in this paper, I will be pursuing the argument on the need for women inclusion in the Nigerian technology sector. Technology is changing the face of the world, and in the next ten years, the job sector would be fully automated across the world, Nigeria inclusive. What will be the fate of our girls and women? Tech Cabal notes that "the National Bureau of Statistics says that in Nigeria women makeup, on average, just 22% of the total number of engineering and technology university graduates each year. As a result, women are roughly only a fifth of the total number of people working in the information and communication technology sector in Nigeria." For this research, I will be making use of reports by Tech blogs, academic articles, and journals.

Oluwafisayo is a social development enthusiast, who desires to serve humanity in her actions and ambitions. She sought to see national governments who are concerned about providing sustainable healthcare systems, sustainable educational systems and eradicating poverty. She has over three years of experience in content curation. She also pitches her thought on social issues on her blog and on medium (fisayowrites.wordpress.com; medium.com/@Fisayowrites). She is a bilingualist who speaks English and French languages fluently with solid professional proficiency in these languages. She is a problem-solver who believes in building a humanity-centered society. This has informed her interest in discussions on women inclusion, education, health, public policy, and fairness.

Tobi Oloyede, *East Tennessee State University*

Chinua Achebe's Anthills of the Savannah: Women and the Politics of Inclusion in Nigeria

It is common knowledge that Nigerian women are being subjugated with regards to political participation and this adversely affects the principles of democracy and good governance. The country's patriarchal system results in the marginalization of women, and this

leads to the urgency and involvement of feminist movements to agitate for the rights and expansion of the frontiers of political process participation for women. With literature, there is a link between human's social world, adaptation to it, and the desire for a change. Therefore, literature is derived from man and his society. In congruence with feminist aesthetics, literature is a vital means of undermining male-dominated views of women as dependent, inferior and apolitical. The disputing activities of the public sphere in pre-modern Europe gave rise to its development. However, such activities had failed to do the same for Nigeria - a country in dire need of development. This paper is to examine Chinua Achebe's political novel, *Anthills of the Savannah* which aptly portrays the rise of the new Nigerian women as reformers in the postcolonial era. The protagonist, Beatrice represents the new Nigerian women as she serves as a source of passion and inspiration. She is portrayed in the novel as one who questions the postcolonial Nigerian politics of marginalization, deprivation, and gender inequality in the country's governance. The inability of Nigerian political elites to infuse feminist principles into their political processes and practices is one of the reasons why governance is a failure.

Tobi Oloyede is an international graduate student from Nigeria in the Gender and Diversity program at East Tennessee State University with a background in English and Literature. Her choice of study emanates from personal experiences in the Nigerian society where patriarchy, inequality, class among others is the order of the day. A young woman trying to use her education to alleviate the social menace by being a voice in the society, and bringing about change in her own little way.

Cristina Ortiz-Merodio, *Rice University*

Common Heritage. Spain's Decisive Role in the American Revolution

At a time of divisive politics and tensions on our Southern border, we have an opportunity to reflect on our common history with Spain and its colonies in New Spain that gave birth to Hispanic culture in the Americas, including Mexico, Central America, and South America. The history of the United States of America, including its Revolutionary War, can only be fully understood after considering its global historical context and the contributions by several nations, including the Kingdom of Spain and its vast American colonies. The Spanish Empire, once the world's strongest although already in decline by the second half of the 18th century, left indelible marks on America's culture, our nation's map, and our very independence, through a process that lasted centuries. One way to understand this legacy is through the perspective of key Hispanic protagonists, such as Bernardo de Gálvez. Spain, through the Gálvez dynasty among others, provided the U.S. with strategic military support and significant financial aid, organized a coordinated front around vast territories including Louisiana, Florida, and Texas, negotiated solutions to land disputes, and made other important contributions before, during, and after the Revolutionary War. This presentation will explore the decisive role of Spain in the American revolution, less commonly recognized as it may be compared to that of other allied nations.

Cristina was a multicultural Oil & Gas Manager with U.S. and international experience in trading, risk management, and finance. She stepped down to become a "chief home officer" and later resumed activity as MLS student at Rice University. She volunteers at non-profit organizations supporting Houston's underprivileged communities through family education. Cristina earned a B.Sc. in Economics from the Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City and has participated in executive programs at the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Chicago.

Stewart Reid Parker, *San Diego State University*

TV Eye: Paranoia, Fear, and Couch Potatoes in Thomas Pynchon's "The Crying of Lot 49"

Thomas Pynchon is a TV junkie. Yes, in the very same way a drug addict relies on a chemical to suppress the constant torment of needing, Pynchon relies on television as a wicked vehicle of addiction that bare upon the shoulders of his cast of characters in *The Crying of Lot 49*. Set in the 1960s, as the Post-World-War-II industrial boom's newly-invented middle class began to feel the numbing effects of the comforts that had become available for purchase in every suburban storefront and home-delivery catalog across the country, Pynchon sensed an epidemic. He knew that lurking within the majority of the American homes was a deceptively simple box that held secret remedies to the psychological ailments of a new generation. The passing of the Golden Age of television in the 1940s and 1950s meant that something had begun to tarnish. For Pynchon, the warm glow of the tube had turned cold, and the rosy-red cheeks of mother, father, sister and brother that spread ear to ear had turned pale under eyes that had grown dark and heavy from hypnosis. This is the world readers are ushered into from the very first page of Pynchon's 1965 novel, *The Crying of Lot 49*. Throughout his labyrinth of impossibly comical characters, plot-twists, and whimsical story telling, Pynchon never fails to remind his audience

that there is a deeper meaning behind it all -- a hidden chain that links together all of his moving parts, as twisted as that chain might be.

Having grown up among the dusty planes of West Texas, Stewart's journey to SDSU has been a long and winding one. Initially admitted to the SDSU School of Art + Design, his passion for creating artwork eventually dwindled, as he felt void of intellectual stimulation from a lack of research and writing. In 2018, he joined the MALAS program at SDSU as a third-year grad and couldn't be more pleased with the transition. PhD up next!

Jordan Poyner, *St. John's College*

The Man of Many Ways vs. The Way of Many Men

In the opening lines of Richmond Lattimore's translation of the *Odyssey*, the narrator describes Odysseus as "the man of many ways." This translation of the Greek word *polútropos* brings to the fore a quality of Homer's hero which allows for him to be both a polymath and a walking contradiction. As a maverick and leader, questing for knowledge and home, Odysseus seems to represent many ways of being in the world--and perhaps many sets of values. Much discussion of the *Odyssey* attempts to resolve these apparent tensions into a coherent political or philosophical teaching. For example, a certain understanding of Odysseus's yearning for home and his abilities as a leader suggests an appropriate orientation towards the common good. Such a reading requires we avoid confronting Odysseus's self-seeking desires and actions, or interpret them as flaws or mistakes. Why does Odysseus determine to listen to the song of the Sirens--they who know everything that happens over all the earth--despite knowing that their singing displaces all thoughts of home? Why does he alone survive the homeward journey, only to set sail once more? These questions suggest that Odysseus's singular yet multifarious character is not so easily reconciled with ideas of a common good. It could be that Odysseus's seemingly contradictory desires to be at home and venture abroad express a fundamentally human phenomenon. If we each have a bit of Odysseus in us, the *Odyssey* might be a timely book for considering human division and commonality, and the supposed antithesis therein.

Jordan Poyner is a student in the Graduate Institute at St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland. He is an editor of *Colloquy*, the journal of the Graduate Institute, as well as a co-founder and editor of *The New Herald*, an online journal of sociopolitical dialogue and reflection. A proud Hoosier, he studied English literature at Indiana University and anticipates his Midwestern homecoming.

Eric Rausch, *Rice University*

Exploring Gender Variation for Coping Strategies in Aging and Health Associations

This study explores gender variations with coping strategies for aging issues, health and well-being in social networking. As life expectancy rises, so does attenuation of physical and mental ability. An increasingly higher level of expectation and social pressure exists to retain a youthful appearance and to maintain an active lifestyle far into elderly years. As our average years of life expectancy rise, individuals will face issues associated with aging that can attenuate physical and mental ability. Extant literature remains relatively thin comparing gender variation with people's reaction of aging. Data reveals greater percentages of aging men desired maintaining physical performance, compared to women's focus on improving aesthetic appearance. Globalization and technology increase the popularity of websites centering on health topics to find information and social connection. HealthBoards.com provides one of the Web's largest sites for finding health information and social support for over 850,000 registered members. Content analysis with open and axial coding is conducted from HealthBoards.com to gain perspective of this phenomenon, uncover themes, and explore differences over 3 primary areas: use of anti-aging products; choosing medical treatment versus homeopathic remedies; and exercise as reverse aging. Using the life course perspective, men and women coping with aging processes is uncovered to promote future qualitative and quantitative research on gender variations of aging.

Eric Rausch is a scholar of sociology, Rice University MLS program alumnus, and currently a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at Baylor University. His research interests include: individualization and society, cultural sociology, identity, medical/health anthropology, the civilizing process, and political philosophy. Mr. Rausch has been invited to present his research before at AGLSP, Midwest Sociological Society, and at The Royal College of Surgeons, London, UK.

Adam Reed, *St. John's College*

A Holistic Educational Philosophy to Create An Ethical Transformation that Strengthens our Common Ground

Through education we can strengthen our common ground, promoting collaboration rather than competition, and living in harmony with the earth rather than destructing it. In this discussion, we explore an educational philosophy that equips children with the virtues of character and expanses of knowledge needed to make choices that are best for the community rather than the self. With a holistic educational framework that's in tune with 21st century dynamics, unanimously accepted, and paired with a practical methodology for implementation, educators can lead an ethical transformation that mitigates the hyper individualism and indulgence in vice pervading our culture as we collectively journey towards a common good. An effective holistic educational philosophy addresses the development of mind, body, and soul. By reading and discussing a highly cultivated and diverse curriculum of literature we can tap into the wisdom of humankind's most insightful philosophers, ancient and modern alike. This strengthens our common bond as we develop our characters by virtues of temperance, benevolence, true friendship, and devotion to the community. By exploring our Earth and her living forms, students can ground themselves in the timeless and universal laws of nature. Through experiential education and internships, students can cultivate interpersonal skills and explore professions in line with their unique skills, with a view towards how they can best serve the community, not just themselves. With a holistic educational philosophy embraced by all citizens, raising children becomes the task of the collective community, strengthening our common ground and promoting a good for all.

Adam earned a B.A. in Crime, Law, and Justice from Penn State University, an English teaching credential from Cal. State University, and a M.A. in Liberal Arts from St. John's College in Annapolis, MD. His master's thesis topic is "The Education of Odysseus: Learning on Life's Journey". Adam has taught high school English in Spain and college English in China, as well as middle school language arts and high school psychology in Oakland, California.

E. Reff-Presco, *Georgetown University*

Artists vs. Critics: Race, Identity, and Agency through the lens of Artistic Narratives

My research explores the evolution of Black artistic narratives since the 19th century. This presentation examines the dichotomy between the Black voice through art and the viewer as a critic. Black artists around the world are subjected to controversy and barriers when they use their art to address issues of race, identity, and discrimination. These artists use their intimate experiences to challenge historical narratives, injustices, and racism in ways that have empowered global communities impacted by human suffering. Yet their success has been predicated by the viewer as critic, historian, or consumer for legitimacy, acceptability, and/or relevance within the art world. Art criticism and subjective interpretations of Black art is often the catalyst for contemptuous receptions and unfavorable opinions by the general public.

E. Reff-Presco received a B.F.A. in Studio Art from Howard University and an M.A. in Art Education from New York University. Currently working on a Doctor of Liberal Studies degree, Reff-Presco is also a high school art educator in Maryland with twenty years of experience. She is a Ceramic Artist who explores the human experiences of the African Diaspora and works to examine artistic narratives and how trauma caused by racism and oppression emerges in visual art as a result of the artist's interest and healing.

Andrea Restle-Lay, *North Carolina State University*

Visi-Trash - Reducing waste through data tracking and public engagement

Visi-Trash is the name of a proposed smartphone social media game app designed to engage the general public, starting with NCSU students. It will educate and encourage healthy competition to reduce waste, focusing on single use containers such as plastic shopping bags and disposable water bottles. Visi-Trash will be designed to increase solidarity and cooperation towards a single common goal: reducing plastic waste. Gaining widespread compliance is difficult, yet reducing single use plastics can reduce both global warming gases and ocean pollution. The project will recruit NCSU staff experts in the use of sustainable materials to act as game moderators and log into a website to interact with the app, offering new activities, special power-ups, prizes and other content to keep the game interesting and engaging. This interdisciplinary, open source project will draw primarily upon the fields of management, computer science, and food science. It will encourage entrepreneurs to test-market new sustainable products through the app, offering them as prizes to motivate contestants and providing incentives for their purchase. The initial product offered will be single

use plastic bags made from edible, biodegradable milk protein (casein). The conference presentation will include a demo of the moderator website and mobile app showing the interaction of participants with the application as well as showing how moderators interact with the game content via the Visi-Trash.com website.

Andrea Restle-Lay is a Full-Time Business Application Analyst (Software Developer) for a Data Processing center at NCSU that manipulates milk lab and genetic data for the Dairy industry as well as a Master's student in the NCSU MALS program with a focus on using computer science to support sustainability in her surrounding community

Jordi Rozenman, *St. John's College*

Literature for Human Beings

Art is a common language. It speaks to us, in all its forms, with the same force regardless of our backgrounds and experiences. Many would have us believe otherwise: that we need a particular art, a particular author, or a particular text in order to really speak to a particular audience. I would like to argue, passionately, against this idea, and to argue in favor of the idea that great literature speaks to everyone. It's not an argument I've pulled out of thin air; as a former high school English teacher, it's been perhaps the most moving lesson I've had the good fortune to witness in the classroom, time and again. NB: Authors from diverse racial, national, and socioeconomic backgrounds will inevitably make their way to a list of great literature precisely because these factors are not what matters. Rather, the story. Whether it is Diaz, Hurston, Murakami, Dostoyevsky, Hemingway, Achebe-this matters so much less than the story they've created. It is the story that interests me, and the students. Let's give these students the intellectual credit they deserve, rather than belittling and splitting them. Is this not the very magic of literature, its purpose, the very reason we write it and read it? Because it speaks to all of us, across time and place? I've watched dead white men (that dreaded phrase)- and dead black men, and women, move classrooms of every color. It is an extremely joyful way to remember what is important about being a human. "

Jordi Rozenman is a resident of Washington, DC, a graduate student at St. John's College, and a former high school English teacher and a college counselor. Her poetry has been published in *Hill Rag*, *Colloquy*, and *Energeia*, and is forthcoming in *Confluence*. She has been a featured reader for the Inner Loop reading series in DC, as well as Literary Hill Book Fest. She loves dancing, reading, writing, naps, and Nutella.

Siddhartha Shome, Stanford University

Gandhi's and King's Conceptions of Freedom: Difference in Commonality

Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. had much in common. They were both committed to nonviolence. They both struggled against entrenched notions of white racial superiority. Above all, they both viewed themselves, and were widely viewed by others, as freedom fighters. This presentation argues, however, that Gandhi's and King's conceptions of freedom were very different from each other. For Gandhi, freedom meant swaraj, or self-rule, the ability to be independent in thought and action, and the ability to exercise self-control over one's mind and body. For King, on the other hand, freedom meant the ability to choose between meaningful alternatives. From King's perspective, swaraj, or self-rule, though helpful since it enhances one's autonomy in making choices - is not enough. Equally important, if not more so, is full access to existing alternatives and opportunities, as well as the introduction of new alternatives and opportunities. Gandhi's well-known advocacy of voluntary simplicity, and his preference for an agrarian craft-based society, was linked, at least in part, to his freedom-as-independence vision. Gandhi felt that modern industrial society impeded freedom by enmeshing people in a complex and incomprehensible web of dependencies, from which it was nearly impossible to extricate oneself. King, on the other hand, with his freedom-as-choice vision, considered economic and technological progress as fundamentally emancipatory and freedom-enhancing for African Americans, since they made possible greater access to meaningful alternatives and opportunities.

Born and raised in India, Siddhartha Shome moved to the United States twenty-six years ago. He completed his Master of Liberal Arts (MLA) degree at Stanford University in 2017. His presentation is based on his MLA thesis research. He also has a Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Iowa and works in Silicon Valley as an engineer developing mechanical design and simulation software.

Gene Slater, *Stanford University*

The Meaning of Place and the Loss of Place: Drawing from Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent*

Among the central experiences we have in common but have few words to describe are that of place and, equally, of locations that feel like no place. Is place merely a backdrop for our thoughts and actions or conversely an extraordinary setting, a Venice, we go to for this experience? Or does place play a more vital role in our everyday lives? One of the most powerful, and politically charged, answers to this question comes from Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent* that became the most cited work after 9/11, as the first great novel of global terrorism. Unlike most novels, rather than build a sense of place in which the characters and thus the reader connect to their surroundings, *The Secret Agent* explores what it means for characters to lose their attachment to their environment-- in order to show the dangers of abstract political, social and moral thinking. With Conrad as guide, and drawing on recent work in environmental psychology and philosophy, I identify the particular characteristics of locations that create a link with the self, and what it means to lack this connection. For emptiness, too, like place, occurs within the self, as in many modern non-places, in airports, in office building lobbies. By using photographs of locations in Conrad's novel I try to concretize the meaning of place -- and the cost of creating, through design, politics or inattention, environments where, like Conrad's characters, we cannot be at home in ourselves.

Gene Slater received a Master of Liberal Arts from Stanford in 2018. This paper draws on his studies at MIT with Kevin Lynch, who wrote the seminal *Image of the City*. For the last 40 years he has been helping create and finance such places as San Francisco's Mission Bay and re-use of the Ferry Building, Washington D.C.'s Anacostia Waterfront Initiative, San Diego's Gas Lamp Quarter, and former public housing sites in New Orleans. Gene has a B.A. from Columbia (summa cum laude), fellowship to the London School of Economics, Master of City Planning from MIT and Loeb Fellowship from Harvard University's Graduate School of Design.

Tamara Taylor, *Dominican University of California*

From Revolution to the Curtailing of Abortion Rights in El Salvador

Using El Salvador as a case study, this paper examines how women became involved in the revolutionary movement of the late 1970s, and how their political activism continued to evolve from the opportunities that they were offered during the war. Opportunities for increased activism and leadership were groundbreaking for women who were fighting alongside the guerilla armies, allowing women from different classes to band together against brutal wartime tactics. However, it is perplexing to observe that the most sweeping anti-abortion legislation was codified as part of El Salvador's Constitution and enforced with fervor in the years following the war. This paper explores how the anti-abortion sentiments became front and center following the war and how women's rights to abortion were shut out of the political discourse when a strong anti-abortion movement took hold of El Salvador in the 1990s. This paper will also discuss how abortion continues to this day illegally, and how access to abortion is dependent on a woman's class and status. Ultimately, the women prosecuted for abortions in El Salvador are mainly accused and convicted of late-term abortions, even when the evidence in the record cannot be conclusively distinguished from the results of a miscarriage. Although El Salvador's political situation is unique, conclusions can be drawn more broadly as to the implications that can arise when countries ban legal abortions, and the effects that this has on women who are accused and convicted of illegal abortions.

Tamara began her higher education journey at UC Santa Cruz as an Environmental Studies major. While she attended this school, she also joined the Feminist Majority student group on campus and became friends with students who were Women's Studies majors, an academic discipline that also intrigued her. For her graduate education, she has been fortunate to attend Dominican University to focus on Women's Studies as her primary major, and specifically study women in leadership.

Jesa Townsend, *Johns Hopkins University*

Social Justice, How Dangerous

Michael Jackson's album *Dangerous* addresses issues of social justice relating to Black politics in the nineties by utilizing the arts to address matters of contention. Jackson propelled new social norms and fostered societal commonality through music. Further, as shown in his album *Dangerous*, the icon served as a living example of Black Excellences' capabilities - triumph over societal

circumstances. Art is one of society's most invaluable narratives. It communicates past life to the present and present life to future generations -our joys, hopes, trials and tribulations. Music is often a key component of social movements for it elicits a call and response -beckoning for a reckoning. It was Jackson's ability to reach across societal boundaries that points to the arts being the ultimate unifier. Dangerous encompasses music that is unbound by musical genres thereby presenting issues of social justice to varying social demographics. The arts are tools of advocacy, the artists behind them activists and the communities created in their wake, a collective of adherents. Perhaps the revolution was never meant to be televised and instead we've been listening to it all along via the likes of Michael Jackson -Heal the Earth, before we are Gone too Soon. How many more times should America play these tunes? History and its songs repeat -Keep the Faith.

Jesa Townsend is an Artist and Public Arts Advocate whose work has been featured in university, city, non-profit, private and hotel collections. She has partnered with public art commissions throughout the country and spoken on the value of the arts within the context of social justice and economic stimulus initiatives. Jesa is a founding member of the Arts & Culture Advisory Council of Nevada State College and currently serves on the board.

David Vosburg, *Johns Hopkins University*

Heresy, Prophecy and Community: Power and the Subversive Potential of Ideas

Ideas are full of divergent potential by nature, forging new connections and realigning forces into novel solutions. As such, they are perceived as problems rather than possibilities by established power. History threads a consistent line of authority, once held, eschewing appropriate limits and seeking self-preservation above other ends. This trend holds regardless of who may wield power, or by what means they might do so. This is a particularly pernicious threat to humanity's best ideas: those committed to the common good. Fortunately, history also wends ways by which ideas can subvert the suppressive force of power. Through individuals willing to live heretically to power, through voices willing to speak prophetically of another way, and through communities committed to the common good, power finds its short-sighted, self-perpetuating ends up-ended.

David is a creative director living and working in Chicago, IL with his wife and son. He received his Master of Liberal Arts from Johns Hopkins University in 2018.

Michele D. Walfred, *University of Delaware*

Truth or Tactic: Fear imagery and the mid-19th century immigrant

Who is eligible to participate in the American story? Who is excluded from this process? Since our nation's birth, xenophobic critics of immigration artfully employed particular techniques - words and especially images - to isolate certain groups of individuals arriving in America. Depicting and presenting immigrants in a negative light using invasion symbolism, assigning sub-human characteristics, and repeating negative stereotypes often succeeded in shaping a negative public opinion toward immigrants. This presentation will examine the cartoons drawn by Thomas Nast, lead artist for New York-based Harper's Weekly and George F. Keller's work for the San Francisco Wasp. The visual treatment of Chinese immigrants played a significant role in the success of the Chinese Exclusion Act, a federal mandate signed into law in 1882. As a result, the Chinese became the first people banned to enter America solely due to their race and country of origin. The act remained in effect until 1941. Today, the nationalities of immigrants and refugees vying for inclusion in the American story have changed, but the fear-stoking script is eerily similar. In the context of history, what is presented to the public as "truth" can be clearly seen as a "tactic," and an effective one at that. Ms. Walfred's website "Illustrating Chinese Exclusion" (www.thomasnastcartoons.com) presents this visual history as an education resource to a modern, global audience - one which has climbed to 416,000 views by the end January 2019.

Michele Walfred is a communications specialist at the University of Delaware and is 2014 MALS graduate at UD. An interest in journalism history, editorial art, and her ancestor's experiences as immigrants propelled Michele to examine how immigrants were depicted in the political art of the time. "Illustrating Chinese Exclusion" (www.thomasnastcartoons.com) is the result of this examination. The parallels to the current political debate on immigration has brought steady and growing attention to her MALS project.