



UNIVERSITY OF  
NOTRE DAME

ARTS & LETTERS



# 2024

## SENIOR THESIS PROJECTS

Study everything. Do anything.<sup>SM</sup>



*Dear colleagues, students, and friends,*

I am delighted to present this College of Arts & Letters book that highlights 193 original works of research and creativity by 190 seniors. These yearlong projects showcase the Class of 2024's academic prowess and innovative skills, as well as its fascinating array of scholarly interests.

The wide-ranging scope of research includes projects that examine presidential populist rhetoric, the relationship between wilderness and accessibility, analytic class number formula, the impact of Taylor Swift's tour on the hotel industry, implementation of a campus carbon food-labeling pilot program, and dark matter.

Seniors also demonstrated their talents and imagination through the development of a comedy television show, design of dinnerware, transformation of language in environmental lawsuits into poetry, and a performance of classical and musical theatre works by Laitman, Mahler, and Bernstein.

Many of these seniors — who started their college careers when COVID-19 restrictions were in place — traveled throughout the nation and around the world to inform their research and enrich their experiences.

I'm heartened when students say their thesis/creative project is a defining part of their undergraduate careers. For some, it even shapes their future in surprising ways — like Anna Bachiochi, a philosophy major and A&L pre-health supplementary major, it also led to an exciting academic opportunity prior to medical school.

"I have grown as a researcher, writer, and philosophical thinker. I loved the project so much that I applied to a few philosophy master's programs for my gap year before medical school," she wrote in her reflection on her thesis. "I got full funding to one and will be doing that next year! I don't know if I would have made that decision if it were not for my thesis."

As is the case each year, I applaud the many faculty members who generously shared their expertise and goodwill to help make the enriching experiences described in this book possible.

To the Class of 2024, I am so proud of all you have accomplished and am grateful for your many contributions to the College and our University. I wish each of you blessings as you continue to learn, grow, create, and make the world a better place.

*Sarah A. Mustillo*

Sarah A. Mustillo

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

**Joy Agwu**

Hometown: Bowie, Maryland

- Major: Philosophy
- Minor: Constitutional Studies
- Sorin Scholars
- Advisor: Joshua Seachris

## Building the Ideal Life: Understanding the Relationship Between Meaning and Happiness

My thesis strives to define meaning and happiness while considering how these worthwhile pursuits may be related. In this philosophical dialogue, college roommates Koko and Zaiya consider whether meaning is objective or subjective.

After agreeing that it is objective, they ponder how this characterization may affect one's pursuit of happiness. They ultimately realize that, while these valuable life goals exist independently, both are crucial to flourishing and achieving eudaimonia.

For years, I have had a special interest in positive psychology and, as a college senior bound to enter the "real world," I am personally invested in knowing what constitutes a meaningful life. Thus, I thought researching the connection between happiness and meaning would be a challenging but worthwhile project.

**Micaela Alvarado**

Hometown: Santa Ana, California

- Majors: Film, Television, and Theatre and Sociology
- Advisors: Anne García-Romero and Terrance Brown

***Elevated Heights***

I developed my own half-hour comedy television show, *Elevated Heights*, inspired by Quinta Brunson's *Abbott Elementary*. I created a pitch deck/document and wrote a pilot episode. I also wrote a paper outlining the research I did for my show world's themes, topics, and culture, in addition to a TV script analysis as part of the pilot and show bible process.

My favorite TV series is *Abbott Elementary* because of how much representation it gives me — a Mexican-American first-gen student from a working-class community who attended public school my entire life. I wanted to create something like this for my own community.

**Sophia Alvarez**

Hometown: Menlo Park, California

- Major: Psychology
- Supplementary Major: Education, Schooling, and Society
- Minor: Classical Studies: Heritage
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program
- Advisors: Nicole McNeil, Michelle Luna, and Jill Pentimonti

## Differences in Small Group versus Whole Group Implementation of a Shared Book Reading Intervention

My study examines the effect of group size on shared book reading in preschool classrooms by comparing small and whole group settings. Anticipated findings suggest a greater frequency of child participation and fewer behavior management techniques in small groups, while whole groups exhibit more frequent scaffolding and teacher prompt expansion.

Pentimonti et al. (2023) found that students in the whole group condition made greater gains in early literacy skills than those in small groups. As a tutor, I've become accustomed to delivering instruction in small groups. I wanted to explore the benefits and drawbacks of different group sizes in language and literacy instruction.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts' Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP).*

**Lauren Amrol**

Hometown: Columbia, South Carolina

- Major: Economics
- Minors: Collaborative Innovation, Sustainability, and Digital Marketing
- Sheedy Family Program in Economy, Enterprise, and Society
- Advisor: Peter Burns

## Carbon Food-Print: Estimating Food-Related Scope 3 Emissions of Notre Dame's Campus Dining Halls to Research the Effectiveness of a Carbon Labeling Program on Carbon-Conscious Consumption

Food and agriculture are responsible for nearly one-third of all global greenhouse gas emissions, and are leading drivers of biodiversity loss. Changing how we eat through awareness and education has the potential to be a powerful method of addressing the ecological crises threatening the planet.

This project implements a carbon food-labeling pilot program at the University of Notre Dame to increase student awareness of their food's environmental impact, and to determine if carbon labels induce changes in students' food choice.

We hope to understand if and how sustainability motivates students' food choices and empowers them to act to reduce their personal carbon footprint. Ultimately, the goal is to determine if carbon labeling is effective for University sustainability goals.

**Will Attig**

Hometown: Portland, Oregon

- Majors: Program of Liberal Studies and Chinese
- Advisor: Denis Robichaud

## A Reconsideration of Plotinian Reasoning: A Case Study of the Problem of Evil

My essay seeks to build off of work done on Plotinus by Albert Camus in his master's thesis "Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism." Through the lens of Plotinus' solution to the problem of evil, I examine his unique logical method and conclude with a discussion of imagery; a stylistic unifier of Plotinus and Camus.

I first encountered Plotinus in Professor Denis Robichaud's Metaphysics and Epistemology class. To me, the work of Plotinus is, in many ways, the philosophical culmination of the entire Greek tradition. I like the distinctive way he expresses thoughts and I wanted to challenge myself by writing about a topic I had little prior experience with.

**Anna Bachiochi**

Hometown: Walpole, Massachusetts

- Major: Philosophy
- Supplementary Major: A&L Pre-Health
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisors: Don Howard and Therese Cory

## Medical Metaphors in Hildegard von Bingen's *Causae et Curae* and Their Significance for Contemporary Discussions on the Medical Body

I examine two medical metaphors in Hildegard von Bingen's medieval medical text — the human as cosmos and the body as plant — and discuss the resulting philosophical vision of the medical body. I then turn to an analysis of a pervasive contemporary metaphor — the body as machine — and talk about its philosophical origins and its implications for medical practice today. Finally, I discuss a movement toward organicism in contemporary philosophy of biology and compare the resulting vision to Hildegard's.

I argue that an understanding of the human body as organism, rather than as machine, is more accurate and lends itself to a more holistic practice of medicine. I also discuss the importance of metaphor in our understanding of the human body and the way we treat it.

I was inspired by the work of Dr. Victoria Sweet, a physician and science historian. She credited Hildegard with influencing how she practiced medicine. I knew then I wanted to examine a medieval medical text. The body has been a topic of philosophical interest to me for a while, so I noticed Hildegard's vision of the body and her poetic descriptions of it. The time I have dedicated to thinking about the medical body will influence the way I see and treat patients.

I am grateful for the Glynn Family Honors Programs's thesis requirement. This project has been one of my favorite aspects of my undergraduate experience. It has been challenging, and I have grown as a researcher, writer, and philosophical thinker. I loved the project so much that I applied to a few philosophy master's programs for my gap year before medical school. I got a full scholarship to one and will be doing that next year! I don't know if I would have made that decision if it were not for my thesis.

*Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.*



**Clare Barloon**

Hometown: Bethesda, Maryland

- Major: Art History
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: French
- Advisor: Elyse Speaks

## Figuring Slow Violence in the Art of Cecilia Vicuña and Minia Biabiany

My thesis looks at Cecilia Vicuña and Minia Biabiany, two women artists whose works address slow violence in the forms of environmental destruction and the legacy of colonization.

I explore the strategies they employ to speak about those forms of destruction that are not easily legible or contained within a singular narrative. I posit the two artists are engaged with both picturing and counteracting what Rob Nixon termed the “formless form” of slow violence.

I’m interested in the ways in which art can creatively respond to climate change, environmental degradation, and structural violence. These issues call for a radical change in every aspect of our international status quo, and I feel that looking to art may help us to imagine an alternate relationship to land, history, and our future.

I traveled to Paris, France, to view an exhibition by Biabiany, and traveled to Guadeloupe, France, to interview her and explore the landscape she references in her work.

*Received an Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts’ Research and Materials Grant and traveled to France.*



### **Analina Barnes**

Hometown: New Orleans, Louisiana

- Major: Anthropology
- Supplementary Major: Peace Studies
- Notre Dame Scholars Program and Notre Dame Posse Scholars Program
- Advisor: Alex E. Chávez

## **When I Open Up My Suit: New Orleans Black Masking Traditions and the Creation of Identity**

Rooted in issues of race, indigeneity, spirituality, and space, this thesis explores the role of masking traditions in the development of identity for Black communities in New Orleans.

Ultimately, masking is a culture of survival and celebration, centered on a confrontation between African (-American) identity and legacies of enslavement and segregation. This ethnographic project draws on interviews with masking practitioners, as well as the author's own lived experience in the context of New Orleans masking.

As a born-and-raised New Orleanian, I have grown up entrenched in my city's masking culture. Although the culture is aesthetically striking, it harbors complexities that are not always apparent to outside observers. I want to give voice to those who practice Black masking as a way of life.

I traveled to New Orleans during fall break to conduct interviews, and again during Mardi Gras to engage in participant observation.

Although the final product of this thesis will be in the form of a written paper, the culture discussed throughout is heavily rooted in aesthetic and musical traditions. I have had the privilege of witnessing this culture at work in person, and I would encourage anyone interested in the topic to explore video and audio or, if they get the chance, to see it in person. My words can only do so much to capture the life embodied in New Orleans Black masking culture.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts and twice traveled to New Orleans.*

**Annika Barron**

Hometown: Wheaton, Illinois

- Major: Neuroscience and Behavior
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: Catholic Social Tradition
- Glynn Family Honors Program and Kellogg International Scholars Program
- Advisor: Nancy Michael

## Imprisoned Minds: A Neurobiological Perspective on Incarceration, Rehabilitation, and Justice

This paper seeks to evaluate why restorative justice provides a more rehabilitative alternative to current carceral systems using a theoretical framework of obligate neurobiological function based on development, plasticity, and attachment.

This discussion is rooted in two case study examples of existing restorative practices: a youth diversion program in St. Joseph County, Indiana, and the National Mediation Service supported by federal policies in Norway.

After volunteering in youth diversion and restorative justice programs, I began to understand the failures of the justice system to provide opportunities for growth and facilitate reintegration into the community. Studying neuroscience has challenged me to consider the ways justice paradigms might incorporate an understanding of neurobiology to promote rehabilitation.

In January 2023 and 2024, I traveled to Norway to interview staff and volunteers at the National Mediation Service, as well as researchers, prison officials, NGO leaders, and elected officials to better understand the history and function of Norway's more rehabilitative national approach to incarceration and justice.

*Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program and the Nanovic Institute for European Studies and traveled to Norway.*

**Claire Bass**

Hometown: Portland, Oregon

- Majors: Greek and Roman Civilization and Biological Sciences
- Glynn Family Honors Program, Kennedy Scholars, Notre Dame Scholars Program, and Trustey Family Scholars Program
- Advisor: Ronald Hellenthal

## The Effects of Human Land Use and Stream Restoration on the Benthic Insect Populations of Juday Creek

I analyzed the long-term efficacy of the Juday Creek restoration by studying insect communities and sedimentation of the restored and unrestored reaches, as well as two reaches upstream of the golf course construction site.

The four locations within the golf course property were found to support greater insect populations relative to the unrestored upstream sites. Ultimately, stream restoration was found to be relatively effective but unable to combat overall watershed effects.

Human land causes drastic decreases in benthic invertebrate populations. Short-term monitoring of stream restoration programs and invertebrate populations is common, although few studies analyze the long-term efficacy of stream restoration. Therefore, this study informs local management strategies and encourages restoration at a larger scale to be economically and ecologically sustainable.

*Received funding from the College of Science's Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships and the Glynn Family Honors Program.*

**Kyle Bass**

Hometown: Davidson, North Carolina

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: French
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Marinho Bertanha

## Do Cigarette Taxes Influence Infant Health? External Validity of the LATE Parameter and Extrapolation to Hypothetical Tax Levels

I used Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data on all live births in the United States from 1989 to 2002 to explore variation in the impact of maternal smoking on infant birth weight while employing state cigarette tax levels as a multivalued instrument.

While traditional analyses assume that effects are constant across all mothers, I relax these assumptions to analyze local average treatment effect (LATE) heterogeneity across mothers with differing demographic characteristics and unobserved propensities to comply with cigarette tax changes.

Policy-relevant treatment effects and their external validity are ongoing topics of research among econometricians, which have important implications for economic policymaking. This intersection of theory and empirical application with real-world significance is a complex yet rewarding field of inquiry that uses economics to promote the common good.

**Mia Bellafante**

Hometown: Downingtown,  
Pennsylvania

- Majors: Political Science  
and Psychology
- Advisor: David Campbell

## Relationship Between Voting Behavior and Mental Health of Young People

Voter turnout among young people has increased greatly in the past several years. Simultaneously, rates of depression and anxiety have skyrocketed.

My study investigated these seemingly competing trends by surveying students to determine the connection between mental health and political engagement. Results indicated that, while there was no actual connection between political activity and depression levels, there was a correlation between high levels of depression and perceiving oneself as politically inactive.

This project elegantly connected my interests in political science and psychology by studying how trends in these two spheres affect one another. In addition, the findings are important because they help reveal obstacles to participating in politics, which can help to increase participation among all citizens.

**Michael Bender**

Hometown: Plano, Texas

- Majors: History and Medieval Studies
- Advisor: Sarah Shortall

## Soldiers of France or Soldiers of God?: Foch, Grandmaison, and the Genesis of the French Cult of the Offensive

This project explores the philosophical and pedagogical influences that defined the military theories of French Gen. Ferdinand Foch and Louis de Grandmaison in the decade preceding the Great War.

Often identified as the chief architects of the French *attaque à outrance* (attack to excess), they argued the importance of war's moral and metaphysical realities. Such a belief can be traced back to their Jesuit schooling, during which they both read the philosophy of counter-enlightenment thinkers such as Joseph de Maistre.

I traveled to Vanves, France, to view documents related to the early life and education of Foch and Grandmaison. I also visited the *École de guerre* in Paris, where these men taught prior to the war, as well as *Les Invalides*, where Gen. Foch is buried.

I chose this topic because few have conducted in-depth research on the military theories of these generals, who are often blamed for the excessive French casualties of 1914. Some posit that their theories were based on ignorance or rabid antipositivism, but I thought there might be more to the story.

*Received funding from the Nanovic Institute for European Studies and traveled to France.*

**Sarah Bender**

Hometown: Glen Allen, Virginia

- Majors: Political Science and Statistics
- Advisor: A. James McAdams

## Loyalty is the Duty: The Codification and Weaponization of National Identity in the Visegrád Group

My thesis analyzes how the Visegrád Group nations incorporated national identity into their constitutions following the collapse of communism.

I conduct a country-by-country investigation into how populists have manipulated conceptions of national identity and constitutional provisions themselves to advance their political goals.

This research suggests that, following a regime change, nations can best mitigate against populist influence by drafting constitutions quickly and with equal attention to each branch of government.

As a Polish citizen, I've been alarmed how easily populists have destroyed the independence of the judicial system and the rule of law in Poland. I was motivated to conduct this research to determine why the Visegrád nations have had different levels of success with democratic institutions.



**Hannah Bergin**

Hometown: Manhattan Beach,  
California

- Major: Biochemistry
- Minor: Philosophy, Politics,  
and Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program

**COVID-19 and Ethnonational Conflict**

I explore the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on ethnonational conflict through comparative analysis of COVID-19 in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland; Israel and the Palestinian Territories; and Armenia and Azerbaijan.

I first encountered ethnonational studies and comparative politics while studying abroad in London and have enjoyed diving deeper into the subject through individual research.

Additionally, the pandemic was a significant event in my life, and it has been personally meaningful to study COVID-19 from a global perspective — to learn more about the experiences and challenges of others during the same time.

**Zachary (Zach) Bergman**

Hometown: Darien, Illinois

- Majors: Psychology and Philosophy
- Minor: Poverty Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Kristin Valentino

## Private Speech in Maltreated Children During a Frustration Task: The Long-Term Impact of the Reminiscing and Emotion Training (RET) Intervention on Children's Self-Regulation

The Reminiscing and Emotion Training (RET) intervention was created to support the development of maltreated children through the improvement of mothers' sensitive guidance during reminiscing.

The present study evaluated whether RET impacted children's private speech five years after the intervention. Post-hoc Bonferroni comparisons revealed that RET children engaged in significantly more strategic planning than nonmaltreated children. This finding suggests that RET may have positive, long-term effects on children's self-regulation during a challenging task.

While coding several of the observational frustration tasks in my research lab, I noticed that children engaged in private speech to self-regulate. However, our lab had not yet coded this data. I saw this as an opportunity to develop a new coding scheme to measure children's self-regulation during these tasks.

*Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.*

**Elizabeth Bernath**

Hometown: Cleveland, Ohio

- Majors: History and Political Science
- Minor: Portuguese and Brazilian Studies
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program
- Advisor: Paul Ocobock

## ***Wunderkammers* and the Curiosity of Victorian-Era British Museums**

*Wunderkammers*, or “Cabinets of Curiosities,” represent an early effort by Europeans to understand the foreign worlds they encountered along imperial frontiers.

In Britain, Victorians would turn these private collections into public exhibits, establishing prominent institutions such as the Victoria & Albert Museum and the Pitt Rivers Museum. My thesis will analyze how these two museums were used as cultural tools for characterizing 19th-century Britons, nurturing the civilizing mission, and justifying European colonization.

Museums, and British museums in particular, are immensely contentious today, with debates surrounding the provenance of artifacts within their holdings. For my thesis topic, I chose to explore the establishment of public museums in Britain, and the implications for imperialism.

In May 2023, I traveled to London and worked in the National Art Library of the Victoria & Albert Museum. In January 2024, I traveled to London and worked in the Victoria & Albert Museum, and to Oxford, where I worked in the Balfour Library of the Pitt Rivers Museum. In both museums, I looked over archives and catalogs.

***Received funding from the Nanovic Institute of European Studies and the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts' Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP) and traveled to London and Oxford, England.***

**Margaret (Meg) Beuter**

Hometown: Nashville, Tennessee

- Majors: American Studies and English
- Minor: Education, Schooling, and Society
- Advisors: Thomas Tweed and Michael Macaluso

## Critical Literacy and Global Citizenship: Teaching African Migrant Experiences in the Elementary and Middle School Classrooms

My thesis in American Studies and Education, Schooling, and Society examines the creation, reception, and teaching of *When Stars are Scattered*, a 2020 graphic novel set in a Kenyan refugee camp.

I chose this topic to better understand how literature about forced migration can be incorporated into K-8 curricula. I conclude by asking if building empathy through critical literacy is possible, ultimately showing how *When Stars are Scattered* has empowered students to become agents of positive change.

I studied student responses to *When Stars are Scattered* my junior year, and fell in love with the book! I found it to be a powerful tool for reflecting students' own experiences and helping others learn about the challenges that their peers around the world experience — and what they could do to help.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts.*

**Samantha Blake**

Hometown: Eden Prairie, Minnesota

- Major: Neuroscience & Behavior
- Supplementary Major: Spanish
- Minor: Poverty Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: David R. Hyde

## The Role of Her9 in Retinal Regeneration in Zebrafish

My project characterizes retinal regeneration in zebrafish following the knockdown of the Her9 protein under two damage paradigms: constant intense light treatment, which models age-related macular degeneration; and N-methyl-D-aspartate (NMDA) damage, which models glaucoma.

Specifically, Her9 is hypothesized to be necessary for proliferation of the Müller glial cells in the damaged retina. Understanding the molecular pathways that underlie retinal regeneration will allow us to work toward regenerative therapies for those with degenerative retinal diseases.

I am interested in neural development and regeneration, and I enjoy research that aims to understand basic biological mechanisms that could be applied to therapies for human conditions. Investigating the genetics of zebrafish retinal regeneration that could eventually translate to treatments for human neurodegenerative retinal diseases is fulfilling.

Engaging in undergraduate research and completing a senior thesis has been rewarding. It has confirmed that I want to pursue a Ph.D. in neuroscience, beginning this fall.

*Received funding from the Center for Stem Cells and Regenerative Medicine's Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship.*

**Carolina Bolivar**

Hometown: Walpole, Massachusetts

- Major: English
- Supplementary Major: Education, Schooling, and Society
- Minor: Poverty Studies
- Advisor: Patrick Kirkland

## The Impact of Perceived Academic Rigor on Student Academic Self-Concept at the University of Notre Dame

We know that Notre Dame is an academically rigorous institution. Because of this, it can be easy to negate the ways that this rigor impacts students. My thesis explores the way that students' perceptions of academic rigor over the course of college impact their perception of self as students.

Through the collection of both survey and interview data, this work amplifies the voices of students in the hope of gaining a better picture of how these experiences differ and how they are similar.

As someone whose self-concept has been negatively and positively impacted by my studies at Notre Dame, I knew I wanted to explore this topic to understand other students' experiences better.

With this work, I hope to give those who have struggled a space to talk about their experiences. I also hope to give those who have persevered through difficult coursework a space to celebrate that success.

**Anne Marie Bollman**

Hometown: Houston, Texas

- Majors: Program of Liberal Studies and Theology
- Minor: History
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program
- Advisor: Ann Astell

## *Marie, Notre Espérance de Beauté: A Marian Response to the French Enlightenment*

I explore the theology and anthropology of Mary's Immaculate Conception as a response to the Enlightenment's rejection of original sin — all within the context of French culture.

In the first part, I examine Voltaire and Rousseau's reactions to Pascal's "paradoxical man." In the second, I use their shared vocabulary with that of the Immaculate Conception to show how Mary fulfills their desires for a "pure" and "childlike" human nature. Finally, in order for Mary to be a true response, I incorporate the theology of Mary, Mother of the Church, as well as her apparitions at Lourdes. She is the New Eve, who, far from some "eternal feminine," comes toward her children and draws us to herself and her Son.

Inspired by my love of France, Marian devotion, and lots of time thinking about "what it means to be human" in PLS, I chose to put all of these interests together as a kind of culmination of, and tribute to, my time at Our Lady's University.

After my semester in Angers, I spent a week in Paris to conduct research at the Bibliothèque National de France. I specifically consulted works on the Marian culture of France.

*Traveled to Paris, France.*

**Haley Brandt**

Hometown: Reston, Virginia

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Gender Studies and Italian
- Advisor: Erin Rossiter

## The Absence of Intersectional Policy-Making in Historically Homogenous States; An Analysis of Nordic Countries' Racist Response to Rising Immigration Rates

The Nordic region is characterized as a female utopia because of its ongoing efforts to achieve gender equality. However, the recent rise of ethnic minorities has demonstrated the countries' failure to apply these policies to non-white women.

I find that this response is due to their history as a racially homogenous population and inexperience with racial diversity. Furthermore, I propose an intersectional policy framework as a solution to the ineffectiveness of their gender policies.

The Nordic countries are widely known as the prime examples of liberal democracy. But for the past few decades, their commitment to the principles of liberal democracy has been eroding due to rising immigration rates. I wanted to figure out why their democratic institutions failed.



**Zachary (Zach) Brnich**

Hometown: Dillsburg, Pennsylvania

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Constitutional Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Richard Garnett

## Speech in the Digital Age: How Can and Should Government Regulate Social Media Platforms?

My thesis analyzes two current approaches to social media regulation: Section 230 reform, and state-level operating requirements. Ultimately, I find that neither is sufficient to respond to criticisms from Democrats and Republicans.

I posit that the best way forward is a system of both state-run and privately managed social media platforms, which will ensure access and freedom of expression for all while also incentivizing better content moderation.

I am heading to law school in the fall, and I have been fascinated by social media's influence and ability to bring the globe together for conversation. This topic lies at the intersection of both my interests, and I believe that finding a solution to social media regulation is critical for the future of online speech.

**Bridget Brown**

Hometown: Mequon, Wisconsin

- Major: Political Science
- International Security Studies Certificate
- Advisor: Andrew C. Gould

## Guns for Hire: Understanding State Acceptance of PMC Security Aid in Mali

Mali has emerged as a complex arena where a diverse range of international and domestic actors are jockeying for influence against the backdrop of the nation's prolonged political turmoil.

My thesis examines security dynamics in Mali in the face of terrorist and rebel threats, and works to elucidate the rationale behind the Malian government's pivot from bilateral aid provided by France to assistance from a private military company (PMC), the Wagner Group. A better understanding of the Malian case could yield valuable insights applicable to other states in the region grappling with analogous threats.

The selection of this research topic was motivated by my interests in international security and the francophone nations of the Sahel region. This area is characterized by an incredibly dynamic and evolving landscape, where I believe that concentrating on specific case studies can yield insights that are broadly applicable and illuminating for other contexts.

**Michael Bsales**

Hometown: Bloomfield, New Jersey

- Majors: Computer Science (BA) and Economics
- Advisor: Matthias Hoelzlein

## Parish or Perish: Catholic Adherence and Deaths of Despair

I am investigating a relationship between social support network effects and deaths of despair (suicide, alcohol related deaths, drug poisonings) by using Catholic adherence as a proxy for social networks and by using the public announcement of sexual abuse accusations against clergy as an instrument.

I was inspired to look at deaths of despair because of my Health Economics class, in which Professor Bill Evans talked extensively about the topic.

Further, a conversation with Maddy Johnson of the Church Properties Initiative at the Fitzgerald Institute for Real Estate led me to connect the social network effects of parishes to the deaths of despair hypothesis.



### Claire Burks

Hometown: Granger, Indiana

- Majors: Music (Concentration in Performance — Voice) and History
- Minor: Digital Marketing
- Advisors: Anne Slovin and Stephen Lancaster

## Senior Voice Recital

My one-hour recital featured music by Handel, Strauss, Liszt, Massenet, and various selections from musical theatre.

I chose this music because it spoke to me in one way or another. The Strauss set challenged me musically. The Handel *Salve Regina* was a little-known work dedicated to the blessed Virgin Mary. The Massenet aria is from a role I performed in Opera Notre Dame's 2024 production, and the Liszt has been a favorite of mine for a while. The musical theatre set features songs that shaped my past and express my hope for the future.

**Claire Burks**

Hometown: Granger, Indiana

- Majors: History and Music  
(Concentration in Performance  
— Voice)
- Minor: Digital Marketing
- Advisor: Katlyn Carter

## A '355': Female Spies of the American Revolution

This thesis explores the work of three female patriots who assisted with espionage during the American Revolution, Anna Strong, Elizabeth Burgin, and Lydia Darragh.

Whether they were sending signals through a clothesline, aiding the escape of more than 200 prisoners of war, or overhearing British soldiers strategizing in the parlor, their common role as unassuming domestics and civilians behind enemy lines allowed them to render invaluable service to the American cause.

While there has been a recent increase in scholarship surrounding espionage during the Revolution, female spies continue to be overlooked. I wanted to highlight the role that women played in this story that, due to its secret and “dishonorable” nature, was never meant to be told.

I visited the Special Collections department at Firestone Library at Princeton University, to view the Benjamin Tallmadge Collection. Tallmadge was the spymaster for the Culper Spy Ring, which ran out of Long Island and New York City during the American Revolution. His collection contained copies of letters that he and George Washington had exchanged regarding the spy ring, as well as a copy of the dictionary he had made for the cipher he created.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts' Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP) and traveled to New Jersey.*

**Mary Clare Cameron**

Hometown: San Juan Capistrano,  
California

- Major: Program of Liberal Studies
- Minor: Constitutional Studies
- Kennedy Scholars
- Advisor: Arman Schwartz

## The Poetics of Allusion: T.S. Eliot and Jorge Luis Borges

My thesis compares the extensive allusion in the writings of T.S. Eliot and Jorge Luis Borges, focusing on Eliot's poem "The Waste Land" and Borges' short story "The Immortal."

The paradigmatic allusive form of these works reconsiders the depersonalized poet's role and the relationship between literary tradition and original innovation. I conducted archival research at the University of Cambridge on materials owned and annotated by Eliot.

As a Program of Liberal Studies major educated in the canonical Western intellectual tradition, I found these two works, in which nearly every line is a reference to another writer, to be fascinating, kaleidoscopic microcosms of literature's capacity for interactive exchanges and repetitions across vast ranges of time, space, and individuals.

I am deeply grateful for the support of my Kennedy Scholars Program directors, Alice Tyrell and Vittorio Montemaggi; my advisor, Arman Schwartz; and my peers in PLS.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts and the Kennedy Scholars Fellowship and traveled to England.*

**Aryel Carreon**

Hometown: Grand Prairie, Texas

- Major: Theology
- Minor: Philosophy
- Advisor: Jay Martin

## A Crumbling Multiverse — A Theological Response to Many Worlds

Diving into the many-worlds interpretation (MWI) of quantum mechanics, one becomes lost in a sea of existential dread due to its stark philosophical implication: Humanity has no free will.

When investigating what it means to possess freedom, one can find a response within the realm of theology which not only preserves our agency but also provides an account which pushes back on the many-worlds interpretation.

Though the MWI of quantum mechanics can seem ridiculous to the regular person, due to the amount of discussion generated both in physics and philosophy, it is only appropriate for theology to take a proper look at it as well, especially given the lack of current literature on this subject.

**Sofia Casillas**

Hometown: Lone Tree, Colorado

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Latino Studies
- Minor: Business Economics
- Latino Studies Scholars Program
- Advisor: Luis Fraga

## The Legislative Politics of the 1975 Voting Rights Act

I am tracking how the Voting Rights Act was passed, as well as the ensuing impact of Section 5 on Latino communities.

I have been researching it since I was a first-year student with Professor Luis Fraga.



**Jessica Castillo**

Hometown: Newark, New Jersey

- Major: Sociology
- Minors: Business Economics and Education, Schooling, and Society
- Transformational Leaders Program
- Advisor: Calvin Zimmermann

## Resource Utilization and Accessibility Among First-Generation College Students

This project seeks to understand how first-generation students access and use resources at the University of Notre Dame and how the use of resources or lack thereof impacts their experience as first-generation college students.

Awareness and utilization of resources can significantly impact students learning to navigate college. First-generation students struggle to access and utilize resources, which can affect their academic success and retention.

I chose this topic because, as a first-generation student, I had my own experience and journey here at Notre Dame, and resources and people have significantly impacted my journey.

This project has allowed me to independently delve into the research field. Although I have participated as a research assistant in other projects, this project allowed me to explore my research interest and further develop my research and writing skills.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts' Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP).*



## Ashley Cho

Hometown: Torrance, California

- Majors: Sociology and Accountancy
- Advisor: Lyn Spillman

## Changes in Wealth Perception with a Change in Social Networks

I personally noticed several differences in perceptions of wealth since coming to Notre Dame, and was curious if students from different backgrounds felt similar to me.

*Received funding from the Department of Sociology's Eisch Endowment for Excellence.*

**Sophie Chorek**

Hometown: Fairfield, Connecticut

- Major: Anthropology
- Advisor: Susan Guise Sheridan

## Health and Violence: A Bioarchaeological Analysis of Stress Indicators and Antemortem Cranial Trauma at Early Bronze Age Bab edh-Dhra

This research focuses on the bioarchaeological analysis of 65 crania for trauma, specifically cranial depression fractures and general stress indicators to see if there is a correlation between stress and violence at Bab edh-Dhra.

The general stress indicators in this study — porotic hyperostosis and cribra orbitalia — were analyzed with a more standardized scoring method, the Bone Porous Lesion Evaluation (BoPLE) form from Rinaldo et al. (2019).

I chose this topic to combine my academic interests in trauma and stress that an individual in the past may have experienced. Studying these topics in bioarchaeology can provide insight into lived experience in the past.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts' Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP).*

**Meghan Chouanard**

Hometown: Independence, Minnesota

- Major: Biochemistry
- Minor: Sociology
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Erika Summers-Effler

## The Caretaking of Medically Fragile Children

My research is an ethnographic study done in partnership with a specialty hospital dedicated to providing respite care to medically fragile children — those with medical conditions that require 24-hour support from skilled caretakers

Through observation and interviews, I have developed theories about important skills related to patient autonomy, community and identity safety, and communication as it pertains to the work done by nurses and support staff in the organization.

Working with this organization has taught me the importance of utilizing specific interpersonal skills when working with pediatric patients, especially those with the special circumstances that come with being medically fragile. As I begin medical school next fall, I plan to apply these skills to my career as a pediatrician.

**Dorrian Cohen**

Hometown: Poughquag, New York

- Major: Biological Sciences
- Supplementary Major: Theology
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Shaun Lee

## The Last of Fung-Us: Evaluating the Antifungal Activity And Mechanism of Action of a Synthetic Enterocin Peptide Library

Due to climate change, fungi living across the planet have recently begun to evolve to survive in incrementally higher and higher temperature environments. In the last decade, some fungi have evolved to survive above 37 degrees Celsius — the temperature of the human body — which allows them to cause diseases in humans.

Using a library of peptides that have previously been shown to be effective against bacteria and parasites, I have determined the peptide that is most effective against the clinically relevant fungal pathogen *Cryptococcus neoformans*, and provided insight into that peptide's mechanism of action.

This work has the potential to have massive implications for the development of new and innovative treatments for the rising threat of fungal infections.

It has also been one of the most fulfilling components of my undergraduate experience and extremely formative for my career discernment as I pursue an M.D./Ph.D. dual degree.

*Received funding from the College of Science's Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships and the Glynn Family Honors Program.*

**David Couri**

Hometown: Peoria, Illinois

- Majors: Political Science and Finance
- Advisor: Susan Rosato

## Sportswashing: Cleansing the Stains of Autocratic Regimes

My thesis centers around exploring the concept of sportswashing, generally referred to as the use of sports or sporting events by states to cleanse or improve a damaged reputation.

I focused the use of sportswashing within high-profile sporting events — such as the Olympics or World Cup — to create a framework that can be used to label state actions in the future.

My interest in sportswashing was first raised in the lead-up to the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar and the creation of the Saudi Arabian-funded LIV Golf. I wrote a paper on the topic for Professor Susan Rosato's junior seminar class and really enjoyed it, which prompted my interest to conduct further research.

I would like to give a special thanks to Mark Robison, the political science and peace studies librarian at Hesburgh Libraries, for his help with my research. I could never have found any of the sources I used without his assistance.

**Claire Crafts**

Hometown: San Juan Capistrano,  
California

- Major: Psychology
- Minors: Business Economics and Philosophy, Religion, and Literature
- Glynn Family Honors Program, Suzanne and Walter Scott Scholars Program
- Advisor: Daniel Lapsley

## Moderators of Loss in Emerging Adulthood: A Positive Psychology Approach

This project examines the influence of purpose and meaning, spirituality, and prosocial behavior on reducing the negative impacts of loss. Bereavement and similar stressful life events that cause grief are associated with negative outcomes such as poor school performance and concentration, increased substance use, emotional problems, and other health issues in young adults.

We hypothesize that the deleterious influence of bereavement loss on adjustment will be moderated by a sense of purpose and meaning, prosocial behavior, and spirituality/religiosity.

In the long term, my goal is to contribute to the development of a psychological framework — accounting for the uniqueness of individuals and their experiences — that realistically examines the relationship between suffering and flourishing and how they can coexist.

*Received funding from the Scott Family Scholarship.*

**Megan Cromie**

Hometown: Allendale, New Jersey

- Majors: History and Political Science
- Advisor: Elizabeth Köll

## 'Too Big To Fail': Voices of the 1979/1980 Chrysler Bailout

My thesis explores how the Chrysler Corporation, the United States government, and the United Auto Workers worked together to bail out Chrysler in 1979-1980. The issue of the bailout was incredibly contentious across all groups and required months of discussions and compromises across the three groups.

The three main groups involved all had different objectives and goals going into the bailout, further complicating the process of reaching an agreement. There were also issues since there was no clear consensus within each respective group. Conversations and compromises were crucial to reach an outcome that the majority of those involved were happy with. The debates surrounding the bailout were dominated by charismatic leaders.

I chose this topic because I was interested in seeing how Chrysler was able to secure one of the first major government-funded bailouts. This thesis allowed me to have a greater understanding of what goes on behind the scenes when a corporation is looking for financial backing from the government. It also showed me more about the complexity behind government bailouts and the contention that emerges both between and within the groups involved.



**Nick Daniel**

Hometown: College Park, Maryland

- Major: International Economics (Concentration in Arabic)
- Supplementary Major: A&L Pre-Health
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Santosh Kumar

## Factors Associated with Childhood Diarrheal Diseases and Use of Oral Rehydration Therapy in Jordan

I investigate factors associated with childhood diarrheal diseases. Further, I investigate factors associated with knowledge of and administration of proper treatment.

Knowledge of proper health practices was higher for urban households, internet users, and households of Jordanian nationality. Among those with this knowledge, households with improved water sources were more likely to treat their child using oral rehydration therapy.

I wanted to work on a project at the intersection of health and policy with a focus on a Middle Eastern country. I studied abroad in Jordan in high school, and I sought to learn more about the country by focusing my thesis on it.

**Carmela D'Antuono**

Hometown: Dayton, Maryland

- Majors: Spanish and Biological Sciences
- Minor: Sociology
- Advisor: Juan Vitulli

## Un Esquema para Analizar el cine Chileno Contemporáneo (An Outline for Analyzing Contemporary Chilean Cinema)

Chilean cinema, as an art form capable of taking into account political society and the environment, has gone through a great transition after the nation's military dictatorship ended in 1990.

The analyzed films (focusing on crime/law, education, politics, social class, and gender) exemplify the changes in contemporary Chilean cinema resulting from the dictatorship. The trauma of the dictatorship created a collective memory for the entire country of Chile, and therefore a more centralized cultural identity.

After studying abroad in Chile, it was apparent that the dictatorship has affected all aspects of Chilean life. Analyzing films allowed me to use a common form of art to gain a better understanding of the long-lasting effects of the dictatorship that I witnessed firsthand.

**Natalie Daskal**

Hometown: Chicago, Illinois

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Constitutional Studies, Data Science, and Hesburgh Program in Public Service
- Advisor: Matt Hall

## Supreme Court (Mis)Perceptions

My study is a survey which asks respondents about their perceptions of the U.S. Supreme Court. My thesis is that perceptions of Supreme Court voting behavior do not align with reality for the Court as a whole and that, moreover, correcting misperceptions of the Supreme Court's polarization reduces perceptions of the Court's polarization and blaming polarization on out-party justices, while increasing the Court's perceived legitimacy.

Since high school, I've been fascinated with the Supreme Court, specifically its role in American democracy as the apolitical branch. However, that special status has seemingly disappeared in the eyes of the public. I am personally fascinated by this reality and believe it is of phenomenal importance for our democracy.

I have greatly enjoyed my thesis experience, working with Professor Matt Hall, reading fascinating work on the Supreme Court, legitimacy, and perceptions, and working through the process of setting up a study, interpreting results, and writing a long form academic article.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts.*

**Ava DeCroix**

Hometown: Middleton, Wisconsin

- Major: Computer Science (BA)
- Minor: Collaborative Innovation
- Glynn Family Honors Program and iTREDS Program
- Advisor: Ann-Marie Conrado

## The Show Must Go On: Addressing The Unique Challenges of Non-Professional Performing Arts Productions

My thesis explores the problem space of non-professional performing arts productions with a focus on reimagining the use of technology to facilitate organization and communication, utilizing a design-thinking methodology to ground the research and inform the development of a novel digital solution. It forms a real-world case study on digital collaboration and communication in the performing arts sector, proposing a way to ensure that the show (as we know it must) goes on.

As someone who grew up very involved in the performing arts and has a deep love for them, I was excited to be able to do a project where I could use both my technical skills and my design research skills to help improve the complicated process of putting on a show.

I've had an incredible time working on this project, and I've loved feeling the ownership of taking an idea and turning it into a real, tangible research output. I'm grateful that the Glynn program gives me the opportunity to spend a good chunk of my senior year working on a project like this.

**Jennifer Delgado**

Hometown: Atlanta, Georgia

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: Russian
- Questbridge Scholar
- Advisor: A. James McAdams

## Behind the Curtain: Unveiling the Art of Narrative Warfare by the Kremlin

This thesis project explores the Kremlin's involvement in the information war, with a particular emphasis on the strategies employed by Russia during times of conflicts. Specifically, it examines the Russo-Georgian War in 2008 and the annexation of Crimea in 2014 as case studies, analyzing how the narrative evolved to suit each conflict.

As a political science major with a minor in Russian language, the (re)invasion of Ukraine sparked my interest in the disinformation and propaganda campaign orchestrated by Russia. Through further research, I discovered a connection between past conflicts involving Russia, while shedding light on patterns in the ongoing war with Ukraine.

**Kevin Dickson**

Hometown: Lafayette, California

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Business Economics
- International Security Studies Certificate
- Advisor: Dan Lindley

## Militarization of Space

I am examining seven major spacefaring states and analyzing their decisions to (or not to) militarize in space. I am looking to see what conditions best explain a state's decision in space and whether conventional military power and economic utilization of space influence these decisions. Additionally, I am considering whether the security dilemma applies in space.

I am interested in space and international security, and I formed and settled on this topic over time while trying to find out how I can write about both national security and international communities' use of space.

**Elise Dohoney**

Hometown: Concord, Massachusetts

- Majors: Political Science and American Studies
- Minor: Business Economics
- International Security Studies Certificate
- Advisor: Eugene Gholz

## The Impact of Americans' Cultural Perceptions on Alliance Maintenance

My thesis seeks to uncover the relationship between Americans' cultural perceptions of U.S. allies and the government's ability to maintain alliances.

By analyzing the U.S.-Germany and U.S.-Japan alliances during both the Cold War era and the modern era, I develop a theory of alliance maintenance that explains that leaders can leverage the American public's strong, positive cultural perceptions of an ally to maintain an alliance yet struggle to maintain an alliance when the American public has a negative or indifferent cultural perception of the ally.

After studying abroad in Berlin, Germany, during summer 2022, I became interested in the U.S.-Germany relationship. This interest grew into a further curiosity about alliance dynamics in general. The U.S.-Germany and the U.S.-Japan alliances serve as fantastic subjects to understand U.S. alliance maintenance.

**Ava Downey**

Hometown: Valley Center, California

- Majors: Economics and History
- Minor: Real Estate
- Sheedy Family Program in Economy, Enterprise, and Society
- Advisor: Daniel Graff

## Driving Down Memory Lane: The Legacy of Studebaker's Closure in South Bend

Today, remnants of the legacy of Studebaker, a once prominent car manufacturer, can be found scattered throughout South Bend, Indiana, the company's former headquarters. In my thesis, I argue that while Studebaker's closure in 1963 is often cited by South Bend residents as the main catalyst for the city's economic decline, broader factors like deindustrialization and suburbanization collectively played a more significant role in shaping the city's economic downturn than the closure itself.

Having never visited South Bend before moving here for college, I was surprised to see remains of its industrial heyday still scattered across the city. As I asked residents about the causes behind the city's economic downfall, their responses were uniformly one-worded: Studebaker. My thesis aims to understand why.

*Received funding from the Department of History and traveled to Detroit, Michigan, to visit United Auto Workers archives at Wayne State University.*



**Justin Durik**

Hometown: Louisville, Kentucky

- Majors: Spanish and Accountancy
- Business Honors Program
- Advisor: Carlos Jáuregui

## Searching for Literary Meaning: The Relationship Between Author, Reader, and the Creation of Meaning in Borgesian Literature

This thesis discusses the creation of meaning, the nature of authorship and readership, and the ownership of literature using the writing of Jorge Luis Borges.

It accomplishes this by first discussing a copyright lawsuit initiated by Borges against Argentinian author Pablo Katchadjian, then moves into a discussion of an artificially generated Borgesian short story. Additionally, the thesis is interspersed with the literary ideas of French philosophers, Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault.

I have been fascinated with Borges since starting my studies at Notre Dame. Additionally, after taking the Deleuzemania class with Professor Carlos Jáuregui, I became interested in what it truly means to create meaning in literature. I figured that a combination of these passions would lead to a thought-provoking thesis.



## **Cora Eaton**

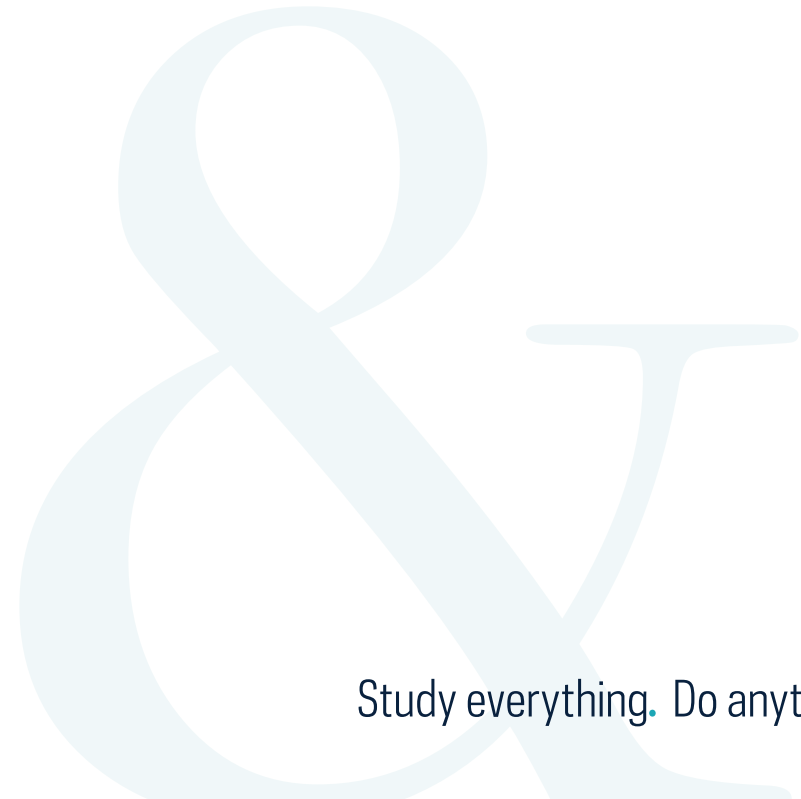
Hometown: Falls Church, Virginia

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Chinese
- International Security Studies Certificate
- Advisor: Joseph Parent

## **Why Can't We Be Friends? Reconciliation after Civil Conflict**

My thesis covers the implementation of peace accord provisions after civil war and how different provisions impact the overall effectiveness of the accord.

I decided to pursue this topic because I am interested in how countries rebuild after internal struggle.



**Megan Ebner**

Hometown: Plymouth, New Hampshire

- Major: Spanish
- Minor: Sociology
- Advisor: Thomas Anderson

## La Identidad Afrocaribeña en los Poemas de Nicolás Guillén y Luis Palés Matos

Poets Nicolas Guillén and Luis Palés Matos proved very effective in inspiring people to fight and reclaim the Afro-Caribbean identity and what it means to be Afro-Caribbean amid the lack of control of their countries, Cuba and Puerto Rico, respectively, in the hands of the United States.

These two authors used their poems as a means to protest against U.S. imperialism that threatened and damaged the two cultures, and the poets transformed the cultural sentiment of the Afro-Caribbean identity and what that identity meant in the 1920s and 1930s.

Within the world of Spanish literature, poetry has stood out to me as being both intellectually stimulating and enjoyable. I have taken several literature-based Spanish courses in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures that have brought up the topic of the Afro-Caribbean identity, and most of these classes required me to read Guillén's poetry and Palés Matos' poetry.

However, because there wasn't ample time to dive too deeply into these topics in class, I decided to research more about it on my own time and turn it into a research paper.

**Gigi Eckholdt**

Hometown: New York City, New York

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

## The Impact of NGOs on the Creation and Enforcement of International Human Rights Law

Through the use of various international human rights documents, I evaluate nongovernmental organization (NGO) success through a framework comprised of theory from existing literature, as well as the addition of the concept of legal personality.

NGO success is varied due to various contingencies, but it is clear that without a supranational enforcement mechanism, compliance and implementation are extremely difficult.

The summer after my sophomore year, I traveled to Poland for an International Law and the Holocaust course. It forever changed my outlook on international politics, and humankind. My thesis represents the culmination of how my broadened perspective has informed my coursework.

**Nikita Elkin**

Hometown: Lake Bluff, Illinois

- Majors: Economics, Philosophy, and Finance
- Suzanne and Walter Scott Scholars Program
- Advisor: Yong Suk Lee

## Human Capital Composition in Venture Studios: An Empirical Examination of Its Influence on Venture Performance

My thesis delves into how the size of venture studios' human capital influences their startups' success.

The studio industry is an emerging asset class that creates and launches multiple startups simultaneously to develop unique scalable economics for business-building. Over spring break, I shadowed the team of Hexa, a prominent venture studio based in Paris, France.

I also examined data from 300 studios and more than 1,500 companies they've developed, and uncovered that larger human capital pools are linked to more venture exits, which demonstrates how human capital intensity drives outcomes.

Despite the remarkable success of venture studios and their potential to scale impactful innovation, they remain largely unexplored in academic literature, especially quantitatively. As someone about to join a venture studio post-graduation, I found this knowledge gap to be particularly poignant and also well-suited for a year-long senior thesis.

*Received funding from the Suzanne and Walter Scott Scholarship and traveled to Paris, France.*

**Taylor Erickson**

Hometown: Nashville, Tennessee

- Majors: Gender Studies and English (Concentration in Creative Writing)
- Questbridge Scholar
- Advisor: Orlando Menes

***In Between Bodies: A Poetry Collection***

*In Between Bodies* is a poetry collection that explores the plasticity of the human self and the conditions under which we choose to change.

It is my assertion that we are taught an array of unspoken rules about how to physically exist in this world, and this collection explores ways we understand and break those rules — the ways we dissect ourselves and stitch the pieces back together.

As a queer person, my physical existence — the way I dress, the way I love, the way I exist — has always been criticized. This collection is me — this form that I am constantly tearing apart and stitching together with line breaks and em dashes.

**Ava Ernst**

Hometown: Tulsa, Oklahoma

- Majors: Program of Liberal Studies and Political Science
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program
- Advisor: Clark Power

## Sins So Grievous: Culpability and Justice in the Catholic Church's Sex Abuse Crisis

My thesis explores how the Catholic Church's response to its sex abuse crisis reveals its conceptions of priesthood, celibacy, and culpability. The Catholic Church's sex abuse crisis is a tragedy; there is no doubt. It is also a tragedy from which the Church has sought to understand and learn, admittedly after several missteps.

A careful study of the arc of the sex abuse crisis can provide answers to some oft-contemplated questions within the Church. For instance, how did the Church's response to the crisis reveal its own conception of what priesthood ought to be, or what culpability looks like when such tragic sins are part of the equation? How does this definition of culpability and even justice change with the realization that pedophilia is a mental health issue, not just a sin that can be "prayed away," so to speak?

The crisis which has swept over the Church has brought a great deal of change in how Catholics relate to their Church, how they trust their clergy, and how they evaluate Church teaching. My thesis also explores questions about the Church in the present day. For instance, is this transformation which has enveloped the Church reversible in any way, or has its role for today's 1 billion Catholics worldwide changed forever? Has this crisis changed how such a unique institution carries out justice today?

I have long admired author Jon Krakauer, whose work is heavily grounded in research, and I have wanted to write a multidisciplinary thesis that incorporates detailed research, theological topics from my Program of Liberal Studies classes, and legal questions with which I will further engage in law school. Additionally, my thesis advisor, Clark Power, provided excellent knowledge regarding my topic, and I am very thankful for his guidance.



**Christopher (CJ)  
Escobar-Rodgers**

Hometown: Commack, New York

- Majors: Psychology, Studio Art (Concentration in Sculpture), and Marketing
- Advisors: Nooshin Hakim Javadi and Maria Tomasula

## Somatic Structures

This project offers a humanist critique drawing inspiration from textiles, architecture, ornament, and technologies influenced by forms found in nature.

The project treats humans in a similar way by appropriating their bodies for structural and decorative elements to show how they can be similarly manipulated. It also applies animistic ways of engaging with the world to our made environment to increase our sense of belongingness with an increasingly artificial world.

My work reconsiders human significance via diverse perspectives, aiming to unfold anthropocentrism for a more interconnected existence. Inspired by studies in ornament and textiles, this series extends these ideas, promoting a rethink of our place in the world.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts' Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP).*



**Megan Fahrney**

Hometown: Northbrook, Illinois

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: French
- Advisor: Susan Ostermann

## Caretaker Governments in South Asia: A Comparative Analysis

Caretaker governments in several South Asian nations take power temporarily during election periods. I am comparing and contrasting these governments and examining how they effectively support democracy, or not.

I chose this topic because I was interested in the South Asian region and democratic elections, so my advisor recommended that I look into caretaker governments.

**Quentin Fairchild**

Hometown: Ave Maria, Florida

- Major: History
- Minor: Philosophy, Religion, and Literature
- Advisor: Ian Johnson

## British Military Analysis of the Russo-Japanese War

I examined reports of British military attachés to the Russo-Japanese War and noted incorrect conclusions they drew from that war, especially that they believed that the attacking army would have the advantage in a modern war.

Then, I connected this faulty analysis to the plans that the British made to support France in a war against Germany, which they ultimately executed in 1914. I did some of my research at The National Archives in London.

I became particularly interested in the development of warfare after taking Professor Ian Johnson's War in Modern History class, and I wanted my thesis to speak to how these developments contributed to the causes of the First World War.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts and traveled to London.*

**Audrey Feldman**

Hometown: Berlin, Connecticut

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
- Kellogg International Scholars Program
- Advisor: William Evans

## Friends with Benefits: The Role of Social Networks in Safety Net Benefit Take-Up Among Refugees in the US

Refugees in the United States are eligible for a variety of safety net benefits, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid.

However, due to cultural misunderstandings, language barriers, and an underlying mistrust of government, refugees, on average, underutilize these benefits, thereby delaying their integration into American society and opportunities to flourish.

I predicted that refugees with larger social networks will have higher safety net take-up. That prediction stems from using American Community Survey data linked with U.S. Department of State data to identify a cohort of likely refugees. I calculated their network upon arrival, with variations on the level of shared public use microdata areas and national origin.

**Chaya Figueroa**

Hometown: Atlanta, Georgia

- Major: Sociology
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: Civil and Human Rights
- Questbridge Scholars and Transformational Leaders Program
- Advisor: Mim Thomas

## Self-Segregation at Notre Dame

The primary objective of this research is to gain a deeper understanding of self-segregation among white, Black, Asian, and Latino students at the University of Notre Dame, and identify potential areas for improvement in the University's diversity and inclusion efforts.

I chose this topic after observing who was sitting with whom around campus, noting that most friend groups appeared to be homogenous in race. Aside from this, I reviewed Notre Dame's recent diversity and inclusion efforts and how white students used the new Center for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as a study space more than students of color.

*Received funding from the Department of Sociology's Eisch Endowment for Excellence.*

**Sara Foote**

Hometown: St. Paul, Minnesota

- Majors: Biochemistry and Theology
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Brian Baker

## Cross-Reactivity Fingerprint of the DMF5 TCR

My thesis studies the structural determinants behind why a T-cell receptor may cross-react with an unintended target. Advances in knowledge made here will help T cell-based immunotherapies become a more viable treatment option, particularly for cancer.

I chose this topic because I am interested in the intersection of immunology and structural biology and how these topics are applicable to treating cancer.

*Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program and the College of Science's Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship.*

**Brooke Friedman**

Hometown: Santa Clarita, California

- Major: Neuroscience and Behavior
- Minor: Linguistics
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program, Fighting Irish Scholars Program, and Building Bridges Mentoring Program
- Advisor: Cindy Bergeman

## The Influence of Perceived Stress, Allostatic Load, and APOE on Cortical Thinning

The cerebral cortex is a brain region essential for higher-level processing. Research suggests that stress, the apolipoprotein E (APOE) gene, and allostatic load may diminish the thickness of the cerebral cortex, leading to adverse functioning.

My senior honors thesis found that APOE significantly moderates the association between allostatic load and cortical thinning. This work is critical to understanding the long-term burden of stress and genetics on brain structure by addressing chronic stress as a significant risk factor.

I will be pursuing a Ph.D. in neuroscience at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, and I wanted to conduct a senior honors thesis which focused on genetics and neuroimaging data. Professor Cindy Bergeman has been a wonderful mentor throughout this project, and we plan to publish this work upon completion.

**Joyce Fu**

Hometown: Hong Kong, China

- Majors: Film, Television, and Theatre and Economics
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: Data Science
- Advisors: Terrance Brown and Cecilia Kim

***The Human-to-Noodle Transformation: A Short Film***

My thesis is a short film about my alter ego, Fred, turning into a noodle. It's an absurdist, body-horror X food-porn crossover borne of my noodle-based diet and passion for methods of cultural consumption that can uplift diverse voices.

I hope this story can inspire reflection about how our communities are capable of pushing beyond tokenism to enjoy the benefits of plurality.

This project is a natural extension of my research interests in coloniality and the Asia-Pacific region. Through the language of filmmaking, I challenged myself to find agency in the space between academic literature and our lived-in experiences.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts.*

**Bridget Fuller**

Hometown: Cincinnati, Ohio

- Major: Sociology
- Supplementary Major: Education, Schooling, and Society
- Advisor: Mim Thomas

## The Effects of a Diagnosis on Student Self-Perception

My project focuses on how students' perceptions of their educational abilities and goals change after they receive a diagnosis of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism, or a learning disability.

I chose this topic because I have discovered that many students at Notre Dame with these diagnoses feel like they understand themselves better after receiving their diagnosis. I am curious about how a diagnosis can alter students' educational trajectories and what social and academic supports can help students.

*Received funding from the Department of Sociology's Eisch Endowment for Excellence.*



**Kylie Gallegos**

Hometown: Stillwater, Oklahoma

- Majors: American Studies and Theology
- Advisor: Peter Cajka

## 'Used To Be Young:' Miley Cyrus and Her Effect on Gen Z's Sexual Ethics

My senior thesis traces Miley Cyrus' evolution from Hannah Montana to the Bangerz era, ultimately arguing for her exaggerated effect on Gen Z's sexual ethics due to the unique trajectory of her story.

As an embodiment of American girlhood and, later, a sex icon of a generation, Cyrus reflects and molds cultural ideals, raising questions about the exploitation of Disney-fication and contemporary sexualization. This thesis contends that Cyrus occupies a unique position, illuminating intersections between celebrity, girlhood, and sexualization.

My interest in Cyrus' story drove me to examine it in more detail, particularly how her evolution from childhood idol to sex icon affected vulnerable fans like myself. Exploring her fame and rebellion explained the extent of her influence, leading to a deeper understanding of celebrity culture and its potential impact on young audiences.



## Anna Gazewood

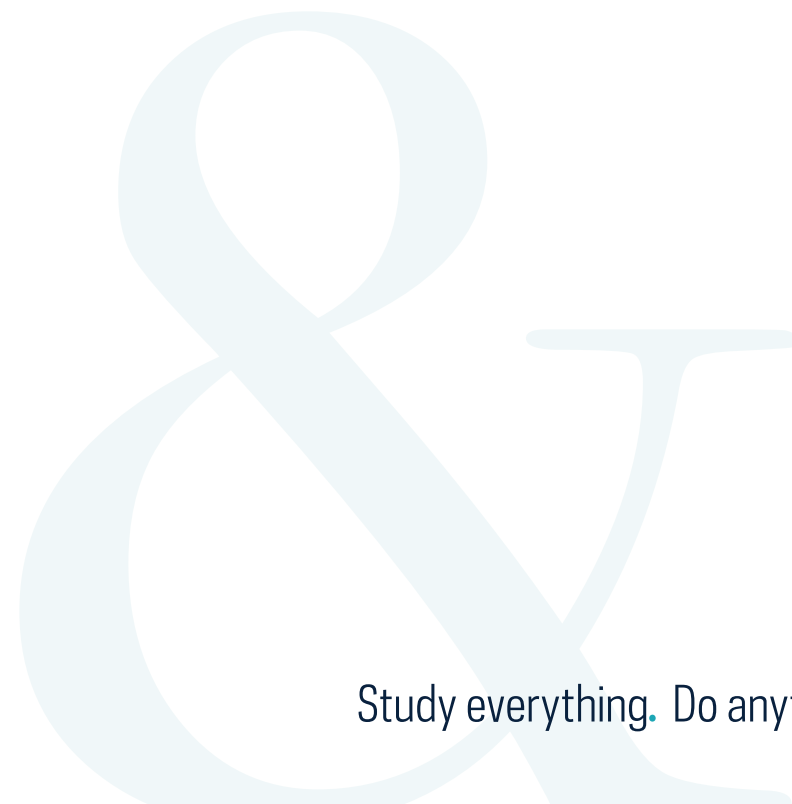
Hometown: Charlottesville, Virginia

- Majors: Music (Concentration in Performance — Voice) and Political Science
- Minor: Hesburgh Program in Public Service
- Advisor: Anne Slovin

## Senior Voice Recital

I performed a mix of classical and musical theatre works by composers, including Laitman, Mahler, and Bernstein, as well as an original song. I was accompanied by pianist Päivi Ekroth.

For my senior recital, I wanted to present a “mirror-image” of pieces that reflect the central themes of identity and liminality, or the in-between, in multiple genres.



**Anna Gazewood**

Hometown: Charlottesville, Virginia

- Majors: Political Science and Music (Concentration in Performance — Voice)
- Minor: Hesburgh Program in Public Service
- Advisor: Christina Wolbrecht

## The Roots of Contemporary Anti-LGBTQ+ Policy in State Governments

My project uses quantitative methods to analyze potential links between factors such as public opinion, partisanship, and religious demographics, and the emergence of anti-LGBTQ+ policies in state governments from 2018 to 2023.

I am interested in investigating why legislation concerning the LGBTQ+ community has become so popular in the last few years, and especially why some states propose and implement more legislation than other states.



## Cullen Geahigan

Hometown: Ellensburg, Washington

- Majors: Political Science and Russian
- International Security Studies Certificate and Kellogg International Scholars Program
- Advisor: Sebastian Rosato

## Right Makes Might: Regime Type and Battlefield Effectiveness

Through in-depth process tracing, my thesis analyzes conditions under which regime type affects battlefield military effectiveness.

I chose this topic because I believe that if regime type does have an impact on military effectiveness, then it would provide the democratic/autocratic world with a comparative advantage that may help predict long-term international political outcomes.

In other words, at the end of history, after the Darwinian battle for survival, can autocracy and democracy survive?

**David Giampietro**

Hometown: Evanston, Illinois

- Major: Program of Liberal Studies
- Advisor: Julia Marvin

***Garden of Being: The Whale Road* — A Novella**

*Garden of Being: The Whale Road* details the story of a person in a rehabilitation clinic whose path to recovery is reconciled in parallel to the reconciliation of Christian values with secular existentialism.

I don't think I believe in God, but I'd like to. But I think you have to find a way to love the world and yourself before you can be ready to make the leap to God. I chose to explore this journey through my novella.

**Lindsay Goldschmidt**

Hometown: Wayne, Pennsylvania

- Major: Film, Television, and Theatre
- Minors: Musical Theatre and Digital Marketing
- Sheedy Family Program in Economy, Enterprise, and Society
- Advisor: Anne Garcia-Romero

***The Ballerina's Burden: A Play and Case Study***

This project is a one-act play exploring a ballerina's dreams turned nightmares and a research paper providing a case study about professional precarity in the ballet industry. I am directing a staged reading of the play, as well.

I chose this topic because I am infatuated with dance, and was curious about how professional ballet dancers have discerned their career paths and navigated uncertainty.

**José Gonzalez**

Hometown: McAllen, Texas

- Major: English (Concentration in Creative Writing)
- Kennedy Scholars
- Advisor: Nicholas Russo

***1400 Open Valley Drive***

My thesis is a collection of prose and poetry — *1400 Open Valley Drive* — stemming from an early short story concept of being in the passenger seat of a car driving through my South Texas hometown.

It accomplishes the production of art from and about a region of low-income communities, failing immigrant tales, and a resistance against Western hegemony through a hyperpersonal depiction that draws upon the feelings of memory more than actual events.

I was interested in exploring my hometown's influence on my narrative, blending Spanglish and local vernacular to reflect my bilingualism. I also examined masculinity in male friendships, seeking reconciliation through my writing.

**Kareema Green**

Hometown: Brooklyn, New York

- Majors: Political Science and Sociology
- Minor: Africana Studies
- Advisor: Dianne Pinderhughes

## Beyond the Ballot: Navigating Black Political Participation through Descriptive Representation, Substantive Representation, and Institutional Legitimacy

My thesis aims to investigate the nexus between Black political trust, representation, and participation within the American political system.

Through an examination of the literature on descriptive and substantive representation and an analysis of election surveys before and after the assumption of office of a Black political leader, my thesis seeks to uncover the underlying factors influencing Black political engagement and perceptions of governmental institutions.

I conclude that while descriptive representation is just as important in altering Black political participation and its perceptions of institutional legitimacy, increased substantive representation, in Black political leaders addressing the needs and concerns of Black constituents, is much more effective in changing the trends we currently see with Black political participation.

As a Black constituent studying political science, I wondered why there were racial disparities in political participation, Black representation in politics, and more. Even after learning more about the political processes through my studies, I noticed that none of my courses and studies addressed this issue in-depth.

As a result of my curiosity and keen interest in the topic, I decided to do my own independent research that would allow me to answer the questions I had as well as contribute new knowledge to the field.



**Anna Grillo**

Hometown: Columbus, Ohio

- Major: History
- Minor: Chinese
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program
- Advisor: Rebecca McKenna

## 'In a State of Shock' at the News: Why the US Implemented the 1970 UNESCO Convention Protecting Cultural Property

My thesis focuses on why the United States joined UNESCO's efforts to end the international looting of cultural property through the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. It also focuses on why the United States took 13 years to pass a law making the 1970 Convention legally effective in the U.S.

Working for Notre Dame's Snite Research Center and the Raclin Murphy Museum of Art inspired my topic. It led to my interest in art looting and combating looting through art provenance (the record of an artwork's ownership from its origin through all owners to the present day) and the UNESCO Convention.

**Clara Grillo**

Hometown: Columbus, Ohio

- Majors: Economics and Chinese
- Minor: European Studies
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program, Kennedy Scholars, Sorin Scholars, and MSPS Scholars
- Advisor: Michel Hockx

## Reimagining 'the Other': Nature's Agency in Wu Ming-yi's *The Man With the Compound Eyes*

This thesis explores the dynamic between nature and "the Other" in Wu Ming-yi's *The Man With the Compound Eyes*, the story of a trash vortex colliding with Taiwan. The novel challenges the portrayal of nature as "Other" by giving it a voice, thus revealing the "Otherness" of humans.

This thesis explores how the characters' connections with nature impact their "Otherness" while proposing a new approach to evaluating "the Other" that rejects anthropocentric views of nature.

I chose this topic because there has not been much research on the topic of "the Other" related to nature's agency. I want to uncover more nuanced perspectives within the binary "human versus nature" approach to "Othering" that already exists in traditional ecocritical literature.

**Brant Hadzima**

Hometown: Bristol, New Hampshire

- Majors: Political Science and Spanish
- Advisor: Pedro Aguilera-Mellado

**Txitzi'n**

This thesis, focusing on the Guatemalan Civil War in the 1990s, explores the impetus that spurred Indigenous women to serve as combatants on the battlefield.

Based on several first-hand testimonies, I analyze the stories of these Maya women to provide a unique perspective on the Guatemalan Civil War at the end of the last century, and the legacy these women left for their community and their country.

While searching for inspiration for a political science essay, I came across this unique primary source, which would later become the backbone of my thesis. As a Spanish major, these stories, which recount the testimonies of Guatemalan Indigenous women combatants, resonated deeply with me.

**Ella Haley**

Hometown: Cook, Minnesota

- Major: International Economics  
(Concentration in Spanish)
- Minor: Italian
- Advisor: Kasey Buckles

## Eras Economics: Impact of the Taylor Swift Eras Tour on Hotel KPIs

I examined the impact of the 2023 Taylor Swift Eras Tour on three key performance indicators within the hotel industry: average daily rate, occupancy rate, and revenue per available room.

My results suggested that hotel room prices increased by 29% during concert dates, occupancy rates increased by 17%, and revenue per available room increased by 46%. Furthermore, I conducted a comparative analysis of the impact of the 2023 Beyoncé Renaissance Tour on these same metrics.

I selected this topic because it combines my love for Taylor Swift's music and my interest in the tourism and hospitality industry. The impact of her tour was widely discussed in the media and my aim was to substantiate the assumed impact with concrete evidence and data.

**Layton Hall**

Hometown: Denver, Colorado

- Majors: Economics and Political Science
- Advisor: Robert Collinson

## Racial Bias in the Eviction Process

Evictions can have lasting effects on employment, credit, housing stability, and health. A disproportionate number of evictions are filed and judged against women and Black tenants.

Using a dataset of case-level eviction filings from 2015 to 2019 in Maricopa County, Arizona, I study the impact of judicial bias on judgment amounts. Using a spatial discontinuity in judicial assignment, I compare outcomes between the marginal minority tenant and the marginal white tenant.

I have spent most of my time at Notre Dame participating in local housing and eviction advocacy. I've worked with the South Bend Tenant Association, the St. Joseph County Library, and several other local organizations to build tenant rights literacy and advocacy across South Bend.

*Received funding from the Flatley Center for Undergraduate Scholarly Engagement.*

**Katherine (Mae) Harkins**

Hometown: Katonah, New York

- Major: Studio Art (BFA in Studio Art — Ceramics)
- Supplementary Major: Spanish
- Advisor: Emily Beck

## Rituals and Reconciliations

This art installation reflects on the intersection and struggle between obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) and the Catholic Church. In preparation for my thesis, I visited Dublin, Ireland, for two months and studied Irish art and textiles, as well as OCD.

I chose this topic because of my experience in Catholicism as someone with obsessive compulsive disorder. The media depicts OCD as a misrepresented, trivialized disorder, thus distorting society's understanding of it.

The Church has a need for great improvement for the treatment and acknowledgment of mental illness and disorders. Through my thesis, I hope to call attention to the need for better education about mental illness.

*Received funding from a Gero Family Travel Grant, the Department of Art, Art History & Design Judith A. Wrappe Memorial Award, and the William and Connie Greif Art Award. Traveled to Dublin, Ireland.*

**Rachel Hartmann**

Hometown: Hoboken, New Jersey

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Civil and Human Rights and Hesburgh Program in Public Service
- Advisor: Geoffrey Layman

## Presidents' Populist Rhetoric and How They Target the Working Class

My thesis explores the significance of populist rhetoric for presidents, analyzing how they connect with their base, mobilize movements, and shape public perception.

It delves into rhetorical strategies employed by leaders such as Andrew Jackson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry Truman, George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump — alongside figures such as William Jennings Bryan and Bernie Sanders — to unravel the persuasive elements of populist rhetoric and assess adherence to populist promises.

Writing about populist rhetoric's role for presidents is crucial for understanding political dynamics, democracy's health, public opinion formation, and policy implications. It provides insights into how leaders connect with their base, influence discourse, and govern, shaping the broader political landscape.

**Grace Hatfield**

Hometown: Benicia, California

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Gender Studies
- Minor: Computing and Digital Technologies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: A. Niles Fernando

## National Crisis, Local Reactions: Assessing US Gun Control Support Post-Mass Shootings

The United States has a significantly high rate of gun violence. While there is agreement on this issue, there is much disagreement on specific policy adjustments.

I evaluate the effect of mass shootings on corresponding local gun control support. My results find that there is more support for gun control in congressional districts with a recent shooting; however, this becomes more complex when taking variables such as news media source, gender, race, and income level into account.

I chose this topic because I believe that gun violence is an important issue in our country, and I want to further understand American society's complex response to it. In my work, I aim to shed light on how these contentions operate to potentially inform future policy considerations.



**David Henry**

Hometown: Woodbury, Minnesota

- Major: Program of Liberal Studies
- Minor: Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
- Kennedy Scholars
- Advisor: Eric Bugyis

## The Philosophy of Shame: Failure in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*

My thesis explores how the Zarathustra of Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* is a literary enactment of the "genuine philosopher" of *Beyond Good and Evil*, and how Zarathustra's failure to achieve that ideal offers a new vision of the philosophic life grounded in the embrace of shame and the particularity of one's truths.

I chose this topic to better understand the unique literary form and complex poetic language of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and how they comment on the role of philosophy and philosophic communication in a secular age.

**Rhianna Hensler**

Hometown: Clarkston, Michigan

- Major: Psychology
- Supplementary Major: Education, Schooling, and Society
- Minor: Science, Technology, and Values
- Advisor: Brooke Ammerman

## Examining Rates and Factors of Depression and Anxiety Among College Athletes

My thesis examines rates of depression and anxiety among collegiate student-athletes, compared to the general student population, as well as factors that contribute to these rates.

As a student-athlete, I'm interested in exploring the impact of collegiate athletics on mental health, and the factors that contribute to rates of depression and anxiety among this population.

**Chris Hernández Rosales**

Hometown: Shelbyville, Tennessee

- Major: Anthropology
- Minors: Latino Studies and Linguistics
- Advisors: Christopher Ball and Aidan Seale-Feldman

## Constructing Self/Other and Nominalizing Verbs: Linguistic Ideologies in Maya Chuj

My thesis delves into the linguistic ideology regarding linguistic differentiation of Chuj, a Mayan language. I aim to understand how linguistic ideologies of two variants of Chuj — Chuj of San Sebastián Coatán and Chuj of San Mateo Ixtatán Guatemala — index identity.

I focus on various social actors and institutions to investigate how ideologies are produced and reproduced in cultural practices and linguistic structure.

I traveled to Chuj territory nestled in the Sierra de los Cuchumatanes in the department of Huehuetenango, Guatemala, and conducted ethnographic fieldwork for two months.

I chose this topic to carry out fieldwork with my own community and to produce more knowledge on our understudied language.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts' Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP), and traveled to Huehuetenango, Guatemala.*

**John (Jack) Herzog**

Hometown: Fishers, Indiana

- Major: Honors Mathematics
- Minors: Constitutional Studies, Liturgical Music Ministry, and Philosophy, Science, and Mathematics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Andrei Jorza

## The Analytic Class Number Formula and its Applications

My thesis presents the analytic class number formula, an important formula in algebraic number theory. It also begins to explore patterns in integrals that can be solved using this formula.

I chose this topic after conversations with my advisor. I knew I wanted to do something in algebraic number theory, and he recommended this particular formula.

**Greta Hillesheim**

Hometown: Faribault, Minnesota

- Majors: Anthropology, English, and Gender Studies
- Iota Iota Iota International Gender/Women/Sexuality Studies Honor Society and Lambda Alpha National Collegiate Honors Society for Anthropology
- Advisors: Susan Blum and Meredith Chesson

## 'Gentle' Judgment and Monitored Mothers: The Distortion of Gentle Parenting through Parenting Pressure on Social Media

Social media has proven to be both an educational and ethically policed space in which Western conceptions of parenting styles are taught and assessed by mothers of any background. From informative posts to judgmental comments, parenting online creates a distinctive community forum for examining how mothers criticize and are criticized on their approaches to mothering, especially those who advocate for "gentle parenting."

As social media becomes more pervasive in public and private spheres, public discourse and media perception concerning parenting styles, philosophies, and approaches increasingly influence ways in which people adapt their parenting methods and choose to identify as parents within a certain style. Because this dialogue exists in the digital sphere, notions of authority, authenticity, and representation are called into question; misconceptions around Western parenting philosophies, especially "gentle parenting" within the authoritative parenting style, have proliferated and restructured the public's view of the practice as a result of social media conversations between a range of novices and experts.

This digital ethnographic analysis focuses on the very gendered lenses of various mediums, including parenting blogs/vlogs, often simplified as "mommy blogs," as well as TikTok accounts, YouTube seminars, and anthropological theory to assess the moral subjectivity of internet surveillance as parenting becomes a public spectacle and a site for judgment, especially for mothers, through social media posts.

The majority of my undergraduate research has focused on women, with a particular gaze upon motherhood. In a field where motherhood is typically reduced to its positionality in sexual divisions of labor and childhood development rather than the identity of mothers, knowledge-acquisition, and agency of motherhood, I wanted to conduct research that focused more on mothers and resources that contribute to their choices rather than actual outcomes of their choices. This piece prioritizes the process of decision-making in light of the extreme scrutiny that comes through the lens of social pressure, expectations, assumptions, and judgment, all of which are easily fostered on social media.

Emphasis on internet communities is still sparse in academia, so my work reveals the ways in which mothers self-identify as "gentle parents" as they defend, contend with, or dispose of the label as well as how they develop sub-communities as the public's grasp on what it means to be a "gentle parent" is constantly reshaped and caricatured due to a multitude of representations on social media.

**Grady Hornbeek**

Hometown: Portola Valley, California

- Majors: Economics and Political Science
- Advisor: Lakshmi Iyer

## The Impact of Argentina's Repressive Violence on Long-Term Political Outcomes and Behavior

My thesis examines the impact of repressive violence under Argentina's 1976 to 1983 dictatorship on electoral outcomes over time.

Using spatial variation in violence across Argentina's districts during the dictatorship, I contribute to the literature studying the costs associated with repression. Furthermore, by using multiple elections, I study the long-term impact of repressive violence.

Growing up, my family moved to Buenos Aires, Argentina, where I learned about the history of the repressive dictatorship, while seeing the vibrant return of Peronism in politics. I therefore wanted to study this relationship and contribute to the literature on the impact of repressive violence.

**Paul Howard**

Hometown: Kinderhook, New York

- Majors: Medieval Studies and Classics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Hildegund Müller

## ***Sermo et Verbum: Psalm Translation and Exegesis in Cyprian and Augustine***

The Psalms play a major role in the writings of the late ancient North African theologians St. Cyprian of Carthage and Augustine of Hippo. My thesis examines the relation between the Psalters of these two Church fathers, demonstrating that the two texts are not close relatives as previously thought.

In addition, I examine their prosopological exegeses of the Psalms, describing the perceived importance of the book to the Christian communities under their charge.

During summer 2023, I interned in Vienna at Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (CSEL), an academic press publishing Latin editions of Patristic texts. Under the direction of Lukas Dorfbauer, I worked on a forthcoming edition of Augustine's *Enarrationes in Psalmos*.

After that, I was eager to continue working on this text and examine the differences in Latin Psalm translations before Jerome's Vulgate.

***Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.***

**Sarah Hui**

Hometown: McKinney, Texas

- Majors: Program of Liberal Studies and Theology
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Andrew Radde-Gallwitz

## Theology as Metaphor: Embodied Language and Embodied Love in St. Catherine of Siena's Letters

I explore how St. Catherine's employment of metaphor deepens our understanding of the capacity of human language when it speaks of the divine. Her use of metaphor demonstrates how imagery exploits how human beings learn and know by doing as embodied beings.

The materiality of her metaphors reflects her central teaching that loving God necessarily incarnates in love of neighbor. Ultimately, her language itself constitutes an act of love.

I conducted library research and explored the places where Catherine lived and drew material for the imagery of her letters. In Rome, I visited the Center for Catherinian Studies, and in Siena, I handled several early editions of Catherine's letters and her book, *The Dialogue*.

I discovered Catherine's metaphorical language when I had to read her letters for class abroad in Rome. I had forgotten this, but after I chose the topic I later remembered that once at Bru Burger during my first year, I told my friends that my potential thesis idea was metaphors about God.

*Received funding from the Diane M. Sciola Grant and Rome International Scholars Program. Traveled to Italy.*



**Alexi (Lexi) Hull**

Hometown: Albany, New York

- Majors: Psychology and Sociology
- Advisor: Mim Thomas

## Rhetoric vs. Reality: Analyzing the Discrepancy Between Conservative Policy and Speech Regarding Mental Health and Gun Violence

My thesis examines the discrepancy between what Republican legislators say publicly about the issue of gun violence and what they support policy-wise.

It also delves into the most powerful political action committee in the United States and the reason why these legislators may tend to blame mental health as the root of the problem: the National Rifle Association.

I began to realize that many right-leaning legislators spoke about mental health access being needed to end gun violence, seemingly describing policies that the left had historically supported. Yet, little to no change occurred for access to resources. As an advocate for mental health care for all, this perplexed me.

**Nicholas Huls**

Hometown: Chanhassen, Minnesota

- Major: Economics
- Minor: Accountancy
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Forrest Spence

## Raising the Bar: Professional Responsibility Exams and Labor Market Outcomes for Lawyers

Aspiring lawyers in 50 jurisdictions must take the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE) to test their understanding of expected professional conduct.

Between 2007 and 2019, 10 states raised their MPRE minimum passing score. Using a two-way fixed effects model, I estimate how higher passing thresholds impact the frequency of disciplinary complaints. Although results are statistically insignificant, the estimated decline in complaints appears to coincide with a broader, unobserved effort to reduce complaints while also increasing passing thresholds.

I am interested in attending law school. Last year, I took Labor Economics with Professor Forrest Spence and Advanced Labor Economics with Professor Jim Sullivan. After these courses, I was interested in testing economic theory assumptions about how certain policy changes impact labor markets through empirical analysis.

**William Hunter**

Hometown: Catlett, Virginia

- Major: Joint Major in Philosophy & Theology
- Minor: Latin
- Advisor: John Cavadini

## The Implications of Augustine's Trinitarian Theology on our Understanding of Being and Creation

If, as Christians, we understand God as "being itself," we must understand that "to be" means something different for a system which accepts a monadic God and one which accepts a Trinitarian God.

Augustine's model of the Trinity insofar as it gives us a glimpse of the immanent Trinity, as well as the relationship God has with creation, will reveal to us the fundamental qualification we must make in understanding "being itself" as a Trinity.

The Trinity is one of the central claims of the Christian faith and thus requires constant theological attention. I believe there is important interplay between St. Augustine's Trinitarian theology and his views on metaphysics that should inform a modern approach to both.

**Ainsley Hurford**

Hometown: Edwardsville, Illinois

- Majors: Theology and Political Science
- Advisor: Kimberly Belcher

**'Do This in Memory of Me': L'Arche, Storytelling, and the Eucharist**

Throughout this thesis, I hope to expand on the idea that the stories of the lives of people with disabilities — as told by them — are of great theological importance to the Catholic Church.

I connect this with the stories I heard and experienced while visiting a L'Arche community before exploring how these stories point to the role of narrative in theology and, specifically, the Catholic sacrament of the Eucharist.

My experiences with L'Arche have been transformative, humbling, and joy-filled. The theological gifts that those with disabilities bring to the Church are too often trivialized or ignored, and the ways L'Arche recognizes these gifts greatly inspired this thesis.

**Cecilia Luisa Ignacio**

Hometown: Manila, Philippines

- Majors: Economics and English
- Minor: Computing and Digital Technologies
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program
- Advisor: Francisco Robles

## Between Words and Worlds: Constructing Migrant Female Identities in Coming-of-Age Literature

My thesis explores the representation of immigrant families in *Bread Givers* by Anzia Yezierska and *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents* by Julia Alvarez. I focus on daughters' narratives to examine the intersection of assimilation, language mastery, and feminist self-identification.

These protagonists negotiate cultural and patriarchal pressures, highlighting the broader dilemma of balancing cultural heritage with assimilation — a key theme in modern immigrant literature reflecting societal shifts in the U.S.

Raised in the Philippines, I initially understood migration through stories of individuals seeking work abroad — narratives of grit that often masked hardships and familial strain.

Relocating to the United States for university deepened my fascination with how migrant literature from a country of destination layers space, language, and identity within immigrant narratives.

**Thomas Joyce**

Hometown: Bloomington, Indiana

- Major: Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Minor: Irish Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Ying (Alison) Cheng

## Catalyzing Success: Using Learning Analytics to Support Instructors and Students in Organic Chemistry

My thesis uses data visualization and statistical techniques to analyze student performance in an introductory organic chemistry course at the University of Notre Dame. I also created machine learning models to accurately predict students' final grades early in the course.

My project findings are displayed on an interactive online dashboard with performance visualizations for course instructors. This platform has supported instructors in their teaching methods and curriculum development.

I chose this topic because it combined my interests in statistics, computing, and organic chemistry. I also valued the practical applications of this project. As an aspiring biostatistician, performing learning analytics research was an excellent opportunity for me to communicate data-driven insights to course instructors to improve student learning outcomes.

**Amber Jun**

Hometown: Beaverton, Oregon

- Major: Biological Sciences
- Minors: Compassionate Care in Medicine and Anthropology
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisors: Eric Haanstad, Holly Goodson, and Dominic Vachon

## Uncovering the Overlooked Role of Compassion in Patient-Physician Relationships at the Individual, Interpersonal, and Systemic Level

I am passionate about health care and the scientific use of compassion in delivering good, personal care. The patient-physician relationship is a fundamental cornerstone of health care delivery. The quality of this relationship dictates patient satisfaction, adherence to treatment, and overall health outcomes.

While medical science has made leaps and bounds in the past century, the nature of the patient-physician relationship and the science of compassion have been relatively untouched and marginally improved.

This thesis delves into the interdependent web of factors that impact the essential patient-physician relationship and provides a comprehensive analysis at the individual, interpersonal, and systemic level through a meta-analysis of published works regarding patient satisfaction and health care relationships. The consequences of these influencing factors on health care outcomes will investigate how a strong and appropriate patient-physician relationship can enhance patient satisfaction.

Conversely, this thesis also explores the detrimental effects of a strained or dysfunctional relationship. The findings and conclusions of this investigation emphasize the importance of a patient-centered approach in modern medicine, and highlight the need for ongoing research, policy reform, and better refined medical education to support and nurture this essential alliance.

*Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.*



### **Bupe Lughano Kabaghe**

Hometown: Kitwe, Zambia

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Hesburgh-Yusko Scholars Program, Kellogg International Scholars Program, and Notre Dame Scholars Program
- Advisor: Jaimie Bleck

## **Women's Political Representation in the Zambian National Assembly**

I am passionate about gender equality in Zambia politics and aspire to the Zambian presidency.

In Zambia, 15.2% of its National Assembly is women. Scholars attribute this low percentage to patriarchal norms, cultural and religious practices, discriminatory legal systems, and financial barriers. Unlike other African countries, Zambia has yet to implement quota systems to ensure the representation of women in parliament.

My research objective is to discuss the presence of Zambian women in the National Assembly, with a particular focus on pathways into political leadership. My paper examines the motivations and barriers/challenges for women to participate in political leadership and highlights family relations as a key pathway for women.

In Lusaka, Zambia, I conducted participant observation in the National Assembly. I also conducted 26 semi-structured interviews with 16 women who are current members of parliament (MPs), two aspiring women MPs from the 2021 elections, two secretary generals of political parties in Zambia, and six gender advocates and other stakeholders.

I presented my research at the African Studies Association Conference in San Francisco as part of a panel of professors and Ph.D. students. This research is crucial to informing the formulation of government policy concerning women's political representation and, more broadly, gender equality in political leadership.

*Received funding from the Kellogg Institute for International Studies and traveled to Rwanda, Zambia, and California.*





Second Chief Joseph Boudreaux Jr. of the Golden Eagles Mardi Gras Indian Tribe, Mardi Gras Day 2024, New Orleans, Louisiana. Photo by **Analina Barnes**



**Jack Konrad** at the Museum of the History of Medicine in Paris, which contains a rich collection of medical and surgical artifacts. He took this photo in November 2022, as part of an independent research project that served as a precursor to his senior thesis.

**Michelle Kwok** at the Globe of Science and Innovation at CERN in Switzerland.



**Irasema Trujillo** in the Sahara Desert in Morocco.



**Annika Barron** explores the fjords in Norway while traveling between Oslo and Bergen for interviews.



**Paul Howard** interned at CSEL at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, where he worked with a 9th-century manuscript of the *Enarrationes in Psalmos*.



# Study everything. Do anything. <sup>SM</sup>



Claire Bass collects insects from Juday Creek.



Sarah Hui flips through a velvet-bound Latin translation of *The Dialogue* at the Biblioteca comunale degli Intronati in Siena, just up the street from St. Catherine's house.



Kaylee Kern's photo of a shelf of glassware in Booth 83 in the Main Street Antique Mall in Niles, Michigan.



Lughano Kabaghe, right, meets Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former president of Liberia, at the Women's Deliver Conference in Rwanda.



Kendra Lyimo views the Wangechi Mutu: *Intertwined* exhibition at the New Museum in New York City. Here, she's beside a collage titled *Riding Death in My Sleep*.



A poster advertises Anna Gazewood's recital. Photo by Lucia Sgroi



Chris Hernández Rosales, left, and Eulalia Alonzo —Princesa Wajxaklajunh during a semi-structured interview in Guatemala.



Garrett Pacholl visits Lake Taal, a famous lake volcano in the Philippines.



### Diversions of Drought

By Emma Stern

My tummy becomes gelatin with each  
Back and forth. Up and down.  
Metal loops rub up against each other,  
threaten to pinch soft fingers if not alert:  
My rusted red, formerly green swing set.

I grew up here, but it is not home  
Not anymore. Not without mom's tomatoes  
or bendweed flowers I used to brew potions.  
They disappeared, drought, dehydrated, dead.  
A tree was there, birch maybe. Toes with pink polish  
touched the limbs, who reached out and threatened tickles.

I killed those limbs. I hate tickling.  
No, that's not fair. We all did, but I know  
check books speak louder than words

Higher education taught me

Vote by dollars.  
Vote by ballot.

The crunch bar I bought on a whim  
to munch and crunch between teeth  
left sticky chocolate fingered evidence and  
the imprint of a crime against tickling limbs  
I made my vote: Nestle, the known executioner,  
exonerated as seductive sugar

Pipelines produced to pump pure privilege  
to the highest bidder.  
Water is the new gold, some investor said.  
Could be Colorado, California, China,  
Companies who cash in.

Turn off the tap screw the cap  
and leave the lakes 'lone.  
Poisoned by the perrier producer  
my papa loved, he didn't know it was  
fatal, just that it came in a fancy bottle  
colored the same green as

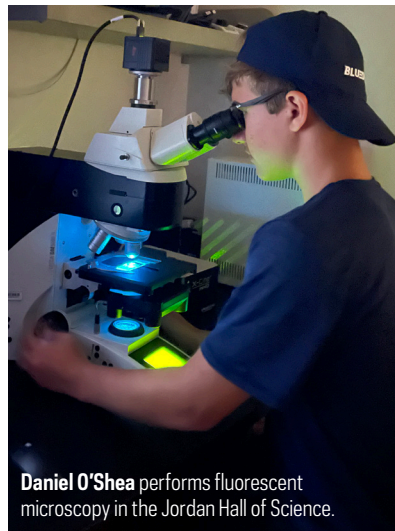
that old swing set. Shoulders sag. Too  
worn to get those tummy flutters.  
Just sit, while dust instead of trees.  
Tickles my nose instead of my toes.



Julia Warden at Shibuya Crossing in Japan.



Cora Vulin inside the Houses of Parliament at the Palace of Westminster in London, United Kingdom. She interned at Parliament for the UK Defence Secretary during her junior year study abroad program and subsequently interviewed UK policymakers for her senior thesis.



Daniel O'Shea performs fluorescent microscopy in the Jordan Hall of Science.



Emma Sedlack shares a photo taken during a ride to quarantine during the 2020-2021 school year.



Olivia Ortega at The Linen Hall, the oldest library in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

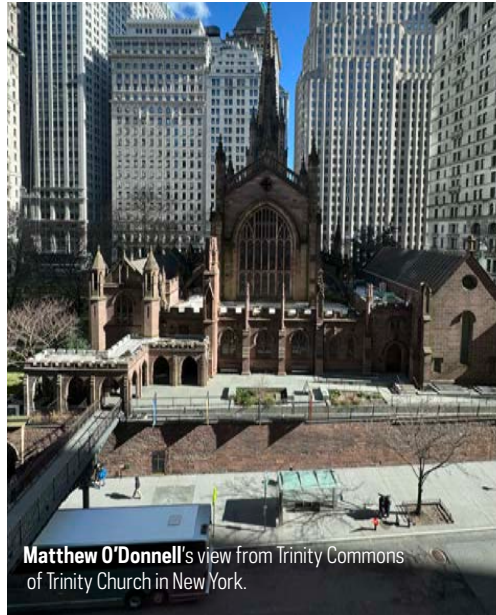


**Maya Ramp** projects a video loop of planes taking off and landing onto a suspended sheet of clear acrylic supporting 150 paper cranes.

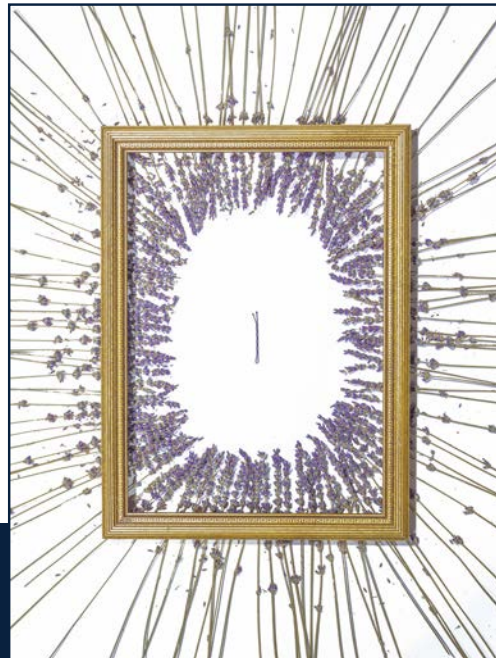


**Felicity Wong's** photo of luxury designer Swati Ubroi's studio in Jaipur, Japan.

The hairpin has great historical significance within the LGBTQ+ community. Here, **Mary Votava** celebrates the hairpin in a reverent manner — surrounded by lavender, which has its own connections to LGBTQ+ history, and a gold frame.



**Matthew O'Donnell's** view from Trinity Commons of Trinity Church in New York.



**Jacob Sherer**, Elizabeth Gonzalez, David Henry, and Garrett Pacholl — Kennedy Scholars studying at Notre Dame London — present their senior thesis research topics to scholars at Durham University.



**Anna Schroedel**, center, with Balinese art teachers, Ketut and Nyoman, in Indonesia.

**Abigail Keaney**

Hometown: St. Albans, United Kingdom

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Kellogg International Scholars Program
- Advisor: Brian Ó Conchubhair

## 'More than a Province...Less than a State...at Least a People': National Identity in Northern Ireland

My thesis examines national identity in the context of Northern Ireland, a region which has experienced marked change in terms of identity affiliation since 1998, which was the end of the decadeslong sectarian conflict known as the Troubles.

Drawing on data from the Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) Survey, the project looks at shifts in national identity affiliation over time, concluding the proportion of respondents identifying as Northern Irish has risen dramatically since 1998, while the proportion of respondents identifying as British has declined over the same period. I also use insights from personal interviews to suggest why such changes might have occurred.

I'm interested in the theory of national identity because of my background as a triple citizen. While interning with the Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies, I was introduced to the Life and Times Survey and realized that it could provide a novel insight into shifting nationality in Northern Ireland at a critical time in its history.

**Bryan Keck**

Hometown: Dubuque, Iowa

- Majors: Economics and Philosophy
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Richard Cross

## On Existential Problems for Divine Simplicity

I examine two problems for the Doctrine of Divine Simplicity. I first consider a novel objection that suggests that truthmaking accounts of divine simplicity cannot serve as a global mechanism for identifying God with all His attributes, particularly His existence.

I argue that this problem can be neutralized by identifying God with a relation or accepting nonstandard accounts of existence. I then consider and reject objections undermining the chief motivation for divine simplicity.

The Doctrine of Divine Simplicity has fascinated me since I first encountered it in high school and in subsequent philosophy and theology classes at Notre Dame. It's an incredibly perplexing topic in metaphysics. Nevertheless, adopting it is also paramount for any comprehensive and coherent theistic explanation of the world.

I am incredibly indebted to my advisor, Richard Cross, who clarified the doctrine to me, answered hours' worth of my questions, and reviewed my writing. I'm also grateful to Jeff Speaks and Daniel Nolan for their assistance in explaining contemporary metaphysical topics to me. I could not have accomplished this without them.

**Jack Kelly**

Hometown: St. Paul, Minnesota

- Major: English
- Supplementary Major:  
A&L Pre-Health
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Michelle Karnes

## Alone with Girdles, Rings, and Shiny Things: An Analysis on Objects and Solitude as Indicators of Masculine Heroism in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and *The Hobbit*

My thesis examines characterizations of masculine heroism by analyzing how characters are depicted in moments of solitude and in relation to various objects.

Objects often have meanings beyond what their typical use is, which demonstrates that a character's attribution as heroic requires more than simple nobility (or lack thereof) based on appearance alone. Such an analysis seems to indicate that both characters uphold a classically Westernized form of heroism, identified with finding the courage for self-sacrifice.

I chose this topic because it has allowed me to examine how masculine heroism is typified in two texts that I not only deeply enjoy but felt were influential to my understanding of masculinity.

**Kaylee Kern**

Hometown: Mishawaka, Indiana

- Major: English (Concentration in Creative Writing)
- Minor: Irish Language and Literature
- Advisor: Johannes Göransson

***Retrosilence***

My thesis explores familial relationships, generational tension, and the female experience through the language of vintage and antique aesthetics.

Retrosilence describes a mental space that is philosophical and experimental, putting my education, values, and goals in conversation with the stories of women who came before me. Each poem in this collection finds its energy in an unspoken question: Is it safe, or even possible, to live in the past?

My passion for antiques began in my grandmother's basement. I became determined to salvage her past, especially those pieces which she seemed most interested in throwing away. My poetry gave me the opportunity to question why I refuse to let the past die or the present live.



**William Kim**

Hometown: Edgewater, New Jersey

- Majors: Honors Mathematics and Philosophy
- Minor: Theology
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Curtis Franks

**Beyond P and NP**

My thesis serves as an exploration of the field of computational complexity theory in an attempt to provide an intuitive description on the significance of complexity classes besides P and NP.

I chose this topic because I have been interested in this subject matter for a long time and I am able to use the tool kit I developed as a logician to study and learn the material necessary to develop my thesis.



**Catherine Kinkopf**

Hometown: Lutherville, Maryland

- Majors: Sociology and Science Preprofessional Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Abigail Ocobock

## Shaping Perinatal Health Outcomes: Using Data to Support a Need for Equitable and Trauma-Informed Health Care for Pregnant Women Exposed to Intimate Partner Violence

My thesis uses quantitative data to explore the perinatal health experiences and outcomes of a sample of women who have experienced intimate partner violence, and to assess factors that may impact these outcomes.

I find that high rates of several adverse health outcomes among these women, with maternal experiences of potentially traumatic events and socioeconomic status suggested to be the most significant in explaining these outcomes, advances a need for equitable and trauma-informed care.

Since my sophomore year, I have assisted in a lab working to assess the efficacy of an intervention for women exposed to intimate partner violence, evaluating its impact on maternal-infant relationships and infant development. My passion for women's health and social determinants of health led me to pursue this thesis.

*Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.*

**Ava Kolb**

Hometown: Warren, New Jersey

- Majors: Program of Liberal Studies and Psychology
- Advisor: Clark Power

## Not Just Fun and Games: An Overview of the Holistic Benefits of Organized Recess

Recess is an underutilized avenue to improve the experiences of elementary school students.

This thesis explores specific links between intentional play and a child's holistic development. Additionally, it addresses the role that socioeconomic disparities play in the academic achievement gap and presents organized recess as a tool to address some of the unique implications of child poverty. Education goes beyond the classroom; by starting at recess today we can equip children to become better citizens tomorrow.

My senior year, I had the opportunity to explore recess at Coquillard Elementary School in South Bend with a group of fellow students and my advisor, Clark Power. This thesis aims to raise awareness about the benefits of organized recess programs like the one we have worked to establish there.

**John (Jack) Konrad**

Hometown: Cincinnati, Ohio

- Major: Biological Sciences
- Supplementary Major: French
- Advisor: Madison Mainwaring

## A Historical-Cultural Comparison of the Modern French and American Health Care Systems

Although France and the United States are socioeconomically similar countries, drastic differences in health care outcomes clearly favor France. This thesis examines the sentiments, opinions, and decisions which shaped each system's modern development, and how such events have resulted in the health care outcomes we experience. My analysis puts a particular focus on pivotal moments in which individual and organizational efforts influence public opinion and the resulting decisions made.

While studying abroad in Angers, France in fall 2022, I traveled to Paris to conduct research at the National Library of France. This was an independent research project sponsored by the Nanovic Institute, but I reference sources from this project in my senior thesis as well.

As a soon-to-be medical student, I understand that I am entering a health care system that is complexly flawed. I chose this topic as a way to educate myself about the system which I am entering, as well as shed light on how both countries have reached their current states.

*Traveled to Paris.*

**Alexandra (Lexi) Koplas**

Hometown: Westbrook, Connecticut

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program and Notre Dame International Security Center Fellow
- Advisor: Susan Rosato

## Diplomacy in Flux: Exploring the Impact of Exogenous Shocks on US Foreign Policy

I am analyzing the impact of exogenous shocks on U.S. foreign policy to better understand the implications of unexpected or major events that occur independently of a nation's existing foreign policy agenda.

In assessing the administrations of George W. Bush, Barack Obama, Donald Trump, and Joe Biden, my research questions are: What is the effect of an exogenous shock on the performance of a country's foreign policy? And, how, why, and when do such shocks require leaders to re-evaluate policy goals and priorities?

I am interested in foreign policy and national security and hope to work for, or adjacent to, the government at some point in my career. The work of foreign service officers is very interesting to me. I want to better understand how foreign policy is created and influenced by external events, specifically in the U.S.



**Madeline (Maddie)  
Kosobucki**

Hometown: Libertyville, Illinois

- Major: Honors Mathematics
- Minor: Constitutional Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Christina Bambrick

## Reading Between the Lines: Justice Roberts' Silent Overruling of *Grutter* in *SFFA*

I am analyzing two landmark Supreme Court decisions, *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) and *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard* (2023). Specifically, I am asking the question: Did *Students for Fair Admissions* overrule *Grutter*?

My thesis compares the holdings, facts, and legal contexts of both decisions, and ultimately determines that *Students for Fair Admissions* must have overruled *Grutter*, even though Justice John Roberts does not explicitly say so.

I chose this topic because, since June when *Students for Fair Admissions* came out, I have seen varying reactions to this opinion. There seemed to be much confusion over what exactly this opinion said, as different scholars and even the justices themselves seemed to disagree about the extent of this opinion.

I'm a math major who plans on attending law school in the fall and wanted to do a close analysis of the logic in a Supreme Court opinion. This case presented a perfect opportunity to do so.

**Anna Krush**

Hometown: Bethesda, Maryland

- Major: Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Minor: Data Science
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Johnny Zhang

## Topic Modeling and Sentiment Analysis in Investigating Gender Bias in Student Evaluations of Teaching

I analyzed text reviews evaluating professors using machine learning to identify gender bias. I used two techniques — topic modeling and sentiment analysis. Three topic models were used to detect what the reviews were describing, and four sentiment analysis models determined the positivity or negativity of a review.

While three of the four sentiment analysis models indicated that male professors were described more positively than female professors, the difference was not statistically significant.

I was interested in quantitative psychology research as it applied my math and data science background for problems that would typically be worked on in a humanities field. This specific project presented an opportunity to leverage my skills for meaningful insights and merged my personal and academic interests.



### **Anna Kulczycka**

Hometown: Birmingham, Alabama

- Majors: Design (Concentration in Visual Communication Design) and Business Analytics
- Sheedy Family Program in Economy, Enterprise, and Society
- Advisor: Chris Hedlin

## **Beyond the Branding: An Analysis of Fast Fashion**

My thesis investigates the ethical practices of popular fashion brands and creates a definition for fast fashion that does not assume an inverse relationship between a company's ethics and the cost of its products.

Most consumers assume that if they are paying more for a clothing product, then the company selling it is more ethical. This study tests this assumption through data analysis and research.

I chose my topic because of my two majors, which I have explored more deeply through the Sheedy Family Program in Economy, Enterprise, and Society. I am deeply interested in the fashion industry, and I knew I could combine my majors to create an interesting topic to explore.



**Saachi Kumar**

Hometown: Naperville, Illinois

- Major: Psychology
- Supplementary Major: Gender Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Nicole McNeil

## Examining How Gender and Tactility Moderate the Frequency and Accuracy of Pre-Schoolers' Numerical Utterances during Shared Counting Book Reading

The goal of my thesis is to determine whether a previous unexpected finding within my lab, which found that girls produced significantly more numerical utterances during tactile vs. non-tactile learning, will replicate in a different study with similar conditions.

Since many educators believe that non-tactile counting books are better for learning than tactile ones, this research is valuable in acknowledging that counting book features may differentially benefit students based on their individual identities.

I chose this topic because I wanted to continue my work within the Cognition, Learning, and Development Lab (CLAD), which focuses on children's math education, and to incorporate my gender studies major. I am passionate about ensuring that research-based teaching practices reflect the diversity of today's youth.

**Michelle Kwok**

Hometown: Mishawaka, Indiana

- Major: Physics
- Supplementary Major: Philosophy
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Christopher Kolda

## Supersymmetric Dark Matter in Primordial Black Holes and Trigger Algorithm at the LHC

I am interested in particle physics, mostly on the theory side. Dark matter makes up 84% of all matter, but we have not been able to figure out what it is made of or where it came from. Exploring the origins and implications of dark matter is fascinating and will allow us to learn more about our world.

In the first part of this project, we edit BlackHawk, a software that models black hole decay, to include the production of supersymmetric particles. We use this to analyze and predict the total mass of dark matter produced through primordial black holes (PBHs).

The second part of the paper focuses on an algorithm that can help find supersymmetric dark matter at the Large Hadron Collider. We propose a method of partitioning the detector data so that a first level-trigger algorithm can be implemented for charged particles.

The second half of my thesis started in the Duke University Triangle Universities Nuclear Laboratory Research Experiences for Undergraduates program. Six weeks of the program were at CERN (Conseil Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire) in Geneva, Switzerland.

*Traveled to Durham, North Carolina, and Geneva, Switzerland.*



## David LaMaster

Hometown: Fort Wayne, Indiana

- Majors: Economics (Concentration in Financial Economics and Econometrics) and Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Fighting Irish Scholars
- Advisor: Michael Pries

## Farmers in Flux: Navigating Disruption in the Era of Evolving Plant-Based Meat

My thesis highlights the unforeseen impact of plant-based meat within agricultural economics.

I chose this topic because plant-based protein is an evolving product with limited economic literature and with unique macroeconomic implications.

**Joan Lederer**

Hometown: Deerfield, Illinois

- Majors: Political Science and Art History
- Kennedy Scholars
- Advisor: Michael J. Coppedge

## An Analysis of Why Some Candidates Refuse to Accept Democratic Election Results

I use the case of the Trump-Biden election in 2020 to understand what makes a candidate refuse to accept an election. My main independent variable is the amount of divisive rhetoric and polarization that a candidate can muster.

My counterexample is Bush-Gore in 2000, in which Al Gore had legitimate doubts, but he still eventually managed to concede. I also look at bolstering examples in Brazil and Mexico to prove that polarization is the main driving variable causing a candidate to use legal or violent means to overturn the results.

I chose this topic because of its prevalence and ever-changing nature in the United States. Trump's trials are ongoing and many states have given him consequences because of his insurrection and delay in succession of power. I want to find solutions to prevent the havoc and chaos caused by a candidate rejecting a perfectly clean election.

**Colleen Lipa**

Hometown: Naperville, Illinois

- Majors: Economics and Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Minor: Art History
- Advisor: Mary Kate Batistich

## Crime AND Punishment? The Effects of Mental Health Court Diversion Programs on Crime and Homelessness

Mental health courts are diversion programs that provide treatment for people with severe mental illnesses, rather than placing them in jails. I test the effects of mental health courts on crime and homelessness at the county level. I find that mental health courts decrease the total crime per 10,000 people in a county by 5.20% and have negligible effects of homelessness.

I learned about incarceration in the United States in classes and during research my sophomore year. This knowledge, combined with understanding that people with severe mental illnesses are more likely than others to go to prison, led to me learning about mental health courts and examining their effects.

**Sean Lonergan**

Hometown: Bowie, Maryland

- Major: Sociology
- Minors: Business Economics and Constitutional Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Erika Summers-Effler

## Dynamic Interaction Rituals: An Ethnography of Gospel Choirs

I observed and participated in two gospel choirs to understand the social processes which create solidarity within them and enable them to generate emotionally effective performances.

I found that existing sociological theory fails to account for the dynamic process by which performers must communicate to the audience that they are in "the group" which is included in the social ritual that takes place through the performance.

Gospel choirs are at the intersection of culture, race, religion, music, and social movements. By studying gospel choirs, I knew that I would encounter intense, emotionally charged social processes.

*Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.*

**Kendra Lyimo**

Hometown: Gibbon, Minnesota

- Major: Art History
- Minors: Africana Studies and Italian
- Building Bridges Mentoring Program
- Advisor: Tatiana Reinoza

## Black is Queen: Afro-Diasporic Identity in the Art of Wangechi Mutu, Firelei Báez, and Beyoncé Knowles-Carter

My thesis examines how contemporary artists represent the female body in their work to recontextualize African Diasporic identity. Through three case studies, I explore how three artists — Wangechi Mutu, Firelei Báez, and Beyoncé Knowles-Carter — understand and depict Afro-diasporic identity in their respective artistic mediums and social contexts.

The dialogue between these artists and their work redefines the body as a space of storytelling, healing, and belonging that conveys the nuances and contradictions of the diaspora.

In New York City, I visited the New Museum for Wangechi Mutu's solo exhibition and the Museum of Modern Art where Firelei Báez was featured in an exhibition.

I am deeply interested in understanding what diasporic identity means to people across different contexts and wanted to underline the inherent diversity of an encompassing term like the African diaspora that contains so many distinct experiences, histories, and identities.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts and traveled to New York City.*

**Colleen Mackin**

Hometown: Jacksonville, Florida

- Major: English
- Minors: Irish Studies and Sport, Media, and Culture
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Matthew Kilbane

**'Big Nothing:' Silence, Community, and Complicity in Eudora Welty's 'The Demonstrators' and Claire Keegan's *Small Things Like These***

I analyze Claire Keegan's 2021 text *Small Things Like These*, through a reading of Eudora Welty's 1966 short story "The Demonstrators." By reading these texts through each other, I investigate the interconnections of silence, community, and individual and community complicity.

My conclusions are particularly insightful in light of Keegan and Welty's rejections of their work's relevance to encompassing institutions and yet each work's simultaneous positioning within the systems of the Irish Magdalene Laundries and the Jim Crow laws of the American South, respectively.

As a native of Jacksonville, Florida, I am interested in American Southern literature, and at Notre Dame, I developed an interest in Irish literature. Recognizing similarities across these two regions, I knew I wanted to investigate further. Last year, I heard Keegan speak, reaffirming the overlap between the writing of Ireland and the American South.



**Theodore (Teddy) Maginn**

Hometown: South Bend, Indiana

- Majors: Economics and Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Advisor: Robert Collinson

## Regeneration or Reversion? The Impact of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program on Changes in Neighborhood Characteristics

Following the 2008 foreclosure crisis, Congress implemented the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) to finance demolitions and rehabilitations of vacant properties. While some studies have analyzed short-term effects of the NSP, its long-term impacts have yet to be researched.

My thesis examines the effects of the NSP on changes in neighborhood racial composition and various housing market outcomes a decade after the policy's implementation.

Neighborhood revitalization programs are often portrayed in a contentious light. While such policies can drastically improve the quality of a neighborhood, they can also negatively impact marginalized groups.

I chose this topic because I am interested in finding ways to aid distressed neighborhoods while mitigating harm to disadvantaged populations.

**John (Jack) Manning**

Mequon, Wisconsin

- Major: History
- Minors: Business Economics and Theology
- Advisor: Ian Johnson

## 'A meeting of two slavs:' John Paul II, Mikhail Gorbachev, and the End of the Cold War

My thesis details the Dec. 1, 1989, summit meeting between St. John Paul II and Mikhail Gorbachev in the Vatican.

Although this meeting has received minimal attention from historians, it was really "a truly extraordinary event," to use Gorbachev's own words.

The meeting is a remarkable story of diplomacy in its own right. It speaks to the extent of the changes taking place in Europe in 1989. But accounting for the many strange facets of the planning process and the two leaders' conversation allows a deeper analysis, revealing the distinct roles that the Pope and the Soviet leader played in the collapse of communism.

I came upon this topic by happenstance, while talking to a Cardinal outside the Vatican during a semester abroad. It caught my interest immediately; I did not know that John Paul had met with Gorbachev. As I researched it further, the lack of thorough historical research surrounding the topic piqued my interest. Discovering a full-length transcript of the leaders' conversation cemented it.

**Ryan Mantey**

Hometown: Windsor, Colorado

- Major: Philosophy
- Supplementary Major: Greek and Roman Civilization
- Advisor: Justin Christy

## Imagine There's No Heaven: On the Incompatibility of Religious Belief with the Moral Life

My thesis is aimed at showing a fundamental incompatibility with religious beliefs and the moral reasoning that is necessary to a good life.

I chose this topic because, though not all religious beliefs are toxic, the epistemic base and fundamental attitudes fostered by religious belief are a serious threat to moral life — perhaps the greatest underlying threat to moral life of all time.

I would like to thank Justin Christy, my advisor, who has patiently sat through my writing and offered invaluable insights, never flagging in his support.

**Luis Sosa Manubes**

Hometown: Cárdenas, Tabasco,  
México

- Majors: BFA in Studio Art (Concentration in Ceramics) and Computer Science
- Advisors: Maria Tomasula and Tatiana Reinoza

***Immigrant Colors***

My thesis installation revolves around the depoliticization, humanization, and celebration of the Black and brown immigrant in the United States.

My work seeks to counter the overwhelmingly negative rhetoric surrounding immigrants, which frames them as subjects of only pain and suffering. Instead, my work seeks to highlight the immigrant as a person of struggles, but also of success, beauty, joy and love.

As an immigrant, I believe that the narrative surrounding immigrant art is incomplete and reduces immigrants to political topics and dehumanizes them from individuality. I want to emphasize that immigrants are more than an adjective; they have dreams, passions, and complex emotions that deserve to be acknowledged and celebrated.

***Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts.***

**Charles (Jack) McEnery**

Hometown: St. Louis, Missouri

- Major: Program of Liberal Studies
- Supplementary Major: Theology
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Andrew Radde-Gallwitz

## Ignorance, Sin, and Moral Culpability in Dante's *Inferno*

I am examining the role played by ignorance in the moral philosophy of the *Inferno*.

One can read ignorant sinners in the *Inferno* as a literary exposition of the Thomistic understanding of culpable ignorance. However, Dante's description of certain sinners' ignorance about their own guilt also reveals the psychologically self-alienating force of sin which begins by blinding oneself to one's own flaws.

I chose this topic because it is academically interesting in itself, as well as personally relevant to me — and I hope to others — in the effort to lead a moral, self-aware, and authentically human life.

**George Henry (Hank) McNeil**

Hometown: Norristown, Pennsylvania

- Majors: Film, Television, and Theatre and English
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisors: William Donaruma and Jim Collins

***We Must Create Magnificence***

*We Must Create Magnificence* is a 15-minute short film in which an undergraduate photography student has one night to finish her senior thesis — a series of portraits of her fellow artists on campus — or she won't graduate in the morning.

Alongside her narrative, the film reveals my personal creative process by documenting my revisions of the script, conversations with my advisors, and my thoughts and feelings regarding our impending graduation through conversations with my protagonist.

Filmmaking is an intensely collaborative process, but a senior thesis, at times, feels like a very individual undertaking, so I knew I needed to make a project which demystifies what it means to make art while acknowledging and celebrating the talented artists I've learned with during the past four years.

***Received funding from the Notre Dame Department of Film, Television, and Theatre.***

**Diane Medina Batista**

Hometown: Naples, Florida

- Majors: Psychology and Chemistry
- Glynn Family Honors Program, Questbridge Scholar, and Transformational Leaders Program
- Advisor: DeeAnne Goodenough-Lashua

## Chemiluminescence as a Mechanism to Test for Artesunate in Solution Using Luminol and Hemin in Basic Media

Malaria is one of the top 20 leading killers in the world. With so many people needing treatment, access to antimalarial drugs is crucial to prevent severe disease.

Artesunate is one of the first-line antimalarial drugs used around the world. Unfortunately, many shipments of this medicine are mixed in with counterfeit drugs that don't contain active ingredients, and prevent millions of people from recovering.

By allowing for the differentiation between real and fake artesunate, I can help increase the access to a life-saving drug. By creating a paper-based test to discriminate between real and fake artesunate using a mechanism to make the medicine glow, I have developed a differentiation method seen with the naked eye that does not require expensive machinery.

I traveled to Italy to better understand how access to certain drugs may be difficult and how countries outside of the United States may distribute medicines. I learned that doctors outside of the U.S. do not try to discriminate between different drugs, as long as they know that some of them are effective to the same extent. Therefore, it made sense that doctors prescribing anti-malarial drugs may not always check the label to make sure that it is the real drug and may not suspect that their medicine is completely inactive.

*Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program and traveled to Italy.*

**Anand Mehta**

Hometown: Oakland, California

- Majors: Economics and Political Science
- Advisor: Robert Johnson

## Exploiting Regional Heterogeneity to Identify the Phillips Curve: A Focus on Global Supply Chain Constraints

I examined whether supply chain constraints produce a causal effect on the inflation-unemployment relationship.

I constructed a panel dataset of U.S. metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) to produce a modified Phillips curve estimation that controls for nationwide economic shocks.

First, I identified the “baseline” Phillips curve using a fixed-effects panel regression. Then, I integrated the Global Supply Chain Pressure Index (GSCPI) into my model to assess whether the slope of the Phillips curve changes given high levels of global supply chain pressure.

I became interested in macroeconomic concepts after taking elective courses my junior year. Considering the salience of inflation and the extensive research focused on the Phillips curve, I thought it would be interesting to focus on a distinct subsection of this topic while contributing to the overall literature.



**Jake Miller**

Hometown: Orchard Park, New York

- Majors: Political Science and Sociology
- Minor: European Studies
- Advisor: Emilia Justyna Powell

## Rule of Law in the European Union: The Role of State Political Ideology in Conflict with the EU

Over the last decade, the European Union has experienced a deterioration of the rule of law that has directly challenged its cohesion as a supranational political and economic bloc. Attacks on judicial independence and political interference in judicial appointments, among other factors, have tarnished relationships between the EU and several of its member states.

My thesis examines this modern crisis by analyzing the political ideologies of four member state governments that have violated the rule of law. Ultimately, I argue that rule of law backsliding occurs independently of political ideology in the European context, but the response to European Union intervention does not.

I chose this topic because during my time at Notre Dame, I have become deeply interested in the rule of law and its role in promoting justice and peace. Over winter break, I traveled to Brussels, Belgium, to learn about how the European Union operates and conduct archival research on the rule of law in the early years of European integration. I visited the primary institutions of the European Union to learn about how they operate and I conducted research at the European Commission Historical Archives to understand how the rule of law developed in the early years of European integration.

Furthermore, in 2022, I spent part of the summer in Poland learning about international law and the Holocaust. This experience emphasized the importance of international institutions in safeguarding human rights and democratic equality. I chose my topic to combine these interests and to highlight the consequences that can occur when the rule of law is under threat.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts and the Nanovic Institute for European Studies. Traveled to Belgium.*

**Natalie Modugno**

Hometown: Trumbull, Connecticut

- Majors: Political Science and Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Minor: Computing and Digital Technologies
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program
- Advisor: Thomas Mustillo

## Analyzing Preclearance Formulas: Discrimination Detection and Post-*Shelby County* Impact

*Shelby County v. Holder* (2013) was a Supreme Court decision that struck down a key provision of the Voting Rights Act — the preclearance formula — making it more difficult to protect the right to vote.

For my thesis, I created a numerical formula for preclearance based on critiques of other formulas, relevance of certain variables, and inspiration from other formulas. Then, I analyzed five possible formulas, including my formula, determining which states would be subject to preclearance for each formula and their consistency with voting legislation.

I chose to study the effects of a lack of preclearance and potential preclearance formulas because I am fascinated by the Voting Rights Act. In AP Government my senior year of high school, the court case *Shelby County v. Holder* stood out to me.

I was inspired to combine my passions for politics and data analysis, as I was interested in exploring the makeup of the preclearance formulas.

**Nora Mulligan**

Hometown: Chester, New Jersey

- Majors: American Studies and Psychology
- Minors: Sustainability and Digital Marketing
- Advisor: Annie Coleman

## Outdoor America for All: Disability and Accessibility in U.S. Outdoor Recreational Spaces

National Parks are American treasures preserved for tourists' enjoyment. Although federal agencies have worked to make them accessible for recreation, disabled individuals — especially those with mobility impairments — often find them difficult or impossible to enjoy due to a lack of reasonable accommodations.

This thesis examines the contentious relationship between wilderness and accessibility and how the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act affect the management of these outdoor spaces.

I traveled to Glacier National Park in Montana, where I explored accessible facilities, trails, and campsites, as well as interviewed park rangers and conducted archival research. I also traveled to Washington, D.C., where I looked at historical films and images in the National Archives as well as historical documents from National Park management plans and committee meetings of federal agencies.

Sustainability is my biggest passion. Although it's a growing field of study, much scholarly research falls into the fields of science and engineering rather than the humanities. I wanted to explore sustainability from a new perspective that has positive real-world implications.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts' American Dream Summer Grant Program and traveled to Montana and Washington, D.C.*

**Claire Novak**

Hometown: Dundee, Oregon

- Major: Program of Liberal Studies
- Minor: Anthropology
- Advisor: Julia Marvin

## Of Perspective: Exploring Montaigne's 'Of Cannibals' as a Cultural Mirror and Philosophical Guide

My thesis is an exploration of Montaigne's famous essay "Of Cannibals," contemplating his source material and socio-political circumstances as they influenced his writing.

Montaigne was one of my favorite authors from the Program of Liberal Studies, and this thesis allowed me to engage with both PLS and anthropology.

**Daniel O'Brien**

Hometown: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

- Major: Joint Major in Philosophy & Theology
- Supplementary Major: Classics
- Kennedy Scholars and Sorin Scholars
- Advisor: Nathan Eubank

## Left Behind: A Metaleptic Understanding of Mark 14:51-52's Allusion to the Joseph Story

My project seeks to explain the purpose of Mark 14:51-52, a passage that has confounded readers for centuries, by returning to an ancient theory (that the passage is an allusion to Genesis 39) with the tools of modern literary analysis of allusions (metalepsis).

I aim to address why some scholars hesitate to consider this allusion and to explain how the evangelist might use this allusion to further the themes of his passion narrative.

I chose this topic because Mark has long fascinated me: The earliest Gospel presents the story of Jesus with dramatic urgency, wrestling with its ironies and rough edges. The mysterious young man in 14:51-52 appears only in Mark, and the lack of a settled interpretation of the strange passage pulled me in.

Metaleptic is a rare adjectival form of "metalepsis," itself a rather obscure word with different technical definitions in different fields. This project facilitated my exploration of a variety of different techniques and perspectives on ancient and biblical literary analysis, and throughout this process I believe I grew considerably as a researcher and a writer.

I am grateful for the support of many wonderful scholars who assisted me at different stages of the project, including but certainly not limited to Vittorio Montemaggi; Fr. Paul Kollman, C.S.C.; David Lincicum; and, of course, my advisor, Nathan Eubank.

*Received funding from a Kennedy Scholars Fellowship.*

**Sarah Ochocki**

Hometown: Mentor, Ohio

- Major: Neuroscience and Behavior
- Minors: Education, Schooling, and Society and Computing and Digital Technologies
- Advisors: Nicole McNeil and Gerry Haeffel

## How Do They Know? Analyzing Inferential Language Use in Literacy Tutoring Passages

I am analyzing the use of inferential academic language in tutoring materials given to struggling early literacy students. Academic vocabulary exposure and education is lacking in the United States and is a predictor of vocabulary attainment and school success.

Supplemental curriculums aim to address this gap, but little is known about the use of inferential academic language specifically.

I chose this topic because wanted to understand how inferential language is used in literacy education and to better understand the use of this important language in supplemental education programs.

**Matthew O'Donnell**

Hometown: North Caldwell, New Jersey

- Major: Economics
- Minors: Accountancy and Real Estate
- Sheedy Family Program in Economy, Enterprise, and Society
- Advisors: Davin Raiha and Chris Hedlin

## Divine Discounts: Trinity Church New York and Property Tax Exemption

This thesis examines whether Trinity Church New York provides its congregants and nearby New York significant economic, social, and spiritual capital to justify not paying property taxes.

I selected this particular subject due to my internship experience on Wall Street during the summer following my sophomore year. I found myself captivated by the multitude of ways in which people engaged with Trinity Church. I later traveled to New York City to meet with various Trinity Church leaders and congregants.

*Received funding from the Sheedy Family Program and traveled to New York City.*

**Payton Oliver**

Hometown: Cincinnati, Ohio

- Majors: Design (Concentration in Industrial Design) and Anthropology
- Balfour-Hesburgh Scholars Program
- Advisor: Ann-Marie Conrado

**Brick & Mortar Revival**

Prompted by in-store optimization following the rise of online shopping, my research seeks to understand the “retail apocalypse” facing brick-and-mortar retail stores closing across the United States.

I inquired into what motivates users to shop online versus in-person, performing a total of 17 expert and user interviews synthesized into actionable insights. Through ideation and visualization strategies, I created human-centered recommendations with the intention to bring value back to the brick-and-mortar shopping experience.

Given that shopping is an everyday part of the human experience, I hope to revive an otherwise monotonous task into one in which users can optimize and find a sense of joy. As we move toward a more digital world, I hope to amplify the value of analog experiences.



**John (Johnny) O'Meara**

Hometown: San Rafael, California

- Majors: Economics (Concentration in Financial Economics and Econometrics) and Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Marinho Bertanha

## Equality of Parameters using Permutation Tests Applied to the Tennessee STAR Experiment

Recently in economics, there has been a revival in randomization tests. In particular, it has been shown that you can use a permutation test to test for equality of variance using an asymptotically normal test statistic.

Through a simulation exercise as well as an empirical example, this thesis studies the permutation test's performance compared to other tests of equality of variance and applies the permutation test to the problem of clustering in economics. This issue is prevalent in the Tennessee STAR (Student-Teacher Achievement Ratio) experiment, where the permutation test determines that the clustering is necessary at the classroom level.

We typically think about the effects of the mean when looking at a dataset, but studying risk and variance has provoked new research in recent years. Alongside this resurgence, the need to cluster at the right level has found its way into a variety of empirical examples, including the Tennessee STAR experiment. I was interested in combining equality of variance tests with the problem of clustering and utilizing the permutation test to do so.

**Sofia Orlandi**

Hometown: Minneapolis, Minnesota

- Major: Neuroscience and Behavior
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Rachel Branco

## The Neurological Bases of Repetitive Motor Behaviors Associated with OCD and Methamphetamine Use

My thesis is a literature review, and I've looked at the literature studying repetitive motor behaviors associated with the compulsions of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and similar behaviors that are expressed by meth users.

I've found several areas of overlap, and will discuss a few in my review: the role of dopamine, involvement of cortico-striato-thalamo-cortical loops, and similar brain regions involved, including the striatum and orbitofrontal cortex.

I was introduced to the idea that meth use could be associated with "obsessive-compulsive behaviors" in my Psychology of Addiction class. This piqued my interest and I did more research on the topic. OCD patients and chronic meth users are in very separate circles of society, and I was curious about what connected them on a neurological level.

**Olivia Ortega**

Hometown: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

- Majors: History, Classics, and Political Science
- Advisor: Colin Barr

## Internationalizing Nationalism: Irish Republican Foreign Policy During the Troubles

I studied how Sinn Fein, the Irish republican political party, reacted to Ireland's position within the Cold War. I found that it was highly concerned with the military and the economic influence of the Western Bloc in the country.

In response, Sinn Fein developed its foreign policy around a vision for an alternative world order centered around small, unaligned, and developing states and peoples.

I did archival research at The Linen Hall Library in Belfast, Northern Ireland. I chose this topic because I wanted to study a country that was not well researched in terms of its relation to the Cold War. I found that the Irish Troubles and the Cold War coincided yet little research had been done to connect the two conflicts.

*Received funding from the Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies and traveled to Northern Ireland.*

**Paola Ortiz**

Hometown: Hidalgo, Texas

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Latino Studies
- Minors: Business Economics and Health, Humanities, and Society
- Latino Studies Scholars Program, Notre Dame Scholars Program, and Questbridge Scholar
- Advisor: Ricardo Ramírez

## A Healthy Democracy: Exploring the Impact of Health on Latino Voter Turnout in the United States

The Latino vote is continually becoming a key determinant in United States elections, and yet, at the same time, the state of Latino health in the U.S. is declining. Previous scholarship has sought to explain the declining Latino voter turnout but has not considered the impact that health has on voter turnout.

I look to determine whether health has a meaningful impact by considering other agents influencing Latino voting, including state contexts, nativity, immigrant generation, education, and income. By employing a quantitative statistical method, I have been able to identify a link.

As a Latina, I wanted to explore Latino politics in the United States in a meaningful manner. I am also interested in public health policy, specifically relating to the Latino community. While reading, I encountered a body of literature that analyzed the impact of health on voter turnout in the United States. However, these studies did not consider Latinos' unique challenges, which pushed me to take on this project and contribute a new lens to this field.

I would like to thank my advisor, Ricardo Ramirez, for his constant support and guidance with my thesis.

**Maeve O'Shaughnessy**

Hometown: South Bend, Indiana

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Business Economics and Irish Studies
- Sheedy Family Program in Economy, Enterprise, and Society
- Advisor: Angela McCarthy

## Not Just Chit-Chat: Examining the Impact of Social Networks and Ideological Diversity on Political Conversation

My thesis considered how undergraduate students from multiple political clubs at Notre Dame think about and engage in political conversation.

I conducted focus groups with students from the Notre Dame College Democrats, Notre Dame College Republicans, and BridgeND to understand how politically engaged college students' level of closeness with their political conversation partners affects the conversation.

Additionally, I explored how these students adapt their communication styles when interacting with those who share their political beliefs, those who do not, or in mixed-group settings.

In an age of increasing political polarization, the ability to have productive and respectful political dialogue among dissenting views is growing increasingly vital. I chose this topic out of curiosity about how college students are navigating diverse political conversations and to explore potential strategies for enhancing the benefits of informal political discourse.

**Daniel O'Shea**

Hometown: Munster, Indiana

- Majors: Economics and Biological Sciences
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Trenton Agrelius

## Quantifying Reactive Oxygen Species in Daphnia Magna Mutants Over Age Classes

From the differential gene expression data from the 2023 course-based undergraduate research experience that I helped to curate and teach, we found many differentially expressed genes that had ontology terms related to or involving oxidative stress and oxidative damage.

I then began investigating these genes via fluorescent microscopy and found an accumulation of reactive oxygen species within the mutant organisms as they aged.

I chose this topic as it was related to other findings that we had within our lab and I was fascinated by fluorescent microscopy and its applications within our model organism.

*Received funding from the College of Science's Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships.*

**Lauren Ostdiek**

Hometown: Columbus, Nebraska

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Education, Schooling, and Society
- Minor: Data Science
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Jeffrey Denning

## Beyond the Mountains of Maternal Education: Understanding the Relationship between Maternal Schooling and Child Health in Haiti

I explore the relationship between maternal schooling and child height-for-age percentile in Haiti and find that as a mother's education increases by one year, her child's height-for-age percentile increases by more than 1.2.

I then account for two sets of variables: a behavioral set, which includes mechanisms through which maternal schooling may impact children's health, and environmental variables, which control for confounding factors like wealth. These variables provide a deeper understanding of the initial relationship.

After noticing that global health was a continued subcurrent in my coursework in economics and education, schooling, and society, I became curious about the interplay of these variables. Specifically inspired by Paul Farmer's work in Haiti and my passion for equity in access to quality education, I wanted to explore this in a resource-constrained setting.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts' Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP).*

**Molly O'Toole**

Hometown: Arlington, Massachusetts

- Major: English (Concentration in Creative Writing)
- Minor: Peace Studies
- Advisor: Roy Scranton

***Murmuration***

My creative writing thesis is a collection of poetry written during the past year.

I focused on themes of grief, nature, female experience, memory, mental illness, and travel. My poems have strong ties to location, and the main places featured are Indiana and the broader Midwest, Dublin, Northern Ireland, Rome, and New England.

I aimed to create poems that explore the relationship between the mind's emotional location and the body's physical one, and to examine the tension between a yearning for the pastoral and the reality of life in a postmodern world.

Poetry, while challenging, is my favorite form of creative writing and my preferred method of artistic and emotional expression. The topics I focused on came about after a lot of writing — I did not choose them in advance, but they took shape once I examined my body of work.



**Garrett Pacholl**

Hometown: Roswell, Georgia

- Major: History
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: European Studies
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program, Glynn Family Honors Program, and Kennedy Scholars
- Advisor: Julia Adeney Thomas

## The Long Fight: Environmental Activism and the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines

This thesis traces the continuities and changes in how the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines engages in environmental advocacy from 1988 to 2022 in an increasingly globalized world.

My thesis argues the core nature of their approach remained largely constant despite changes in the rhetoric they used and how they supported their aims, especially after the publication of *Laudato si'* in 2015.

After my third year of college, I studied local environmental activism in the Philippines, including conducting ethnographic research on community perceptions of climate change and climate reparations. What I learned from this experience — including that the Catholic Church there had staunchly defended environmental rights for decades, long before *Laudato si'* — greatly informed the direction of my senior thesis. I believe there is much to learn from their example and experience.

***Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program and the Liu Institute for Asia and Asian Studies. Traveled to the Philippines.***

**Anjali Pellegrin**

Hometown: Notre Dame, Indiana

- Majors: Political Science and Arabic
- Cathy and Jack Brennan Family Scholars Program and Notre Dame Scholars Program
- Advisor: David Campbell

## The Collapse of the Big Tent: The United Methodist Church Schism at Individual, Institutional, and Socio-Political Levels

My thesis is a historical analysis of the United Methodist Church's debate surrounding LGBTQ+ issues. I seek to explain the timeliness and intensity of this conflict in a church body that has historically sought conflict resolution and moderation. I also seek to understand the impact of this phenomenon through a series of interviews with individuals within a variety of congregations. I traveled to New Orleans to conduct in-person interviews in churches.

I was raised in a formerly United Methodist Church and found myself drawn to seeking an understanding of how this conflict might both impact and be impacted by our larger society.

The history has been nothing short of illuminating and I never anticipated a thesis product that could be as affirming to both parties of the conversation as I hope this will be.

*Traveled to New Orleans, Louisiana.*

**Madeline Petrikas**

Hometown: Dallas, Texas

- Majors: Political Science and Science Preprofessional Studies
- Minor: Health, Humanities, and Society
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Rebecca Wingert

## The Role of Iroquois Genes in Kidney Differentiation and Development

My project explores how Iroquois genes impact kidney differentiation and development with the hope of finding new treatments for chronic kidney disease (CKD). The project includes an overview of current treatments for CKD and associated disparities.

When I become a physician, I want to address issues that straddle medical and political domains. How doctors treat patients is impacted by health legislation; how patients experience illness is inextricably tied to societal perceptions of sickness. I want to explore illness from a sociopolitical perspective as well as a biological lens.

*Received funding from the College of Science's Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships and the Glynn Family Honors Program.*



**Mackenzie (Mack)  
Pittman**

Hometown: Bellbrook, Ohio

- Major: Anthropology
- Minor: Sustainability
- Advisor: Donna Glowacki

## Growing Food to Grow Community: Unity Gardens Inc.

Lack of access to healthy and affordable food is a pervasive issue that is inadequately addressed by most food security organizations.

This study uses ethnographic observations and interviews at Unity Gardens in South Bend, Indiana, to understand the impact the organization has on the ways people create community and understand food systems. Unity Gardens was chosen as the research site because it employs a unique community garden model: All of the food grown there is free-to-pick for all community members. The qualitative data reveal a unique connection between food access and placemaking.

It is important to understand how organizations like Unity Gardens address food access in a dignified manner while also facilitating community growth through a sustainable food model.

This project could not have been completed without the insights of Sara Stewart, the executive director of Unity Gardens, who sparked my love for gardening and has been a wonderful mentor.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts' Summer Comprehensive Grant.*

**Anna Polivka**

Hometown: Loveland, Ohio

- Majors: History and Theology
- Advisor: Fr. Stephen Koeth, C.S.C.

## 'Operation Hospitality': The Archdiocese of Chicago and Metropolitan Desegregation Efforts, 1968-1974

In the 1960s, Chicago had the greatest residential segregation of any large U.S. city, while the Archdiocese of Chicago boasted the nation's largest parochial school system.

My project explores how the Archdiocese sought to engage with the problem of segregation across the metropolitan area through a parochial school busing program, known as "Operation Hospitality." It also explores what reactions to the program reveal about how American Catholics engaged with their Church at this time. I traveled to Chicago to do research in the Archdiocese of Chicago Archives.

I chose this topic because I was interested in examining how Catholic dioceses responded to population shifts within their territories. This story offered a compelling setting to see how an Archdiocese attempted to resolve a seemingly secular problem through its unique metropolitan structure and how everyday Catholics responded to their hierarchy's decision-making.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts and traveled to Chicago.*

**Elizabeth Prater**

Hometown: Vancouver, Washington

- Majors: Program of Liberal Studies and Marketing
- Advisor: Tom Stapleford

## The Role of the Artist in the Novels of Kazuo Ishiguro

The scope of my thesis encompasses four of Kazuo Ishiguro's novels: *An Artist of the Floating World*, *Never Let Me Go*, *Klara and the Sun*, and *The Unconsoled*. I evaluate the role of the artists featured in these works.

Many of these figures exhibit loneliness/loss and use art to create social connections or build societal status; however, these aesthetic experiences fall short of resolving the discordance between the individual and the world.

I read *Never Let Me Go* my sophomore year of college and was immediately drawn to Ishiguro's elusive narration and the slow unveiling of his world building. After reading several of his other works, I realized that many artists were featured in his novels, which led me to question their role within his oeuvre.

I did research through the Harry Ransom Center, a humanities research library and museum at The University of Texas at Austin. I gained digital access to some containers of Ishiguro's archive and read his preparatory and drafting notes of select novels.



### Rose Quinlan

Hometown: Buffalo, New York

- Majors: Program of Liberal Studies and Economics
- Advisor: Thomas Stapleford

## The Bhutan Dilemma

Bhutan, a small Buddhist monarchy in the Himalayas, seeks to maximize Gross National Happiness (GNH) rather than gross domestic product (GDP). This objective has guided the monarchy toward a series of controversial policy initiatives that impose an objective understanding of happiness on its citizens.

My thesis focuses on the ethical questions arising from Bhutan's agenda of economic and cultural isolationism and, conversely, the ethical problems arising from a more growth-centric approach to development.

I wanted to do a project that combined my interests in philosophy and economics by examining the ethical debates surrounding standard-of-living metrics. I traveled to Bhutan for independent qualitative research on Bhutanese culture, politics and history, which included interviewing government officials and researchers at the Center for GNH Research in Thimphu.

Shortly into my research, I became fascinated with Bhutanese public policy, and I decided to examine the country as a case study in alternative approaches to development.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts' Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program and the Roberts Endowment for Undergraduate Research in East Asia. Traveled to Bhutan.*



### Maya Ramp

Hometown: Stewartville, Minnesota

- Major: Economics
- Notre Dame Scholars Program
- Advisor: Nooshin Hakim Javadi

## Flightless Birds: The Social and Environmental Costs of Travel

Amid worldwide climate catastrophe, tourism is the fastest growing carbon-emitting industry.

Research finds that there is no technology-driven sustainable solution to current travel patterns, making decreased consumption the only path to decreased emissions. Additionally, creating economies reliant on unsustainable tourism practices creates societies vulnerable to economic catastrophe.

By creating an art installation utilizing data visualization, my work explored the parallels between human and bird migration asking the question: Are humans meant to travel the world?

In spring 2023, I studied abroad in Athens, Greece, and became interested in the relationship between travel and catastrophe. I hadn't taken an art class since fifth grade but decided to take the leap and explore this concept creatively to take advantage of all the opportunities at Notre Dame before I graduate.

*Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program and Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts. Traveled to Greece.*



**Isabela Rascon**

Hometown: Chihuahua, Mexico

- Major: Economics
- Minors: Sustainability and Anthropology
- Advisor: Sisi Meng

## The Sea is Rising, Are We Moving?

The long-term viability of coastal communities is threatened by sea-level rise caused by climate change. However, how these communities will respond and what will prompt them to take adaptive measures is not well understood.

My thesis analyzed the factors that impact the likelihood of relocating as an adaptation strategy in response to sea-level rise. Ultimately, I found that concern for sea level rise, previous experience with natural hazards, place attachment, and certain sociodemographic factors shaped these decisions.

I am interested in topics related to immigration and the environment. My thesis allowed me to quench my curiosity about the intersection of the two and think about the global implications of climate displacement.

**Benjamín Rascón Gracia**

Hometown: Westfield, Indiana

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: Hesburgh Program in Public Service
- Kellogg International Scholars Program and Phi Beta Kappa
- Advisor: Scott Mainwaring

## Brahmin Left and Merchant Right in Global South: An Analysis of Class and Presidential Vote in Brazil

My project looks at the influence of class on the presidential vote in Brazil from 2002 to 2022. I operationalize two proxy variables by which I look at different class social cleavages: income and education. I analyze how being part of elite income and education cleavages similarly and differently predict for the presidential vote over time.

The overall implications of my project are an understanding of how elites in the Global South prioritize policy concerns.

I chose this topic because, from a quick glance, Brazil seemed to defy a pattern seen in Global North democracies. My two times studying in Brazil revealed the extent to which class influences politics in the nation.

In summer 2022 in Rio de Janeiro, I did exploratory research to learn Portuguese and familiarize myself with Brazilian political dynamics leading up to the 2022 election. I returned to Brazil during spring 2023 to study abroad.

*Received funding from the Kellogg Institute for International Studies and traveled twice to Brazil.*

**Benjamín Rascón Gracia**

Hometown: Westfield, Indiana

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: Hesburgh Program in Public Service
- Kellogg International Scholars Program
- Advisor: Sarah Shortall

## Embracing Laïcité: What the US Can Learn from France's Approach to Religion

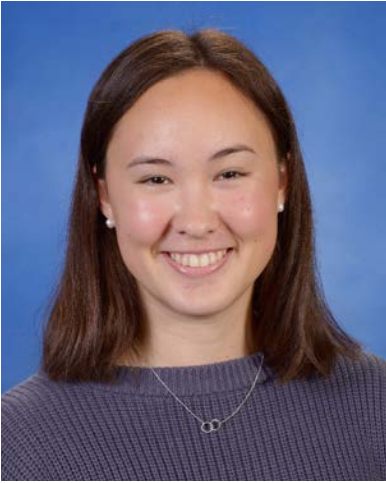
In two complementary capstones that I treat as one large thesis project, I first compare how French and American secular regimes treat the problem of religious interference in the political sphere. They complement each other by first doing a comparative analysis then making reflective argumentation on applicability to the U.S.

In the first portion (for my global affairs major), I find that France has a more sophisticated constitutional and political remedy that provides the state with the tools to constrain the imposition of religious values in a liberal society but that struggles with minority religions. In the second portion, for the Hesburgh Program in Public Service, I argue for how U.S. policymakers and jurists can draw from the French tradition to combat religious fundamentalism in the U.S.

I am deeply disturbed by the Christian nationalist forces that have gained strength in the United States, slowly chipping away at our separation of church and state. I wanted to look to a liberal society that has at least equipped the state to assert its secular nature in the political sphere.

In Paris, France, I met with experts on separation of church and state in France, as well as advocates of strict secular government to understand the contestation of religious actors in the political sphere. I also paid attention to how France constructed a "civil religion" in its architecture and artwork.

*Received funding from the Rooney Center for the Study of American Democracy and traveled to France.*

**Erin Reilly**

Hometown: Madison, Connecticut

- Majors: History and Chinese
- Minor: Data Science
- Kennedy Scholars
- Advisor: Elisabeth Köll

## The Poppy on Paper: Opium Discourse in the Early Republic of China

My project focuses on Chinese and Western public discourse regarding opium between 1912 and 1916.

The topic of opium provides a lens for evaluating the state of Chinese modernization and Sino-Western relations during the early years of the new Republic of China. Opium at the time encompassed political, economic, and socio-cultural agendas, which together allow for a more complex understanding of the relationship between Western intervention in Chinese affairs and Chinese modernization efforts.

I chose this topic to explore the development of the Sino-Western relationship in modern history, particularly in the years following the Opium Wars of the 19th century and the end of the imperial dynasties in 1911.

**Benjamin Riner**

Hometown: Geneva, Illinois

- Majors: Economics and Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Drew Creal

## FORE-casting Success: Predicting Outcomes on the PGA Tour

My thesis consists of building a model to predict the outcomes of PGA Tour events from player-level historical data.

I fit a linear model to predict the skill of each player, add a random shock to simulate the round-to-round variance of golf, and conduct Monte Carlo simulation to calculate the probability that each player finishes in a given position in a specific tournament.

I chose this topic because I am a huge fan of golf and statistics, and I love sports analytics. Additionally, golf tournament prediction is a space with relatively little academic literature but lots of potential.

*Received support from Professor Drew Creal's research fund.*

**Luisa (Lulu) Romero**

Hometown: Santa Ana, California

- Majors: American Studies and Psychology
- Supplementary Major: Latino Studies
- Cathy and Jack Brennan Family Scholars Program, Questbridge Scholar, and Transformational Leaders Program
- Advisor: Jason Ruiz

## Cruzando La Frontera: Narrating Immigration in Latinx and Latin American Telenovelas

My thesis seeks to explore how telenovelas are not a superficial art form, but are accomplishing heavy cultural work through breaking down crucial Latinx cultural aspects and engaging audiences with deep, and sometimes taboo, topics.

I strive to understand how telenovelas — through their vast popularity among Latinxs — play an important role communicating Latin American issues to wider audiences, affecting how these societies view themselves and how others view them.

Through exploring three telenovelas, I examine immigration and how the societal opinion of that era is reflected within the novela. The commitment of this thesis is to demonstrate that telenovelas reflect the zeitgeist of the time in which they are created, specifically when it comes to the concept of immigration.

I chose this topic because my favorite childhood memories with my grandmother were spent in the living room watching telenovelas. I didn't understand why my family had such a large attachment to these shows until I realized that they tether a familiar space of language and culture.

I hope to encourage Latinx viewers and telenovela creators to explore the impact that telenovelas have on their audiences, carefully analyzing what they are promoting through them.

**Julia Ruelle**

Hometown: Minnetonka, Minnesota

- Major: Biological Sciences
- Minors: Latino Studies and Health, Humanities, and Society
- Glynn Family Honors Program and Stamps Scholars Program
- Advisor: Vania Smith-Oka

## Narrative Medicine Principles at a Spanish-English Free Health Clinic

In my thesis, I interview doctors, nurses, community health workers, and other professionals at a clinic for undocumented Latinos in the Twin Cities metro area about the communication, relationships, and stories shared by the patients and the providers.

Narrative medicine and medical anthropology frame my questions and conversations. The value of community health workers in the narrative co-construction of patients' histories to allow for holistic, dynamic care emerges as one major conclusion of my work.

My volunteer work at a clinic for undocumented immigrants sparked my interest in the relationships and communication between providers and patients. I tied together topics from my favorite courses about narrative medicine in the health, humanities, and society minor and the Latino studies minor to shape my questions and frameworks.

*Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.*

**Adam Salek**

Hometown: West Chester, Ohio

- Major: Sociology
- Minors: Education, Schooling, and Society and History
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program
- Advisor: Dana Moss

## 'It's the Only Place I Know': Undocumented Children's Experiences Navigating Education, Opportunity, and Integration in Israel

My project has studied the experiences of undocumented children of migrant workers and asylum seekers in Israeli schools, seeking to understand their experiences.

I have grouped my findings into three distinct periods defined by public attitudes toward undocumented families, demonstrating that circumstances are unstable across time. Nonetheless, institutions like the Bialik-Rogozin School in south Tel Aviv for multicultural and refugee communities, and other civil society organizations, mitigate the fluctuations in public attitudes.

While studying in Tel Aviv, I taught American literature to 11 undocumented high school juniors preparing for college entrance exams. They performed very well and claimed to be Israelis despite lacking citizenship. I wanted to investigate this further and look for contrasts between undocumented students in Israel and the U.S.



**Rebeca Santa Maria  
Granados**

Hometown: Tlaxcala, Mexico

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major:  
Global Affairs
- Transformational Leaders  
Program
- Advisor: Erin Rossiter

## Shaping Diplomacy: La Cuarta Transformación and Mexico-US Bilateral Relations

My senior thesis pertains to the bilateral relations between Mexico and the United States. I seek to identify sociopolitical factors that could foster a fairer relationship between the two countries. To this end, I conducted a series of interviews with Mexican diplomats to understand the impact of the current Mexican presidential administration and the present state of Mexico-U.S. diplomatic relations.

During my internship at the Mexican Embassy in Washington, D.C., Mexican diplomats' dedication to advancing the relationship between our two countries taught me the importance of understanding the nuances of this relationship.

Furthermore, it motivated me to explore this topic in my thesis to contribute to their ongoing efforts to strengthen Mexico-U.S. relations.

**Emma Sayler**

Hometown: Ormond Beach, Florida

- Major: Psychology
- Minor: Education, Schooling, and Society
- Advisor: Nicole McNeil

## Comparing the Goal-Setting Practices of Early Literacy Students in Repeated Reading

My project was inspired by the early literacy students I've worked with through TutorND. My thesis followed Notre Dame tutors and their students in South Bend public schools to determine if objective or general growth goals were better for promoting fluent reading.

Repeated passage reading is an evidence-based method for improving early literacy students' oral reading fluency. Educator practice guides recommend that tutors and teachers provide students with goals when they are engaged in repeated passage reading, but current fluency interventions differ in the types of goals they ask students to set.

I hope that my thesis adds to the current body of research regarding literacy interventions to improve instruction for young readers.

**Christina Sayut**

Hometown: Melbourne, Florida

- Major: BFA in Design  
(Concentration in, Visual  
Communication Design)
- Minors: Musical Theatre and  
Studio Art
- Advisors: Sarah Martin and  
Clinton Carlson

**Kinware: A Self-Authored Ceramics Brand**

Kinware is a self-authored brand that centers around accessible design in ceramics.

All aspects of the brand — logo, brand values and marketing materials — were built from an idea. The brand focuses on connecting a family through dinnerware and sitting around the table.

Brand creation is an interest of mine within the world of design, and I have a love of creating functional and aesthetically pleasing ceramic ware.

*Received funding from the Department of Art, Art History & Design's William and Connie Greif Art Award.*

**Catherine Schafer**

Hometown: Cincinnati, Ohio

- Major: German
- Minors: Business Economics and Data Science
- Sheedy Family Program in Economy, Enterprise, and Society and iTREDS (Interdisciplinary Traineeship for Responsibly Engaged Data Scientists) Scholar
- Advisor: Mark Roche

## Poetry in the Visual World: An Analysis of Selected Poems from Eichendorff to Steinherr in Light of the External World

This thesis seeks to investigate the nature of the imagery evoked through concrete poetry, particularly through the lens of German poems.

Considering works from five different German-language poets — Joseph von Eichendorff, Theodor Storm, Jakob van Hoddis, Paul Celan, and Ludwig Steinherr — hailing from five different literary periods spanning the Romantic to the contemporary, the illustrative effects and impact of the poets' diction and literary devices are considered.

I developed a passion for analyzing German poetry during some of my first semesters at Notre Dame. Upon the suggestion of my professor and now advisor, I decided to embark upon a thesis that would allow me to continue to explore this interest and further develop my skills in poetry analysis.

**Faith Schafer**

Hometown: Williamston, Michigan

- Major: Science-Business
- Minor: Theology
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Gerald McKenny

## Current Roles and Future Projections of Catholic Health Care in American Society

My paper seeks to identify and explain a few of the complications that have risen over the last few decades as Catholic institutions partner with, or acquire, public secular health care organizations.

It portrays a potential look into what the future of Catholic health care might look like in the coming years, and how viable current partnerships may be in an American landscape that is now hyper-focused on the ever-changing sphere of medicine.

I chose this topic because I've always been interested in health care, but never realized how complicated the administrative end of it can be. I've enjoyed looking at topics through a theological lens at Notre Dame, and this was an especially interesting topic to examine in that light.

I've enjoyed exploring a topic in this much detail. I'm also so grateful to my advisor and everyone who helped me, even if it was just by putting a new thought into my mind.

**Bridget Schippers**

Hometown: Olathe, Kansas

- Major: Economics
- Minors: Data Science, Hesburgh Program in Public Service, and Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program, Notre Dame Scholars Program, and Suzanne and Walter Scott Scholars Program
- Advisor: Lakshmi Iyer

## Teacher Stay-tistics: The Effects of Principal and Teacher Gender on Teacher Support and Turnover

Limited literature quantifies male resistance to female leadership. I explore this phenomenon in public education between principals and teachers.

Using a nationally representative dataset of U.S. public school principals and teachers from 2003 to 2021, I analyze how teacher turnover is mediated by teacher and principal gender.

I expect to find increased male teacher turnover rates under female principals, with female teacher turnover rates remaining relatively constant. Resistance to female leadership is predicted to decrease over time and in areas with higher female workforce participation.

This topic is inspired by my own experiences in leadership positions, my time working for female leaders, my prior research on female leadership with Professor Tom Mustillo in the Keough School of Global Affairs, and the research of academics, including Claudia Goldin who recently received the Nobel Prize "for having advanced our understanding of women's labor market outcomes."

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts.*

**Hannah Schmitz**

Hometown: Maria Stein, Ohio

- Major: Theology
- Minor: Constitutional Studies
- Advisor: Timothy O'Malley

## Marriage and Music: The Hymn and Its Musical Theology of Marriage

In my project, three songs are analyzed for their ability to successfully incarnate the theological vision of marriage and determine if they are fit for usage within the Roman Catholic Mass.

The theology of marriage and the theology of music are the criteria for evaluating, *Inclina Domine*, *Ave Verum Corpus*, and *O God Beyond All Praising*, which all successfully incarnate the connection between music chosen for the Mass and the theology of marriage.

After taking Professor Timothy O'Malley's Nuptial Mystery class, I was inspired to learn more about the theology of marriage. I am involved with music ministry, and after taking the class I began to see the connections between the theology and the music chosen for the wedding Mass, which blossomed into this project.

**Madison (Mimi) Schneider**

Hometown: Granger, Indiana

- Major: German
- Minors: Business Economics and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program
- Advisor: Mark Roche

## Poetic Enchantment and Poetic Ambiguity: Understanding the Nature of German Romanticism by Interpreting Four Eichendorff Poems

In my thesis, I analyze four poems by the German Romantic poet Joseph von Eichendorff.

My primary focus is the form, structure, and meaning of the poetry, including how Eichendorff portrays Romantic themes, such as isolation of the self, time's fleeting nature, human interaction with the sublime, and the magnificence of nature. In my afterword, I draw comparisons between Eichendorff's works and those of Caspar David Friedrich and Mary Oliver.

During my sophomore year, I took the course German Literary and Cultural Tradition. While covering German Romanticism, I found myself particularly captivated by Eichendorff's poetry. I am writing my thesis on Eichendorff to further explore how his poetry fits into, and shapes, the meta-themes of German Romanticism.



**Ian Schowe**

Hometown: Kendallville, Indiana

- Majors: Political Science and Biochemistry
- Advisor: Ricardo Ramírez

## Stopping More Than Just the Undocumented: How Unfavorable Immigration Policy is Causing Erosions to Both the Physical Health of all Latinos as well as to the Latino Health Advantage

According to the Latino Health Advantage, Latino immigrants experience better health outcomes compared with acculturated counterparts. However, increasingly unfavorable state immigration laws may decline this advantage.

Utilizing the 2015 Latino National Health and Immigration Survey, I explore the links between perceived unfavorable state policies with cardiovascular risk factors while looking at effects on the Latino Health Advantage. I aim to show the importance of making policy from a holistic view due to these unintended consequences.

After reading *The Death Gap: How Inequality Kills* by Dr. David Ansell, I became heavily interested in health disparities due to structural factors, including public policy. Moreover, this topic allowed me to link my interests in disease and health with political science.

I enjoyed working with Professor Ricardo Ramirez, which allowed me to do interdisciplinary research of public health, public policy, and immigration policy. It was great to work and strengthen my coding skills and analyze real datasets in this data-driven process.

**Anna Schroedel**

Hometown: Kailua-Kona, Hawaii

- Major: Program of Liberal Studies
- Advisors: Katie Bugyis and Maria Tomasula

***An Enchanted World***

My thesis consists of two parts: the written work, which serves as an extended artist's statement, and a series of 12 paintings.

I focus on the relationship between humanity and the natural world by weaving together my experience growing up in Hawai'i with Eastern Orthodox theology, literature, and artistic philosophizing.

I did creative research in Bali, Indonesia, to expand my painting technique. Ultimately, I aim to share a sacramental vision of the world — one which blurs the lines between the material and spiritual, between reality and imagination.

This topic is close to my heart. It brings together the intellectual aspects of my major in the Program of Liberal Studies with my love of painting. Through this deeply personal project, I was pushed to explore and intertwine the various influences I have had in my creative process.

***Received funding from an Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts Summer Comprehensive Grant and traveled to Indonesia.***

**Emma Sedlack**

Hometown: Cincinnati, Ohio

- Major: Sociology
- Minors: Digital Marketing and Collaborative Innovation
- Advisor: Terence McDonnell

## When We Were HERE: ND Student Response to Campus Mandates and College Life Under COVID

With a goal of controlling COVID-19 spread, the HERE campaign altered social interactions due to distancing guidelines during the Class of 2024's first year at Notre Dame. This study explores student reactions and interactions with the HERE campaign, shedding light on the marketing efforts and community adaptation in unprecedented times.

Responses varied from acceptance to defiance, evident in interactions with campaign materials, like stickers and signs, and in how students opted to follow the rules.

As a member of the Class of 2024, I wanted to build a framework to understand our unique shared experience. Additionally, I have loved to see how the HERE campaign has traveled with us through our four years, so this thesis allowed me to more fully understand these cultural objects.

**Lena Shadow**

Hometown: Houston, Texas

- Major: Sociology
- Minors: International Development Studies and Data Science
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Erika Summers-Effler

## Searching for Legitimacy: Civil Society Organizations' Ability to Re-Legitimize Police Reporting Among Victims of Gender-Based Violence

In Durban, South Africa, I spent six weeks conducting interviews and focus groups across four townships. A friend from South Africa told me: "I'm afraid every day as a woman living in South Africa."

This was my introduction to the country as one of the rape capitals of the world. I wanted to investigate potential methods for women's empowerment in such a dire context

I've found that large networks of civil society organizations have been able to harness enough social capital to increase gender-based violence reporting rates by holding normally corrupt police accountable and providing a safety net for victims who might otherwise be victimized by the police.

*Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program and Kellogg Institute for International Studies. Traveled to South Africa.*

**Jacob Shawwa**

Hometown: Virginia Beach, Virginia

- Major: Spanish
- Minor: Latino Studies
- Supplementary Major:  
A&L Pre-Health
- Advisor: Thomas Anderson

## José Martí y su Influencia para el Ascenso al Poder Fidel Castro

"The conceited villager believes the entire world to be his village ... unaware of those giants with seven-league boots who can crush him underfoot." (From José Martí's *Our America*).

Who are the giants? Martí uses the image of a giant with the ability to easily crush Cuba to describe the growing threat from the United States to independent Latin American states. Martí's *Our America* disapproves of U.S. involvement in Latin America and disapproves of its racist tendencies.

It would take the undaunted visionary Fidel Castro to loosen the iron grip the U.S. had on Cuba. I wish to show how American diplomacy joins *Our America* to influence the rhetoric of Castro, who tried to seize and spread the principles of communism and nationalism in Cuba.

In my first year at Notre Dame, I took a University Seminar course on human rights, social justice, and the culture of violence in Latin America taught by Professor Thomas Anderson. I completed the class with an essay that focused on American exploitation of Cuba and Latin America through the lens of Castro.

Before this class, I had never been exposed to Cuban nationalism outside of an American perspective. It opened my eyes to a completely different perspective of the Cuban-American conflict and I thoroughly enjoyed the topic.



### Jacob Sherer

Hometown: Platteville, Wisconsin

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: European Studies and Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program and Kennedy Scholars
- Advisors: Geoffrey Layman and James Kirk

## Blame It All On My Roots? Rural-Urban Migration, Rural Consciousness, and Political Attitudes

My thesis explores the political behavior of “rural movers” — the portion of the electorate who have recently relocated from rural to urban areas.

On a range of issues, I find that rural movers are politically distinct from their rural and urban peers. Additionally, I find that they maintain heightened levels of rural identity — specifically rural consciousness — after moving. This suggests that where an individual previously lived may have lasting effects on how they make sense of the political world. My thesis ultimately contributes to a better understanding of the political implications of rural-urban migration in the United States.

Reflecting on my experiences growing up in small-town Wisconsin, I’m interested in understanding how geography and one’s sense of place shapes political attitudes. The surprise election of Donald Trump in 2016 — largely at the hands of disaffected rural voters — brought the rural-urban political divide to the forefront of discussions about American politics. I chose this topic because it’s an exciting (and important) time to be exploring questions related to political geography.

I presented my research at the annual Midwest Political Science Association conference in Chicago in April. Earlier, I traveled to Washington, D.C., to better understand how the current way the government functions might contribute to the dissatisfaction of rural citizens. I moved away from this specific topic for my thesis, but it was a valuable experience nonetheless. Additionally, I was a Kennedy Scholar at Notre Dame London, which gave me the opportunity to speak with scholars about my research at Cambridge University and present my research topic to scholars at Durham University.

*Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program and Kennedy Scholars Fellowship. Traveled to Chicago, London, and Washington, D.C.*

**Joel Skelley**

Hometown: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Mary Keys

## The Purpose of Politics in Plato's *Gorgias*

The *Gorgias* has been neglected and misunderstood in considerations of Plato's political thought. In my thesis, I investigate how Plato's Socrates understands the ends to which political activity is ordered through close analysis of the text in translation and reference to the original Greek.

I argue that Plato envisions politics as fundamentally ordered toward friendship with the people, namely a kind of friendship based not on flattery and mutual satisfaction but rather providing for the relative material good of the polis, encouraging citizens toward moral improvement, and safeguarding the state of their eternal souls.

Upon first reading Plato's *Gorgias*, I was enthralled with the dialogue's discussion of politics, one which was radically different from the ways in which we conceive of politics today. I find that the *Gorgias'* account of political friendship is one which speaks to the modern ear in a challenging but rewarding way.

**Matthew Smolka**

Hometown: Baltimore, Maryland

- Major: Science Preprofessional Studies
- Supplementary Major: Latino Studies
- Minor: Theology
- Advisor: Karen Richman

## Securing Health Care Access for Uninsured Latino Patients in Baltimore and Hilton Head

This thesis focuses on my experiences the past two summers working and volunteering in Baltimore and Hilton Head. I interviewed medical professionals whom I worked with in both areas and explored the major themes around health care access for Latino patients, with a special focus on barriers to access for the uninsured.

I am passionate about everyone having the right to access affordable health care. When combined with my interests in Spanish and medicine, this is simply an exploration of some of the major themes I have come across during the past two summers.

*Received support from the Notre Dame Club of Hilton Head and traveled to Hilton Head, South Carolina.*



**Grace Sorenson**

Hometown: Chadron, Nebraska

- Major: English
- Minor: History
- Glynn Family Honors Program and Kennedy Scholars
- Advisor: Barbara Green

## Evelyn Sharp's *Rebel Women* as Individual Stories and a Linked Story Collection

I am investigating how the stories in Evelyn Sharp's *Rebel Women* collection function as a cohesive unit as well as how they function individually when published on their own in periodicals.

I have been interested in women's suffrage literature, and I found this topic to be a unique and interesting way to delve further into that subject.

**Jessica Stehlik**

Hometown: Chicago, Illinois

- Major: BFA in Studio Art  
(Concentration in Painting and Drawing)
- Advisor: Maria Tomasula

## Reflections of Faith, Hope, and Love

While reflecting upon my Catholic journey, I noticed how my faith has flowed through periods of great joy and doubt. During times of doubt, I look to the stories of powerful women in Catholic tradition to find strength.

Whether or not their full stories are ever mentioned, I have read between the lines and reimagined them using self-portraits to show the true courage it took then and would take now to be in their situations.

I traveled to Rome to look at the many churches there, including St. Peter's Basilica. One of my most important discoveries in Italy was the amount of female imagery displayed in churches and the reverence of women that was shown. I also traveled to Dublin, Ireland, to get inspiration for my color palette and for the shape of my panels from the stained glass in the churches around the city.

I have felt particularly drawn to religious themes since I began making art in grade school. It was a fitting end to my time at Notre Dame to incorporate my religious journey in my thesis by depicting my story through strong female figures from Catholic tradition.

*Received funding from the Department of Art, Art History & Design's William and Connie Greif Art Award and Gero Family Travel Grant. Traveled to Italy and Ireland.*



## Emma Stern

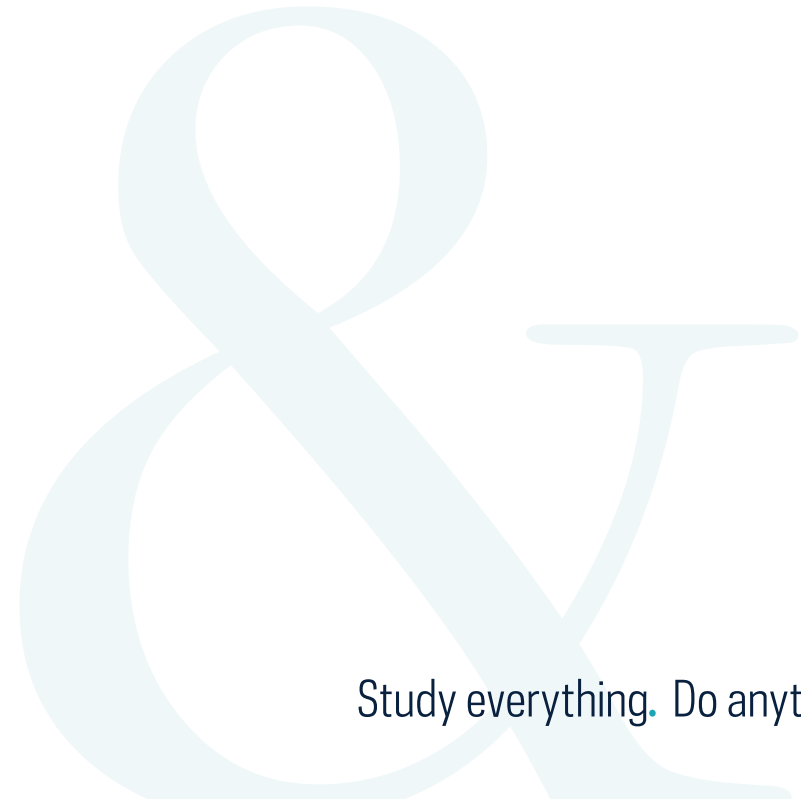
Hometown: Denver, Colorado

- Majors: Political Science and English
- Minor: Sustainability
- Advisors: Orlando Menes and Maira Hayat

## Environmental Litigation as Poetry

For my thesis, I transformed the language of environmental lawsuits and litigation into poetry.

I chose this topic because as an aspiring environmental lawyer, I wanted to discover a new way of communicating complex legal environmental topics.



**Elizabeth (Lizzie) Stifel**

Hometown: Easton, Pennsylvania

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: Data Science
- Glynn Family Honors Program, Notre Dame Scholars Program, and the Suzanne and Walter Scott Scholars Program
- Advisor: Daniel Miller

## How Do Trees on Farms and Forests Buffer Households Against Shocks in Ethiopia?

I investigated the role of trees on farms and forests in bolstering the resilience of Ethiopian households against political, climate, and household-economic shocks.

I use nationally representative panel survey data from the World Bank's Living Standards Measurement Study for Ethiopia from 2011-2016. Using a fixed-effect regression with interactions, I find that while trees on farms are associated with increased household consumption levels, their ability to shield households against a spectrum of shocks is less certain.

This research builds on a previous study I did with Professor Daniel Miller in which we found that trees on farms increase household consumption. I wanted to further that research to better understand how households used trees in times of scarcity.

**Cecelia Swartz**

Hometown: Bethesda, Maryland

- Major: English
- Minors: European Studies and French
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Amy Mulligan

## Sovereignty Goddesses and Feminism in Contemporary Versions of the 'Táin Bó Cúailnge'

My thesis is a comparative literary analysis of contemporary retellings of the medieval Irish epic "Táin Bó Cúailnge" that uses the archetype of the sovereignty goddess to reimagine the characters of Medb and the Morrigan in a feminist light.

I conclude that such reinterpretations create a mode of empowerment reliant on magic which foregrounds a powerful place for women in the myths but is inaccessible to human women who do not have magic.

During summer 2023, I spent eight weeks in Dublin, Ireland, as part of the Irish Internship Programme. I consulted sources at the National Library of Ireland, the Dublin Global Gateway, and the University College Dublin James Joyce Library to do the bulk of the research.

This topic connects my interests in mythology, Irish literature, and feminism. The sovereignty goddess fascinates me because, in mythology, the representation of political sovereignty is usually male, so when I learned about modern retellings that used the archetype as a feminist symbol, I had to write a thesis on it.

*Received funding from the Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies and traveled to Ireland.*

**Isabela Tasende**

Hometown: Panama City, Panama

- Majors: Political Science and Economics
- Minor: Theology
- Hesburgh-Yusko Scholars Program and Kellogg International Scholars Program
- Advisor: Scott Mainwaring

## Guardians of Power: Unraveling the Military's Role in Venezuela's Authoritarian Consolidation and Survival

This thesis presents a new, actor-based theory for what allows personalistic dictatorships to survive in high-tension contexts. It analyzes how Venezuela's Chavista regime has maintained control since 1999, focusing on the role of the military in the regime's authoritarian consolidation and survival.

I argue that by leveraging a cycle of militarization and co-optation, personalistic dictators can shift the military's preferences for and capacity to sustain their regime in times of crisis. The military's nature as a hierarchical institution with vast coercive power allows it to act as the most decisive determinant of authoritarian longevity.

More than 5 million Venezuelans have fled the country since the regime's consolidation, creating one of the largest migration crises in world history. My family makes up just four of those millions. Thus, my personal and academic interest in Venezuela's democratic revival pushed me to understand which factors stand in the way of democratization, and how the armed forces have served as a bulwark for the regime in times of crisis.

**Lauren TerMaat**

Hometown: Grand Rapids, Michigan

- Majors: Economics and Spanish
- Minor: Constitutional Studies
- Advisor: Juan Vitulli

## El Desarrollo del Utopismo Latinoamericano

I explore the unique role that Latin America has played, as a geographic space and as an intellectual realm, for debating and imagining how the ideal society ought to be established.

I determine a concise definition of the Latin American branch of utopianism and trace its development through the centuries, highlighting utopian thought in works by prominent historical figures and emphasizing the influence that utopianism has on current Latin American political discourse.

As a constitutional studies student, I'm fascinated by what people throughout history have considered to be the ideal political community. And my love for Spanish literature and Latin American history inspired me to study how Latin America has been perceived as the place where the ideal community could be established.

**Julia Thomalla**

Hometown: Hugo, Minnesota

- Majors: Political Science and Gender Studies
- Advisors: Christina Wolbrecht and Rachel Porter

## 'Think of the Children': Anti-LGBTQ+ Education Policy and the Parents' Rights Movement

In recent years, the United States has seen a wave of anti-LGBTQ+ education policy in state legislatures, accompanied by a parents' rights movement that advocates for this legislation under the justification of "protecting the children" from LGBTQ+ issues.

Through a comprehensive quantitative analysis at both the state and individual bill level, my thesis seeks to determine which factors influence both the introduction and the passage into law of anti-LGBTQ+ education policy in the 2023 legislative session.

As a queer scholar, I am deeply and personally affected by issues that pose harm to the LGBTQ+ community, particularly those that endanger the ability of LGBTQ+ children to live authentically. By aiming to understand what influences the development of anti-LGBTQ+ legislation, I hope my research contributes toward promoting inclusivity and equal rights for all.



**Adam Toland**

Hometown: Derry, Northern Ireland

- Major: Spanish
- Minor: Data Science
- Fighting Irish Scholars
- Advisor: Marisel C. Moreno

## La Experiencia Afro-Latina en los Estados Unidos

This project seeks to study the effects of colonialism on the present-day experience of Afro-Latinos in the United States. I begin by exploring the creation of an Afro-Latino identity, then focus on Afro-Mexicanos, specifically.

My project takes a specific focus on Alan Pelaez Lopez, a queer afroindigenous formerly undocumented migrant from Oaxaca, México. I discuss his opinions on 'latinidad' as an identity, and analyze various works from his book *Intergalactic Travels: poems from a fugitive alien*.

As someone with no interest in poetry entering Notre Dame, I was blown away when I was exposed to Pelaez Lopez's work in the Afrolatinidades class at Notre Dame. What particularly struck me was how they attempted to tell a 500-year story through telling their own story in such a raw, unfiltered way.

**Irasema Trujillo**

Hometown: Fort Wayne, Indiana

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Majors: Latino Studies and Global Affairs
- Balfour-Hesburgh Scholars Program, Fighting Irish Scholar, and Building Bridges Scholar
- Advisor: Tatiana Botero

## Shifting Paradigms in Migration Policy: A Comparative Analysis of Mexico's 2011 Migration Law and Morocco's 2013 National Immigration and Asylum Strategy

I am comparing Mexico's 2011 Migration Law and Morocco's 2013 National Immigration and Asylum Strategy. Both policies signaled a shift from a security-focused approach to migration to a more humanitarian, rights-based approach.

Comparing how a country's immigration policy balances security with human rights, I suggest, is a useful way to understand an important dynamic of global migration: Migration policies often claim to assist migrants. At the same time, they perpetuate cycles of discrimination and abuse.

In spring 2023, I studied abroad in Rabat, Morocco. Living for three months with a welcoming host family, I immersed myself in the culture, traditions, and community. From enjoying Friday couscous to exploring the souk and learning the local language, Darija, I embraced the local way of life. As a participant in the Human Rights and Multiculturalism Program, I had the invaluable opportunity to engage with local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), interact with passionate civil rights advocates, and deeply explore crucial topics, including economic development, gender dynamics, migration, and environmental issues. During the last month of the program, I conducted an independent research project. With the invaluable assistance of my research advisor, I produced a comprehensive 40-page paper that delved into the topic of anti-immigrant sentiment in Morocco. The paper highlighted the complex nature of race and migration and shed light on the dual stance Moroccans often have on human rights.

Drawing from experiences in Mexico and Morocco, my research explores the dynamic interplay between migration policies and their broader societal impacts. This topic reflects my interest in understanding how such policies shape economic, social, and human rights outcomes globally, emphasizing the need for humane and equitable migration frameworks.

**Antonio Valdez**

Hometown: San Antonio, Texas

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Real Estate
- Kennedy Scholars
- Advisor: Kyle Jaros

## Public Housing in Singapore: Balancing Citizen Needs and the Goals of a Global City

My thesis analyzes the use of public housing in Singapore and the trade-off between a citizen-centric approach to housing and a strategy that encourages immigration. I specifically analyze when the People's Action Party adopted an outward approach to housing and the point in time when it shifted to an inward approach.

I highlight the importance of housing to the political landscape of Singapore and explore the tension between using housing to gain popular support and to develop as a global city. I traveled to London to start my research in the Kennedy Scholars Seminar.

This topic lies at the intersection of my political science major and real estate minor and I developed an interest in Singapore's public housing system while studying as a part of the Kennedy Scholars Seminar in London.

**Audrey Veator**

Hometown: Beverly, Massachusetts

- Major: Science-Computing
- Supplementary Major: Spanish
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Kathleen Eberhard

## Perception of Lexical Stress in Spanish-English Bilinguals and English Monolinguals

English is a stress-timed language, meaning that the stressed syllables occur at regular intervals, while the dispersed unstressed syllables are shortened or lengthened to maintain the set distance between stressed syllables. Spanish is a syllable-timed language in that all syllables are given an equal amount of time to pronounce.

Thus, a fascinating question arises as to whether native Spanish speakers will be as perceptive to differences in lexical stress in the English language.

As someone pursuing fluency in Spanish, I'm fascinated by the acquisition of language in children and by the factors that affect this process.

*Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.*

**Mary Votava**

Hometown: Portland, Oregon

- Major: Studio Art (Concentration in Photography)
- Minor: Accountancy
- Advisor: Emily Beck

***In Plain Sight***

*In Plain Sight* explores LGBTQ+ identity through a photographic exploration of the historical use of “flagging” symbols, specifically within the sapphic community.

These symbols are captured in both reverent displays and everyday settings, portraying their significant, yet inconspicuous, meaning.

With a draw to understanding the historical context and symbolism of my own identity, my thesis was an opportunity to contemplate the experiences of LGBTQ+ members here. In a reflection of persisting struggles and unending resilience, I celebrate their triumphs in symbolic recognition.

***Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts' Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP).***

**Cora Vulin**

Hometown: St. Louis, Missouri

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: European Studies
- International Security Studies Certificate and Kennedy Scholars
- Advisor: Emilia Justyna Powell

## Contested Counterterrorism: Analyzing UK Strategy in Light of a Fifth Wave of Terrorism

Expanding on the works of prominent terrorism scholars David Rapoport and Ronald Crelinsten, my thesis contends that international modern terrorism has evolved into a new “wave” perpetuated by Islamist extremists and the extreme far right.

I evaluate the benefits and pitfalls of a “comprehensive” national counterterrorism strategy in light of a changed terrorist threat landscape, critically analyzing the United Kingdom’s preeminent strategy, CONTEST.

This topic sits at the intersection of my academic interests in international security, political science, and European studies. I chose to analyze the United Kingdom’s counterterrorism strategy CONTEST after interning at UK Parliament for the UK Defence Secretary. I interviewed security scholars, professors, think tank experts, and government policymakers in London and Madrid, Spain.

I am grateful to the Nanovic Institute for European Studies, Notre Dame International Security Center, and my advisor, Professor Emilia Justyna Powell, for supporting my research efforts for this thesis.

*Received funding from the Nanovic Institute for European Studies and traveled to London and Madrid.*

**Brian Wagner**

Hometown: Geneva, Illinois

- Major: Biochemistry
- Supplementary Major: Spanish
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Jen Tank

## Soil Characterization of Two-Stage Ditches with a Comparison to Adjacent Field Soils

Agricultural nonpoint sources of water contamination are significant targets for reducing downstream environmental impacts.

Two-stage ditches are an in-stream conservation method that can be stacked with on-field practices to effectively remove excess nutrients and improve stability of stream banks adjacent to agricultural fields.

My study characterizes soils in different two-stage ditches constructed in 2007, 2017, and 2018, to investigate the influences of two-stage ditch age on soil health and properties related to nutrient removal.

My background interest in agriculture and gardening led to involvement in soil ecology research in high school. I sought to continue soil ecology research as an undergraduate and found the Tank Lab to be a perfect fit for my interests, as it investigated soil properties in agricultural settings.

*Received funding from the College of Science's Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships and Glynn Family Honors Program.*



## Hugh Walsh

Hometown: London, England

- Major: History
- International Security Studies Certificate
- Advisor: Michael Desch

## Winning Ugly: Russian Military Performance from the Battle of Kyiv to the Present

My thesis is aimed at discussing the capabilities of the Russian military throughout the current war in Ukraine. I analyze a variety of factors that have contributed to Ukrainian and Russian battlefield successes to paint a picture of potential outcomes.

I chose this topic because I have spent about 10 years following the conflict and felt that it was important to create a piece that focuses on the capabilities of a near-peer adversary.



**Julia Warden**

Hometown: Ambler, Pennsylvania

- Majors: Business Analytics and Film, Television and Theatre
- Kellogg Developing Researchers Program and International Business Scholars
- Advisors: Tarryn Chun and Kyle Jaros

## East Asian Intellectual Property Diplomacy: Identity, Geopolitics, and Business

My thesis explores intellectual properties in East Asia, focusing on Hong Kong, Japan, and South Korea. Through case studies, it examines cultural intricacies through diverse reactions to specific intellectual properties.

Investigating Tokyo Disneyland and Hong Kong Disneyland, the red panda from Disney's *Turning Red* (2022), as well as Baby Shark and Nintendo's Mario, my research contributes to the conversation on cultural assimilation, soft power dynamics, authenticity interpretations, and identity preservation to offer insights into cross-cultural dynamics between East Asia and the United States.

My goal was to immerse myself in cross-cultural experiences to enhance my ability to communicate and empathize with individuals from diverse backgrounds. Furthermore, conducting research abroad and engaging directly with locals enriched my perspective, for which I am deeply grateful. I learned a lot and enjoyed myself along the way.

***Received funding from the Liu Institute for Asia and Asian Studies and the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts. Traveled to Hong Kong, Japan, and South Korea.***

**Maegan (Maggie) Watson**

Hometown: Fishers, Indiana

- Major: English
- Supplementary Major: A&L Pre-Health
- Minor: Science, Technology, and Values
- Advisor: Essaka Joshua

## Escaping the Asylum and Shattering the Bell Jar: Representations of Mental Illness and Passing in Fiction

This essay examines two female literary characters, one from *The Woman in White* and one from *The Bell Jar*, who are presented as mentally non-normative.

It analyzes rules for passing as normal and synthesizes how these rules change over time, since the primary sources are published decades apart. *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* contributes scientific perspectives. By elevating these fictional voices of those who struggle to pass, we make space for greater understanding of mental illness.

In an increasingly medicalized world, understanding mental illness through the perspective of fiction writing is vital. With close family and friends who struggle with mental illness, and with my majors in English and the health field, I was motivated by a concern for the role of literature in a health-related topic.

It has been a pleasure and a challenge to complete a yearlong thesis. Amazing faculty like Professor Essaka Joshua who spend so much extra time encouraging and guiding students on the journey make it worthwhile. I couldn't have done it without her.

**Nicole Weiss**

Hometown: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

- Major: Economics
- Minors: European Studies and French
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Davin Raiha

## Game Changers: Exploring the Link Between Mid-Season Standings and Winter Transfer Investments in European Football Clubs

My project aims to study the relationship between mid-season standings for European football clubs and their propensity to spend on new players in the winter transfer window.

Even though I'm still analyzing my results, there seems to be a strong correlation between an increase in transfer expenses and the 16th position.

I've always been passionate about football and wanted to explore that interest in the context of economics. Also, I wanted to better understand some of the economic incentives behind clubs' purchasing patterns.

**Sarah Wells**

Hometown: New Glarus, Wisconsin

- Majors: Program of Liberal Studies and Mechanical Engineering
- Advisor: Eric Bugyis

## A Movement of Radical Love: Reframing the Legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. through the Theological Tradition of Søren Kierkegaard and Thomas Merton

Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy has been diluted to focus on his impacts as a social justice leader without considering his commitment to radical Christian love as the foundation of his actions.

I wanted to investigate the topic of radical Christian love and how it was and can be applied to large movements for social change and within the individual actions of love in our lives.

This paper reframes his legacy by showing his connections to the theological tradition of radical love as embraced by Søren Kierkegaard and Thomas Merton.

**Katie Werner**

Hometown: Houston, Texas

- Major: Political Science
- Glynn Family Honors Program and International Security Studies Certificate
- Advisor: Sebastian Rosato

## Using the F-Word: Why States Adopt a Feminist Foreign Policy

Since 2014, six countries have explicitly adopted a feminist foreign policy (FFP): Sweden, Canada, France, Mexico, Spain, and Germany.

I intended to understand why states adopt FFP, and I proposed three potential arguments based on theories of international politics. I discovered that states adopt FFP primarily to carry out feminist convictions and shape global norms. However, several states only adopted FFP to acquire more international power.

I chose this topic because international politics has almost always been dominated by men who designed policies, institutions, and global power structures in their favor. I was ready to read foreign policies designed by women.

**Julia Wilcox**

Hometown: Huntington, New York

- Majors: Sociology and Environmental Sciences
- Minor: Energy Studies
- Advisor: Richard Williams

## The Papal Paradox: Exploring How the Catholic Church's Condemnation of Assisted Reproductive Technologies Affects Catholic Women Struggling with Infertility

While taking Professor Richard Williams' course Population Dynamics, I learned about the constraints and intricacies of the Catholic Church's policies surrounding conception, and felt compelled to study these policies' effects on Catholic women.

My thesis includes a qualitative portion consisting of interviews and content analysis. It also includes a quantitative data analysis portion on survey results from a purchased Qualtrics sample and a convenience sample of participants from Catholic Facebook groups.

*Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts.*

**Felicity Wong**

Hometown: Princeton, New Jersey

- Major: English (Concentration in Creative Writing)
- Supplementary Major: Art History
- Minor: Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Xavier Navarro Aquino

***Vain Trifles***

My short story collection, *Vain Trifles*, explores the relationship that women have with their clothes, particularly in the way that fashion shapes self-consciousness and encodes personal and collective histories.

My work is heavily influenced by my time in Jaipur, India, where I immersed myself in the fashion landscape of a country with a rich and storied visual culture. I visited galleries, cultural landmarks, and spoke with textile technologists, designers, stylists, and business owners about sustainability, consumerism, and the way in which histories of colonization can be traced in clothing.

My work also is influenced by the writing of Virginia Woolf, Jenny Zhang, Carmen Maria Machado, Daniyal Mueenuddin, Sigrid Nunez, May-Lan Tan, and Jhumpa Lahiri.

By drawing out the narratives embedded in clothing, I attempt to challenge the notion of fashion as a capitalist product. This collection is a marriage between my research interests in fashion and textiles studies, diasporic narratives, and postcolonial theory.

*Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program and traveled to Delhi and Jaipur, India.*