

# 21st Annual Student Research and Ideas Fair

March 14th, 2025

## ABSTRACTS

### PANEL 1: RESEARCH IN COMMUNITY

**SAVANNAH SIMON** (History, 4th year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Cora Woolsey

#### UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY LED RESEARCH

Community Led Research (CLR) is a new paradigm in academic research that seeks to reform the relationship between the researcher and the community. It positions the community as a partner rather than a subject, shifting the researcher's role to supporter, rather than arbiter, of research goals. This gives the community agency to direct research activities that reflect and serve the research questions of that community rather than of the researcher. Historically, communities, especially marginalized groups, have been misrepresented in research output. Far too often, academic researchers have produced highly influential research in their fields but the value of this work for the researched communities is unclear or non-existent. Increasingly, communities insist that they should tell their own stories, and research should be conducted according to the CARE Principle: Collective Benefit, Authority to Control, Responsibility, and Ethics. This means that researchers must build trust, prevent harm, and ensure that ethical standards are upheld, such as informed consent and data ownership by the community. By emphasizing the role of the community as a partner and beneficiary, communities gain direct access to research findings that help them better understand local issues and find practical solutions to those issues. This leads to long-term benefits and outcomes that extend beyond the research itself—creating stronger, more informed, and more resilient communities.

**SHELBY HARNISH** (Social Work, 3rd year), **JULIET ORJI-OBA** (Social Work, 3rd year), **CAITLIN SAWLER** (Social Work, 3rd year), and **REBECCA MACMULLIN** (Social Work, 3rd year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Gül Çalişkan

#### FOSTERING INCLUSIVITY IN FREDERICTON: INSIGHTS FROM POP-UP CAFÉ DISCUSSIONS IN THE PROMISE OF HOME PROJECT

As part of our social work program's social action initiative, we are contributing to the Promise of Home, a four-phase, REB-approved, community-based narrative research project led by Dr. Gül Çalişkan (STU Sociology) and Dr. Sophie Lavoie (UNB Culture and Media Studies). This project aims to promote inclusivity in Fredericton by centering immigrants' lived experiences to inform retention strategies and foster stronger relationships between immigrants and locals. In Phase Three, we are facilitating "pop-up cafés"—eight focus group discussions, with long-term Frederictonians. These sessions

explore themes such as inclusivity, barriers to creating it, ideas for making the city more welcoming, and the roles of policymakers and organizations in supporting integration. Through guided conversations, we encourage shared experiences, collective action, and community-driven solutions. Participants provide both verbal and written feedback, ensuring a wide range of voices are heard. We will present preliminary findings from these discussions, highlighting the collective vision for a more inclusive Fredericton and the critical role of community involvement in shaping policies. The insights will contribute to the broader data collected throughout the project informing Phase Four, a two-day policy conference in fall 2025. The final shared with policymakers, school administrators, and service providers to guide future initiatives.

**SHAMY ILIZA RUKOKORA** (Social Work, 3rd year), **SARAH BREWER** (English, 2nd year), and **DORA ALICE SZEMOK** (UNB International Development Studies and Political Science, 4th year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Gül Çalışkan and Sophie M Lavoie

### **A SENSE OF BELONGING? POLICY MAPPING FOR PROMISE OF HOME IN FREDERICTON**

Promise of Home is a community-based research project that began in 2019 with the goal of making Fredericton a more welcoming place for all immigrants. Using a story-based approach, the project encouraged immigrants to share their experiences and perspectives on belonging and challenges they have faced while moving to Canada. In the first two phases, narratives were collected from immigrant youth and families, highlighting their challenges and aspirations. Phase 3 expanded this conversation to the broader community, bringing together diverse stakeholders to discuss hopes for a more inclusive Fredericton. Through these discussions, five major themes emerged, identifying key issues that need to be addressed to better support newcomers. Now in its fourth phase, Promise of Home's research assistants have been conducting a comprehensive policy mapping of organizations and government departments with newcomer initiatives in Fredericton. This mapping began in September 2024 with the aim of analyzing all existing support initiatives, identifying gaps and overlaps. This presentation will report on our findings so far, highlighting key trends in policy mapping and offering insights into how Fredericton can improve its newcomer support systems to foster long-term belonging and integration.

**DORA ALICE SZEMOK** (UNB International Development Studies and Political Science, 4th year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Sophie Lavoie

### **COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF IMMIGRATION STRATEGIES IN FREDERICTON, MONCTON AND SAINT JOHN: PLANS VS. REALITY**

Immigrants are essential for Fredericton's growth, as they bring diverse skills, cultural perspectives and contribute to the economic development of the city. The Fredericton Region Five-Year Immigration Strategy highlights the role of immigration in meeting population targets, strengthening the local economy, and promoting workplace diversity and inclusion. However, retaining immigrants remains a challenge, as most immigration programs concentrate on economic and labor needs, over fostering a sense of belonging. The Promise of Home is a community-based narrative research project exploring newcomer experiences of belonging in Fredericton. The project's ultimate goal is to make Fredericton a more welcoming and inclusive city where immigrants and newcomers

feel at home. In my analysis, I compare the immigration strategies of Fredericton, Saint John, and Moncton, examining their approaches to attracting, retaining, and integrating immigrants. Using Fredericton as a case study, I contrast its immigration plan with the lived experiences of immigrants documented in The Promise of Home research. Through interviews, workshops, and conferences, immigrants in Fredericton identified five key areas for improvement: immigration processes, healthcare, education, public services, and community engagement. My paper analyzes how effectively Fredericton's strategy addresses the challenges immigrants face, highlighting the gaps between strategic objectives and realities.

## **PANEL 2: REPRESENTATION OF CRIME IN FILM AND TELEVISION**

**CAMERON MACDONALD** (Criminology & Criminal Justice, 4th year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Karla O'Regan

### **PORTRAYALS OF INCARCERATION IN FILM**

The portrayals of incarceration in popular media have a direct impact on the public's perception of both incarcerated people and the criminal justice system, as most people do not have direct experience with either academic reports on the subject or direct involvement with correctional facilities. This necessitates that the portrayal of incarcerated life be understood to better analyze the messages films are sending to the public. This proposed study will be conducted by applying a content analysis to a variety of popular and influential films about prison to identify the presence of common myths and misrepresentations of incarceration. I predict that the films will portray prison as replete with violence and brutality for both correctional staff and incarcerated people. This runs counter to the research which shows the reality of incarceration as a time of isolation and boredom. The influence of these contradictory portrayals of incarceration on public perception of prisons and criminal justice policy will also be examined.

**ANA LUCÍA PAVÓN** (Criminology & Criminal Justice, 3rd year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Karla O'Regan

### **BAU OR BLUFF? PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF PROFILING IN CRIMINAL MINDS**

The crime drama Criminal Minds has had seventeen seasons running since 2005. The series is a police procedural drama that follows a group of FBI profilers as they catch criminals from across the United States. Criminal Minds has demonstrated enduring popularity since its debut in 2005. In 2021, it was the most-streamed TV show in the United States, with 12 seasons available on Netflix reaching an estimated 33.9 billion minutes watched. This presentation will provide an overview of a proposed study to explore how Criminal Minds portrays criminal profiling and the impact this portrayal has on public perceptions of criminal profiling's a legitimate scientific and investigative tool. While there is little to no research to support the accuracy or reliability of criminal profiling as a crime-solving tool, the show frames profilers as experts in psychology and forensic science whose insights are essential to criminal investigations. Through a qualitative content analysis of random episodes, the study will examine the language, narrative techniques, and visual strategies used to construct profiling as an effective method for solving crime. The study aims to critically assess the impact of Criminal Minds on public perceptions of law enforcement, and criminal behavior, shedding light on how media representations can shape the public's understanding of criminal justice practices and their real-world credibility.

## **PANEL 3: GENDER AS AN ANALYTICAL FRAME**

**AMERI SUZUKI** (Economics, 4th year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Fariba Solati

### **ECONOMIC GAINS AND EXPLOITATION OF FEMALE BODIES: THE CASE OF HENTAI ANIME INDUSTRY IN JAPAN**

This study examines the economic and social impact of the production of Japanese animated child pornography called hentai. It has recently contributed to Japan's economic growth, accounting for 0.2% of its GDP in 2022 and is projected to grow at 3.9% over the next six years. Driven by global demand, hentai has become the most popular genre on a porn site, surpassing Netflix in user engagement with 2.7 billion visits in November 2022 alone. Japan's lack of regulation around animated child pornography has enabled this industry's expansion, giving Japan an absolute advantage in production. Despite its profitability, the hentai industry poses significantly negative externalities, particularly for women and girls. Preliminary findings support that the normalization of pedophilic elements in hentai is linked to lower educational attainment, mental health issues, and employment barriers among women, creating lasting impacts on their status. This study employs qualitative research based on a literature review, emphasizing feminist political economy theories. It aims to assess the broader implications of the industry for gendered economic outcomes in Japan. Through analysis, the research contributes to the discourse on animated pornography, gender inequality, and regulation, arguing for the need to balance economic growth with respect for human rights.

**EMMA FACKENTHALL** (Environment and Society, 4th year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Susan O'Donnell

### **ECOFEMINIST ETHICS, "MACHO MENTALITIES," AND THE NUCLEAR INDUSTRY: EXPLORING THE GENDER DIVIDE IN SUPPORT FOR NUCLEAR ENERGY**

Compared to other energy sources, there is a disproportionate divide in support from men and women on nuclear technologies no matter the country or culture. Indeed, while the nuclear field continues to be a relatively male-dominated field, opposition continues to have a strong female voice. Why are women more likely to criticize this technology over other energy sources? Can the nuclear industry go on without female support? How has industry attempted and failed to bring in female support and involvement?

## **PANEL 4: INTERNATIONAL POLITICS**

**OLIVER WRIGHT-GARDNER** (Political Science, 4th year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Thomas Bateman

### **THE GEOPOLITICAL IMPACT OF SPACE DEBRIS IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMERCIAL SPACE EXPANSION: AN INTERNATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR GEOPOLITICAL ENCOUNTERS IN SPACE EXPLORATION**

As commercial space activities grow, the proliferation of space debris has become a critical challenge for future exploration. This issue is compounded by geopolitical dynamics, as nations and private entities compete for dominance in space, raising concerns about the sustainability of space operations and global cooperation. Space

debris, primarily from satellite collisions, rocket stages, and defunct spacecraft, threaten spacecraft, space stations, and satellite networks crucial for communication, navigation, and scientific research. This not only impacts commercial activity and technological innovation but also international relations. Geopolitically, space debris could worsen rivalries and amplify the political and economic effects of space exploration. Emerging space industries face higher costs and risks, while spacefaring powers may exert control over space traffic management and debris mitigation technologies. Commercial entities will also navigate an increasingly fragmented regulatory landscape. To address these issues, a robust international legal framework is needed to manage space debris. Focus should be placed on space traffic management, debris mitigation, and protocols for debris removal. Collaboration between nations and commercial enterprises is essential for sustainable space exploration practices, ensuring space remains a shared resource and reducing the risk of conflict. This research aims to advocate for comprehensive international legal reform.

**MARION GOVEDNIK** (Political Science, 4th year)  
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Shaun Narine

### **AUKUS THROUGH THE LENS OF GRAMSCIANISM**

On September 15, 2021, three influential nations—the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia—formed a trilateral security partnership called AUKUS. This alliance aims to maintain stability in the Indo-Pacific by strengthening security relations among its members. A key aspect of its strategy is to support Australia in developing nuclear submarines by the 2030s. My primary research question is: “In what ways does the AUKUS treaty heighten tensions in US-China relations and the broader Indo-Pacific region instead of easing them?” AUKUS holds considerable implications for China, American dominance, and the international order. My analysis includes countries indirectly involved or interested in AUKUS, like Canada, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia, as it could escalate and significantly impact them economically, socially, and politically. I will explore AUKUS using Gramsci’s hegemony theory to understand its establishment and potential effects in the Indo-Pacific, focusing on consent, coercion, and domination. Furthermore, I will clarify the concept of the state and connect it to the insights of Robert Cox, a theorist who adapted Gramscian concepts for the global context. This inquiry aims to illuminate the origins of counter-hegemonic movements, which is particularly pertinent for understanding AUKUS.

**JOSH OSBORNE** (Political Science, 3rd year)  
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Thomas Bateman

### **INSTABILITY IN TUVALU AND THE INTERSECTION OF POST- AND PRE-COLONIAL GOVERNANCE**

This presentation will begin with an overview of Tuvaluan politics and history, primarily serving to introduce the audience to a country that they likely lack background knowledge of or potentially have not heard about prior. We will begin by briefly outlining Tuvalu’s status as a British colony, its secession from Kiribati in the 1970s, and its geographic place in the world as they are all fundamental to understanding the current issues at play. Following that, the political structures of Tuvalu including the Fale i Fono (Tuvaluan Parliament) and its non-partisan build-up will be explained, with its decentralized system of power giving semi-autonomy to the Falekaupule of each individual island. Then, the

primary political issues surrounding Tuvalu will be examined, including the attempted banishment of Lotoala Metia by the Falekaupule of Nukufetau, and the abundance of votes of no confidence and Prime Ministers being unable to finish their terms. Following the overview, a more prescriptive style will be followed by comparing Tuvalu to several case studies, as well as building upon the works of Dr. Jon Fraenkel and other scholars of both federalism and the South Pacific as well as the works of Arend Lipjhart and his work on consensus democracy.

**JOSE RUBEN MORENO MORAN** (Political Science, 3rd year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Thomas Bateman

### **HOW POPULISM SUCCEEDS IN EL SALVADOR**

It is widely agreed that electorates in many democracies are turning to populist leaders. Yet populism is a contested concept in different social sciences. Some scholars have referred to populism without defining it, while other scholars define populism as a type of political discourse, an ideology, a style of leadership, and a political strategy. There may even be different types of populism characteristic of different regions. Populism has become popular in different regions, such as Europe and the Americas, leading to different approaches to the concept. My honours thesis uses the case study of Salvadorean president Nayib Bukele to explain how his populist style carried support for him in a polarized political party system. The thesis will identify Bukele's brand of populism and will also examine the factors leading to his success as a populist leader. Furthermore, an explanation of how populism can threaten democracies with authoritarian measures will also be provided.

**EMMA CRAIB** (Political Science and History, 4th year)

Faculty mentor: Dr. Laura Levick

### **ACCOUNTING FOR VARIANCE IN QUALITY OF DEMOCRACY WITHIN THE POST-SOVIET SPACE**

In 1991, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was a wave of newly independent states undergoing regime change in Eurasia. Liberals thought that these states would develop into capitalist democracies as they also transitioned their economies and integrated into a singular international order. Some states have since developed into consolidated and stable democracies in the region, such as Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, however, many have returned to authoritarian structures or hybrid regimes like Belarus and Russia. This variance in quality of democracy can be attributed to the effect of multiple factors on democratization including development of state institutions, international involvement, and economic institutions, which are all influenced by a state's history. Thus, the majority of variance in the quality of democracy amongst post-Soviet regimes can be accounted for through path dependency theory, which dictates that a state's democratization process is constrained by actions taken before and during regime change but does not determine that states without institutional histories of democracy cannot consolidate a new democratic regime. Taking Georgia and Moldova as case studies, this phenomenon can be examined through historical analysis, particularly of events which can be deemed as critical junctures in democratization and/or consolidation.

## **PANEL 5: NARRATIVES AND DISCOURSES PART 1**

**LAURA STEEVES** (Social Work, 5th year)  
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Clive Baldwin

### **NARRATIVE STUDY OF FIRST HAND ACCOUNTS (OF LEAVING “CULT-LIKE” RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS)**

This presentation reports on a narrative study of first-person accounts of leaving “cult-like” religious organizations. Such accounts have been a source of data about such groups (albeit often skeptically) but have not yet been analyzed as a phenomenon in themselves. Here, I present a single case study as an exemplar of such accounts and as narratively-informed hermeneutical analysis. In this presentation, I will explore the rhetorical tropes deployed as the author recounts her experience in and of leaving the Jehovah’s Witnesses. Narrative features of the account – autobiography, memoir, testimonio, narrative structure, a-symmetry, ego/hetero-centricity, voice, positioning, narrative structure, and ‘truth’ – will be explored. By analyzing this individual’s story, we gain deeper insight into how those leaving high-control religious groups story their experience as the reclamation of autonomy and rediscovery of faith, and employ their story as redemption, quest, or overcoming the monster.

**REECE RONAN** (Sociology, 4th year)  
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Erin Fredericks

### **“A LEGITIMATE CAUSE TO BE BITCHING”: EXAMINING DIAGNOSTIC NARRATIVES AND FUNCTIONAL NEUROLOGICAL DISORDER**

Functional Neurological Disorder (FND) is a broad-spectrum disorder characterized by motor, sensory, or cognitive symptoms that cannot be explained by another recognized disorder, previously known as ‘conversion disorder’, with women making up over 70% of patients. This gender disparity raises questions about the gendered nature of the diagnosis, as it is used to categorize women’s distress. By analyzing five narrative interviews from North American women who disagree with their FND diagnosis, recruited from online FND support groups, this research aims to shed light on the intersection of gender, medical authority, and patient autonomy. Preliminary results describe participants’ disillusionment with medicine, preference for natural methods, the importance of a support system, and barriers of communication with care providers. This research contextualizes FND within the framework of ‘contested illness’ and narratives of health, exploring epistemic injustice and illness as a social construct. Findings have the potential to inform both clinical care and patient advocacy, highlighting the need for greater sensitivity to gender bias in biomedicine.

**TYLER MCCORMICK** (Sociology, 5th year)  
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Kristi Allain

### **CONSTRUCTING WORKING-CLASS MASCULINITY: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF RURAL NEW BRUNSWICK MEN AND THEIR TEMPORARY INTERPROVINCIAL WORK MIGRATION**

Rural, working-class men shape their masculinities through discipline, responsibility, and physical labor, with toughness and hard work serving as markers of identity. The decline of manufacturing industries in New Brunswick (NB) has disrupted these established forms of

masculinity, forcing many men to seek temporary interprovincial work migration (TIWM) in Western Canada, or go “Out West.” This paper examines how rural, working-class men from NB construct their masculinities in response to economic uncertainty and labor migration. Drawing on semi-structured interviews and applying critical discourse analysis (CDA), I argue that these men, whose identities are rooted in regionally specific forms of masculinity, seek employment “Out West” to preserve their disciplined selves and dignity amidst socioeconomic instability. This research explores how rural masculinities adapt to shifting economies, connecting individual experiences to broader societal transitions, and contributing to discussions of gender, power, and resilience during economic change.

## **PANEL 6: ISSUES IN CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

**SAMUEL CHOINIÈRE** (Criminology & Criminal Justice, 3rd year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Karla O’Regan

### **PROFIT OR POWER? AN EXAMINATION OF ORGANIZED CRIME**

The presence of organized crime can deeply affect a country’s national economy. Criminal organizations engage in several different activities such as money laundering, international trade, and corruption. Most of the time, organized crime groups are profit-seeking, and their objective is strictly the accumulation of capital. However, some criminal organizations seek to accumulate power, including social, economic, and state influence. This research will conduct a comparative analysis of these two types of criminal organizations and their respective socio-economic impacts. This comparison will examine case studies of organized criminal activity in different international contexts, analyzing the effects of those events on the national economy of each jurisdiction. Two theories will be used: political economy of corruption theory will illuminate the complex ways in which money disturbs a state politically; and social control theory will demonstrate how organized crime can take advantage of weak social and political institutions to infiltrate the national economy. I hypothesize that the main difference between profit-oriented and power-oriented criminal organizations is that the former acts in the shadows while the latter’s activity receives significantly more public exposure. This research will contribute to the important field of economic criminology, examining the negative political and economic influence of organized crime.

**EMMA DOUCETTE** (Criminology & Criminal Justice, 4th year)

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Karla O’Regan

### **CONTEXTUALIZING REVENGE: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF PERPETRATORS’ NEUTRALIZATION**

Technology-Facilitated Sexual Violence (TFSV) is a form of gender-based and intimate partner violence which has become widespread in the past 5-10 years. TFSV includes a range of offences, including the non-consensual distribution of intimate images, or so-called “revenge porn”, given the prevalence of cases in which the offender uploaded sexual images or videos of an ex-partner to online forums without their knowledge or consent. Research on this growing phenomenon has uncovered the mental, physical, and social impacts that this abuse has on victims, and legislation has been passed in several jurisdictions (including Canada’s Criminal Code) in an attempt to prevent TFSV, although it can be difficult to monitor criminal activity online, and many victims report difficulties when trying to have the images removed. In order to draft more effective



legislation and intervention strategies, the motivations driving perpetrators' actions must be better understood. The proposed study aims to conduct a critical discourse analysis of online discussions of TFSV among self-identified perpetrators in reddit.com, 4chan.org, and similar forums. Sykes and Matza's neutralization theory provides a lens to view TFSV as enabled and promoted within these masculine-dominated online spaces through the discourse that 'neutralizes' the existing social and legal prevention strategies.

**OLI BRADFORD** (Criminology & Criminal Justice, 4th year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Karla O'Regan

### **POLICING THE FUTURE: BRIDGING GAPS IN RCMP TRAINING FOR SAFER INTERACTIONS**

Every Royal Mounted Canadian Police (RCMP) officer undergoes training before beginning their career serving the community. This training is the Cadet Training Program (CTP) and is updated yearly to ensure it remains relevant and embodies evolving policing skills required for our communities. As incidents of lethal police encounters and excessive use of force increase, people are beginning to question whether the CTP is truly achieving its intended goals. The purpose of this study is to examine whether RCMP training adequately prepares officers to de-escalate high-risk encounters without using excessive or sometimes lethal force, particularly with vulnerable populations. Using a mixed methods approach, this research will analyze RCMP training curricula and publicly accessible use of force data while incorporating police officer interviews and expert assessments. Key areas of focus include measuring the proportion of training hours dedicated to de-escalation in the RCMP training program, officers' perceptions of their own preparedness in the field, and comparisons to international best practices and training programs. Ultimately this study aims to identify potential training gaps and hopes to contribute to ongoing discussions on police reform.

**TAYLOR ARMSTRONG** (Criminology & Criminal Justice, 4th year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Dawne Clarke

### **TAKING THE PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE: IGNORING SOCIAL CONTEXT IN THE CRIMES OF SERIAL KILLER ELIZABETH WETTLAUFER**

Ontario nurse Elizabeth Wettlaufer murdered eight elderly Alzheimer or dementia patients in her care, injecting them with insulin to facilitate their deaths. As with most explanations of serial murder, the reasons for her crimes were individualized, citing her struggles with sexual orientation and addictions to prescription drugs and alcohol as causes for her crimes. Moving away from individualized narratives of blame for serial killing, this research uses Yardley & Wilson's (2015) concept, institutional mediation, to examine the social contexts of Wettlaufer's crimes. Qualitative direct content analysis of three popular podcasts and Wettlaufer's own confession to the Ontario Provincial Police reveals that a lack of administrative oversight by the nursing home into Wettlaufer's work performance; negligent practices in access to, and storing of medications; lack of accountability mechanisms within the provincial nursing home association; and refusal of lawyers and pastors to act on Wettlaufer's own admission of her crimes, provided the social contexts that facilitated Wettlaufer's malfeasance. While not abrogating Wettlaufer's responsibility in the commission of her crimes, the social context in which those crimes took place is equally important yet rarely examined.

## **PANEL 7: EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY**

**NICOLE DURON** (Psychology, 4th year)  
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Sandra Thomson

### **THE IMPACT OF TEXTING ON RETRIEVAL PRACTICE**

Practicing retrieving information from memory typically improves long-term memory for it more than restudying the same information. The benefits of retrieval practice have been studied extensively, and they persist even when people are retrieving or restudying while their attention is divided. However, past studies have used relatively artificial distraction tasks. Cell phones are a common distraction in real world learning situations, and the purpose of the present study is to examine the impact of texting on retrieval practice. Participants were asked to read a passage and take notes. Then, they either spent time studying their notes or rewriting them from memory (retrieval practice). During this time, half the participants in both groups were distracted by receiving and responding to messages on their personal cell phone. All participants returned two days later for a final test of their memory for the material. We expect to find that participants who were distracted by their phones will perform worse on the test than those who were not, but also that those who rewrote their notes from memory will perform better than those who restudied their notes. This finding would suggest that retrieval practice is more beneficial than restudying even when distractions are present.

**GAVIN WOODWARD** (Psychology, 4th year)  
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Hiu Mei (Doris) Chow

### **DO SOUNDS HELP US PERCEIVE MORE ACCURATELY ACROSS EYE MOVEMENTS?**

When people move their eyes (make saccades) to scan the world, they often fail to notice changes in the location of visual objects. In the lab, this perceptual phenomenon can be studied by asking participants to look to a visual target and displacing the target when the saccade is detected. Interestingly, when a brief gap in a sound associated with the visual target occurs, observers report the displacement direction more accurately compared to when no gap occurs; called the auditory blanking effect. Given that audiovisual integration—the binding of the visual target and sound into a coherent perceived event—affects many aspects of perception, we investigate whether it mediates the auditory blanking effect. If that were the case, we expect that weakening audiovisual integration should lead to a reduced auditory blanking effect. Data from 20 participants did not support this hypothesis. We replicated the auditory blanking effect but found that weakening audiovisual integration had no impact on the effect. These findings suggest that audiovisual integration may not be necessary for the auditory blanking effect to occur, and shed light onto how we use information from multiple senses to perceive a stable visual world despite frequent eye movements.

**SID D'ENTREMONT** (Psychology, 4th year)  
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Hiu Mei (Doris) Chow

### **TESTING THE LINK BETWEEN VISUAL IMAGERY AND THE TACTILE BOUBA-KIKI EFFECT**

The tactile Bouba-Kiki (BK) effect refers to a non-arbitrary mental association between nonsense words (e.g., "bouba") and tactile features like shape and texture (e.g., a shape with rounded edges or a smooth texture). Interestingly, it has been found that people with congenital blindness and young children show weaker tactile BK effects, presumably because these populations might also have weaker visual imagery for abstract shapes. However, the link between visual imagery and the tactile BK effect has not yet been directly established. Therefore, the aim of the current study is to test this link by correlating participants' self-reported visual imagery (using Vividness of Visual Imagery Questionnaire, Marks, 1973) and measured strength of the tactile BK effect in a lab-based audio-tactile task. Specifically, 30 participants completed a questionnaire involving visualizing familiar images and rating their mental vividness. Additionally, they felt 3D-printed shapes hidden in a box, listened to recordings of nonsense words, then rated the congruence of the word-shape pairs. A positive correlation between strength of visual imagery and the tactile BK effect is hypothesized, which will be evaluated by the data collected. The results have implications for explaining why audio-tactile associations exist.

**FLAVIA ORELLANA** (Psychology, 4th year)  
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Hiu Mei (Doris) Chow

### **DOES SEEING BEAT HAND GESTURES IMPROVE STORY RECALL?**

Storytelling with representational hand gestures that convey meanings has been shown to help with listeners' recollection of the story. Although nonrepresentational beat gestures are the most commonly used in everyday communications, not much is known if beat gestures also assist with recollection. To fill this gap, we conducted two experiments to see if participants' ability to recall a short story is better when they watch a short story presented with beat gestures. 71 participants watched a video of someone telling a short story, involving beat gestures or no beat gestures. After the video, participants answered questions about the short story. Results from Exp. 1 showed a benefit of beat gestures: participants in the beat-gesture group answered more questions correctly than those in the no-beat-gesture group (mean accuracy = 64% vs. 56%). Preliminary results from Exp. 2 showed that there was no difference between beat-gesture and no-beat-gesture groups. However, this could be due to a smaller sample size, but also because pitch accent (whether a particular word is emphasized) was controlled for in Exp. 2, but not in Exp. 1. The study finding might have implications in educational settings or public speaking, to help students and audience remembering more information.

## **PANEL 8: ARCHAEOLOGY**

**ADA CARR** (Anthropology, 2nd year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Cora Woolsey

### **THE IMPACT OF TRADE ON TECHNOLOGICAL INGENUITY AND RESOURCE INTENSIFICATION IN THE CITY OF PETRA**

Petra is a vast ancient city located in the southwestern region of Jordan, roughly 75 km southeast of the Dead Sea in the Middle East, Asia. Petra is a complex archeological multicomponent site spanning the lower Paleolithic to at least the early first century AD, with influences from Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and Parthian contemporary cultures. The remarkable adaptability of those that lived in the desert city of Petra is visible in their reuse of precious materials in successive building periods, namely marble for walls and wood for doors, transferred from buildings as groups moved into new neighborhoods. The people of Petra also conserved water through an extensive plumbing system with cistern, irrigation, and drainpipes managed so well that they had excess water for pools. Petra is commonly known for its intricate artistic architecture carved into the side of the valley walls. Petra was also a central location in the silk/ spice trade routes. Archeological evidence of ceramic cookware and documentation within the Chinese Chronicles suggests Petra was an established trading hub. With only 1% of the city unearthed and excavated after 75 years, significantly more can be learned about the remarkable "Rose City". My presentation will examine Petra's sophisticated water system and the Nabatean's adaptation to the local environment and the resources on hand. I will further discuss how Petra's central position in trade routes manifested in their building styles and artistic choices as evidenced in the archaeological record.

**MAYAVEYE WALKER-TITUS** (Anthropology, 3rd year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Cora Woolsey

### **SEARCHING FOR THE BOULTENHOUSE SHIPYARD**

The Loyalists' arrival in the late 18th century set the stage for the "the golden age of sail," a century of enormous economic growth along the New Brunswick coast. Christopher Bolttenhouse of Sackville was one of the main entrepreneurs of the industry, producing 60 vessels throughout his career. The Tantram Heritage Trust, partnering with St. Thomas University and Mt. Allison University, has initiated research on Boultenhouse's impact, including an archeological investigation of the suspected Boultenhouse Shipyard. In November 2024, LiDAR and resistivity surveys were conducted. The resistivity survey revealed subsurface cultural resources and an archeological excavation is planned for July 2025. This project will continue for the next several years at least, creating an assemblage of 19th century cultural material for analysis. Maritime archeology has primarily focused on the study of shipwrecks, but studying the coastal industries behind this period of history is crucial to our wider understanding of maritime identity and history. By incorporating community-led research and archeological data, this project will enrich our understanding of the Maritime Provinces' shipbuilding legacy while creating a broader appreciation for coastal industry, maritime identity and historical understanding and its lasting impacts on the reality of life in the Maritimes (present and past).

**PAUL ITOAFA** (English, 2nd year)  
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Cora Woolsey

### **DACIA'S IRON CAPITAL: SARMIZEGETUSA REGIA DESTROYED AND REBUILT**

Sarmizegetusa Regia represents one of the most complete examples of a Dacian settlement, pre- and post-Roman occupation. The Citadel, located in the Orastie Mountains in modern Romania, saw its construction during the late Iron Age and is widely considered to have been the pre-Roman capital of the Dacian people. It is separated into three distinct sections: a walled hill fort, a "sacred area," and a civilian sector. Each of these sites has been subject to a wide range of archaeological excavations over the last three hundred years, though awareness of the site persisted among the local population for far longer. From destructive attempts to uncover rumored caches of gold, misguided reconstruction efforts that caused incredible damages, and finally more recent attempts to properly maintain and conserve the site, Sarmizegetusa Regia has had a troubled and expansive history as an archaeological site. Recent work to consolidate existing data and leverage non-intrusive techniques have recontextualized Sarmizegetusa Regia as an important redistribution center and the capital of the Dacian kingdom. This presentation will look at how contemporary non-intrusive initiatives have begun to provide a new path toward understanding Sarmizegetusa Regia and other Dacian fortresses within the Orastie Mountains.

### **PANEL 9: HUMAN RIGHTS**

**EMILY STOREY** (Human Rights, 3rd year)  
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Thomas Bateman

### **ALIGNING CANADA'S EDUCATIONAL PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT CURRICULA WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS**

Canada's approach to sexual health education varies significantly across provinces, with Ontario and New Brunswick exemplifying distinct models that reflect broader provincial autonomy in education policy. This study evaluates the effectiveness of these curricula in aligning with international human rights standards on Sexual Health Education ("Personal Development"). Using a comparative analysis, my research examines how these models address key principles such as gender equality, informed consent, and adolescent well-being. By integrating international frameworks, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2018) guidelines on sexuality education, this study highlights discrepancies in Canada's approach and identifies pathways for harmonization. My honours studies aim to contribute to policy discussions on education reform, advocating for a more cohesive national approach that ensures all Canadian students receive inclusive, evidence-based, and rights-oriented sexual health education.

**JONATHAN MCDONALD** (Human Rights, 4th year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Shannonbrooke Murphy

### **WHAT PARENTAL RIGHTS? INTERNATIONAL AND CANADIAN PROTECTIONS OF THE QUEER CHILD**

While not novel, claims of parental rights to control the upbringing of an LGBTQIA+ child have recently gained prominence. Such claims are the basis of policy choices made in New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, and other jurisdictions in Canada and abroad. This honours thesis will explore the grounding of these claims in international human rights law, as well as their potential conflict with the established human rights of the queer child. Working primarily within the framework of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, it will examine the compliance of the most prominent parental rights claims with the internationally binding protections of the child, as well as their compatibility with domestic Canadian protections of the same. While parental control rights exist generally, they remain subordinate to the best interests of the child. As a result, if a parental claim related to the child's sexual orientation or gender identity might conflict with the child's rights or best interests, the child's rights prevail.

**ISABELLA CAICEDO** (Political Science, 3rd year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Shaun Narine

### **U.S. INFLUENCE ON INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE U.N. SYSTEM**

The focus of this thesis is the United States' stance on human rights as reflected in its actions within the United Nations system. The central research question is: Is the United States a promoter or an obstacle to international human rights within the UN? As a founding member of the UN and a self-proclaimed champion of the rules-based international system, the US has often portrayed itself as a global leader in human rights. However, its selective application of human rights principles—particularly its frequent use of veto power in the Security Council to block resolutions addressing conflicts in the Middle East—overshadows this commitment. By prioritizing national security and strategic interests over consistent human rights advocacy, the US risks undermining the authority of international human rights intuitions and law. This presentation examines the political, economic, and ideological factors that shape American approach to international human rights, focusing on its engagement with the UN as a central human rights body. This study assesses whether U.S. actions align with its stated human rights commitments or obstruct their global enforcement, by focusing on its use of veto power in the Security Council, engagement with the Human Rights Council, and stance on key treaties.

## **PANEL 10: NARRATIVES AND DISCOURSES PART 2**

**BIANCA PRAJESCU** (Sociology, 5th year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Gül Çalışkan

### **POLITICS OF DWELLING BORDERLANDS AND DIASPORICITY: A NARRATIVE ANALYSIS OF QUEER MUSLIM MEMOIRS**

This presentation discusses how queer Muslims in diaspora navigate belonging at the intersections of sexuality, gender, Islam, and culture through narrative analysis of three memoirs: *Life as a Unicorn: A Journey of Shame and Pride and Everything in Between* by Amrou Al-Kadhi, *Hijab Butch Blues* by Lamya H., and *Among the Eunuchs: A Muslim Transgender Journey* by Leyla Jagiella. Drawing on Gloria Anzaldúa's concept of borderlands and Gül Çalışkan's diasporicity, the analysis explores how intersectional identities challenge traditional notions of citizenship and belonging. Borderlands, as spaces where cultural, racial, and social boundaries intersect, reveal the complexity of negotiating identity (Anzaldúa, [1987] 1999). Diasporicity, with its transnational and fluid approach, unsettles fixed identities and fosters a broader understanding of belonging (Çalışkan, 2022). Based on findings, these frameworks illuminate how queer Muslims navigate intersectionality and the complex relationship between sexuality and Islam, disrupting dominant power structures in both Western and Islamic contexts.

**ELLIE NAMIT** (Sociology, 4th year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Gül Çalışkan

### **"KILLING IS NOT THE SOLUTION IN DRUG WAR": A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF PRESIDENTIAL SPEECHES SURROUNDING THE "WAR ON DRUGS" IN THE PHILIPPINES FROM 2016-2024**

The Philippine "War on Drugs," initiated under President Rodrigo Duterte, led to intensified drug policies and over 6,000 acknowledged killings. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who took office in 2022, claims no drug war-related deaths under his administration, stating that "killing is not the solution." However, human rights organizations report little change in extrajudicial killings between Duterte's last years and Marcos Jr.'s first two years. Both leaders have shaped public perception of the campaign through their rhetoric. This thesis critically examines their speeches to analyze how they frame the issue through definition, positionality, public concern, and the construction of information. These discursive strategies influence public attitudes toward the campaign, either justifying or obscuring government actions. This is particularly significant in shaping perceptions of vulnerable populations and the extent of human rights abuses. This study asks: How have Presidents Rodrigo Duterte and Ferdinand Marcos Jr. employed discursive elements in their speeches to construct the broader narrative surrounding the "War on Drugs"?

**SARAH KASPRZAK** (Psychology, 5th year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Michelle Lafrance

### **“THE SYSTEM IS BROKEN, NOT YOU”:** ADVICE FROM PSYCHOLOGY’S FEMINIST VOICES

Feminist psychology is an approach to all aspects of psychological practice (theory, data collection, methodology, writing, mentorship, therapeutic practice, etc.) that centers around an awareness of social context and resistance of dominant structures of social power and inequity. The Psychology’s Feminist Voices’ archive is dedicated preserving this field and features publicly available interview transcripts of prominent feminist psychologists reflecting on their experiences. Through the present research, I am investigating the ways in which feminist psychologists respond when asked for advice for newcomers to the field. I use qualitative methods (critical thematic analysis) to examine, collect, and distill common themes and types of language used in the advice. Through this work I have identified patterns in the data such as warning language used about problems caused by toxic culture and pressure in academia. Participants also provide ways to survive these problems such as encouragement toward finding fellow feminist academics and forming communities, grounding in political and feminist beliefs, and following passion. Corroborating advice from leading international figures in the field will help to reveal ways in which patterns of advice emerge in connection with feminist identity. This can inform future generations of students who are interested in pursuing feminist psychology.

### **PANEL 11: FOOD AND FOOD SYSTEMS**

**FARLEY CHAMBERLAIN** (History, 3rd year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Julia Torrie

#### **ICE CREAM ESTABLISHMENTS: THE EMERGENCE AND POPULARIZATION OF ICE CREAM IN 19TH CENTURY AMERICA**

American ice cream grew in popularity not because of its taste but because of the ecosystem built around the dessert. Saloons, soda fountains, and pleasure gardens populated this ecosystem, allowing anyone to eat and experience ice cream culture. Ice cream was popularized in America in the late 18th century for several reasons. One of the more popular explanations is credited to Thomas Jefferson who brought recipes and devices to make ice cream back from France. The introduction of ice cream shook the way people ate regardless of who they were. There were ice cream restaurants, called ice cream parlors, specifically made to cater to women, and many of them would meet in these businesses after a day of shopping at a department store. Rebellious young adults often met within the walls of these parlors. The most popular ice cream saloons and parlors were meant for people in the upper class there were facsimile parlors which catered instead to people in the lower class. These facsimile parlors were often cheap recreations of bigger parlors and allowed people to enjoy the treat regardless of their class. The businesses which sold ice cream were involved in popularizing the dessert across the country.



**DHRUV MANISH** (Environment and Society, 4th year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Monika Korzun

## **BITTER HARVEST: THE CHALLENGES OF COCOA PLANTATIONS AND THE IMPACT OF FAIR TRADE**

The cultivation of cacao has historically occurred on plantations, where workers have been exposed to unfair and unjust treatment. Practices at cacao plantations also result in several negative environmental issues. The goals of this paper are twofold. First, this paper explores the ongoing difficulties faced by cacao farmers and workers, examining the limitations of current sustainability initiatives. The cocoa industry is marked by significant financial hardship for farmers, who face high production costs while receiving minimal profits. In regions such as West Africa, children are trafficked or coerced into hazardous labor conditions on cocoa farms, where they perform dangerous tasks and are often deprived of education. Second, the paper examines the concept of fair trade as a potential solution to addressing the challenges of conventional cacao production. Fair trade is a certification system that aims to ensure fair prices for farmers and farm works, provide good working conditions and minimize child labour on farms and plantations. It is important to note that fair trade certifications have been criticized for their limited impact, particularly in excluding farmers from decision-making processes and failing to produce large-scale systemic change. The paper argues for more effective, inclusive solutions that address the root causes of exploitation within the cocoa supply chain. This argument is supported by exploring historical context of labour practices in cacao production, outlining relevant case studies and critically exploring fair trade certification programs.

## **PANEL 12: AGING AND AGED CARE**

**EMILIANA BALSECA WEEB** (Gerontology, 3rd year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Janet Durkee-Lloyd

### **ANXIETY AND WHATNOT: MENTAL HEALTH FOR OLDER ADULTS**

Mental health is a frequently discussed topic, but it is rarely addressed from the perspective of older adults, despite the importance of psychoeducation in this area. Factors such as stigma, misconceptions, and the limited support available to older adults regarding their mental health highlight the need for targeted interventions. For this reason, I developed this psychoeducational project "Anxiety and Whatnot", a magazine dedicated to anxiety and depression in older adults. This resource focuses on the particular interests of this population and is designed to be accessible and relevant to their unique needs.

**MEAGHAN O'NEILL** (Gerontology, 4th year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Linda Caissie

### **POLICY INVESTIGATIONS INTO NURSING HOME NEGLIGENCE: CASES RESULTING IN INVOLUNTARY MANSLAUGHTER AND/OR WRONGFUL DEATH**

For many older people, nursing homes become a sanctuary of support when they no longer can live on their own, staffed with nurses, PSWs, recreational therapists, food services staff, and run by a team of managers who want to provide the best care for their residents. Although this is how nursing homes should be run for older and more vulnerable

people, there are sadly many cases where neglect in a nursing home facility turns into worse. Negligence is sadly too common across Canada, with a 90-day mortality rate among individuals exhibiting signs of neglect. The term wrongful death will be used in this presentation as the death of a resident as a result of nursing home negligence. For the purpose of making this more accessible to viewers, the term involuntary manslaughter will be referring to the death of a resident caused by another resident who has a diminishing mental capacity (such as dementia) and therefore cannot be held liable due to their mental state. The point of adding or amending a policy about wrongful death and/or involuntary manslaughter in a nursing home is not to criminalize individuals with dementia or specific healthcare providers, but to maintain the standard of care and hold nursing homes accountable; wrongful death as a result of negligence can be prevented, and we need to fight for the safety of older adults living in care homes.

## **PANEL 13: POLITICS AND POLITICAL RIGHTS**

**SYDNEY GALLIBOIS** (Human Rights, 4th year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Thomas Bateman

### **HOMELESS ENCAMPMENTS AND SECTION 7**

The number of homeless individuals has increased since the commencement of the Covid-19 pandemic. Homeless shelters cannot account for this rapidly growing number of homeless individuals. Thus, homeless individuals have constructed encampments as a form of emergency shelter; however, the safety of the individuals residing in these encampments has been threatened. This presentation aims to examine to what extent Canada has an obligation to protect homeless encampments under Section 7 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Homeless encampments have been the target of discriminatory bylaws created by Municipal governments. Regardless of the bylaws being unconstitutional under Section 7 of the Charter, municipal governments have continued to attempt to implement them. Ontario Premier Doug Ford has gone as far as promising the use of the notwithstanding clause, Section 33 of the Charter, on these bylaws in order to ensure they are legally implemented. The bylaws are breaking international obligations set out under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Canada has signed both documents and therefore has the obligation to ensure that protection of these encampments is augmented and enforced in legislation and interpreted in judicial precedent.

**ELLA MURPHY** (Political Science, 3rd year)

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Thomas Bateman

### **HANNAH ARENDT ON THOUGHTLESSNESS AND MODERN POLITICS**

Political thinker Hannah Arendt decries the modern political sphere and its role in disastrous events in the 20th century. This political science thesis proposal evaluates Arendt's notions of freedom and action as the most robust and full form of political life. Freedom and action are contrasted with the modern bureaucratic system, which uses scientific solutions to organize humanity. Bureaucracy, she believes, is fundamentally thoughtless. Why does Arendt think that this thoughtlessness destroys freedom and action? Arendt declares bureaucracy as the Rule of Nobody, which is the most totalitarianism regime of all. This thesis proposal will examine Arendt's major works such as: Eichmann in Jerusalem, The Origins of Totalitarianism, "On Lying and Politics", and The Human Condition.