



Student Research and Ideas Fair

———— **2024** ————



St. Thomas
UNIVERSITY

Office of
Research Services

WELCOME

20TH ANNUAL STUDENT RESEARCH AND IDEAS FAIR

It gives me great pleasure to extend my warmest greetings to all participants in our 20th annual Student Research and Ideas Fair.

When I first arrived at St. Thomas University at the beginning of this academic year, I recognized immediately the extent to which the goals of a liberal education are embedded in our mission and infuse our everyday practices. Faculty, staff, and students all appreciate the importance of broad and deep knowledge, of inquisitiveness and critical thinking, and of thoughtful moral and ethical judgement. We also share a commitment to write and speak clearly and precisely, and to apply our knowledge and understanding to fundamental questions about humanity, as well as an array of challenging new issues that face us in the 21st century.



The Student Research and Ideas Fair provides a unique opportunity for St. Thomas University students to share the results of their research within our scholarly community. Important ideas, findings, and insights must be shared both within and beyond the university for their impact and potential to be achieved. This process of knowledge mobilization is an essential step that allows each of our students the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding, engage with knowledge users, and take their first steps towards making the world a better place.

As presenters in this year's Student Research and Ideas Fair, you are already well aware of the importance of these processes of research, study, reflection, and engagement. Through the mentorship of your professors and debate with your fellow students, you are well on your way to putting your liberal education to work in your fields and in your communities. I offer you all my heartfelt congratulations, and I look forward to following you on your academic journeys.

Dr. Nauman Farooqi
President and Vice-Chancellor

20th Annual Student Research and Ideas Fair

March 15th, 2024

SCHEDULE

- 12:00 – 12:45 PM** Lunch in BMH Rotunda (BMH 318)
- 12:45 – 1:00 PM** Welcome and Opening Remarks (BMH 318)
- 1:00 – 2:40 PM** SESSION ONE
- Panel 1: Tragedies, Epics, and Fairy Tales I (BMH 107)
 - Panel 2: Environmental Studies I (BMH 108)
 - Panel 3: Contemporary Social Issues (BMH 202)
 - Panel 4: Media Representations of Criminal Justice Issues (BMH 204)
 - Panel 5: Cognitive Psychology (BMH 205)
- 2:40 – 3:00 PM** Nutrition Break – Ground Floor Foyer, Brian Mulroney Hall
- 3:00 – 4:40 PM** SESSION TWO
- Panel 6: Tragedies, Epics, and Fairy Tales II (BMH 107)
 - Panel 7: Environmental Studies II (BMH 108)
 - Panel 8: Literary Analysis (BMH 202)
 - Panel 9: Critical Examinations of the Justice System (BMH 204)
 - Panel 10: New Research in Psychology (BMH 205)
 - Panel 11: Identity and Empowerment (BMH 101)
 - Panel 12: Political Studies, National and International (BMH 102)
- 4:45 PM** Closing Remarks, Ground Floor Foyer, Brian Mulroney Hall

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

SESSION ONE – 1:00 – 2:40 PM

Panel 1 – Brian Mulroney Hall 107

Theme: Tragedies, Epics, and Fairy Tales I

Moderator: Dr. Andrew Klein

Meryssa Otis
1:00–1:25 PM

An Identity Paradox: The Complexity of Femininity in *The Bacchae*
English, 4th year

Henry Nadeau
1:25 – 1:50 PM

Can You Take This Spike? Capitalism, Consumption, and Human Connection in Neil Gaiman’s Fairy Tale Retellings
English, 2nd year

Marley Durling
1:50 – 2:15 PM

Literal and Liminal Queerness in *The Epic of Gilgamesh*
English, 5th year

Panel 2 – Brian Mulroney Hall 108

Theme: Environmental Studies I

Moderator: Dr. Janice Harvey

Erin Hurley
1:00 – 1:20 PM

Planting the Seed: Embracing Traditional Indigenous Wisdom in the Shift to Sustainable Food-Growing Practices
Environment & Society, 4th year

Quintina Northrup
1:20 – 1:40 PM

Harmony Unleashed: Shifting Power and Amplifying Voices for Community-Driven Regenerative Governance for Community-Driven Regenerative Governance
Environment & Society, 4th year

Chris Roddis
1:40 – 2:00 PM

Synergy for Sustainability: The Critical Role of Collaborative Civil Society Movements in Achieving a Sustainable Future
Environment & Society, 4th year

Arabella LeBlanc
2:00 – 2:20 PM

Beyond Four Walls: Rethinking the Human Habitat for a Sustainable Future

Environment & Society, 4th year

Molly Hansen
2:20–2:40 PM

Pursuing Planetary Health: Strengthening Human and Environmental Well-being Through Policy Responses and Personal Pursuits

Environmental Studies, 4th year

Panel 3 – Brian Mulroney Hall 202

Theme: Contemporary Social Issues

Moderator: Dr. Gül Çalışkan

Liam McCann
1:00 – 1:25 PM

Migration Selectivity in Interregional Human Capital Flight!

Economics, 5th year

Valeria Solis /Dora Szemok/
Shamy Illiza Rukokora /
Zachary Girard
1:25 – 1:50 PM

Promise of Home: Envisioning a More Inclusive Community

Interdisciplinary Studies, 4th year / UNB International Development Studies & Political Science, 3rd year / Criminology and Human Rights, 2nd year / Sociology & Communications, 2nd year

Indigo Poirer
1:50 – 2:15 PM

Not Born This Way: Everyday Transgender Expressions of Agency

Sociology, 4th year

Alegria de la Parra
2:15 – 2:40 PM

Debating Physicians' Roles in Medically Assisted Death in Canada: A Critical Discourse Analysis

Sociology, 3rd year

Panel 4 – Brian Mulroney Hall 204

Theme: Media Representations of Criminal Justice Issues

Moderator: Dr. Dawne Clarke

Helene Noddin
1:00 – 1:25 PM

Framing Filicide: Gendered Perspectives in Canadian Print Media (2017–2022)

Criminology, 5th year

Taylor Armstrong
1:25 – 1:50 PM

Media Violence and the Criminal Justice System

Criminology, 3rd year

Clark Gowan
1:50 – 2:15 PM

Youth, Gender, and the News: A Content Analysis of the Evolution of Representation of Young Offenders

Criminology, 5th year

Panel 5 – Brian Mulrone Hall 205

Theme: Cognitive Psychology

Moderator: Dr. Sandra Thomson

Claudia Ruiz
1:00 – 1:25 PM

Investigating How People Evaluate News Headlines: A Replication and Extension of Pennycook et al. (2018)
Psychology, 4th year

Molly Fortin
1:25 – 1:50 PM

An Examination of Mood and Time Orientation in Unintentional and Intentional Mind Wandering: Replication and Extension of Seli et al. (2016)
Psychology, 4th year

Lily Derbyshire
1:50 – 2:15 PM

An Experimental Investigation of Memory Effects in Spontaneous Causal Inferences
Psychology, 5th year

NUTRITION BREAK

2:40 – 3:00 PM

Ground Floor Foyer, Brian Mulrone Hall

SESSION TWO – 3:00 – 4:40 PM

Panel 6 – Brian Mulrone Hall 107

Theme: Tragedies, Epics, and Fairy Tales II

Moderator: Dr. Andrea Schutz

Jacob Beatty
3:00 – 3:25 PM

Feminizing Achilles: Masculine Rigidity and Feminine Malleability in *The Iliad*
English, 4th year

Miriam Schriefers
3:25 – 3:50 PM

The Transactional Tragedy of Liminal Adolescence in *Little Red Riding Hood*
English, 2nd year

Ryan Martin
3:50 – 4:15 PM

“Their Shade Was Good”: The Tension of the Forest in *The Epic of Gilgamesh*
English, 3rd year

Panel 7 – Brian Mulroney Hall 108
Theme: Environmental Studies II
Moderator: Dr. Angela Wisniewski

Erin Hurley
3:00–3:25 PM

A Critical Thematic Analysis: Understanding Offshore Wind Energy Development Through a Climate Justice Lens
Environmental Studies, 4th year

Emma Fackenthall /
Erin Hurley
3:25 – 3:50 PM

The CEDAR Project: Examining News Media Discourses on Energy Transitions in New Brunswick
Environmental Studies, 3rd year / Environmental Studies, 4th year

Panel 8 – Brian Mulroney Hall 202
Theme: Literary Analysis
Moderator: Dr. Matte Robinson

Adam Schwartz
3:00 – 3:25 PM

Novel Metaphysics: Virginia Woolf and Saul Bellow
Great Books, 4th year

Elize Davila
3:25 – 3:50 PM

Mottley’s “Cultural Confidence” as a Tool for Postcolonial Development and Literary Analysis
English, 4th year

Aspen Boyer–Belanger
3:50 – 4:15 PM

The Significance of the Omission of Poe’s Bestiary in Adaptations
English, 4th year

Panel 9 – Brian Mulroney Hall 204

Theme: Critical Examinations of the Justice System

Moderator: Dr. Michael Boudreau

Jaylene De Adder
3:00 – 3:25 PM

The Exploration of Intersectionality of BIPOC Youth in Relation to the Canadian Criminal Justice System
Criminology, 5th year

Olivia Stock
3:25 – 3:50 PM

Demeanour Evidence in Court: Uses and Misuses
Criminology, 3rd year

Stevie-Rae Demerchant
3:50 – 4:15 PM

What do you hope will happen as a result; a critical analysis of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
Criminology, 4th year

Jaylene De Adder
4:15 – 4:40 PM

Was it Really Rape? Using Intersectionality to Evaluate Judges Sentencing Reports and Indigenous Women Survivors of Sexual Violence
Criminology, 5th year

Panel 10 – Brian Mulroney Hall 205

Theme: New Research in Psychology

Moderator: Dr. Sarah Vannier

Lauren Allen
3:00 – 3:25 PM

Awe, Humility, and Love: A Replication and Extension Study
Psychology, 4th year

Benjamin King
3:25 – 3:50 PM

The Tinnitus Experience
Psychology, 4th year

Rachel Doucet
3:50 – 4:15 PM

Perceptions of Psychology Course Language and Links to Internalized and Perceived Stigma
Psychology, 4th year

Laura George
4:15 – 4:40 PM

Mindfulness and Nature Exposure: Effects on Stress Reduction
Psychology, 4th year

Panel 11 – Brian Mulroney Hall 101
Theme: Identity and Empowerment
Moderator: Dr. Karen Robert

Tyler McCormick
3:00 – 3:25 PM

Deploying Heteronormativity: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Reddit Forums Discussing Drag Story Hour
Sociology, 3rd year

Valeria Solis
3:25 – 3:50 PM

Decolonization Through Two-eyed Seeing? A Thematic Analysis of Digital Counter-Maps in the Upper Amazon
Interdisciplinary Studies, 4th year

Jonathan McDonald
3:50 – 4:15 PM

What Parental Rights? Preliminary findings on the International and Canadian Protections of the Queer Child
Human Rights, 3rd year

Daniel Salas
4:15 – 4:40 PM

Black Cadillac: Brand Identity and Black Pride in the Civil Rights Era, 1950–1980
History, 4th year

Panel 12 – Brian Mulroney Hall 102
Theme: Political Studies, National and International
Moderator: Dr. Shannonbrooke Murphy

Erin Elliott
3:00 – 3:25 PM

Is It Lawful to Limit the Self-Determination of Palestinians Based on the Conduct of Hamas?
Human Rights, 4th year

James Brennan
3:25 – 3:50 PM

International Recognition of Disputed Territories: The Cases of Somaliland, Western Sahara, and South Sudan
International Relations, 3rd year

Charlie Hanscomb
3:50 – 4:15 PM

The Politics of Electoral Systems Reform in Canada
Political Science, 4th year

Valeria Nicola
4:15 – 4:40 PM

Green Constitution, Grey Outcome: The Implementation Gap between Environmental Laws and Development in Ecuador
International Relations, 3rd year

Poster Presentations – Ground Floor Foyer, Brian Mulroney Hall

1:00 – 4:00 PM

Mercedes Ortiz

Limitations for a Successful R2P Implementation

International Relations, 4th year

Marion Govednik

AUKUS and Gramscianism: Analyzing Consent and Coercion in the Indo-Pacific Region

Political Science, 3rd year

Estafania Martinez

The Political Impact of Climate Change on Developing Countries: A Case Studies of Honduras and El Salvador

International Relations, 4th year

Mayaveye Walker-Titus

The Relevance of Minutia: Endless Unravelling of Stonehenge

Anthropology, 2nd year

20th Annual Student Research and Ideas Fair

March 15th, 2024

ABSTRACTS

PANEL 1: TRAGEDIES, EPICS, AND FAIRY TALES I

MERYSSA OTIS | English, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Andrea Schutz

An Identity Paradox: the Complexity of Femininity in *The Bacchae*

In Euripides' *Bacchae*, Dionysus serves as the protagonist who challenges the categorization of gender, specifically through the act of embodying both masculinity and femininity, creating a category crisis. To be a category crisis is to be a monster who "is dangerous, a form suspended between forms that threatens to smash distinctions... that which questions binary thinking and introduces a crisis" (Cohen 6). Femininity often falls into a state of complexity as what is defined as feminine presents double-sided images of women. These images established as both an integral part of civic structure, but also serve as a threat to the male-centric Polis. *The Bacchae* highlights the complexity of the feminine identity in Greek tragedy and myth through the ambivalent images of femininity as both domestic and savage, a gateway to the expression of repressed desires, and as a threat to Greek masculinity.

HENRY NADEAU | Great Books, 2nd year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Andrea Schutz

Can You Take This Spike? Capitalism, Consumption, and Human Connection in Neil Gaiman's Fairy Tale Retellings

Sleeping Beauty and Snow White, in their traditional stories, are innocent, perfect protagonists who deal with unnecessary punishments from women whom society has, in one way or another, cast out. In most interpretations and retellings of this basic story, the focus centers on these protagonists and their metaphorical meaning for the people they represent. Neil Gaiman, in his adaptations of *Snow White* and *Sleeping Beauty*, *Snow, Glass, Apples* and *The Sleeper and the Spindle* respectively, challenges the notions that these protagonists must always represent something "good." According to Jeffrey Jerome Cohen's "Monster Culture (Seven Theses)," if these protagonists represent things prevalent in our society and specifically push societal boundaries of what women are capable of in these seemingly-limited positions of power, is it not more fitting that they are monsters? Their passivity makes them reliant on consumption, but this fact is overshadowed by their innocent demeanor. Neil Gaiman's retellings paint Snow White and Sleeping Beauty into consumerist monsters; while they are in a death-like state, they consume the life forces of those around them. This paper will explore the parallels of consumerism and unnatural youth between Gaiman's tales.

MARLEY DURLING | English, 5th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Andrea Schutz

Literal and Liminal Queerness in *The Epic of Gilgamesh*

The relationship between Gilgamesh and Enkidu in *The Epic of Gilgamesh* is notoriously vague and difficult to describe, as at times it seems platonic or familial, yet is also romantic, which would define them as queer characters. This essay dissects not only their relationship, but their individual characters and their queer aspects. Focus on the relationship reveals similarities between their relationship and other marital and sexual relationships both in this text and other contemporary texts of the time. The individual characters, namely Enkidu, exhibit queer characteristics such as gender non-conformity and separation from family. Lastly, this essay discusses the liminality in this text, and how Gilgamesh and Enkidu are characters who exist on the spaces in-between, and how their liminality makes them inherently queer figures.

PANEL 2: ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES I

ERIN HURLEY | Environmental Studies, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Janice Harvey

Planting the Seed: Embracing Traditional Indigenous Wisdom in the Shift to Sustainable Food-Growing Practices

With the climate crisis and extreme social inequality, many people today are questioning the very systems we live and operate under. Scholars are insisting that transformational change is necessary in many social systems to avoid environmental catastrophe and systems collapse. One of these transformational changes involves a transition away from our current food system. The industrial agriculture system that promotes mass production, mass consumerism, and a disconnection from the land is unsustainable. Using the research methodology of case studies, I will be examining Indigenous ecological farming practices that reflect traditional knowledge of the land on which food is grown. Learning from these community-based and regenerative food-growing practices, my goal is to envision a more holistic and collaborative approach to our food system. The main themes of my research are resilience, cooperation, reciprocal relationships, and a deep and profound connection with nature.

QUINTINA NORTHRUP | Environmental Studies, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Janice Harvey

“Harmony Unleashed: Shifting Power and Amplifying Voices for Community-Driven Regenerative Governance”

This research project champions a bold shift to regenerative governance, advocating for community empowerment, and participatory decision-making. Using principles found in instruments such as the Earth Charter, it challenges conventional top-down governance, aiming to shift power from centralized institutions to local communities.

Inspired by the decentralized spirit of initiatives such as the Anarchy Rules project and the collaborative approach to governance found in the enduring Haudenosaunee constitution the Great Law of Peace, this research delves into alternative governance models that emphasize community involvement, collaboration, and collective action. By amplifying the voices of marginalized groups, the project seeks to discover a system of governance that overcomes systemic inequalities that are found within existing governance structures.

CHRIS RODDIS | Environmental Studies, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Janice Harvey

Synergy for Sustainability: The Critical Role of Collaborative Civil Society Movements in Achieving a Sustainable Future

With the need to transition to a sustainable future, civil society movements are essential in steering the way. Despite the intrinsic value of these movements, their isolated efforts often lack the cumulative impact necessary for significant change, underscoring the critical need for strategic collaboration. Thus, the importance of collaboration among diverse civil society movements, with its array of NGOs, community groups, and grassroots initiatives, is instrumental in pushing for environmental, social, and economic sustainability. This study will employ a case study approach to explore the effectiveness of local-level collaborations among civil society groups in driving concrete sustainability initiatives. By doing so, it will explore the extent of civil society's engagement in sustainability efforts, identifying both challenges and opportunities in partnerships. Furthermore, the study aims to demonstrate how integrated civil society efforts can significantly advance our sustainability goals, helping us realize the future we want and need.

ARABELLA LEBLANC | Environmental Studies, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Janice Harvey

Beyond Four Walls: Rethinking the Human Habitat for a Sustainable Future

An actionable plan for a sustainable future requires identifying practical and tangible steps that can be implemented at the community level. One central dimension of any community is the home. Rethinking the home can serve as a model for rethinking other aspects of society to build a more sustainable future. The homes of every other species on Earth are embedded within the ecosystem that forms their habitat. A sustainable society must recognize that the "human habitat" is also embedded in ecosystems. I suggest that an ecologically and socially sustainable future must necessarily include sustainable homes. My research explores the concept of ecologically integrated and efficient homes. This involves exploring specific ways builders, individuals, and communities can move towards building and living in homes that are sensitive to the particular ecosystems in which they are located. I examine what changes in the social belief paradigm are required to shift the way we think about the home, the potential barriers to revolutionizing the home, and how these barriers can be overcome. This includes identifying the pioneers in the sustainable shelter movement. Additionally, I investigate how such community-led sustainable housing initiatives can strengthen community resilience and improve access to affordable housing.

MOLLY HANSEN | Environment & Society, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Janice Harvey

Pursuing Planetary Health: Strengthening Human and Environmental Well-being Through Policy Responses and Personal Pursuits

This portion of a collaborative research project aims to delve into the mind, body, and soul of human connectedness to the environment. The health and well-being of our planet directly affects our mental, physical, and spiritual well-beings. Poor environmental health negatively affects public health, as seen with the physical health impacts brought upon by various environmental disasters such as air pollution and droughts, as well as mental health effects, as seen with the rise of eco-anxiety in recent years. Addressing these issues means addressing the shortcomings of our current collective relationship to the Earth, and recognizing the reciprocal and entangled nature of these well-beings. An interdisciplinary approach is necessary in this scenario, one that strengthens environmental policy to prevent further degradation and restore as much existing damage as possible to strengthen public health. Each action taken in this approach must support the network of planetary health being built. Through exploring the importance of the interconnectedness of these well-beings and the possible paths that can be taken in response, we can begin to foster a healthier population and environment.

PANEL 3: CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL ISSUES

LIAM MCCANN | Economics, 5th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Fariba Solati

Migration Selectivity in Intergenerational Human Capital Flight

Certain subsets of the population, such as university graduates and immigrants, consistently exhibit elevated levels of internal mobility, resulting in disproportionate representation in interregional migration flows. Research on interregional migration, specifically on human capital flight, largely fails to explain the mechanics of this migration selectivity. Using longitudinal data from the Postsecondary Student Information System (PSIS) and Longitudinal Administrative Databank (LAD), this study explores how selective migration contributes to interregional human capital flight out of Atlantic Canada. By employing a probit specification of the discrete-time hazard model, migration propensities are modeled as a function of socioeconomic characteristics for three groups: those without tertiary education, university graduates, and immigrant graduates. Two well-documented examples of group differences in interregional mobility are subsequently examined: the difference between those with and without tertiary education, and the difference between Canadian-born and landed-immigrant university graduates. Using Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition, the differences in migration rate between groups are broken down into three components: one explained by the differences in socioeconomic composition, one explained by differences in migration responses to socioeconomic conditions, and one explained by differences in group characteristics not captured in the model.

VALERIA SOLIS/ DORA SZEMOK/ SHAMY ILLZA / ZACHARY GIRARD | Interdisciplinary Studies, 4th year / UNB International Development Studies & Political Science, 3rd year / Criminology & Human Rights, 2nd year / Sociology & Communications, 2nd year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Gül Çalışkan

Promise of Home: Envisioning a More Inclusive Community

In this presentation, we will be discussing our involvement in the Promise of Home project as research team members. Promise of Home is a community-based narrative project on experiences of belonging in Fredericton for immigrant youth, families, and individuals. We are currently completing Phase Three: Community-Enrichment Narrative Visioning, where we are including Frederictonians from all backgrounds to engage with the narratives expressed in the previous phases and ask: "What are the shared hopes and aspirations for a more inclusive community?" To address this question, we contributed to the planning and implementation of community outreach initiatives during the summer, a two-day community conference, and a panel discussion on making campus home with international student leaders from St. Thomas University and the University of New Brunswick. Findings from these events and previous phases will inform the fourth and final phase, in which we will formulate grassroots policy proposals to share with policymakers and community partners at town hall meetings in Fredericton.

INDIGO POIRIER | Sociology, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Kristi Allain

Not Born This Way: Everyday Transgender Expressions of Agency

Transgender people have increasingly been the subject of intense debate and political rhetoric over the last few years. In attempts to advocate for legal rights and protections, many pro-trans activists have relied on what Cloud (2018) calls "low agency" arguments for trans identity; these state that being trans is not a choice and therefore deserves protections under the law. This argument has been central to queer activists' work over the last few decades. However, Cloud argues that focusing solely on a low agency conception of queer identity risks overlooking the myriad ways that queer people express agency. Taking up the work of queer theorists such as Butler and Connell, in this talk I will analyze a series of semi-structured interviews conducted with members of the trans community, and discuss the agentive personal decision making processes involved with their transition and day-to-day life as transgender people. I argue that far from being homogenous, the decisions involved in physical and social transition, as well as negotiating one's role as a trans person in their community, balance numerous and often conflicting pressures and social expectations, and that this richness and complexity is a vital, yet often overlooked, aspect of trans people's lives.

ALEGRIA DE LA PARRA | Sociology, 3rd year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Erin Fredericks

Debating Physicians' Roles in Medically Assisted Death in Canada: A Critical Discourse Analysis

MAID (Medical Assistance In Dying) has been controversial in Canada since its legalization. This is due to conscientious refusal, which is an act of freedom of conscience, where the procedure can be refused due to a physician's moral or religious values. In contrast, the Canadian public is questioning if this should be permitted, as it might complicate MAID regarding accessibility, and allowing conscientious refusal might establish superiority of physicians' rights over patients' rights. This study uses a Critical Discourse Analysis in order to describe language as a constituting system by analyzing discourse and dominance. Data from the comment section of 2021 CBC article on conscientious refusal in MAID, it is a reputable source that adequately represents Canadians thoughts through comments. 100 comments were preliminarily coded through thematic coding in NVIVO, and then classified into thematic codes. The literature on the subject demonstrates that there is a lack of research on the issue, as well as a lack of funding and emotional support for physicians. The Canadian public's biggest worry is that allowing conscientious refusal in MAID might impact accessibility on other procedures, and further damage the Canadian healthcare system. This research is significant as deciding to allow conscientious refusal in MAID impacts doctor's rights as well as patient rights. Analyzing themes such as good death, responsibility, equal access and medical practice is essential to fill in the research holes that this debate has, and correctly support physicians and patients in the ways that they need.

PANEL 4: MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ISSUES

HELENE NODDIN | Criminology, 5th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Claire Goggin

Framing Filicide: Gendered Perspectives in Canadian Print Media (2017-2022)

Filicide, the act of a parent killing their child, is a rare yet tragic occurrence in Canadian society. This study provides a comprehensive overview of filicide cases between 2017 and 2022 while exploring how Canadian newspapers portrayed maternal and paternal filicide offenders and examining the influential role of media in shaping public perceptions of such crimes. Utilizing a mixed-methods content analysis, 49 filicide cases were retrieved from the Canadian Legal Information Institute (CANLII). In addition, 250 articles about the 31 cases which met inclusion criteria were extracted from 7 Canadian newspapers. Initial results revealed that there was a statistically significant difference in the mean word count of articles about male vs. female offenders [$t(248) = -1.998, p = 0.047$], ($M_{Male} = 460.70, SD_{Male} = 267.86$ vs. $M_{Female} = 392.52, SD_{Female} = 209.21$). This finding indicates a disparity in the depth of media coverage based on offender gender. The study also examined gender-based differences in media portrayals of offenders based on language, terminology, word count, demographics, and other relevant factors. It not only provides insights into trends and patterns in media coverage but also highlights the importance of fostering accurate, unbiased, and nuanced representations of filicide offenders.

TAYLOR ARMSTRONG | Criminology, 3rd year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Claire Goggin

Media Violence and the Criminal Justice System

Media is very influential in our current society. Past research examining portrayals of the criminal justice system in violent media report that people tend to seek opportunities to gain new knowledge and make sense of what they already know in violent media; violence effects how much people enjoy what they watch, listen to or read; and that people are more likely to choose media that contains violence when given a choice between different subjects in media. The purpose of the proposed study is to better understand the appeal of violent media among a university cohort, how their perceptions differ based on the intensity of violence and how violent media content effects their attitudes towards the criminal justice system. The data for this thesis study will be collected via an on-line survey from students enrolled at St. Thomas University during the upcoming 2024-2025 academic year. Potential respondents will be invited to complete an on-line survey sampling their interests in violent media content and their attitudes towards the criminal justice system. It is anticipated that students will endorse violent media content due to the suspense/intensity in media and the opportunity to learn more about violence and the criminal justice system. It is expected that students' experiences will reflect the existing literature in that the more they are exposed to violence the less they enjoy the media. Lastly, I expect that students' consumption of violent media to negatively affect their perceptions of the criminal justice system.

CLARK GOWAN | Criminology, 5th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Claire Goggin

Youth, Gender, and the News: A Content Analysis of the Evolution of Representation of Young Offenders

The purpose of the present thesis was to analyze the evolution of youth crime reports published in selected media between January 1, 2013, and December 31, 2023. Specifically, the study examined how the behaviors of both male and female youthful offenders were characterized in news reports from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and the Globe and Mail. Youth represent a unique offender group given their age and the protections afforded them under the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA). Typically, youthful offenders have historically been the subject of disproportionate and unrepresentative coverage by news media. To inform the thematic and statistical content analysis, agenda setting and feminist theories were used. Preliminary analysis of the media sample (n = 197) showed an average word count of five hundred and sixty-three words per article indicating that the heavy emphasis placed on youth offender coverage by news media continues to be evident. Analysis also demonstrated that nearly 40 percent of articles covered a violent offence whereas that comprises just 28 percent of actual offences committed by youth. Indicating that while the overreporting of violent offences remains prevalent it appears to be a smaller gap than found in previous studies.

PANEL 5: COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

CLAUDIA RUIZ | Psychology, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Sandra Thomson

Investigating How People Evaluate News Headlines: A Replication and Extension of Pennycook et al. (2018)

The surge in fake news following the 2016 U.S. presidential election has raised concerns about widespread misinformation, heightened by political unrest and global health crises. In democratic societies, accurate belief formation is essential for individual well-being and societal functioning. Decades of cognitive science research has considered the illusory truth effect, where repeated exposure increases belief in familiar information. This study, replicating Pennycook et al.'s (2018) work, explores this phenomenon, particularly the influence of fake news on perceived accuracy. Through a three-stage experiment, it further investigates whether the presence of warning labels can affect later accuracy judgments of headlines. As an extension of the original study, it tests if posing warnings as questions ("What if it isn't true?") rather than only a statement ("Disputed by 3rd party fact-checkers") encourages critical engagement with content. Consistent with original findings, even a single prior exposure is expected to enhance perceived accuracy for both fake and real news, despite warnings. Moreover, posing warnings as a question is predicted to decrease the effects of exposure on belief, as it may focus participants to consider the accuracy of subsequent information more. With this research, a better understanding of fake news and its social implications can be attained.

MOLLY FORTIN | Psychology, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Sandra Thomson

An Examination of Mood and Time Orientation in Unintentional and Intentional Mind Wandering: Replication and Extension of Seli et al. (2016)

Studies have shown that people engage in mind wandering around 20-50% of the time during lab tasks and everyday activities. Mind wandering can be distinguished into two types: unintentional and intentional. In this study we measured mind wandering in the lab using easy and difficult versions of a Sustained Attention to Response Task (SART), with occasional thought probes asking participants if they were on task or mind wandering. If they reported mind wandering, we also asked whether they were thinking about something positive or negative and if it was related to the past or future. We predict we will replicate past findings that shows intentional mind wandering occurred more in the easier task and unintentional mind wandering occurred more in the harder version of the task. We hope to extend the literature on the two types of mind wandering by examining whether mood and time orientation are associated with specific types of mind wandering. We predict that when people are in a positive mood, they will engage in more intentional mind wandering. We also predict that when a person is engaged in unintentional mind wandering, their thoughts will be more negative and about the past.

LILY DERBYSHIRE | Psychology, 5th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Nancy Higgins and Dr. Sandra Thomson

An Experimental Investigation of Memory Effects in Spontaneous Causal Inferences

People naturally seek to understand and explain the social world by making causal attributions about their own and others' behaviour. Causal attributions are inferences about the situational and/or dispositional reasons for a person's behaviour. Causal inferences that occur below the level of conscious awareness are called spontaneous causal inferences (SCIs). The focus of the present research is on spontaneous trait inferences (STIs) that are elicited in person perception. Many studies in social psychology and social cognition demonstrate that people commonly infer trait causes for others' behaviours without any instruction to do so. The present research explores low and high frequency exposure to trait-implicating behaviour stimuli on STIs elicited in person-perception. First year psychology student participants read a series of non-trait implicating and trait implicating behavioural sentences, then completed a word recognition task. In addition to old and new words, the recognition task included trait words that were not shown but implied by one or more behavioural sentences. It is predicted that, if STIs are elicited by the trait-implicating sentences, participants will falsely recognize implied-trait words in the recognition task, especially for traits implied in the high frequency condition. Results from this study will contribute further knowledge about STIs.

PANEL 6: TRAGEDIES, EPICS, AND FAIRY TALES II

JACOB BEATTY | English, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Andrea Schutz

Feminizing Achilles: Masculine Rigidity and Feminine Malleability in *The Iliad*

A significant portion of Iliadic scholarship is devoted to the poem's study of masculinity and warfare in Greek culture; of equal interest is the personal quality of Achilles' journey, commonly understood as providing an emotive grounding to, and, in some regard, superseding the poem's raw, tactile energy. My design is to draw attention to what has been, so far as I can discern, a totally ignored aspect of that development: Achilles' brush with death while facing Xanthus. This skirmish, I posit, is one that forces Achilles to surrender his unyielding masculinity and exposes him to the strengths of what I will call feminine malleability, whose virtues he adopts and exhibits in his cathartic encounter with Priam.

MIRIAM SCHRIEFERS | English, 2nd year
Faculty Mentors: Dr. Andrea Schutz

The Transactional Tragedy of Liminal Adolescence in *Little Red Riding Hood*

In the Brothers Grimm version of *Little Red Riding Hood*, transformation is present through the titular protagonist's journey from childhood naivety into responsible pubescence as she traverses through various liminal thresholds. Despite the inherently ambiguous nature of liminal concepts and the parallels it shares alongside adolescence, scholarly analysis frequently arrives at the same rigid conclusion which frames the story as a sexual awakening narrative. This interpretation has proliferated the cultural zeitgeist of LRRH so much so that it overshadows other aspects of the tale and acts as another method in which female puberty is reduced to burgeoning libido as more nuanced complexities go ignored. under-studied. It is within the confines of a fairy tale that the woodlands

transcend past physical definitions and becomes a limitless space for narrative metamorphosis. To avoid the pitfalls of a restrictive analysis concerning the enigmatic liminal, it is vital to re-establish the definition of transitory places and extrapolate that beyond mere physicality. Just as spatial arenas distort when a new threshold is crossed, sequential time turns atypical as the tale shifts from a horizontal axis to that of the unconscious vertical. As Red Cap achieves the “happily-ever-after”, she is accompanied by a quiet tragedy as the tale implies that to begin the progression into womanhood, the wonder of childhood naivety must be sacrificed. This journey of growth does not end upon the completion of adolescence but continues as evidenced with the tribulations that Red Cap’s maternal figures undergo as their fears manifest through twisted intention. By examining the transcendental possibilities of liminal spaces, a deeper understanding of complex character progression can be achieved especially regarding the inherently turbulent journey of female adolescence and the continued sacrifices it demands.

RYAN MARTIN | English, 3rd year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Andrea Schutz

“Their Shade Was Good:” The Tension of the Forest in *The Epic of Gilgamesh*

This paper explores the tension of the forest and its malleability in *The Epic of Gilgamesh*; it then follows that discomfort to its ultimate end: the reappropriation, destruction, and transformation of the forest into something unmalleable. Throughout the epic, various characters struggle with the identity of the forest and how it relates to their own identities. The social and cultural identities that many of Gilgamesh’s characters find sacred are subverted and broken within the borders of the forest. However, paradoxically, the forest is also what defines these identities. Therefore, the forest simultaneously others itself from its inhabitants and moulds itself to them, oftentimes uncannily. This malleability is what ultimately leads to the tension and discomfort of the cultured human with the wild forest. To relieve this tension and discomfort, the forest in Gilgamesh is dealt with in three primary ways: taming it (specifically, reappropriating it to be more palatable to humans), destroying it (through massive efforts of deforestation), or transforming it (turning it into buildings, doors, tools).

PANEL 7: ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES II

ERIN HURLEY | Environment and Society, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Janice Harvey

A Critical Thematic Analysis: Understanding Offshore Wind Energy Development Through a Climate Justice Lens

The climate crisis has brought a sense of urgency to transition away from fossil fuels to more sustainable energy sources. This raises the question: which alternative energy sources do we transition towards? While there are contesting energy transition discourses, many environmental scholars insist that renewables are the most just and feasible option. One of the ways that Canada is planning to harness renewable energy is through the development of offshore wind farms. In my thesis research, I am examining three offshore wind projects: Block Island Wind in Rhode Island, Sea-Breeze Tech Demonstration Project in Nova Scotia, and Nova East Wind in Nova Scotia. My research question asks: How can the urgent need for renewable energy be reconciled with the conflicts that have arisen and continue to arise from offshore wind energy development? I plan to answer this

question through a critical thematic analysis of news stories, collected from the Meltwater database, and websites surrounding these three projects. From this data, I can develop an understanding of the common conflicts that arise from these developments and, from there, the meaningful principles these projects should engage with going forward in order to mitigate those conflicts.

EMMA FACKENTHALL / ERIN HURLEY | Environment and Society, 3rd year / Environment and Society, 4th year

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Janice Harvey

The CEDAR Project: Examining News Media Discourses on Energy Transitions in New Brunswick

With the devastating effects of the climate crisis already being felt across the globe, there has been a growing push for the transition to a more sustainable society. One inherent aspect of this transition involves something deeply intertwined in our daily lives: energy. While a transition away from fossil fuels has become more and more widely accepted, there are still many competing discourses around which dominant energy source we should transition towards. Study 1 of the CEDAR (Contesting Energy Discourses through Action Research) Project, based at St. Thomas University, delves into these contesting energy transition discourses in the New Brunswick news media landscape. As research assistants on this project, our work thus far has pertained to NB Telegraph-Journal articles, published between 2002-2023, that we have collected from the Meltwater database. Our random sample has pulled 300 articles that we have been coding by article type, dominant voices, and the energy technologies discussed. Ensuing work will aim to scrutinize the implicit assumptions embedded within these hegemonic and counter-hegemonic discourses by employing three overarching theoretical lenses—climate capitalism, ecomodernism, and climate justice. Ultimately, these findings will be shared at the 2024 Canadian Political Science Conference in Montreal this June.

PANEL 8: LITERARY ANALYSIS

ADAM SCHWARTZ | Great Books, 4th year

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Matt Dinan

Novel Metaphysics: Virginia Woolf and Saul Bellow

The novel is perhaps the ubiquitous form of literary fiction in our world today. Novels are everywhere, and yet, literary critics perennially fear that novel is in danger. Concerns about the so-called “death of the novel” have been circling the literary world since as long as novels have been written, with major critics making such claims throughout the 20th century and even back to the period of early novels in 1752. In 1965, literary critic Frank Kermode wrote that “the special fate of the novel is to always be dying,” but why? What about the novel allows it to thrive when by all accounts it should have “died” decades ago? I will be exploring the peculiar case of the novel’s undeath using the work of two novelists, both of whom argue for the value of novels through their own works: firstly, Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs Dalloway*, published in 1925; and secondly, Saul Bellow’s *Ravelstein*, published in the year 2000, shortly before its author’s death in 2005. In their respective defenses of the novel form, Woolf and Bellow teach us that the novel’s value might actually be found in an unexpected place; its ability to portray the mundane lives of ordinary people.

ELIZE DAVILA | English, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Andrew Klein

Mottley's "Cultural Confidence" as a Tool for Postcolonial Development and Literary Analysis

In 2020, The Honourable Prime Minister Mia Mottley of Barbados gave an address at the Inter-American Development Bank Pivot Event. Meant to focus on economic development, Mottley pushed further to identify an underlying challenge which she dubbed a lack of "Cultural Confidence. Mottley explains she is naming the feeling so many have expressed, citing Trinbagonian artist Peter Minshall's comments on self-contempt. This research seeks to define Cultural Confidence and then proposes that Cultural Confidence is a new tool for postcolonial literary analysis. In turn, Cultural Confidence enables a new postcolonial form that faces the challenges of globalization and its intercultural exchange. Cultural Confidence is explored in this study through a close reading of the Caribbean drama *Echo in the Bone* by Dennis Scott. In order to place Cultural Confidence in the current theoretical conversation, this study looks at ideas of affiliation and catalysis as discussed by theorists Edward Said and Denis Williams, as well as ideas surrounding the development of Caribbean theatre proposed by Errol Hill.

ASPEN BOYER-BELANGER | English, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. André Loiselle

The Significance of the Omission of Poe's Bestiary in Adaptations

The literary symbolism of "bestiary" is designed to connect animals in descriptive works to contain moralistic purposes. This is strategically indicated in literature to demonstrate symbolic significance. Poets like Edgar Allan Poe use this symbolism to demonstrate the essence of human nature, in which animals represent emotions, feelings, and the consciousness of narrators. More specifically, this symbolism is indicated through a mirroring effect, in which the animals the narrators interact with signify their psychological processing - depicting the subconsciousness. However, this symbolism that's depicted in Poe's work can be omitted or diverted in some way shape or form, which ultimately alters the narrative and therefore establishes an unrelated and inapplicable interpretation of Poe's original pieces. In the analysis of adaptations of "The Black Cat," "The Pit and the Pendulum," and "The Raven," this manipulation of the animal's depiction can be indicated by comparing their intended purpose of the creatures for the narrators to the original representations.

PANEL 9: CRITICAL EXAMINATIONS OF THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

JAYLENE DE ADDER | Criminology, 5th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Claire Goggin

The Exploration of Intersectionality of BIPOC Youth in Relation to the Canadian Criminal Justice System

The purpose of this presentation is to discuss a theoretical consideration of the concept of intersectionality when explaining the overrepresentation of Black, Indigenous and Persons of Colour (BIPOC) individuals within the Canadian criminal justice system. Specifically, the focus will consider young BIPOC women between the ages of 18 years and 25 years who are known as emerging adults. The factors of age, gender, race, and class may help to explain some of the reasons for the overrepresentation of BIPOC-incarcerated emerging adults.

OLIVIA STOCK | Criminology, 3rd year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Claire Goggin

Demeanour Evidence in Court: Uses and Misuses

The use of demeanour evidence in court may lead to wrongful convictions. Demeanour evidence is defined as physical/verbal cues that defendants/witnesses exhibit, excluding testimonial content. Dangerous decision theory (DDT) will be used to understand to what extent initial demeanour contributes to outcome decisions and, therefore, enhances the potential for wrongful convictions. Participants will include undergraduate students at St. Thomas University in the 2024-2025 academic year. An anonymous on-line survey will be used to randomly present one of four scenarios in which demeanour of the accused/witness varies throughout their court appearance. The four scenarios include: a) guilty demeanour followed by not-guilty demeanour; b) not-guilty demeanour followed by guilty demeanour; c) consistently guilty demeanour; and d) consistently not-guilty demeanour. Following this, respondents asked to deliver a verdict on the accused. DDT suggests that participants shown a display guilty demeanour first is more likely to convict the individual regardless of the nature of the second display. This research is important in order to better understand whether perceived demeanour plays a role in wrongful convictions and, if so, what changes to courtroom processing might be useful in order to reduce the potential for that outcome.

STEVIE-RAE DEMERCHANT | Criminology, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Dawne Clarke

What do you hope will happen as a result, a critical analysis of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (NIMMIWG) is one of a myriad of government-commissioned investigations into the historic and contemporary mistreatment of Indigenous people by the Canadian state. Analyzing ten randomly sampled family testimonies collected during the NIMMIWG, using Indigenous Qualitative Content Analysis (IQCA) (Pidgeon & Riley (2021), preliminary results reveal how the interview process used in collecting testimonies reinforces dominant settler colonial ideologies about Indigenous women and Indigenous peoples. This leads to the conclusion that Commissions of Inquiry are more about restoring the public's faith in government, and not how the state can make meaningful reparations to Indigenous peoples for violence and trauma perpetrated against Indigenous women and girls.

JAYLENE DE ADDER | Criminology, 5th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Susan Reid

Was it Really Rape? Using Intersectionality to Evaluate Judges' Sentencing Reports and Indigenous Women Survivors of Sexual Violence

Many Indigenous survivors of sexual crimes are often victim-blamed and are re-victimized by key players within the criminal justice system such as judges. As such, the following research question is proposed: how do judges interact with Indigenous women survivors of sexual violence, as evidenced in their sentencing judgements? Key themes within these documents, including colonization, intergenerational trauma, rape myths, re-victimization, and victim blaming, will be examined. Intersectionality theory will be used to examine how race, class, and gender interconnect to form multiple layers of oppression in the lives of Indigenous women and assess the potential role of judges in that putative oppression. The data source will be judicial sentencing reports delivered between 2010 and 2023 and employ a thematic coding scheme to evaluate the nature of narrative discourse among sentencing documents (n = 20 cases). Tentative using Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Tool- Short Form (IRMASF), to code rape myths from judges' sentencing reports. It is expected that the results will demonstrate that judges do tend to include rape myth, re-victimization, and victim blaming themes in their sentencing decisions of cases involving Indigenous women survivors of sexual violence.

PANEL 10: NEW RESEARCH IN PSYCHOLOGY

LAUREN ALLEN | Psychology, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Sarah Vannier

Awe, Humility, and Love: A Replication and Extension Study

This project is part of the Collaborative Replications and Education Project (CREP), founded in 2013 to address the ongoing “replication crisis”. The CREP team, led by an international group of psychology faculty, identifies highly cited psychology studies that are then directly replicated by research groups around the world. The current study replicates a widely cited experiment by Stellar et al. (2018) that found brief exposure to awe inducing stimuli increases humility. The current study builds on the original study by examining the link between awe and love. Data collection is ongoing, with a current sample of 37 students from SONA. Participants are randomly assigned to watch one of two videos: the experimental video shows the universe in expansive images and the control video shows instructions for fence building. Participants will then complete measures of humility and love. Data will be analysed using t-tests (independent variable: video condition; dependent variables: humility, love). I predict that participants in the awe condition will report higher humility and feelings of love than control. As part of CREP results of this study will determine if highly cited research can be replicated and through extension, strengthen our understanding of the links between awe, humility, and love.

BENJAMIN KING | Psychology 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Dave Korotkov

The Tinnitus Experience

This correlational study examines how stressful life events can foster or inhibit the development of resilience, thriving, coping, and how stress relates to tinnitus impairment. First-year university students with self-reported tinnitus were sampled. Participants completed questionnaires related to tinnitus impairment, stress, resilience, thriving, and coping. To frame this research, the Stealing Effect Model and the Sensitization Model were used, with the former suggesting that participants would report greater levels of resilience, thriving, less tinnitus distress, and greater use of approach coping under moderate self-reported stress levels. With respect to the sensitization model, it is expected that individuals self-reporting with zero or high levels of stress, would report lower levels of resilience and thriving, and greater use of avoidant coping. Data collection and analysis is ongoing. Implications for health, resilience, and stress management will be discussed.

Rachel Doucet | Psychology, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr Sarah Vannier

Perceptions of Psychology Course Language and Links to Internalized and Perceived Stigma

“Abnormal Psychology” is a common title for university courses covering the diagnosis and treatment of psychological disorders. Although there is concern about stigmatizing effects of the term ‘abnormal’ (MacDonald et al., 2021), there is little research on the topic. The current project explores perceptions of psychology course titles and assess the impact of the term “abnormal” on internalized and perceived stigma. Study 1 included 286 undergraduates with a psychological diagnosis. Study 2 included 366 undergraduates with and without a diagnosis. Participants read a course description with one of five titles: Abnormal Psychology, Psychopathology, Clinical Psychology, Mental Health and Well-Being, Research Methods. Next, participants in Study 1 completed a measure of internalized stigma (i.e., mental illness stigma towards oneself). Participants in Study 2 completed a measure of perceived stigma (i.e., perceptions of public mental illness stigma). Finally, participants answered open-ended questions regarding their opinion of course titles. Results indicate no impact of exposure to “abnormal” on stigma. Preliminary qualitative analysis shows a preference for “clinical” because it is “fitting” and “not offensive”, while “abnormal” is perceived as having a “negative connotation” of people with a mental illness. Results may inform choices concerning the use of ‘abnormal’ in the field of psychology.

LAURA GEORGE | Psychology, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Marvin Claybourn

Mindfulness and Nature Exposure: Effects on Stress Reduction

It has been demonstrated that mindfulness can reduce stress, and other studies have examined how the restorative effects of nature can have similar stress-reducing outcomes. Recent research has shown that nature exposure can enhance the effects of mindfulness-based stress reduction by increasing reflective attitudes and attentional abilities (Bakir-Demir et al., 2021; Choe et al., 2020; Nisbet et al., 2019). This exploratory study examines how mindful walking and exposure to nature can affect levels of stress. A sample of 18 university students participated in a series of four relaxation sessions. These included an indoor mindfulness session, an indoor session employing their usual stress reduction technique, an outdoor mindfulness session, and an outdoor session employing their usual stress reduction technique. Participants’ stress levels were assessed before and after each session. A repeated measures ANOVA was used for analysis, including trait anxiety as a covariate. Environment was found to have a significant impact on stress reduction but was impacted by participants’ trait anxiety levels. Mindfulness did not appear to have a significant impact on stress reduction. These findings could have important implications for health practitioners, and others interested in finding accessible ways to manage stress.

PANEL 11: IDENTITY AND EMPOWERMENT

TYLER MCCORMICK | Sociology, 3rd year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Erin Fredericks

Deploying Heteronormativity: A Critical Discourse analysis of Reddit Forums Discussing Drag Story Hour

Drag Story Hour (DSH) events at local libraries, which feature drag performers reading to children, have sparked considerable controversy and online debate. Previous research on online debates about DSH demonstrate that critics share common sentiments about protecting children from sexuality. As drag performers challenge gender norms by embracing alternative aspects of gender identity, I analyzed how posters in an online discussion about DSH events in Canada mobilize discourses that uphold/challenge heteronormative ideologies and centre on the public child, an understanding that the wellbeing of children is the responsibility of the community. I performed a critical discourse analysis of 117 comments from an online Reddit forum initiated by the sharing of a CBC article "LGBTQ+ community turns out to defend drag storytime sessions from possible protests". Initial analysis suggests posters in support of and against DSH centre the public child as the motivating factor in their evaluation of the appropriateness of DSH. However, the reasoning for being in support of or opposition to DSH events varies, drawing attention to the sexuality of drag and children's engagement with sexuality while failing to engage with the sexuality that is embodied through a defense of heteronormative discourses that children engage with.

VALERIA SOLIS | Interdisciplinary Studies, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Gül Çalışkan

Decolonization Through Two-eyed Seeing? A Thematic Analysis of Digital Counter-Maps in the Upper Amazon

Decolonization is the undoing of colonial relations that subjugate the lands, lives, and cultures of the colonized. Indigenous communities are engaging in decolonization efforts by reclaiming rights to their ancestral lands through maps. They engage in "counter-mapping," a process in which they appropriate state mapping techniques to create alternative maps. These counter-maps weave Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge systems and technologies, which can be analyzed through the Mi'kmaw concept of Two-Eyed Seeing, used to bridge the use of Western methods and theories with Indigenous knowledge.

In this research, I explore whether two-eyed seeing can reflect the decolonizing potential of digital counter-mapping projects. Using thematic analysis, I look at three digital counter-mapping projects by three Indigenous communities in the Upper Amazon – the Waorani, Siekopai, and A'i Kofan of Sinangoe – in collaboration with NGOs Alianza Ceibo, Amazon Frontlines, and Digital Democracy. I examine the legacies of colonial cartography through Annibal Quijano's notion of 'coloniality of power,' an expression referring to Eurocentric structures of domination. I also analyze the mapping process and counter-maps through the concept of two-eyed seeing to study their decolonizing potential in reclaiming ancestral lands.

JONATHAN MCDONALD | Human Rights, 1st year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Shannonbrooke Murphy

What Parental Rights? Preliminary Findings on the 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. Preliminarily, it is expected that 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.

DANIEL SALAS | History, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Karen Robert

Black Cadillac: Brand Identity and Black Pride in the Civil Rights Era, 1950–1980.

This paper will examine the Cadillac not only as a car brand, but as a symbol. During the civil rights era prominent black figures, such as the activists Malcolm X and Martin Luther King; Musicians such as Aretha Franklin and Chuck Berry, along with the writer Ralph Ellison. Adopted the Cadillac as a status symbol. In doing so and modifying their cars they subverted the Cadillac's brand association with white corporate America. By juxtaposing Cadillac advertisements, with photos, song lyrics and written text. The paper will demonstrate that this appropriation of the car was a deliberate strategy for black empowerment.

PANEL 12: POLITICAL STUDIES, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

ERIN ELLIOTT | Human Rights, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Shannonbrooke Murphy

Is It Lawful To Limit the Self-Determination of Palestinians Based on the Conduct of Hamas?

There is a long-standing forcible denial of the right of Palestinians to exercise self-determination within the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). This presentation examines the obligations of states, international actors, and domestic non-state actors including non-state armed groups to the human right of self-determination of the Palestinian people in Gaza and displaced from Gaza. Jus cogens theory is applied to exercises of internal and external self-determination to examine the obligations of various actors under international human rights law. The primary research question asks: is it lawful to limit Palestinian self-determination based on the conduct of Hamas? This thesis examines the conduct of Hamas, Israel, and other international actors, and makes recommendations to how Palestinian self-determination may be best respected moving forward.

JAMES BRENNAN | International Relations, 3rd year
Faculty Mentor: Dr Shannonbrooke Murphy

International Recognition of Disputed Territories: The Cases of Somaliland, Western Sahara, and South Sudan

In the international order, there are a variety of disputed territories that seek recognition of their independence, whether or not they actually possess internal sovereignty. This international relations thesis proposal will discuss three African secessionist states that feature differing levels of internal sovereignty and international recognition: Somaliland, the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (Western Sahara), and South Sudan. While South Sudan is fully recognized by the international community, why have Western Sahara's and Somaliland's paths to recognition been more complicated? Considering the realist international relations theory approach contrasted with international law principles regarding state sovereignty, it appears plausible that states act not out of adherence to international law but purely for self-interested reasons. By examining a range of political, economic, historical, and cultural factors that determine recognition in individual cases, this thesis will explore whether there are any coherent patterns that can predict recognition or non-recognition.

CHARLIE HANSCOMB | Political Science, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Tom Bateman

The Politics of Electoral Systems Reform in Canada

This presentation will examine the politics of electoral systems reform in Canada and aims to answer the question: "What causes voters, political parties, and politicians in Canada to support or not support electoral system reform propositions?" To answer this, I will examine Canada's historical electoral reform referendums, the successful electoral referendum in New Zealand in the 1990s and Canada's history of electoral reform attempts since 2000. From there, I will examine each of these case studies through the institutional barriers which may prevent policy change, the inciting events leading up to each reform attempt and how the political culture of each case affected the outcome of the electoral reform attempt. I conclude that the success or failure of electoral system reform is greatly influenced by the current political, institutional, and cultural context and the past decisions made by voters and politicians. Finally, in each case where electoral system reform was successfully implemented, there was an inciting incident or series of inciting incidents which made voters and politicians see the direct and indirect effects of the current electoral system as a problem requiring reform.

VALERIA NICOLA | International Relations, 3rd year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Shaun Narine

Green Constitution, Grey Outcome: The Implementation Gap between Environmental Laws and Development in Ecuador

Climate change has been demonstrated to disproportionately affect developing countries, as developed countries continue to pursue growth characterized by predatory industrial policies. To cooperate with climate action, various countries in Latin America have attempted to integrate an alternative model of development, one that prioritizes environmental sustainability into their economic and political framework. Ecuador, one of the most biodiverse countries in the world, made history with its 2008 Constitution by becoming the first to incorporate Rights of Nature and the principle of Buen Vivir, translated to “life in harmony.” This emphasized the country’s commitment to a sustainable and balanced coexistence between humanity and nature. Despite the ostensibly strong constitutional protections for the environment, Ecuador has struggled to transition toward a more sustainable framework while trying to meet the needs of its growing population and complying with the global system. Thus, the issue of dependency emerges as a significant factor that has hindered sustainability efforts in the country. This research aims to examine three critical barriers impeding Ecuador’s transition to a more sustainable form of development: economic historical legacies, contemporary globalized economic structure, and internal political dynamics.

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

MERCEDES ORTIZ | International Relations, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Shaun Narine

Limitations for a Successful R2P Implementation

Is the world addressing atrocity crimes correctly? The globalized world faces new challenges in the context of human rights violations and states’ responsibility to protect their citizens. The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) was introduced at the United Nations (UN) in 2001 to prevent and address mass atrocities: genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity. This was meant to respond to several failed UN attempts to prevent mass atrocities in the 1990s. However, the R2P doctrine has inherent limitations that prevent it from being implemented successfully. It redefines the principle of state sovereignty and interveners’ national interests and ulterior motives when intervening in different regions remain suspect considerations. This project aims to examine why the principle of state sovereignty and national interests are limitations to the protection of human rights under R2P. This research will offer a thorough examination of the doctrine and will aim to propose reforms like a clearer implementation process and creating new UN institutions in charge of analyzing and overseeing the future execution of R2P cases.

MARION GOVEDNIK | Political Science, 3rd year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Shaun Narine

AUKUS and Gramscianism: Analyzing Consent and Coercion in the Indo-Pacific Region

On September 15, 2021, three powerful nations, the United States, The United Kingdom, and Australia, came together to create a trilateral security partnership called AUKUS. AUKUS is supposed to uphold peace in the Indo-Pacific by expanding its member's security relations. Part of its strategy is to help Australia build nuclear submarines by the 2030s. My main research question is: "How does the AUKUS treaty contribute to increasing tensions in US-China relations and the broader Indo-Pacific region rather than alleviating them?". I argue that Gramscian hegemony theory, which focuses on the relationship between consent and coercion, best explains why AUKUS is causing tensions between the participating countries and China, as well as indirectly affected countries, including Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia. The USA is using a combination of coercion and consent to put nuclear weapons in Australia to pressure China. Through negative media and education on China, the US is reinforcing the consent from other Western countries to its dominance in the Indo-Pacific. This has caused China to increase its focus on its military security as Western countries expand their own regional military presence.

ESTEFANIA MARTINEZ | International Relations, 4th year
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Shaun Narine

The Political Impact of Climate Change on Developing Countries: A Case Studies of Honduras and El Salvador

Central America experiences numerous challenges, including high crime rates, corruption, poverty, economic instability, and low living standards. These difficulties are compounded by the impacts of climate change, which are exacerbating existing issues with the emergence of diseases, natural disasters, rising temperatures, and environmental degradation. While climate-induced environmental crises contribute significantly to political volatility in the region, particularly affecting vital sectors like agriculture, they are not the sole catalysts for instability. With agriculture playing a large role in the economies of El Salvador and Honduras, its vulnerability to climate change poses severe risks to both economic and social stability. Effective management of environmental challenges is imperative, yet the lack of state capacity and resources hinders mitigation efforts. Failure to address these issues, especially within the agricultural sector, threatens to precipitate political collapse and state failure in these countries. Policies and initiatives offer potential avenues to mitigate disruptions and foster resilience in the face of climate-induced challenges. This research will examine the direct and indirect effects of climate change on the Honduran and Salvadorian agriculture industry and how this brings tensions in the political systems and economy, leading to political instability. Finally, the research will make recommendations as to how these countries can mitigate and adapt agriculture to the effects of climate change.

MAYAVEYE WALKER-TITUS | Anthropology, 2nd year

Faculty Mentor: Cora Woolsey

The Relevance of Minutia: Endless Unravelling of Stonehenge

People are drawn to inspiring views. They love to observe superficial beauty, often drawing conclusions about the meaning of something without fully knowing the layers above and below its surface. Stonehenge, a megalith site from the neolithic period, is a prime example of this. By focusing on what is immediately visible, researchers in the past have missed the truly intriguing hidden details of this 5000-year-old site. Conversely, a remarkable origin is revealed by the examination of human remains found within the 56 geometrically placed burial holes dated to 3000-2000 BCE, as well as the unique origins of the bluestones comprising the inner ring of the monument which have been sourced to the Persil Hills region in Wales. Two details which have concretely linked populations from Wales with those of southern England nearly 200 miles apart. This poster will present the unexpectedly important minutia of one of the world's most recognizable mysteries.