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Professor Rhona Free              Department of Economics
Professor Barbara Liu             Department of English
Professor William Salka           Department of History

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**MAJESSIRE SMITH**

Major: Psychology

Honors Thesis Title: Gender Differences in Reactions to Infidelity

There is a gender difference in the way people answer when asked the forced choice question of “which kind of infidelity, sexual or emotional, is more distressing.” Women report more distress over emotional infidelity and men report more distress over sexual infidelity. Evolutionary theory states that this phenomenon is rooted in the evolutionary needs of men and women. A woman needs emotional fidelity to ensure a man’s long-term support for her and her offspring. Men need sexual fidelity, because a man must be confident that the child being supporting is his own genetic offspring. Assuming that the root of this gender difference involves an interaction of evolution and one’s current values, I explored this relationship with a subset of ECSU students. I hypothesized that there will be a strong relationship between the type of affair individuals choose as more distressing and the factors in a relationship the individual most values. I replicated the traditional gender difference in response to the forced choice question. I also found that the majority of the participants tended to choose emotional qualities as more important than sexual qualities for most of the questions, regardless of gender and regardless of the answer to the forced choice question.

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**SARA SMITH**

Major: Business Administration

Honors Thesis Title: Nation Building: Lessons Learned from Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq

The United States contributes to and often leads peacekeeping, development and nation-building efforts across the globe. My research explored four such foreign assistance efforts: in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro), Afghanistan and Iraq. Each case demonstrates the need to consider the influence of unique-context and country-specific concerns. However, commonalities seemed to emerge across all four cases in terms of the overall process of change. I identified and articulated a five-stage generic model of nation-building as: (1) conflict, (2) international awareness and political action, (3) conflict resolution and peacekeeping, (4) transition and interim administration, and (5) reconstruction and development. I then used this model to compare the four cases. Based on results of that stage-by-stage analysis, I then employed organizational, managerial and strategic lenses to discuss the potential for organizational learning and best practice dissemination across these cases and others, over time.

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**INTRODUCTION**

The students featured on the following pages are to be congratulated for their outstanding academic achievements. These students have taken advantage of their superior academic skills, embracing the challenges and opportunities afforded them through the University Honors Program to further refine their competencies enroute to producing an original work of scholarship. Their respective accomplishments reflect well on the University, the academic departments of their respective majors, and the Honors Program. A significant consequence of their efforts is that the caliber of their respective theses helps establish a tradition of quality undergraduate scholarship and sets a high standard for future Honors graduates.
**AMITY BERNIER**
Major: Psychology
Accepted to Masters Program in Forensic Psychology - CUNY

**Honors Thesis Title:** Effects of Prenatal Exposure to Marijuana

Marijuana use among pregnant women and its potential effects on offspring has not been studied as much as other drugs, such as cocaine, cigarettes, and alcohol. It is important for women to know the possible effects of using this drug during pregnancy so that they can make informed decisions. Research that has been done in this area on animals shows that there are effects on the offspring of various species, and therefore, it is possible that human offspring could experience similar outcomes. The research that has been conducted with human infants, young children, and adolescents is scarce and inconclusive. My review of the existing research demonstrated a shortage of investigations of the possible effects of prenatal exposure to marijuana in humans and identified areas needing further research.

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**REBECCA SCHNEIDER**
Major: Public Policy and Government

**Honors Thesis Title:** Media Influence on the Democratic Presidential Nomination Race of 2004

My thesis research examined the effect of the media on the Democratic Presidential Nomination Race of 2004. Presidential scholar William Mayer's model for predicting the winner of a party's nomination is based on funds raised and poll standing. He says that, 90% of the time, the candidate with the most money and the highest poll standing at the end of the year before the election goes on to clinch the nomination. However, that was not the case in 2004. By coding articles from four news sources, this study attempted to determine whether or not the media played any part in determining the Democratic nominee. For this race, it seems as though the media was not biased against Howard Dean, the one-time front runner of the Democratic party, but simply reported on each verbal mistake and misstep that Dean made through the course of the primary season. The media seemed to have no darling in this campaign, and this research shows that they should no longer be faulted for the perilously fast descent of the once seemingly insurmountable Dean campaign.

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**ROBryn RODRIGUEz**
Major: History
Accepted to PhD Program at Ohio State University

**Honors Thesis Title:** The Allied Strategic Bombing Campaign against Germany: Arthur Harris and the Destruction of German Cities in 1945

The invention of the airplane in the early twentieth century brought with it a debate over its potential uses in times of war. Airplanes gave belligerents the ability to strike far beyond the front lines and attack large numbers of civilians. The debate over whether or not belligerents can justify attacking civilians continues to the present day. World War II was one of the first times that aerial warfare was used in mass against civilians. The tragic stories of the fire bombing of Dresden and the destruction of almost every German city still haunt the history books. Much of the literature blames Arthur Harris, the leader of British Bomber Command, for these tragedies and unnecessary terror raids against the defenseless German civilian population; however, Harris was not solely responsible. The strategic bombing campaign was developed and supported by the British and American bureaucrats, government leaders, and military commanders. This thesis examines Harris’s role in the implementation of the strategic bombing campaign and how the campaign was justified to the public.

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**Anthony Bonetti**
Dual Major: Sociology & Applied Relations and Public Policy & Government

Will attend the University of Connecticut

**Honors Thesis Title:** The Use of Canned Laughter on Situation Comedies and Its Construction of Gendered Humor

My research examined the use of laugh tracks on prime-time sitcoms and how these laugh tracks serve to construct gendered humor and perpetuate gender stereotypes. The research reviewed the laugh tracks contained on three episodes each of five different situation comedies selected from a simple random sample. The unit of analysis for this study was each joke preceding a laugh track. First, all the sitcoms were examined on an individual basis to see how they constructed gendered humor. Then these findings were compared to each of the other sitcoms to find common threads across all prime-time sitcoms contained in this research. Many studies have examined socialization through television and the reinforcement of gender stereotypes through humor. However, few studies have specifically investigated the use of laugh tracks on television sitcoms and what messages are contained in the jokes that precede them. Therefore, these findings provide a meaningful contribution to this previous research on socialization through television, humor, and gender.
**Lauren Proniewycz**
Major: Physical Education
Plans to teach elementary or secondary Physical Education

**Honors Thesis Title:** The Influence of a Strength-Training Program on an Adult with Cerebral Palsy; Single Subject Design

My study was designed to investigate whether a specific strength-training program would be beneficial for an adult with cerebral palsy. A pre-test was given measuring upper body strength, which was equivalent to the amount of power the subject applied when tested using a hand-held dynamometer. Also, a 50-meter sprint in a manual wheelchair was administered to test the Anaerobic power of the subject. I then developed an eight-week strength training program including, the use of various free weights, resistance bands, stress balls, an arm crank, and the use of a heart rate monitor. After the completion of the program, a post-test was administered using the same protocol as the pre-test. The subject significantly improved his average in the hand-held dynamometer grip test: Right hand increase of 8.9 kg, Left hand increase of 4.5 kg. During the 50-meter manual wheelchair sprint the subject improved his average time by 34 seconds.

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**Molly Roehl**
Major: English
Will pursue graduate studies in the fall

**Honors Thesis Title:** The Victorian Feminine Ideal in Kate Chopin’s *At Fault* and *The Awakening*

My research examined the female protagonists in Kate Chopin’s fiction confront conventional gender roles that prevailed during the late nineteenth century. Chopin interrogates the Victorian concept of woman as a moral guide, albeit differently, in her two novels, *At Fault* and *The Awakening*. Chopin was ahead of her time in her portrayal of female characters as they strive for self-realization and autonomy within oppressive social institutions. These women exhibit nonconformity and rebellion in their struggle against gendered expectations, in regard to marriage, motherhood, divorce and sexuality. The notion of the feminine ideal in the Victorian era is portrayed in both of Chopin’s novels, and the protagonists react differently to social pressure. In *At Fault*, Thérèse Lafirme, although unconventional in some aspects, nevertheless feels an obligation to uphold moral expectations. However, in *The Awakening*, Edna Pontellier not only disregards these ideals, but blatantly abrogates them through her rebellion against Victorian gender norms which demand that women stay confined to the private sphere.

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**Amy Gilbride**
Major: English
Plans to pursue a graduate degree in Speech Pathology

**Honors Thesis Title:** Hope Fades: A Creative Writing Project

My thesis project consisted of my writing a collection of short stories that deal with several themes, although the major theme is love. Love in a friendship, the growing of friendship into love, and saying goodbye to a loved one are examined in three short stories: New Beginnings, Hope Fades, and Dancing.

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**Nicholas Murdock**
Major: Biology

**Honors Thesis Title:** The Effects of Social Environment on Foraging Activity, Stress Hormone Levels, and Weight Loss in the Deer Mouse (*Peromyscus maniculatus*)

Recent studies have suggested that when placed in a social environment, wild-captured deer mice (*Peromyscus maniculatus*) tend to lose mass even when food is available in excess. It was unclear whether such decreases in mass in a stressful environment were the direct results of a behavioral or physiological response. My study was designed to investigate the effects of induced social environment on the mass, foraging behavior, and plasma corticosterone levels of *P. maniculatus*. Three phases of the experiment were executed, consisting of first a pre-social, solitary environment, a social environment in which two subjects resided together, and a post-social, solitary environment. Masses and blood samples were taken after each phase and behavior was monitored using video cameras. Three of the four subjects were found to lose mass while in the social phase. Mass loss appears to be most directly related to behavioral displacement from access to food, although the appetite-suppressive effects of high levels of corticosterone cannot be disregarded.
**BRIAN NASS**  
Major: History  

**Honors Thesis Title:** The British and American Reaction in the Media to the Bolshevik Revolution  

My thesis focused on the Allied media’s portrayal of the Bolshevik Revolution. The Radical Socialists, known as the Bolsheviks, overthrew Russia’s Provisional Government that had been set up following the first Russian Revolution and the Czar’s subsequent abdication. Once in power the Bolsheviks took the Russians out of the Allied war effort in World War I. This obviously affected Russia's Allies: France, Great Britain, and the United States. It is on this impact on Great Britain and the United States that I centered my thesis. I first had to research the Revolution itself, using many secondary sources to establish the background of my thesis. To explore the actual reactions of the media in Great Britain and the United States, I researched a six-week period in both the Times of London and the New York Times. This six-week period focused on the initial takeover by the Bolsheviks and their rise to power. Through my research I discovered that the Bolsheviks were negatively portrayed by the Allied media. Their legitimacy was brought into question repeatedly, and the Bolsheviks were criticized for trying to take Russia out of the war. The consequences of the actions of the Bolsheviks had a direct negative effect on their Allies, so the public reaction was predictably negative in nature.

**ERIK NIELSEN**  
Major: English  

**Honors Thesis Title:** The Making of a Monster: William Godwin’s Influence in Mary Shelley’s “Frankenstein”  

Since the initial publication of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein in 1818, literary criticism of the novel has often focused on the influence of her mother, Mary Wollstonecraft, a feminist who fought for women's rights during the eighteenth century. Unfortunately, considerably less attention has been focused on the influence of Shelley’s father, William Godwin, on her work. However, Godwin has exerted a profound influence on Shelley’s Frankenstein. My paper examines his influence within the text and reveals many correlations that can be drawn between Godwin and Frankenstein. This research explores both the biographical and literary influence Godwin exerted on the novel, and my analysis supports the claim that Godwin's influence is equal to that of his wife Mary Wollstonecraft. While this study does not attempt to discredit Wollstonecraft; if equality was truly her aim, then she would most likely support the contention to restore Godwin to his deserved status and thus achieve a closer state of equilibrium in the recognition of each parent’s importance.

**WILLIAM OSTROVE**  
Major: History  

**Honors Thesis Title:** Eduard Bernstein and Rosa Luxemburg: Politics, Economics, and the German Revisionist Debate, 1890-1914  

From 1890 to 1914 a debate raged within the German Democratic Socialist Party (SPD) over the role of politics and economics within socialism. Eduard Bernstein, a moderate socialist, and Rosa Luxemburg, a radical revolutionary, best represent this division that eventually split the party after the First World War. Eduard Bernstein theorized that the SPD could work within the current political system in Germany to make changes. He believed that by bettering education, health care, and giving workers social security and other programs they could be brought into the current system as equal citizens. On the other hand, Rosa Luxemburg believed that the only way workers could gain equality within society was to completely overthrow the current system and replace it with a Marxist system. She believed that through a spontaneous mass strike, brought about by economic problems, the workers could gain political power and therefore bring an end to the contemporary society. By comparing Bernstein and Luxemburg conclusions can be drawn about the revisionist debate within Germany.

**JUSTIN PIRO**  
Major: Biochemistry  

**Honors Thesis Title:** HU Binding to Discontinuous DNA Oligonucleotides  

My thesis research involved an investigation of the binding affinity of HU, an archtectural, prokaryotic, DNA binding protein of the DNABII family. This protein functions in many cellular processes including replication, recombination, transposition, and regulation. The increased binding affinities that HU exhibits for discontinuous substrates prompted this study of the HU binding interaction with gapped and overhang DNA. I examined the effect of gap position within a 34 bp duplex on HU binding affinity, using electrophoretic mobility shift assays (EMSA). HU binding to either a 5' or 3' overhang was also examined by EMSA and fluorescence measurements. HU binding to discontinuous DNA sequences as determined by EMSA is position dependent with respect to the discontinuity. My research indicates that the difference in binding affinity most probably arises from asymmetric interactions with the α-helical body of HU.