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Professor Jeanelle Day, Department of Education
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INTRODUCTION

The students featured on the following pages are to be congratulated for their outstanding academic achievements. These students have responded exceptionally well to the challenges and opportunities afforded them through their participation in the University Honors Program, with their efforts culminating in the production of an original work of scholarship. Their respective accomplishments reflect well on the University, the academic departments of their respective majors, and the Honors Program. The quality of the theses summarized on the following pages continues a growing tradition of quality undergraduate scholarship produced by Honors students and sets a high standard for future Honors graduates.

Phillip F. Elliott
Director
University Honors Program
Achievement
**Gregory C. Whitehead**  
Major: Accounting  
Pursue a career as an Accountant  
**Thesis Title:** Intangible Assets and Cell Phone Company Performance

My thesis explored the relationship between the intangible assets used by cell phone companies and the performance of these companies. In order to measure this relationship, linear regression was used in an attempt to connect intangible assets with several performance measures. The performance measure that I deemed most appropriate for this study was the Return On Asset (ROA) ratio, which essentially shows how effectively a company has used its assets to turn a profit. Over the 2002-2006 period, increases and decreases in ROA were compared to the behavior of intangible assets, both as a whole and as individual intangible asset categories. In conclusion, there was no significant relationship found between total intangible assets and performance as measured by ROA, although there was a somewhat strong connection between the intangible asset of trademarks and ROA. This has led me to conclude that intangible assets merely serve as building blocks for the performance of cell phone companies, rather than driving forces of performance.

**Sarah C. York**  
Major: Economics  
Minor: Mathematics  
Pursue a Career in the Financial Industry  
**Thesis Title:** Determinants of Mothers’ Labor Force Attachment

My thesis attempts to find factors that can help retain female workers after having children. With the growing number of females present in the work force, it is important for companies to implement resources that make mothers want to return to work. The presence of employer provided child-care and a shorter commute were just some of the factors that were found to influence the decision.

**Heather R. Altier**  
Individualized Major: Psychology, Video Production  
**Thesis Title:** Gender and Perspectives Regarding Infidelity

I explored the supposition that innate differences in perceptions of infidelity exist between males and females. Specifically, the hypothesis generated from evolutionary psychology theory states that in a monogamous relationship females are more distressed by a partner’s emotional unfaithfulness, while males are more disturbed by sexual infidelity. Analysis of data collected from 140 individuals at Eastern Connecticut State University offers compelling support for the hypothesis.

**Hailie J. Bostier**  
Major: History & Social Sciences, Elementary Education Certification  
Plans to be an Elementary School Teacher  
**Thesis Title:** Abraham Lincoln: How His Importance Grew

My thesis followed the way the American people viewed Abraham Lincoln from the time of his death until the Civil Rights Movement. While he was president, he did not have much support from the American people. However, as time passed his popularity grew. He became known as a great leader and a gracious man. He was portrayed as the model American, who rose to greatness despite his humble beginnings. This increase in his popularity was outlined based on the work of Merrill Peterson and Barry Schwartz. American history textbooks were analyzed to find if there was an association between the trends in Lincoln’s popularity in the public eye and the way he was portrayed to school children during the time. Many of the trends found were reflected in the textbooks.

**Fannie R. Brabo**  
Major: Biology  
Pursue Masters Degree at Yale University’s School of Divinity  
**Thesis Title:** Alzheimer’s Disease and Neurofibrillary Tangles in the Cingulate Gyrus

My thesis research compared histological characteristics of brain tissue taken from persons diagnosed with Alzheimer’s Disease with those with no known symptom of Alzheimer’s. I used immunocytochemical staining techniques to stain brain tissue samples of the cingulate gyrus. Using nine individuals with known Alzheimer’s and six control individuals, I calculated the number of total cells and the number of cells exhibiting tangles in the pyramidal cells of layer III. We analyzed this data to determine if there was any difference in cell density and tangle density between the two groups and if so, what types of differences existed.
**Rosanne M. Carlo**  
Major: English, Political Science  
Pursue PhD in Rhetoric at University of Arizona  

**Thesis Title:** A Dramatistic and Role Analysis:  
Case Study George W. Bush  

The theoretical basis for my work is rooted in the theories of 19th century scholar Kenneth Burke, especially his theory of Dramatism. The sample of speeches analyzed are contextualized by a self-constructed retrospective timeline based on recent disclosures of administrative knowledge. The use of Burke’s pentad creates an analysis for Bush’s motivations for public speaking, and yielded major themes and pentadic ratios from which to draw conclusions. The role analysis performed through the use of Hart and Daughton’s dimensions of verbal credibility and a catalogue of “I” statements also revealed a discourse of motives within George W. Bush’s rhetoric.

**Allison M. Plantamura**  
Major: Mathematics  
Minor: Economics  
Plans a Career in Financial Services  

**Thesis Title:** Contributions to Wage Differences of Recent College Graduates: The United States & United Kingdom  

My thesis uses data on recent college graduates from 1995-2005 in both the United States and United Kingdom to assess the extent to which differences in educational systems influence economic success. My analysis considers factors including graduation rate, unemployment, wages, Consumer Price Index, and the percentage of female graduates. I found that in the U.S. Graduation rates and the percentage of female graduates were significant in explaining variability in wages, while in the U.K., none of these characteristics were significant. When comparing both countries however, CPI and graduation rate were the most important factors contributing to the difference in salaries of recent college graduates. The results indicate that cost of living and the changing dynamics of graduates play a major role in the variance in earnings between the U.S. and U.K. Furthermore, the results indicate that education is an important contributor to economic ascent.

**Megan L. Clampett**  
Major: English  
Minor: Writing  
Pursue a career in Elementary Education  

**Thesis Title:** Everything Was Beautiful:  
A Collection of Short Stories  

My collection of stories follows a family that deals with cancer, death, war, and pregnancy, among other things. It focuses on the relationship between the characters, as well as bringing out each character’s insecurities, hopes, and greatest fears. They are all attempting to cope in a world in which nothing is simple, and it is not possible to plan for anything because things never work out the way you expect them to.

**Kimberly L. Spreda**  
Major: History and Social Science, Elementary Education  
Plans to Teach Elementary Education  

**Thesis Title:** The Natural Pacifist: Three British Feminists’ Views of War and Motherhood During World War I  

My thesis examined British Feminist Pacifism during World War I and how motherhood and the unique role of women in society was used to argue for both peace, as well as equality for women. My research focused on the works of three British women. Helena Swanwick, Olive Schreiner, and Catherine Marshall. I found that these women had similar beliefs including women are natural pacifists because of their roles as mothers, men are naturally prone to violence, and that because of their unique role in society, they should be given the vote to ensure a more prosperous, democratic, and peaceful Britain. The works of these women were then compared to the discussions held during The Hague Peace Conference in 1915. During this conference, many of the same points we discussed upon by leaders such as American Jane Addams, who also believed that motherhood influenced women’s natural pacifist tendencies.
**TYLER A. MATTEAU**

Major: History

Pursue a career as a Museum Archivist

**Thesis Title:** Superman and the Mad Psychiatrist: How Censorship Saved the Man of Steel

In the turbulent times of the 1950s parents worried about the spike in juvenile delinquency. Following the advice of Psychiatrist Frederick Werham, the United States Senate formed a subcommittee dedicated to investigate the impact of violence in comic books. As the first successful comic book, Superman underwent several changes as a result of these hearings and the resulting censorship.

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**COURTNEY R. CUTTLER**

Major: Visual Arts, Elementary Education

Pursue a Masters Degree in Art Education

**Thesis Title:** Portraiture Post-Photography: An Investigation of the Processes of Andy Warhol and Chuck Close

My thesis is an analysis of the processes of two artists, Andy Warhol and Chuck Close, who are famous for their work in the realm of portraiture. After intensively researching the artists, I created two 30 x 40” portraits that emulated the style and processes that these artists used in their portraits. **Anna Nicole** is an acrylic on canvas created with the use of Andy Warhol’s famous abstract grid, bright colors, and flat application of color. A **Close-Self Portrait** is an oil on canvas created with the use of Chuck Close’s grid system and abstract shapes to create an overall image.

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**STEPHANIE L. MORRIS**

Major: Mathematics

Plans to work for Aetna Insurance Company as a Financial Consultant

**Thesis Title:** The Mathematics Behind Graduation and its Application to Insurance Data

Graduation is a statistical process used by actuaries to fit data to a curve, most often using mortality data. The use of both prior knowledge of mortality and the actual data is combined to create a smooth curve. This thesis investigates four of the many methods of graduation. Each method was applied to a set of data and the results were analyzed and compared with each other. A best fit was determined by examining the results and deciding which method gave the best results using a combination of fit and smoothness.

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**ERIKA L. HARRINGTON**

Major: Psychology

Pursue a PhD in Social Psychology

**Thesis Title:** Perceived Racism as a Predictor of Depression, Anxiety, Self-Esteem, and Cultural Mistrust

I examined the role of perceived racism as a predictor of depression, anxiety, self-esteem, and cultural mistrust in African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, and Caucasians. As hypothesized, African Americans experienced the highest levels of perceived racism, followed by Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, and Caucasians. Perceived racism was significantly predictive of cultural mistrust in all ethnic groups, with higher levels of perceived racism related to increased mistrust. Ethnicity was shown to significantly affect both depression and anxiety, with African American participants reporting the highest levels of depression and anxiety, followed by Hispanic Americans, and Caucasians. Lastly, a significant interaction between ethnicity and gender on cultural mistrust was demonstrated, in which minority males reported higher mistrust than did minority females, while Caucasian females reported higher mistrust than did Caucasian males. These results have implications for improving the treatment of psychological disorders, and for further understanding the etiology of depression, anxiety, and cultural mistrust, and the role of perceived racism in their development.
RYAN R. JASSIL

Major: Psychology
Minor: English
Plans to work at Sikorsky Aircraft
and pursue Masters Degree in
Industrial/Organizational Psychology

Thesis Title: Motivation to Learn, Goal Orientation,
and E-Learning

The purpose of this study was to explore the effectiveness of two types of training,
traditional and e-learning, in teaching a complex task. Individual factors like motiva-
tion to learn and goal orientation were included to discover any interactions that exist
between learning type and these factors. The complex task in this study was learning
to solve a Rubik’s cube.

JENNA M. LAFLAMME

Major: English
Accepted to Graduate Programs in the Schools
of Divinity at Yale University and Harvard University

Thesis Title: Going up in Flames: Heretical
Literature of the Medieval and Early Modern
Time Periods

Throughout the Medieval and Early Modern time periods,
numerous individuals were persecuted and killed for their
religious beliefs. Because Church and State were intimately
connected, a citizen’s personal faith was subject to scrutiny by both religious and
secular officials. If an individual challenged the established Church institution, particu-
larly through a written mode, they were ultimately a threat to the nation as a whole. In
an effort to maintain order and power, it seems, the Church convicted individuals
whose writing was variant to Church teachings (including the translation and interpre-
tration of scriptures). However, when one takes a closer look into the lives and
writings of these so-called “heretics,” an interesting thread begins to form (through
similarities of subject matter) connecting each “heretic” to the other. My paper
unearths this thread through a close examination of literary texts from both
“heretical” individuals and “orthodox” authors. This thread begins to reveal the true
reason why the Church was so threatened by these marginal individuals that they saw it
fit to execute them under the guise of “heresy”.

KRISTEN E. LEE

Major: English
Plans to attend Law School

Thesis Title: Suppressing Adolescent Literature:
An Exploration of Diversity through the
Most Frequently Challenged Books of 2006

My thesis consists of a literary analysis of the
American Library Association’s ten most frequently challenged books of 2006. Most
of these books are intended for adolescents, but one is a children’s picture book and
two are adult novels. I posit that the common theme in each of these books is diver-
sity. Diversity in these books includes, but is not limited to, race, gender, class, family
structure, and sexual orientation. My conclusion is that the common thread linking
these books is their portrayal of people that are seemingly different from the censors
themselves. While I support the right of parents to control the literature that their
own children have access to, I do not support those who attempt to censor what all
children read. My thesis will serve to discredit censorship attempts of each of the ten
most frequently challenged books of 2006.

DOMINICK M. LOMBARDOZZI

Major: Mathematics
Plans to Teach High School Mathematics

Thesis Title: Understanding Factor Analysis
and It’s Application to Real Data

Factor analysis is a process used primarily when analyzing
data that is obtained from a questionnaire. When
looking at questionnaire data, we can think of the
responses to each question as being separate variables.
Factor analysis then takes these separate variables and
reduces them to a smaller set of factors allowing them to be grouped together in a
meaningful way. In general, factor analysis is used to find patterns that exist in data
that otherwise would not be observed. I conducted a survey of 44 questions
combining questions from previous studies on how students perceive mathematics. I
was able to survey 143 college students from a variety of math courses. Respondents
were categorized depending on the type of math course in which they were enrolled.
Students enrolled in MAT 139 or MAT 216 were labeled “non-math majors” and
students enrolled in MAT 130 or MAT 315 were labeled “math majors.” My results
did not correspond with previous work and suggest that categorizing people on the
basis of their attitudes/beliefs about math is not straightforward.