



UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME

ARTS & LETTERS



2020

SENIOR THESIS PROJECTS

Study everything. Do anything.SM

**Christian Abraham Arega**

- Major: Biochemistry
- Minors: Anthropology and Compassionate Care in Medicine
- Kellogg International Scholar
- Adviser: Catherine Bolten

Disparities in Health Care Access for Undocumented Latino Immigrants in Indiana vs. Illinois

This project is an ethnographic venture that attempts to understand what health care looks like in Indiana and Illinois for undocumented Latino immigrants and to what we can attribute the differences. I found that the evident differences were due to the fact that these states possess fundamentally different rhetoric about health and notions of deservedness, which was then reflected in the politics of allocating health care resources and fighting for increased access to health care for this population.

I am interested in finding ways to make health care accessible to underserved populations. I chose to work with the undocumented Latino population because I have had experiences both inside and outside the classroom that shed light on their plight. I was drawn to understanding these challenges in light of the tense political climate and dehumanizing rhetoric regarding this population.

Traveled in Indiana and Illinois with funding from the Kellogg Institute for International Studies.

**Mia Ayer**

- Major: Anthropology
- Supplementary Major: Peace Studies
- Minor: Japanese
- Advisers: Mark Golitko, Sabrina Sholts, and Rita Austin

A Regional Comparative Analysis of External Auditory Exostosis in Pre-Hispanic Peru

External auditory exostosis (EAE) is a pathology of bony growths in the ear. To test what causes EAE, this study compares it across Peruvian populations with data from Panama. Using the Smithsonian Institution's human skeletal collections, Peruvian crania were assessed for provenance, sex, and EAE presence. The majority of the individuals exhibiting EAE were male, indicating a division of labor/behavior based on sex. High frequencies of EAE in coastal populations suggest a reliance on marine resources.

During my internship experience at the National Museum of Natural History at the Smithsonian in summer 2019, I was given the opportunity to survey the human skeletal collections, specifically of pre-Hispanic Peruvian populations. Within these populations, there was a statistically significant frequency of individuals exhibiting EAE, and I decided to look into it. With the large data set I had after the summer, I was able to pursue a senior thesis.

Traveled to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., with funding from the Department of Anthropology.

**Mary Bernard**

- Major: Anthropology
- Minor: Journalism, Ethics, and Democracy
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Adviser: Eric Haanstad

Spotlight on South Bend

For my senior thesis, I focused on the effects of former mayor Pete Buttigieg's U.S. presidential campaign on the city of South Bend. I created a podcast miniseries that captures this moment in South Bend's history, looking particularly at Buttigieg's time as mayor, how this city launched him to the national stage, and how people feel the national spotlight on the city now.

As a journalism and anthropology student, I knew I couldn't pass up the opportunity to focus on such a historic moment happening in this very city. Mayor Pete is an interesting figure who has already made history, and who was attempting to do it again. That's a story I wanted to help tell.

Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.

**Sara Berumen**

- Major: Gender Studies
- Supplementary Major: Anthropology
- Adviser: Meredith Chesson

Uncharted Territory in Emerging Urbanism: Gender, Life Course, and Lived Experience of Urbanizing People Buried in Charnel House A56, Bab edh-Dhra', Jordan

This project aims to explore Charnel house A56 at Bab edh-Dhra', Jordan. I combined traditional bioarcheological and archaeological methods with feminist approaches to the life course in order to explore the lives of these individuals.

I chose this topic because I believe there needs to be a more diverse discussion about small and large commingled collections, in which gendered and feminist theory should be practiced during analyzing skeletal remains and material culture.



Emily Cline

- Major: Program of Liberal Studies (PLS)
- Minors: Anthropology and Business Economics
- Adviser: Christopher Chowrimootoo

Exploring the Problem of Bad Art in Contemporary America

My project examines “bad” art from an aesthetic, philosophical perspective, and attempts to carve out a new definition for art that is “bad” and aesthetically flawed but nonetheless enjoyed. My case study, the movie *The Room*, examines the paradox of “good bad art,” and I argue that good bad art is a direct response to the highbrow artistic culture that persists despite the dissolution of an aesthetic hierarchy as a result of mass culture.

During a Program of Liberal Studies fine arts tutorial, I became interested in Susan Sontag’s camp sensibility as it is used to describe and explain certain kinds of traditionally bad art. However, I began to question whether camp alone could explain the phenomenon of art that is “so bad that it’s good.” After seeing *The Room*, I thought it would be really interesting to explore it from a serious philosophical and sociological perspective.

**Maggie Doyle**

- Major: Anthropology and Science Preprofessional Studies
- Adviser: Eric Haanstad

Barriers Across Borders: Perceptions of Foreign Health Care Practitioners in Tanzania

The rise of globalization in recent decades has led to transnational collaboration of health care systems. My research examines the relationship between Western expatriate doctors and local health care practitioners in northern Tanzania, as well as patients' perceptions of this collaboration. Using semi-structured interviews and participant observation, I collected qualitative data to examine the benefits and challenges of this growing phenomenon.

I became interested in this topic after participating in an International Summer Service Learning Program in Sanya Juu, Tanzania. Reflecting on my experience in relation to anthropological literature on global health, I wanted to understand more about the possible consequences of transnational collaboration in order to create solutions that can make this partnership more sustainable.

Traveled to Arusha, Tanzania, with funding from the Kellogg Institute for International Studies.

**Sarah Konkey**

- Major: Anthropology
- Supplementary Major: Latino Studies
- Adviser: Deb Rotman

“Not From Here and Not From There” ... Then From Where? A Spacio-thematic Remapping of East Los Angeles Through Chicano Murals

This project investigates the extent to which the emergence and distribution of Chicano murals allows for a reclaiming of Mexican territory and, therefore, identity in East Los Angeles. Through a spacio-thematic analysis of maps of Chicano muralism in East Los Angeles, I seek to understand how the historical loss of land by Chicanos is contested through the use of public murals.

At a time when globalization has accelerated movement and communication within and across borders, the idea of territories is constantly being deconstructed and reconstructed, as culture and identity are re-territorialized based on experience rather than the constraints of the nation-state. Here, I wanted to understand how Chicanos, who have a binational and bicultural identity, creatively express this experience in East Los Angeles.

Traveled to East Los Angeles, California.

**Adrian Mark Lore**

- Majors: Anthropology
- Supplementary Major: Peace Studies
- Adviser: Eric Haanstad

New Mythologies: The Semiotics of American Capitalism

Taking Roland Barthes' *Mythologies* as my starting point and inspired by the discourse of critical theory, I attempted a series of Marxist critiques of various symbols from American popular culture that reproduce the ideologies of capitalism, applying Marxist concepts developed by the Frankfurt School and Louis Althusser.

I chose this topic because I had been working on it already, with the intent of proposing it to a radical left publisher. I'd been reading a lot of critical theory and post-structuralist philosophy, not to mention Barthes, whose book *Mythologies* inspired the project.

**Ilesha Magallanes**

- Major: Design (Concentration in Visual Communication Design)
- Minor: Anthropology
- Adviser: Neeta Verma

Reclaiming Historically Black Distorted Identities

My thesis is a design showcase on how black women in America have reclaimed the distorted identities that have been historically placed upon on them. I emphasize black women's strength and power through a personalized expression of the stark contrast between created, societal stereotypes and the true beauty of unique black cultural diversity.

I chose this topic because I have constantly dealt with the nuances and social complexities that come with being a transracial adoptee. I also believe that it is important to spread awareness to outsiders about the minority group I fall into.

**Dayonni Phillips**

- Major: Anthropology
- Minors: Africana Studies and International Development Studies
- CUSE Sorin Scholar
- Adviser: Alex Chávez

Control the Media, Control the Masses: A Comparative Analysis of Two Supreme Court Nominations

This project is a comparative study of the U.S. Supreme Court confirmation hearings of Clarence Thomas and Brett Kavanaugh — involving the testimony of Anita Hill and Christine Ford — through the analytical lens of mediatization to comprehend how the intersections of race, gender, and political economy shaped media representations of these events.

I chose this topic because I have witnessed the power of the media to control our worldviews of race, gender, and law. As a new media age emerges with social media, it is vital that we understand how these new forms of communication influence the American public's perceptions in regard to legal and political debates.

Received funding from the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program.

**Dayonni Phillips**

- Major: Anthropology
- Minors: Africana Studies and International Development Studies
- CUSE Sorin Scholar
- Adviser: Erin McDonnell

The Implementation of a Ban on Isla Mujeres, Mexico: The Intersection of Norms, Law, and Economy

I investigated how a community's social norms influence how successfully a law may be implemented and enforced, in order to gain a better understanding of the intersectionality of norms, law, and the economy. I interviewed 40 participants in Isla Mujeres, Mexico, including government officials, restaurant owners, residents, environmental activists, and store managers. In addition to my interviews, I surveyed 195 people, including tourists, restaurant owners, residents, and store managers, and observed the use of Styrofoam.

I chose this topic because I wanted to continue the research I began in summer 2018, investigating the impact of Styrofoam on the island of Isla Mujeres, Mexico, and the barriers that restaurants face with transitioning to biodegradable alternatives. I sought to provide data and analytical support for the creation of government policies that lead toward banning Styrofoam on Isla Mujeres.

Traveled to Isla Mujeres, Mexico, with funding from the Flatley Center for Undergraduate Scholarly Engagement.

**Anna Scartz**

- Majors: Anthropology and Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Sorin Fellow
- Adviser: Eric Haanstad

Beyond the Glass Box: *Keepers of the Fire* Exhibit and Native American Museum Representation

My thesis examines museum anthropology, specifically that of Native American representation. It centers on an exhibit that was on display in the South Bend History Museum for several months — *Keepers of the Fire: The Pokagon Band of the Potawatomi*. The project questions the display of current peoples in museums and the implications for cultural understanding.

I became aware of the exhibit at the South Bend History Museum last summer, and it quickly became the focus of my thesis. As anthropologists, we learn about other cultures, and I wanted my thesis to reflect how important that is. Native American communities are facing many challenges, and representation is an urgent problem.

Received funding from the Flatley Center for Undergraduate Scholarly Engagement and the Glynn Family Honors Program.

**Claire Stanecki**

- Majors: Anthropology and Spanish
- Adviser: Karen Richman

Two-Way Language Immersion in Schools: A South Bend Case Study

The goal of my thesis is to inform people about the benefits of bilingual education and to encourage parents to consider dual-immersion programs when enrolling their children in school. I examined the different paths of bilingual education, focusing on Holy Cross Grade School as a case study. Ultimately, I argued that dual-immersion programs give agency to both non-native English speakers and native English speakers alike and create more informed and understanding individuals.

I volunteered in an after-school reading program at Holy Cross Catholic School as part of a Spanish community based learning class I took. I loved my experience there and wrote a research brief about the dual-immersion program during the fall of my junior year, which became the foundation for my thesis. This topic allowed me to combine my majors and build upon previous knowledge and experience.

**William Stewart**

- Majors: Anthropology and Economics (Concentration in Financial Economics and Econometrics)
- Adviser: Michael Pries

Does ESG Investment Spending Lead to a Reduction in Investor Perceived Left Tail Risk?

I examined the relationship between ESG (environmental, social, and governance) initiative spending and investor perceived left tail risk — as measured by the implied volatility smirk of their underlying options. This allowed me to identify whether strength in particular ESG practices provides tangible shareholder value.

I chose this topic because I completed an internship at an ESG mutual fund and developed an interest in the space. It allowed me to make a case for why investors should focus on incorporating ESG strategies into their portfolios and why managers should spend money investing in ESG initiatives.

**Isabel Weber**

- Major: English
- Minors: Anthropology and Gender Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Adviser: Barbara Green

Meaningful Blankness in *The Little Review*

In this project, I examine the influence of Emma Goldman's feminist anarchism on Margaret Anderson's editorial uses of blankness in the modernist magazine *The Little Review*.

I took a class in feminist periodical studies with my adviser Barbara Green in spring 2018 and I was really intrigued by *The Little Review*. I wrote my final paper about Anderson's references to Goldman in early issues and decided to expand on the project.





Samantha Zeponi

- Major: Anthropology
- Adviser: Rahul Oka

The Price of Consumption

Consumers have transformed cellphone technology into a strongly perceived necessity, largely driven by the convenience of information, social relations, and material resources at one's fingertips. In this process, convenience powerfully overrides any concern for the negative impacts of the technology or the product. My research focuses on understanding why the convenience of such a fabricated need overpowers moral judgement and the negative consequences of cellphone usage. I selected this topic for my thesis due to my interest in economic and psychological anthropology. I have always found consumer behavior incredibly interesting, especially when such behavior produces and perpetuates negative consequences for certain demographics. Researching technological consumption proved to be an important platform for analyzing how want transforms into need, and how this need causes consumers to easily disregard the damaging effects it creates.

Traveled to Pune, India, with funding from the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program and the Liu Institute for Asia and Asian Studies.