



UNIVERSITY OF  
NOTRE DAME

ARTS & LETTERS



# 2020

## SENIOR THESIS PROJECTS

Study everything. Do anything.<sup>SM</sup>

**Joshua Anthony**

- Majors: Classics and Theology
- Adviser: Aldo Tagliabue

## Warrior Wisdom: Paideia as Power in the Medieval Greek Alexander Romance

Late Antique educators and philosophers use the figure of Alexander the Great as an example of the ideal philosophical life and a demonstration of perfection through education. The medieval Greek work *Alexander Romance*, however, uses educational tropes in order to rehabilitate Alexander not primarily as a philosopher but as an embodied example of why Greeks deserve to rule the world.

Education as an institution and a concept has been deeply complicit in structural inequality throughout modern history. With this project, I wanted to explore what may well be the genesis of education as a mechanism for systemic discrimination against a culturally distinct group.

**Olivia Berardi**

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Greek and Roman Civilization
- Adviser: Dan Lindley

## The Truth Behind the Oil Embargo on Japan in 1941

My project looks at the debate surrounding the oil embargo on Japan prior to Pearl Harbor in 1941. I looked at both primary sources from the time and more modern secondary sources in order to come to a conclusion on whether Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson caused the total oil embargo or President Roosevelt orchestrated the situation.

We discussed this topic in a class on U.S. foreign policy that I took, and the debate really struck me, given the pivotal role the oil embargo played in pushing Japan toward Pearl Harbor and war with the United States.

**Elizabeth Kolb**

- Major: Arabic Studies
- Minors: Russian and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
- Adviser: Hana Kang

## Second Language Acquisition Ideologies of Online Polyglots

This study investigates the language-learning ideologies of two members of the online polyglot community, Steve Kaufmann and Benny Lewis. Through an analysis of Kaufmann's and Lewis' proprietary online language-learning platforms, I compare the polyglots' methodologies and evaluate their efficacy in learning Arabic and English.

I chose to conduct this research because of my interest in second language acquisition. I had studied linguistics with my adviser, Hana Kang, and I wished to conduct independent research in the field before graduation. Online language-learning enthusiasts endorse many different products and methods, though there is very little research on their methods or ideologies in applied linguistics. I felt that my research could help fill this gap.

*Received funding from the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program.*

**Andrew Lischke**

- Majors: Sociology and Arabic
- Adviser: Rory McVeigh

## Discursive Framing of Black Lives Matter Through the Civil Rights Movement: A Study of Mass Media Outlets and Their Readership's Political Affiliation

My project questions whether the political affiliation of a mass media outlet's readership affects the outlet's framing of today's Black Lives Matter movement by comparing it to the civil rights movement of the 1960s.

I originally looked at a comparison of *The New York Times'* coverage of Black Lives Matter and the civil rights movement. One of the more interesting qualitative finds I came across was that articles about Black Lives Matter often evoked the memory of the civil rights movement. I decided that could serve as a more interesting thesis focus.

**Patrick McKelvey**

- Major: American Studies
- Supplementary Major: Greek and Roman Civilization
- Adviser: Korey Garibaldi

## La Cosa Nostra: 20th-Century Film and the Myth of the American Mafia

This project explores the role of 20th-century film and television in crafting a negative Italian-American stereotype and how the effects of that stereotype reverberate even today. It traces the birth of the Italian-American community and the Mafia in the United States, before moving on to the movies that organization inspired.

I wanted to do a project that allowed me to combine my passion for film with my academic desire to trace a phenomenon from the past into the present day. Italian-American identity seemed particularly under-explored in this way and gave me the perfect opportunity to do so.

*Traveled to New York City with funding from the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program.*

**Peter Molyneaux**

- Major: Arabic
- Minors: Linguistics, European Studies, and Portuguese
- Adviser: Hana Kang

## Linguistic Identity and Heritage Language Learners

This project looks at how heritage language learners view themselves and their heritage language in the context of an English language environment. Through surveys and interviews, I examined how their identities are tied to their heritage language in order to determine the influence of factors such as heritage language fluency or cultural connection.

As an avid language learner whose only language for 16 years was English, I have always been curious about how those who grew up in a multilingual environment viewed themselves.

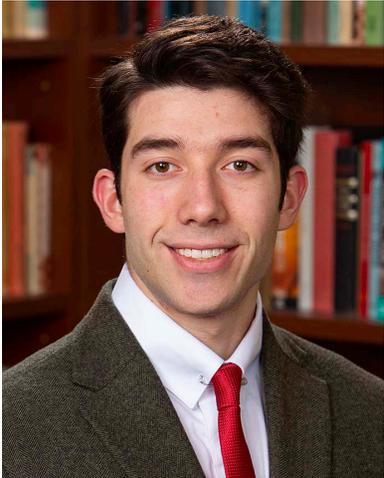
**Brigid O'Keefe**

- Majors: Classics and Political Science
- Adviser: Elizabeth Forbis Mazurek

## The Power of Pietas: Surviving Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Through Virtue

In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Erysichthon's daughter cares for her selfish and cruel father, despite being granted the ability to shapeshift and escape from him. She exemplifies the Roman virtue of pietas, but her motivations for doing so are unclear at first glance. I concluded that her commitment to pietas saves her in the end, as she meets a more peaceful fate than many women in the *Metamorphoses* who try to break from their expected, virtuous roles.

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is filled with tragic endings, many of which involve violence towards women. I was intrigued by the story of Erysichthon's daughter, who experiences the violence typical in the *Metamorphoses* but also receives an open, non-tragic ending. Her story concludes with her father's gruesome death, leaving the reader to wonder what becomes of her. I wanted to explore this special case and its place within the *Metamorphoses*.

**Carlo Perri**

- Majors: Political Science and Arabic
- Certificate in International Security Studies
- Adviser: Michael Desch

## A Friendship in Question: An Analysis of the Change in Ideological, Domestic Political, and Strategic Interests Characterizing the Cold War and Post-Cold War U.S.-Israeli Relationship

My thesis explores the traditionally unquestioned U.S.-Israeli alliance from three different perspectives — ideological, domestic political, and strategic — to determine whether the partnership is strategically viable and what its future should be.

I chose this topic because I spent more than four months studying abroad in Jordan, in close proximity to the Arab-Israeli conflict, and U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East convinced me that structural problems exist in our approach to politics in the region. Getting to the heart of those problems involves searching where you might least expect, not with our enemies, but with our friends.

*Traveled to Jordan, Israel, Egypt, and the West Bank in Palestine.*

**Connor Reilly**

- Major: English
- Supplementary Major: Classics
- Minor: Art History
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Adviser: Elizabeth Mazurek

**All Are Punished: Metatheatre, Spectatorship, and Authorship in Seneca's *Thyestes***

I explored Seneca's use of metatheatre in his play, *Thyestes*, especially his use of internal authorship and spectatorship. In my thesis, I discuss how Seneca creates internal audiences who witness scenes that authorial figures stage and how this implicates the audience of the play. I also explore how Seneca uses the elements of a Roman stage and theatrical production, such as set pieces, to reinforce these themes.

When I first read *Thyestes*, I grew interested in what a production of the play might look like. As I began to research the play, I was intrigued by Seneca's heavy use of metatheatre in the play. I was able to combine these two by looking at the play as a performance text and discovering the effects this had on the metatheatre.

**Kylie VanArsdale**

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Classics
- Balfour-Hesburgh Scholar
- Adviser: Luis Schiumerini

## The Native Vote: Social Movements and Native American Voter Turnout Mobilization

I hypothesize that partaking in social movements activates approach emotions in Native American voters and, thus, mobilizes them to turn out to vote. To test this theory, I collected voter turnout data in three cases of Native American social movements: voter suppression laws in North Dakota, Bears Ears Reserve in Utah and Arizona, and the Dakota Access Pipeline in the Dakotas.

There is a huge gap in voter turnout research when it comes to Native American voters. As a Navajo woman and voter, I wanted to understand this better. This led me to think deeply about recent protests against pipelines and voter identification laws and how this potentially impacts turnout.