



PHI THETA KAPPA
HONOR SOCIETY

2021 Edition



civic scholar

Phi Theta Kappa | Journal of Undergraduate Research

TO THE SEVENTH GENERATION:
Inheritance and Legacy

About Phi Theta Kappa

Phi Theta Kappa is the premier honor society recognizing the academic achievement of students at associate degree-granting colleges and helping them grow as scholars and leaders. The Society is made up of more than 3.5 million members and nearly 1,300 chapters in 10 nations.

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A Letter from the Editor

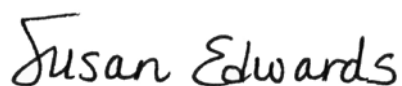
Welcome to the 2021 edition of *Civic Scholar: Phi Theta Kappa Journal of Undergraduate Research*. First published in 2018, *Civic Scholar* emphasizes Phi Theta Kappa's mission to recognize academic achievement of college students and to help them grow as scholars and leaders. We are proud to publish research conducted by community college students who have developed and implemented research-based, action-oriented projects that have had positive impact on their communities.

The articles published in this edition of *Civic Scholar* include both substantive research and intentional college and community engagement. These Honors in Action projects began as explorations of Phi Theta Kappa's interdisciplinary 2020/2021 Honors Study Topic, *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*. Each chapter focused on one of seven themes related to the topic and developed research objectives and a research question to guide the study of inheritance and legacy. Honors in Action teams then conducted academic investigations into their identified Honors Study Topic-related themes and, from their research conclusions, determined what action they could take in their communities that would have both short-term and potential for long-term impact.

This year, despite the many challenges students faced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we received 400 admissions for possible inclusion in this journal. We are pleased to publish 18 of those submissions. They represent 18 community colleges from 12 of the United States. Students' research illustrates diverse lenses through which to investigate Phi Theta Kappa's biennial Honors Study Topic, as well as varied collaborators and action elements of the projects about which they wrote. Many chapters included graphs, charts, and images with their entries to highlight and support their research and action components. We are excited to include examples of these figures in the 2021 edition of *Civic Scholar*.

We are proud of all the chapters who took the opportunity during the trying circumstances surrounding the pandemic to develop, implement, and write about their Honors in Action projects this year. They are conducting research that matters, and their work has engaged people on their community college campuses and in their communities. A special congratulations to the chapters whose work is published in these pages. Your work inspires us and highlights something we have known all along: community college students are central to the production of new knowledge and meaningful scholarship.

Here's to the legacy of your work,



Susan Edwards

Associate Vice President of Honors Programming and Undergraduate Research
Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society

About the Honors Program

The Phi Theta Kappa Honors Program is designed to engage students in informed action that fosters student success and helps fulfill our mission to provide college students opportunities to grow as scholars and leaders.

Learning Outcomes

Participation in the Phi Theta Kappa Honors Program contributes to personal, academic, and career development and affords students opportunities to have an impact on their campuses and in their communities by addressing challenges related to their Honors Study Topic research. Members who participate in the development and implementation of an Honors in Action project will be able to:

1. Evaluate multiple global perspectives of a theme as it relates to Phi Theta Kappa's Honors Study Topic.
2. Demonstrate undergraduate research fundamentals by identifying sources, appraising their credibility, and formulating conclusions based on evidence.
3. Demonstrate critical thinking and reflective skills throughout the research process.
4. Design, organize, and implement a plan of action that solves a real-world problem related to the Honors Study Topic.
5. Form and develop teams that collaborate and communicate with college and community partners to enhance the impact of the project.
6. Provide evidence of project impact through the use of quantitative and qualitative assessments.
7. Compile a report using clear, correct, and effective language.

Achievement of these learning outcomes builds the analytic and collaborative problem-solving and leadership skills necessary and valued in advanced academic pursuits, work places, and communities.

Editorial Board

The *Civic Scholar* Editorial Board is comprised of members of Phi Theta Kappa's Honors Program Council and Student Engagement Team. The Honors Program Council is responsible for making recommendations to Phi Theta Kappa Headquarters staff about the new Honors Study Topic and Honors in Action Program; assisting with the editing of the biennial Honors Program Guide; and serving on the Editorial Board of *Civic Scholar*. Made up of Phi Theta Kappa chapter advisors, Headquarters staff, and consultants, Honors Program Council members are selected for their broad knowledge of the Honors Study Topic and Phi Theta Kappa's integrated approach to the Hallmarks of Scholarship, Leadership, Service, and Fellowship, as well as their balance in academic disciplines. The projects selected for inclusion in this edition of *Civic Scholar* were based on the 2020/2021 Honors Study Topic, *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*.

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To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy

2020/2021 HONORS STUDY TOPIC

THEME 1: The Heirs of Our Ways

How do we acknowledge our inheritance and support children in ways that promise humanity's greatest potential?

THEME 2: Natural and Constructed Environments

To what extent are natural and constructed environments fluctuating, and how can we intentionally interact with them to affect our legacy?

THEME 3: Trade, Craftsmanship, and Industry

How have inherited practices of trade, craftsmanship, and industry shaped our world, and what legacies will we inspire?

THEME 4: Expressions of Truth

In what ways do inherited expressions of truth build lasting legacies?

THEME 5: Resistance – Reform, Rebellion, Revolution


What have we learned from the inherited effects of resistance, and what legacies can we envision?

THEME 6: Perceptions of Progress

How do inherited understandings of progress guide the future?

THEME 7: Life and Death

How do narratives of life and death inspire commitment to preserving inheritances and building legacies?



Opening the Windows of Opportunity: A Multimodal Approach to Promoting Multicultural Awareness in Early Childhood Education

Alpha Epsilon Phi Chapter
Bergen Community College
Paramus, New Jersey

Theme

The Heirs of Our Ways

Abstract

The Black Lives Matter movement and the protests following the death of George Floyd show that we have yet to achieve a society where its members are not victimized because of their race. Racial and cultural bias persists as an insidious cycle of inheritance that can only be dismantled by a commitment to transform our legacy through inclusive education. This commitment necessitates difficult conversations regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion that must involve our nation's children, the predestined heirs of our ways. Our Honors in Action team decided to target bias in early childhood education in order to find solutions to break the generational cycle of inherited bias and in its place instill a legacy of multicultural awareness. Although schools are becoming more diverse, the methodology, pedagogy, and curriculum used in teaching often remain biased. Our findings assert that emotional and cognitive milestones acquired from ages 4 to 7 define the most effective period for intervention. Exposure to cultural diversity remains the most successful method to reducing bias in children. However, limitations persist. Our project worked to address two of the biggest obstacles facing multicultural awareness in childhood education: the inadequacy of multicultural curriculum and the absence of parent and community involvement. To provide practical materials that assist parents



Figure 1

and communities during the pandemic, the Alpha Epsilon Phi team created *Mr. Lee's Virtual Class*, a children's book that promotes ethnic inclusiveness and offers a virtual learning experience. Along with the free multilingual e-books, our team created a suite of digital resources including a parent's workbook with activities, a research guide to share our academic sources that informed our work, two virtual story time readings, and a parent workshop with additional resources. Throughout 2021, we plan to continue our outreach efforts in collaboration with local libraries and community partners.

Objectives

Our first research objective involved examining the different ways implicit bias exists in the elementary classroom. We aimed to understand how educational material may influence a child's development of perspective and understanding about diversity. Our discoveries then propelled us to investigate if bias in children could be entirely avoided before it began. We quickly concluded that bias is inevitable, so we decided to narrow our focus to how early a child can develop such bias. Our second main objective extended to the research of early child brain development to discover the science behind forming a biased perception. After discovering the importance of developing interconnected neurons during infancy and early childhood, we realized the window of opportunity to help children develop an open mind is restricted to certain age periods. We created a third objective to discover the best age for intervention and find the best methods to apply during the intervention, as well as methods that should be avoided. Our three main objectives prompted an action that involved developing a curriculum to promote multiculturalism for both parents and children.

Upon determining that children as young as 4 years old are susceptible to implicit bias, our team sought to develop our intervention. Our ultimate

objective was to create a website that housed virtual educational materials promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion for both parents and children. Given that our research revolved around multiculturalism and the importance of embracing diversity, we sought to construct materials that were accessible to as many people as possible in our diverse community. This thought sparked the idea of creating a multicultural storybook for children that could be delivered in multiple languages and as a free electronic download. The team felt strongly about producing materials that reflected a diverse group of children experiencing a virtual learning environment, which felt particularly important during the pandemic.

In addition to our storybook, our team provided an informative parenting workshop, an educational guide for teachers, a story time video for children, an interactive activities guidebook that coincides with our storybook for parents and educators (Figure 1), and recordings of our events such as the parent workshop. To do this, we collaborated with child development centers, daycares, and libraries. Our team contacted over 25 libraries and 35 childcare centers all across New Jersey, the Child Development Center (CDC) of Bergen Community College (BCC), and the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) Program. The purpose of these collaborations was to assess how children were learning in a virtual environment and explore the ways we can support parents teaching multiculturalism at home.

To create the storybook and resources, we consulted with authors, illustrators, and specialists who have experience in children's literature. These collaborations helped us carefully and properly create an engaging experience for children. In addition to these materials, we collaborated with the Bogota Public Library and the Bergenfield Library to host virtual children's reading events

using the activities mentioned in our interactive guide. Future virtual reading events are scheduled at Ramsey Public Library and Montclair Public Library.

Academic Investigation

Our goal was to understand the ways in which multicultural education practices might mitigate existing bias learned at an early age and act as an intervention to nurture a legacy of respect and empathy in young children. In doing so, our research question became the following: In what ways, if at all, do teachings that reflect an inclusive approach to multiculturalism in the classroom and at home expand a child's understanding and perspective of diversity?

Our initial research involved the study of brain development in children. Neurons are responsible for a child's learning capacity and, essentially, developing personality traits. Studies suggest that there are "windows of opportunity," which are critical brain periods that allow for social and emotional development in the child. By age 4, curiosity, cooperative play, and communication evolve rapidly. By age 7, children have already built a perception of the world and their inner community based on their experiences. Therefore, the gap between the age when curiosity sparks and when a child's perspectives become less malleable was considered the most promising age for intervention. Other studies showed strong limitations when interventions were attempted between ages 7 to 10, which reinforced our team's belief for the need for early action.

Thus, we wanted to identify the most efficient means for schools to help in curbing the development of biases in children. Therefore, we examined the existing initiatives in multicultural education such as the level of bias in textbooks and the guidance provided to teaching staff to ensure that both their pedagogy and methodology were aligned with best practices in this field. Our findings concluded school systems still depend on curriculum and teaching resources that reflect biased and Eurocentric perspectives of history. Further, some early childhood teachers share concerns and reveal a lack of preparation and support in approaching diversity in their classrooms.

In light of such challenges faced by the inclusion of multicultural education into the school system,

different interventions were initiated for children ages 4 to 7, the same range as our study. These interventions attempted to reduce bias by exposing children to storybooks and images featuring positive outgroup examples and diverse children positively interacting. These studies measured the children's level of comfort toward diversity through pre- and post-intervention tests.

One study was conducted in Indonesia where bias between the Javanese and Sundanese children and the territory's minorities, the Chinese and the Papuan children, was studied. The results were not as positive as expected because the children did not have sustained contact and families only had limited involvement. We were careful not to replicate these problems in our project. Hence, the action components chosen by the team provided outgroup exposure along with information and support to teachers, parents, and the community.

Conclusions

Our team then decided to research the impact of translated children's books on a global scale. We wondered if bias in education extends to children's literature and if the process of adjusting storybooks during translation changes the way children view and understand culture. Our key conclusions showed that an overwhelming number of translators and publishers worldwide do not believe young readers are capable of fully grasping foreign elements, resulting in name, location, food, and illustration changes.

Our research concluded that the age of intervention, need for pedagogical, methodological, and material support to teachers, consistent exposure, family involvement, and attention in the translation process of storybooks are crucial elements to reduce bias. Our findings guided every step of the project action components.

Action

Our research led us to address the lack of cultural exposure for children and the lack of parental support, consisting of three main components: an academic seminar for adults, an interactive curriculum for children, and a primary online source where resources can be easily accessed.

Our first collaborations occurred with the CDC at our college, in which we engaged in conversation about the effects of virtual learning for both children and parents. We then connected with two representatives from the CCAMPIS Program, a New Jersey federal program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education that supports low-income parents in postsecondary education.

Our cooperation with CCAMPIS allowed our team to accomplish our first goal. We met with two child development specialists: Julia Loman, based in San Diego, California, and Lark Sontag, based locally in New Jersey. Both Loman and Sontag are equity and inclusion consultants that have been committed to social change, anti-bias, and multicultural practices for over 25 years. After several meetings both Loman and Sontag agreed to facilitate our parent workshop on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Further, our work with BCC's CDC and CCAMPIS extended when our team decided to create a multicultural storybook entitled *Mr. Lee's Virtual Class*. Loman and Sontag, along with a representative from CDC, provided us with numerous resources and advice about writing a children's book. In addition, they assisted in the assessment of our Research Guide and interactive Parent Guide.

Upon completing a first official draft, we sought out author Natasha Yim, a well-known children's book writer and freelance playwright. Yim met with us to critique our work and provide helpful advice. After robust feedback from college professors and literature specialists, we decided to provide translations of our book. Within our small team of nine people, each one of our members successfully translated *Mr. Lee's Virtual Class* into Spanish, Korean, Italian, Portuguese, Albanian, German, and Hebrew. We met with the department chairs of the World Language Program at BCC and had our translations reviewed for accuracy. Finally, we worked with Diana Melo to illustrate our book.

We also developed www.theheirsofourways.com, our Honors in Action website where all our materials can be viewed and easily accessed. Our final action consisted of virtual children's book reading events at the aforementioned libraries.

Our project has allowed us to connect with multiple libraries and childcare centers, establishing additional events beyond January 2021.

Impact

Many families lack the resources needed to address multiculturalism both at home and in school. Our ultimate goal was to provide the necessary materials that could equip a family with creative and educational resources to get them started. Our team successfully held two story time readings with nine children and seven parents from Bogota Library, in which we received positive feedback from their community about *Mr. Lee's Virtual Class* and our activities. In collaboration with Bergenfield Library, our multicultural story time event premiered live and reached 135 views on Facebook and 40 views on YouTube.

Our website, www.theheirsofourways.com, has had over 200 visits, and this number continues to rise. In a survey conducted after our workshop, which totaled to 15 participants, 83% of our participants felt they knew where to find the proper resources for diversity, equity, and inclusion, and 100% agreed to finding the information very helpful. Our materials and events succeeded in enhancing the multicultural experience for parents ranging 20 to 60 years of age, children ages 4 to 12, college students, chapter members, and ourselves. Our project does not end here. We will continue collaborating with learning facilities to help families receive informative and engaging materials and further promote the reduction of bias among children.

Resources

- Altalib, H., AbuSulayman, A., & Altalib, O. (2013). The child's brain: Use it or lose it! In H. Altalib, A. AbuSulayman, & O. Altalib, *Parent-child relations: A guide to raising children*. International Institute of Islamic Thought.

As children observe the actions of others and implicitly incorporate them into their own lives, an unwanted perception can arise. Neuron development from infancy to early childhood present stages known as "windows of opportunity" that serve as critical learning periods that can determine the best age for

intervention when combating favoritism, division, and bias among children.

Children show implicit racial bias from a young age, research finds: New research highlighted in *ScienceDaily* (2017) sheds light on how racial prejudice develops.

This study evaluated two age groups, 5- to 8- and 9- to 12-year-old children. Identifying the types of bias that occur among children of different age groups, it was concluded that distinct age groups require different methods of intervention due to the developmental patterns occurring at such age.

Christia, S. B., Tam, M., & Aboud, F. (2018). Ethnic prejudice in young children in Indonesia: Intervention attempts using multicultural friendship stories. *International Journal of Early Childhood*, 50(1), 67-84.

This experiment analyzed ethnic prejudice among children, from ages 4 to 7, in Indonesia. Using children's literature to combat implicit bias, the overall sentiment of the experiment presented limitations that resulted in an unsuccessful attempt to diminish bias in the community.

Gonzalez, A. M., Steele, J. R., & Baron, A. S. (2017). Reducing children's implicit racial bias through exposure to positive out-group exemplars. *Child Development*, 88(1), 123-130.

This study shows that there is a difference in children's ability to change their own perspective on certain biases according to their ages. The experiment concluded that the most auspicious ages for interference are earlier than 7 and later than 10.

Klefstad, J., & Martinez, K. (2013). Kindergarten through grade 1: Promoting young children's cultural awareness and appreciation through multicultural books. *YC Young Children*, 68(5), 74-81. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/yccyoungchildren.68.5.74>

Klefstad and Martinez introduce the concept of "Book Bonding," which is an effective way to address multicultural teachings using literature. This source concluded that children learned best when they were introduced to text, illustrations, and engaging questions.

Van Coillie, J. (2020). Diversity can change the world: Children's literature, translation and images of childhood. In Van Coillie J. & McMartin J. (Eds.), *Children's Literature in Translation: Texts and Contexts* (pp. 141-156). Leuven University Press.

Van Collie examines the global perspective of the impact in cultural exchange behind translations in children's literature. The findings suggest that there is an imbalance of translated books throughout the world. Cultural exchange is damaged by the reduction of foreign elements in these books, due to an overwhelming Anglophone culture and the assumption that young readers are not capable of understanding the foreign elements of a storybook.

Vittrup, B. (2016). Early childhood teachers' approaches to multicultural education & perceived barriers to disseminating anti-bias messages. *Multicultural Education*, 23(3-4), 37-41. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1119398.pdf>

This study emphasizes the ineffectiveness of the "color-blind approach," suggesting that the only way to diminish bias is through exposure. An assessment of 77 early childhood teachers conclude multiculturalism is still not successfully supported in many schools.

Wilkinson, P., & Kido, E. (1997). Literature and cultural awareness: Voices from the journey. *Language Arts*, 74(4), 255-265. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41482869>

Wilkinson and Kido conducted a study aimed to help K-12 educators better prepare themselves in addressing diversity. The source predicted that by 2020, at least half of students in all U.S. classrooms will represent a minority population. This study concluded that students in K-12 have a better chance of understanding multicultural material when educators exposed themselves to multiculturalism outside of the classroom.



Progress in Mental Health Treatment

Sigma Lambda Chapter
Calhoun Community College,
Decatur Campus
Tanner, Alabama

Theme

Perceptions of Progress

Abstract

Mental health is a crucial component of general well-being, but fear of receiving treatment leads many individuals to neglect it. Attitudes and accepted treatments for mental health disorders have evolved significantly over time, and these inherited changes have directly impacted individuals who need help. Research shows that education on this topic can help create a legacy that reduces stigma and increases the effectiveness of mental health care in our communities.

Having learned about the impact that changing attitudes and treatments have had on the role of mental health care for individuals and communities, our chapter set out to accomplish two objectives: 1) Learn more about the impact of this evolution from current mental health practitioners, and 2) share the opportunity to learn with our community. To accomplish these objectives, we hosted a virtual panel discussion with mental health practitioners in our community and a neighboring state. Panelists included a psychiatrist, a psychiatric nurse practitioner, a college psychology instructor, and a psychiatric intake specialist from a local hospital.

We had 39 attendees from our college and community at our event. Attendees indicated that they gained new knowledge about the impact of changes in treatments and attitudes toward mental health care. Education and awareness of these issues can create communities that are more hospitable to addressing the unique needs of individuals dealing with mental health issues.

MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT: A VIRTUAL PANEL DISCUSSION
Past, Present & Future

DR. WILLIAM THORNELOE, M.D., DAAFA
Psychiatrist

DR. SARA SAYLE, Ph.D.
Psychology Instructor,
Former Mental Health Practitioner

MS. HARMONY ROSE, CNP
Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner

MR. DAVID PANELLA, MS
Psychology Instructor,
Mental Health Practitioner

Monday, October 26th | 2:00 PM CDT

DISCUSSION TOPIC:
How have evolving attitudes toward mental health influenced patients and practitioners to seek out better treatments?

PRESENTED VIA **zoom**

SCAN ME

CALHOUN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

For more information, contact
dana.burton@calhoun.edu

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Figure 1

Objectives

Our first objective was for each member of the Honors in Action committee to complete Phi Theta Kappa's Research Edge program and for our entire chapter to attend our regional mock chapter event over the summer.

Our second objective was to thoroughly investigate each of the seven themes related to the 2020/2021 Honors Study Topic, *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*, by:

- reading the Honors Study Topic theme introductions.
- watching and discussing seven movies (one per theme) pulled from the Phi Theta Kappa Film Resources list on the Honors in Action website.
- having each chapter member brainstorm and post two to three topic ideas per theme to an online discussion board.
- discussing these ideas in weekly meetings.

Our third objective was to choose a topic. Our Honors in Action chair created a Google Doc with notes on everything our chapter discussed concerning each theme. The Honors in Action Committee used these notes to choose both a theme and a topic for further exploration. Once a theme and topic were decided upon, the next objective was for each committee member to find three to four sources related to the topic. The final objective was for committee members to review

the sources we found and then formulate a research question that would guide more specific source-finding.

Our research conclusions led us to decide that our action component should be a community awareness event about changing attitudes toward mental health and how those attitudes affect treatment. However, COVID-19 limitations meant that we would need to find a way to conduct our event without violating local health orders or safety precautions. We decided to host a virtual panel

discussion with mental health practitioners from our community. To do this, we established a list of tasks and goals, which included:

- create a list of possible panelists.
- draft and send out email invitations to potential panelists.
- finalize our list of panelists based on email responses.
- collaborate with our college public relations office and our chapter public relations officer to create and distribute an electronic event flyer to our school and community.
- draft a list of in-depth panel discussion questions along with introductions for our panelists.
- conduct a virtual rehearsal for our event.
- create a post-event survey to distribute to event attendees.
- draft and send thank you notes to panelists.

Our overall action objectives were to:

- Host a professional and engaging panel discussion featuring mental health practitioners;
- Derive insight into our topic from our panelists alongside helpful advice for attendees;
- Expose attendees from our campus and community to information and resources they did not have prior to the event;

- Collect data from attendees about their response to the event.

Academic Investigation

Our research question was, “How have changing attitudes toward mental health contributed to the evolution of humane and effective treatment methods?” We reviewed 12 academic sources on this topic. Our sources were primarily peer-reviewed journal articles, which we retrieved from databases on our school library website.

Our research revealed that as societal attitudes toward mental health have changed over time, so have treatment methods. Historically, mental illness acted as a ticket to being ostracized from normal socialization due to stigma and a lack of adequate care. Many physicians viewed their patients as test subjects instead of people, which had a damaging effect on the patient-healthcare worker relationship. Horrific treatments, such as lobotomies and shock therapy, were at one time viewed as acceptable and even advanced scientific methods. Over time, however, research showed that these treatments were unlikely to have significant benefits to patients, and they have since fallen out of favor. However, previous approaches like these have had long-lasting effects on mental health treatment by perpetuating an atmosphere of fear and stigma.

Thankfully, patients in some studies who have been receiving care for mental health issues for long periods have reported that over time, they have experienced more compassionate care. Our research showed that eliminating stigma and providing better patient-provider experiences is crucial to obtaining positive treatment outcomes. Many patients report that fear of stigma, as well as negative past experiences with treatments and providers, prevent them from seeking help when they need it. Our research suggests that as mental health practices improve and practitioners engage in more strategies to improve a patient’s comfort and level of personal acceptance and happiness, the treatment yields better results.

Conclusions

Finally, our research showed that opening a conversation about mental health in our own

communities can help combat damaging stigmas and provide community members with much needed resources. Progress is made when treatments emphasize patient comfort and compassion, not only from providers but also from their community as a whole. This means that mental health is a public health concern, and everyone has a duty to help facilitate effective care, even if it means changing the way that they communicate with others about the topic.

Action

Our chapter hosted a virtual panel discussion via Zoom to teach others about the impact of evolving attitudes on mental health treatment (Figure 1). Our panel consisted of mental health practitioners from our local community and from a neighboring state. Specific panel members included a psychiatrist, a college psychology instructor, a psychiatric intake coordinator for a behavioral health unit at a local hospital, and a psychiatric nurse practitioner. We selected a broad spectrum of panelists who would have different backgrounds, experiences, and specialties to promote diversity of opinion.

We chose this course of action because our research emphasized the importance of community acceptance and compassionate care paving the way to better outcomes for those struggling with mental illness. Creating a public event that community members could attend from their homes was necessary for COVID safety, but this also had the potential to encourage those who are apprehensive about openly discussing mental health to attend since they could remain relatively anonymous. We hoped that a panel discussion in which resources and advice for care were not only offered but encouraged would help to create the acceptance that is so critical to improving mental health care.

Carefully selecting panelists turned out to be very effective. The panelists were open and engaging in their responses, and they provided participants excellent information, advice, and exposure to resources. After asking our prepared questions, we opened the session to audience questions for the panelists, and several audience members felt comfortable asking questions related to sensitive topics.

Impact

Our virtual panel discussion included 39 attendees from our school and community and four panelists. We received 23 responses to our post-event survey. Forty-three and a half percent of respondents said that they or someone they know are currently seeking therapy. More than 65% agreed that they would recommend therapy to others and that mental health treatment and/or acceptance deserves more recognition in our community. Eighty-seven percent agreed that our event exposed them to information and resources that they did not have prior to the event. Participants were also asked if they had ever been reluctant to seek therapy due to fear. One person wrote they were afraid of the stigma; another wrote that they would not discuss their time being admitted to a psychiatric ward with others out of embarrassment. Another participant stated they felt they would be viewed as weak if they got help.

Regarding our event, one individual responded to a question asking about what they felt was the most important or insightful point with, "That there are people who really want to help others." This comment, among the other responses we received about our event, shows that community support for mental health is needed and appreciated. Alongside the panelists' advice to "just call!" if someone is reluctant to seek help for mental health issues, our event provided advice and comfort that seeking out treatment is not a sign of weakness, but a sign of self-care. One survey taker mentioned a statement by a panelist comparing mental health treatment to a medical procedure. One would visit a doctor to fix a broken arm or wound without a second thought, and the same feeling should be applied to mental health.

Responses to our post-event survey confirmed what we learned in our research: Individuals want affirmation that mental illness is not something to be ashamed of, and stigma is often a barrier to seeking care. Through our panel discussion, we were able to make an impact on this problem by providing information to participants about how mental health care has changed over time. If individuals entered the session with negative preconceived notions about what mental health care looks like, our panelists helped dispel those

notions by discussing current approaches to care. These current approaches are more patient-focused and compassionate than many practices used in the past. Additionally, those who attended our panel were able to get reassurance that mental health issues are not something to be ashamed of.

Our chapter grew as scholars during this project through our completion of the Research Edge program, which taught us how to be better academic researchers. We also grew academically by exploring the seven Honors Study Topic themes as well as our investigation into our topic. We gained a much deeper understanding of the complex relationship between events that are viewed as "progress" at the time they happen but then create long-lasting, sometimes unintended, consequences and legacies.

Our chapter also grew as leaders throughout this project. We learned how to communicate effectively with professionals in our community and how to put together an effective and meaningful panel discussion. At the conclusion of our event, one of our panelists remarked that our chapter had done a particularly good job putting on an event that was efficient and professional.

Resources

American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425596>

This manual, relied on by psychiatrists and other mental health practitioners, provides diagnostic and background information for various psychiatric conditions. It gave us a point of reference when we came across mental illnesses we were unfamiliar with in our research. Understanding these conditions helped us better understand the studies we read.

Arai, Y., Tsutsui, Y., Shinmura, Y., Kosugi, T., Nishikage, H., & Yamamoto, J. (2001). An autopsy case of the schizophrenic 32 years after lobotomy. *Neuropathology*, 21(1), 53–60. <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1440-1789.2001.00363.x>

This was a case study about a patient who underwent a prefrontal lobotomy. It helped us

understand the evolution of treatments for mental illness and how modern treatments have become incredibly more humane in comparison.

Arshad, M., Arham, A., Arif, M., Bano, M., Bashir, A., Bokutz, M., Choudhary, M., Naqvi, H., & Khan, M. (2007). Awareness and perceptions of electroconvulsive therapy among psychiatric patients: a cross-sectional survey from teaching hospitals in Karachi, Pakistan. *BMC Psychiatry*, 7(27). <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-244X-7-27>

This article discussed obstacles treatment providers have had to overcome regarding patient apprehension to electroconvulsive therapy. While this procedure is similar to the electroshock therapy used in the past and made infamous by pop culture representations, it is administered much more humanely and can yield positive results. This article showed us how modern treatment providers struggle with lingering attitude barriers created by problematic past treatments.

Cage, E., Di Monaco, J., & Newell, V. (2018). Experiences of autism acceptance and mental health in autistic adults. *Journal of Autism & Developmental Disorders*, 48(2), 473–484. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-017-3342-7>

This is a study about how the effects of mental illnesses can vary based on societal acceptance. It helped us understand how perceived acceptance from others and mental health care are related.

Kragh, J. (2010). Shock therapy in Danish psychiatry. *Medical History*, 54(3), 341–364. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0025727300004646>

This article provided insight into commonly accepted psychiatric treatments of the past, and how these treatments were related to stigma. It helped us understand mental health treatment before reforms in the 1950s and 1960s and provided historical evidence for the development of mistrust of mental health care providers.

Marks, A. The evolution of our understanding and treatment of eating disorders over the past 50 years. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 75(8), 1380-1391. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.22782>

This article provided a comprehensive overview of historical approaches to treatment for eating disorders, as well as changes in attitudes. It was significant to our project because it provided an example of how changing attitudes and reducing stigma leads to better treatments and patient outcomes.

Rafoul, B., Mashiach-Eizenberg, M., Hasson-Ohayon, I. & Roe, D. (2020). Knowledge about, attitudes toward, and willingness to undergo electroconvulsive therapy among mental health patients, staff, and family members. *International Journal of Mental Health*, 43(3), 215-228. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00207411.2019.1702613>

This article argued that well-informed patients are more likely to accept mental health interventions; thus, we learned disseminating factual information about mental health treatment to patients, their families, and communities is crucial.

Stein, C., Leith, J., Osborn, L., Greenberg, S., Petrowski, C., Jesse, S., Kraus, S., & May, M. (2015). Mental health system historians: Adults with schizophrenia describe changes in community mental health care over time. *Psychiatric Quarterly*, 86(1), 33–48. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11126-014-9325-3>

This article explored how treatment approaches for adults with schizophrenia have changed over time. Patients interviewed describe an improvement in the quality of caregivers and compassion, which affects their ability to effectively manage mental illness. This article was significant to our project because it illustrated the connection between positive care experiences and patient improvement.



Support Small Sustainable Business and Keep Inherited Trades and Craftsmanship Alive

Beta Theta Sigma Chapter
Fashion Institute of Technology
New York, New York

Theme

Trade, Craftsmanship, and Industry

Abstract

As students at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), we are exposed to special campaigns during the year that focus on small business and sustainability. During these campaigns, we see the positive environmental effects the promotions of small business development and sustainability can create for future generations. This foundation brought us to our research question: Can increasing awareness of small sustainable businesses help support and keep inherited trades and craftsmanship alive? From this angle, we wanted to research the lasting effects of sustainability and see how its connection to small business would allow not only small businesses to survive into future generations, but also create an increased use of sustainability on a wide scale.

We began our research by utilizing FIT's library database to find sources that showed the impact as well as statistics of the use of sustainability within the country; the environmental effects of the fashion industry, specifically fast fashion in comparison to small businesses; as well as the effects the coronavirus pandemic will have on both of these aspects. We also decided to reach out to Mercado Global and FABSCRAP, which are two businesses/organizations that were able to teach us more about what goes on behind the scenes of small and sustainable businesses. From the information and data we gathered, we decided to do a virtual campaign on the social media platform Instagram (@ptk_fitnyc) to show members of our chapter how important it is for us to support small and sustainable businesses in order to create a better business world for future generations.

Objectives

We set ourselves a goal of creating an impact on the small businesses in our community while promoting the community's awareness of climate change and the impact of the fashion industry on our planet. To achieve this goal, we set both research and action objectives:

- to better understand the impact of the fashion industry and consumerism on climate change.
- to identify small sustainable businesses in our community and connect with them to support inherent trade and craftsmanship.
- to understand the effects of COVID-19 on small businesses and sustainability.
- to initiate a campaign to influence and educate our community on small sustainable business.

To achieve our goal of increasing awareness of sustainability in order to help support small businesses, we created collaborative outreach and action objectives to narrow the scope of our project in order to make it attainable.

Objectives related to collaborative outreach:

- to identify small sustainable businesses that can be presented to our Instagram (@ptk_fitnyc) followers for them to support.
- to work with Mercado Global to increase awareness of their goals of providing rural Latin American women with opportunities to become entrepreneurs.
- to work with FABSCRAP to increase awareness of their goals of reducing textile waste in the fashion industry.

Objectives related to action:

- to provide factual information on how COVID-19 affected small businesses.
- to showcase small sustainable business, how to find and support them.
- to inform others of how a more sustainable lifestyle can be achieved through the support of small businesses.
- to create a source of information on small sustainable businesses for FIT students to learn from and to which they can refer back.

Academic Investigation

After we concluded our research, it was clear the effect large corporations have had on global warming and that sustainability and the support of small businesses are necessary steps for society to take in order to leave behind a better world for future generations to inherit. This foundation brought us to our research question: Can increasing awareness of small sustainable businesses help support and keep inherited trades and craftsmanship alive? According to EnvironmentalScience.org, sustainability is a way to protect natural environments and keep the planet in balance without disrupting our way of life. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has calculated that the fashion industry alone is responsible for 10% of the carbon emissions in the air and annually uses 1.5 trillion liters of water. Due to the coronavirus, many small businesses have taken a hit and are struggling to stay alive. However, according to *Sourcing Journal*, sustainability is the key to bringing customers back into stores after the pandemic. The United States Cotton Patrol and *Sourcing Journal* conducted a survey showing 43% of the 138 global sustainability executives surveyed reported that the coronavirus has had a positive impact on their future commitments to sustainability. More than ever, consumers are vocal about their demand for sustainability. According to *Forbes* magazine, during a recent United Nations General Assembly meeting, General Assembly President Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garcés called on the "last generation that can prevent irreparable damage."

Conclusions

Increased awareness and understanding of sustainability will allow small businesses to thrive and meet the demands of consumers. Many small businesses have a foundation rooted in skills and tools passed down through the traditions of many generations. The growth of these businesses will allow the inherited trade and craftsmanship that is foundational to them to be passed along to the seventh generation and beyond.

Mercado Global is a Brooklyn-based, non-profit accessory brand that serves to empower rural Latin American women to become entrepreneurs.

The Mayans have been weaving for over 2,000 years and are symbolic to Mercado Global. To this day, Mercado Global teaches women different weaving techniques that are passed down from generation to generation, keeping the art of craftsmanship alive. Each color and pattern represent a different community in Guatemala and tells their story. These collections are designed to be sold on the international market, resulting in a huge change in these women's lives. The women can earn money to support their families, send their children to school, and learn important life skills. After meeting with a Mercado Global representative and learning about their values, we attended Mercado Global's Fashion Forward Virtual Gala. Here, we were able to learn even more about their company and hear about the people who have made them so successful.

FABSCRAP is an organization that works with many companies and individuals to reduce textile waste. Their goal is to shift the fashion industry to a more circular economy, meaning items are recycled, sorted, and shopped.

Every week, they pick up about 5,000 pounds of textiles just in New York City. These textiles are then sorted through and either recycled or reused. Whatever textiles are recycled are shredded into shoddy, which can be used as insulation, furniture lining, and carpet padding. If the textiles are intact enough, they are reused or sold at FABSCRAP's warehouse or online store. By keeping textile waste out of landfills, greenhouse gas emissions are being reduced significantly.

Action

For our action component, we decided to take our research and pass on to others all that we had learned. We also reached out to two brands, Mercado Global and FABSCRAP, that reflect sustainability and keeping small businesses alive to collaborate with us. Both collaborators tied in perfectly with our research.

Given the circumstances with the current pandemic and our college operating remotely, we

felt it would be safest that our action components be completed virtually. We came up with the idea to promote awareness toward sustainable and small businesses on our social media platform. Social media is connecting people now more than ever. We developed our posts to run for five days. On Monday, we provided sustainable business statistics and spoke about how COVID-19 has affected small businesses. On Tuesday, we spoke about how to support small businesses and shared data about businesses and how to support them. On Wednesday, we listed some of the small and sustainable businesses students could shop, as well as some student-owned businesses to support. On Thursday, we highlighted Mercado Global and informed students about internships they provide. Finally, on Friday, we provided information about FABSCRAP and how to get involved in the sustainability movement.

Impact

Throughout the awareness week, our project reached those who followed us and those who work with the brands we were supporting and with which we collaborated. We wanted to get a look into our viewer's closets to see how many of them support small businesses. Out of the 127 people who watched our Instagram (@ptk_fitnyc) survey stories:

- 97% said they do shop small business.
- 3% said they have never shopped small business.
- 41% of the votes said their closets contain mostly fast fashion.
- 59% of the votes claim that most of their closets are filled with items from small businesses or clothing that was thrifted.

Seeing this raised the question, is fast fashion so popular because people do not know how the industry is currently affecting the world, or is it because of how cheap fast fashion is? Because of this, we wanted to highlight some New York-based small businesses that have reasonable prices and have been struggling due to the recent pandemic. Softwear, a Brooklyn-based loungewear company, for example, has been working hard to fulfill online orders to keep the company alive. With our 105 views on the post created for the brand, we got 32 people to check

out the company, which brought in a potential new market. Maryam, a store in New York, got 20 people to visit their Instagram site through our stories. Heavy Manner, another New York-based brand, got 19 visits on their Instagram site due to our post. We also wanted to recognize the small businesses throughout our own FIT community. Duartman, a brand created by a student at FIT, received 72 visits on their Instagram site due to our posts.

Along with helping small businesses, we wanted to bring attention to the companies mentioned previously that are working hard to stop fabric waste and keep trade and craftsmanship alive. We centered a whole day's worth of posts on bringing awareness to Mercado Global. From these posts, 13 people visited their webpage to learn more about the work they are doing and the products they offer. Another day was dedicated to FABSCRAP. Out of the 56 viewers:

- 7 people or 44% said they had heard of FABSCRAP.
- 9 people or 56% said they had never heard of FABSCRAP.

With the information we provided, 25 people continued to FABSCRAP's webpage to learn more about the brand and what they are doing for the New York community.

As for qualitative data, almost every small business owner or company we promoted responded and was extremely grateful for the posts we created. We wanted to highlight why everyone should shop small and to explain to our viewers how shopping small benefits people and companies. We mentioned the personal shopping experience a customer receives while purchasing from a small business. The goal of mentioning the benefits of shopping local was to persuade followers to shop small and sustainable businesses so they themselves can get the feel of the exclusive involvement one gets when shopping this way. We wanted our followers to be able to see for themselves the connections that can be formed when consistently buying local. We also spoke about community support and how small business owners are members of our community. Purchasing from them is supporting them, their families, and the community. Due to this campaign, we increased our social media following, showing that the FIT

community supported our objective and wanted to learn from our project.

The posts we created raised awareness about the importance of supporting small businesses and the trades and craftsmanship still alive in our communities today. Many people who viewed our stories took interest in learning more about the companies we shared, and the team learned so much from the research into the PTK Honors Study Topic that was the foundation of the project. Moving forward, we want to continue to inform people about our research, and we have left the project on our social media highlights for people to come back to or for new viewers to look at as time goes on. Our project has had an impact on the way we look at small businesses, and it will influence our purchasing behavior. The appreciation received from the brands we promoted confirmed our previous statements about personal experiences. We formed a new appreciation for small businesses that we had not yet encountered before this project. This project has engaged our followers, and our research and action can inspire them to share our research with others. They can continue to spread this information, or, perhaps, even find jobs and internships that will aid in their journeys to promoting small and sustainable businesses.

Resources

Bick, R., Halsey, E., & Ekenga, C. C. (2018). The global environmental injustice of fast fashion. *Environmental Health: A Global Access Science Source*, 17(1), 1-4. file:///C:/Users/edwardsh/Downloads/The_global_environmental_injustice_of_fast_fashion.pdf

This report went over each step of the process in the fast fashion industry. It highlights the negative effects from every aspect of this supply chain, from manufacturing to purchasing, and that the results of the fast fashion manufacturing model have led to extreme environmental consequences.

Davis, N. (2020, April 7). Fast fashion speeding toward environmental disaster, report Warns: Study highlights industry failures and calls for shifts in consumer attitudes. *The Guardian*. U. S. Edition. <https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2020/apr/07/fast-fashion-speeding-toward-environmental-disaster-report-warns>

The article referred to a report written by experts that warns of the negative impact fast fashion has on the environment. The article featured a few experts explaining the ways, such as the manufacturing and use of synthetic fabrics and the high consumption of water, in which the industry harms the planet, as well as the ways in which the industry can improve.

Gandon, E., Nonaka, T., Sonabend, R., & Endler, J. (2020). Assessing the influence of culture on craft skills: A quantitative study with expert Nepalese potters. *PLoS ONE*, 15(10), e0239139. <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A637120962/AONE?u=fitsuny&sid=AONE&xid=6cf677e8>

This study focused on the cultural and community impact of a generation's craftsmanship skills. For this purpose, they focused on the Nepalese potters and how their skills have been passed down through the ages. The researchers found a significant cultural influence on the community and the community felt connected to the elders that taught them to keep the tradition alive.

Guest Editorial, S.J. (n.d.). Sustainability Is key to bringing customers back into stores after COVID-19. *Sourcing Journal* 2020. <https://libproxy.fitsuny.edu:2504/topics/sustainability/u-s-cotton-trust-protocol-apparel-textile-sustainability-coronavirus-229269/>

This article described how the coronavirus had a positive impact on the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol's commitments to a sustainable future. It focused on clothing brands and their new need to keep up with customer demands and looked at their productions to make sure they are able to start creating a sustainable brand.

Hannon, K. (2020, March 23). How the coronavirus is impacting small business owners. *Forbes*. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2020/03/23/how-the-coronavirus-is-impacting-small-business-owners/#7b770ca7473a>

The article shared the personal experiences of small business owners across the United States from the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mason, M. (2020). What is sustainability and why is it important? *EnvironmentalScience.org*. <https://www.environmentalscience.org/sustainability>

This article is an in-depth look at what sustainability truly means. It highlights the three different pillars of sustainability, economic development, social development, and environmental protection.

Mohamad, M. A. & Chin, O. (2018) The effects of business networking and entrepreneurial munificence on the business sustainability of small rural business. *Global Business and Management Research: An International Journal*, 10(3), 890. <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A567634657/AONE?u=fitsuny&sid=AONE&xid=a2fe0ef4>

The purpose of this study was to see the effects of sustainability on small businesses in rural areas. Most of the previous research done on this topic focused on small businesses in bigger cities. The study concluded that business networking is essential for small rural business and directly affects their sustainability.

United States Environmental Protection Agency (2017, June 21). Sustainable manufacturing. <https://www.epa.gov/sustainability/sustainable-manufacturing>

This article from the Environmental Protection Agency discussed the side of businesses in the role and pursuit of sustainability. The trend of "green" business has shown a positive impact not only within the objectives of business but on the environment as well.



Expressions of Truth Behind Bars: Reciprocity, Legacy, and Education

Alpha Psi Zeta Chapter
Feather River College
Quincy, California

Theme

Expressions of Truth

Abstract

What does it mean to be a bad person? In the case of someone incarcerated for a crime, is this a permanent label? As a PTK chapter with incarcerated members, we decided to explore this question under the Honors Study Topic theme “Expressions of Truth.” Our research clearly refuted the idea of bad personhood. Realizing a common goal, we partnered with the Feather River College (FRC) Social Justice Prison Journalism Club (SJPJC) along with students, journalists, and PTK members inside Mule Creek State Prison (MCSP). We decided, based on our Honors Study Topic research conclusions, to put on an academic roundtable at the MCSP featuring then-PTK International President James Elliott as keynote speaker to provide a platform to spread awareness of college and PTK in prison both during and after incarceration.

Objectives

For our research objectives we

1. proposed to use the theme “Expressions of Truth” to explore the label of prisoners as “bad” in the context of a college education.
2. examined the effects of an education on the incarcerated as well as the greater society.

Our collaboration objectives were:

1. to create a conversation between academics at Feather River College (Alpha Psi Zeta and SJPJC) and incarcerated journalists, students, and PTK members inside the MCSP.
2. to work with MCSP in putting on an education roundtable.

Our action objectives were

1. to expand outreach of academic resources and engage in academic discourse and shared truths through an education roundtable that featured PTK President James Elliott as keynote speaker and
2. to educate the larger society and begin erasing stigma around incarceration by publishing articles after the event in the *Mule Creek Post* (the MCSP monthly newspaper) as well as other publications such as the local newspaper in Quincy, where FRC is located.

Academic Investigation

We first explored the ideas of inheritance and legacy around our chosen theme, “Expressions of Truth.” As a chapter with incarcerated PTK members, we have had the opportunity to communicate with members by mail. Some of us had also interacted with incarcerated journalists from the *Mule Creek Post* through Feather River College (FRC) and the Social Justice Prison Journalism Club (SJPJC) via correspondence and in person. As we explored our relationships with incarcerated PTK members and journalists, we increasingly focused on these questions: What does it mean to be a bad person? In the case of someone incarcerated for a crime, is this just a convenient and permanent label? Society calls them criminals or convicts and identifies the incarcerated person with a crime. According to incarcerated PTK members, correctional officers address incarcerated persons by their number or just call them “inmate.” This dismissal reveals incarceration as a vehicle to permanently remove others from conversations by labelling them “bad.” However, those were not the persons we saw in our interactions. We decided to focus our research on these two questions:

1. What impact does the environment have on personal development and moral behavior, and how are “socially accepted truths” like a prisoner is a “bad” person influenced by environment?
2. What are the effects of college as well as intellectual pursuits like prison journalism for incarcerated people, and how does engagement of college students with incarcerated people have reciprocal benefit?

Curious about why average Germans were willing to perpetuate the Holocaust during World War II, Stanley Milgram ran a series of experiments to determine why good people do bad things. His experiment served the purpose of demonstrating that people are willing to inflict suffering on another person not because they are innately evil but to please a superior (Milgram, 1974). Now, crime is widely considered not to be the result of a “bad” individual but of circumstance. This means if we understand identity to be fluid, our current criminal justice system’s practice of sentencing people to lengthy or life sentences without rehabilitation does not reflect research about human experience and development.

The need to educate the incarcerated is also being recognized by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR). As one prisoner said, “They are finally putting the ‘R’ (rehabilitation) back in CDCR.” In an historic agreement, CDCR forged an alliance with California Community Colleges to bring face-to-face college instruction into California prisons (CDCR 2015). Bringing college into the prisons gives the incarcerated a voice by choosing their own course of study and a chance to redefine themselves as more than a “bad person.”

In her work, *Liberating Minds*, Ellen Lagemann, a formerly incarcerated researcher, also found that an education is important in helping individuals realize their full potential, which advances not only their personal well-being, but also works for the greater good of society (Lagemann 2016). Her work demonstrated the benefits of a college education not only for the incarcerated but also for their families, as well as for creating a better work environment for the correctional officers. Incarceration doesn’t exist in a vacuum. It touches

the lives of people who have never been to prison. This is a reason why a college education is something positive to pursue for society as a whole.

There are researchers who argue that human and financial resources would be spent more fairly on communities outside of the prison system where college educations can cost law-abiding students and their families thousands of dollars (Kupiec, 2014). This reasoning led to the passage of the 1994 crime bill, which led to an era of mass incarceration of 2.2 million people (Sawyer, 2019). During this period, the federal government ended college programs in America's prisons. Recently, however, the argument for educating incarcerated people is gaining popularity, but the system is still recovering from this draconian crime bill. For example, 58% of incarcerated people received no further education while in prison and only 2% received an associate degree (Sawyer, 2019). These statistics are linked with higher rates of recidivism. College has proven to break the cycle of incarceration (Mukamal, 2021).

The demand for higher education in the job market is expected to outstrip the supply, and many California residents have a criminal record or were in prison (Mukamal, 2021). Once released, in California, 96% of probationers live within a 15-mile radius of a college (Mukamal, 2021). Getting involved with a campus or an academic honor society like PTK before release can be a bridge to college after prison as well as an ever-decreasing chance of recidivism. In this context, it is also crucial to note we must create an environment where incarcerated people can change. We are not forming thinkers. We are liberating minds. The warden at MCSP exemplifies the kind of leaders we need in the department of corrections. The *Mule Creek Post*, a unique monthly, professionally printed prison newspaper, was able to thrive and the journalists were able to reach their academic potential when the warden fully supported their work (Covello, 2020).

Conclusions

An education can profoundly liberate the mind. Here is one example from a PTK member and poet from MCSP published in an anthology of prison writings. Author Jesse Carson concluded his poem "What Do I Have to Offer" with "Hope

for a brighter tomorrow. / I give the world me — / All seven billion of them — / Because I know now that I am enough" (Carson, 2020). In other words, Carson has claimed his value recognizing he can contribute and have an impact on society. This further disproves the idea of a "bad person," because Carson's personal development is what he can give back in order to amend what he has taken. Knowing this, we should no longer lock someone up and throw away the key.

Action

Based on our research conclusions, we organized an academic roundtable inside MCSP to engage people in a discourse with fellow incarcerated students, journalists, and PTK members. We were specifically driven to create a platform for incarcerated and non-incarcerated students and journalists to join together and share their truths as well as to demonstrate to the larger public the benefit of engaging in these types of events. We invited our college president as well as the PTK Nevada/California Regional Coordinator and our PTK Regional Officers. We invited then-PTK International President James Elliott, a formerly incarcerated student, to be the keynote speaker, and we were very excited when he accepted. Our incarcerated counterparts invited over 200 inmates as well as many prison officials. Afterward we (FRC students and our incarcerated counterparts) shared our experiences and findings with the public by publishing articles after the event to demonstrate its value. The act of participating in this research project is another outlet for us to share our work.

This HIA project involved a planning collaboration between incarcerated and non-incarcerated FRC students and journalists (from SJPJC) and PTK members of Alpha Psi Zeta. Most of the planning was done via mail. However, at some point, one prison official agreed to act as an email intermediary. We worked with our college president, especially on the funding for travel to the prison. On the Mule Creek side, the students, journalists, and PTK members collaborated with the warden and prison officials to secure a space, get clearances for everyone visiting the prison, and get passes for incarcerated PTK members from other prison areas so they could attend as well.

Impact

This event directly touched a lot of people. There were over 200 incarcerated attendees and many others wanted to participate but could not fit in the E-chapel where the roundtable took place. In addition, the warden and about 20 prison officials were present along with our FRC President, two FRC faculty, and many FRC students and PTK members, both incarcerated and non-incarcerated, as well as the Nevada/California Regional Coordinator and one PTK Regional Officer. This event gave us the platform to spread awareness of college and PTK in prison both during and after. We, as well as incarcerated journalists at MCSP, published articles in the prison newspaper (which has a reach into several other prisons) on the impact of the roundtable. We also published an article in the weekly newspaper of our college's town. The newspapers with our articles are archived online for everyone to read.

Qualitatively, perhaps this paragraph from one of the articles published after the roundtable says it best: "When James took to the floor to speak about his time in prison and how his life changed afterward, he gave hope to incarcerated people and a new perspective to people who have not been incarcerated. His speech showed solidarity and similarity to many of the Mule Creek prisoners and spoke to the truth that many of them have gone through themselves. By speaking his truth, he reached the hearts of those incarcerated and those from FRC."

Over the course of our research, we recognized a need to destigmatize incarceration and address the question of the "bad person" in order to improve the lives of incarcerated individuals both in prison and upon their release and also how this benefits society. The first step is to erase the stigma through a change in perspective. One of our team members claimed that "we attended the roundtable with the goal of helping inmates participate in rehabilitation through the power of education, but I believe we received just as much from the inmates themselves as they received from us." In other words, we entered the prison seeking to help through the power of education. However, being there in person, we realized that there is a reciprocal benefit of engaging with incarcerated scholars: creating a platform where they can be heard.

Finally, we realized in the context of COVID-19, which was barely a concern when the roundtable happened in February 2019, this project will serve as our legacy to the students, both incarcerated and non-incarcerated alike, at Feather River College. While we were unable to move forward in the way we would have liked, our work with the MCSP is now recorded for future students to continue. Our impact has been creating the foundation for this legacy. We showed it is possible, which makes future generations of students more likely to continue this work and positively affect our communities, inside and outside of prisons.

Resources

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. (2015). CDCR and California community colleges partner to expand college opportunities to inmates. *News and Publications*. <https://jailtraining.org/cdcr-and-california-community-colleges-partner-to-expand-college-opportunities-to-inmates/>

This article demonstrated that access to community colleges offers personal development for incarcerated people to choose for themselves after having most things chosen for them while in prison. Community college also offers opportunity to interact with people outside prison culture.

Carson, J. (2020). What do I have to offer? Perspective from the cell block: *An anthology of prison writing*. LWL Enterprises, Inc.

This poem provided pertinent insight into the expressions of truth people express when incarcerated. His personal experience shows that incarceration locks people away without consideration for their potential but that the potential is there and can be unlocked.

Covello, P. (2020). Recognizing academic excellence. *The Mule Creek Post*, 3(4), 2. <https://fliphtml5.com/bookcase/zudxq>

This article demonstrated the importance of prison officials supporting their inmates in pursuing education. *The Mule Creek Post* creates an environment that encourages inmates to reach their creative and academic potential. This

newspaper thrives because of the support from inmates and the prison staff like the warden.

Kupiec, C. (2014, February 26). College students have to pay, why shouldn't convicted felons? *The Record*. <https://buffstaterecord.com/2748/opinion/college-students-have-to-pay-why-shouldnt-convicted-felons/>

This article demonstrated the mindset that caused college courses to be removed from prisons during the 1990s. It proposed that money should not be spent on the incarcerated because non-incarcerated students struggle with the rising cost of college.

Lagemann, E. C. (2017). *Liberating minds: The case for college in prison*. The New Press.

This study showed how incarceration doesn't exist in a vacuum and affects more than just inmates but also their families and even the work environment of prison guards. This is why college in prison is important for society as a whole to pursue.

Milgram, S. (1974). The perils of obedience. *Harper's Magazine*. <https://bxscience.edu/ourpages/auto/2013/2/7/66623602/Milgram-Obedience.pdf>

Milgram's experiment served the purpose of demonstrating that crime is not the result of a particularly warped adult but of circumstance. If identity is fluid and influenced by the environment, then our current prison system does not reflect true human experience and development.

Mukamal, D., Silbert, R., & Taylor, R. M. (2015). *Degrees of freedom: Expanding college opportunities for currently and formerly incarcerated Californians*. Stanford Law School and Berkeley College of Law. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED574151.pdf>

This study showed that college can break the cycle of incarceration. An education can provide inmates with the higher chance of employment after release. Inmates involved with a college also have more opportunities to engage in programs because prisons have a lack of space and time.

Sawyer, W. (2019). Since you asked: How did the 1994 crime bill affect prison college programs? *Prison Policy Initiative*. <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2019/08/22/college-in-prison/>

This source delivered a comprehensive overview of the changes to laws and their effects within the prison system. It demonstrated how the money not spent on college in prison is not worth the high rates of recidivism and imprisonment that followed the 1994 crime bill.



Creating New Truths to Combat a Legacy of Sexism

Omicron Psi Chapter
Grayson College
Denison, Texas

Theme

Expressions of Truth

Abstract

Gender-based discrimination is ubiquitous. Members learned that inherited truths about traditional gender roles have created a legacy of sexism. As a result, women often find themselves the victims of harassment, disparate treatment, and violence. However, sexism is not strictly a women's issue; it affects everyone. Members created teams to research expressions of truth about gender stereotypes, ways to combat the resulting sexism, and how to contribute to the creation of new legacies. Members concluded that creating opportunities for open discussions about gender-stereotypes and sexism is the best approach to unlearning inherited truths. They also determined that highlighting notable women would help combat sexism as women in leadership would become the norm rather than the exception. The resulting awareness campaign created a shared sense of purpose as members learned how deeply sexism has affected them. Members understood the role informed advocacy can play in bringing forth change and the potential it has for long-term impact. These are powerful lessons in understanding *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*.

Objectives

The research objectives are as follows:

- Read the Honors Program Guide to better understand the Honors Study Topic, *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*.
- Identify members to serve on the research team and create a research timeline.
- Conduct independent research to identify possible themes and questions for investigation. Provide opportunities for

regular reflection on research during weekly meetings.

- Create opportunities and provide training for members to grow as scholars.
- Develop a better understanding of the role inherited ideas have in developing legacies.
- Develop a better understanding of issues related to gender-based stereotypes and sexism, both globally and domestically.
- Review the research and use conclusions to develop an action component.

The action and collaboration objectives are as follows:

- Collaborate with college administrators, faculty, staff, and students on our campus, as well as with another chapter, to host a TEDxPlano Salon event on toxic masculinity.
- Create a video series highlighting female trailblazers.
- Establish a book club to read and discuss lived experiences related to sexism.
- Develop a marketing plan to advertise the TEDxPlano Salon event, video series, and book club.
- Gather relevant data related to the creation of the project and its outreach.
- Reflect on lessons learned from the project.

Academic Investigation

When members began researching *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*, they explored various themes and research questions related to this topic for discussion at weekly meetings. In preparation for conducting academic research, members arranged research training with the college librarian. Members advocated for research themes based on their findings. Members narrowed their focus to “Expressions of Truth,” then further centered on cancel culture and censorship. Investigating these topics resulted in members focusing on self-censorship. Through their research, members learned women are more likely to self-silence, and they discovered the connection between self-silencing and the inherited perceptions of gender stereotypes. Because people often believe emotion-driven perceptions are in fact truths, the team began

further exploration of the inherited truths of gender stereotypes and their legacy.

Gender-based discrimination is ubiquitous through time and across the globe. Members’ research identified two strains of sexism prevalent in society: hostile sexism (HS) and benevolent sexism (BS). HS is easily identified as it takes the form of sexism-based prejudice. Members discovered HS has increased in the last 20 years in reaction to economic hardship and perceived emasculation. Specifically, there has been an increase of misogynistic violence both in globally rising domestic violence rates and extremist terrorism incidents such as the 2018 Toronto van attack, where a man intentionally drove into a crowd, killing 10 and wounding another 16. In his confession, the attacker explained his motive was revenge toward women for not finding him attractive.

Historically, women have been viewed as lesser, which prevented their advancement or recognition for their work. In BS, men are seen as dominant, independent, competitive, and capable of leadership. Women are viewed as dependent, caring, good at domestic tasks, and less capable. Popular entertainment perpetuates that males’ lives are adventure-oriented while females’ lives are romantic relationship-oriented. Both BS and HS behavior contribute to toxic masculinity, which serves to protect these stereotypes. While these behaviors are more popularly known for their violence, they are often far more subtle, such as preventing young boys from playing with “feminine” toys.

Social conditioning has also taught women to be more verbally restrained, making them less likely to respond to sexist incidents. In a recent study, a third of South Korean women had witnessed gender-based workplace discrimination but were unwilling to report it. Members realized these sexist fallacies have become an inherited truth and continue to harm. Understanding this, members developed the research question, “How have inherited truths about gender stereotypes built a legacy of sexism?”

Inherited truths about gender stereotypes have perpetuated sexist beliefs and practices, but they can be combatted. Members learned in their

research the dangers of toxic masculinity and that the best path toward disrupting it involved an open dialogue that included both men and women. This toxicity is not found in any single sex or gender; everyone is harmed by it, so all must work to end it.

Conclusions

Though many are familiar with sexism, members learned those most strongly affected are discouraged from speaking out. This is detrimental, as research showed the sharing of people's lived experiences is the most effective way of exploring controversial topics. People connect through the emotion of learning others' stories, which can lead to the dismantling of inherited truths.

Another reason these gender stereotypes persist is history itself. For far too long, history has centered on the great man theory. Thomas Carlyle's view may have been welcomed in the 19th century; however, we know history has a far more complex narrative. Members learned women's stories have been ignored in history except those relating to traditional gender roles. If history emphasized equitably the important roles women have had as drivers of societal change, this would have a significant impact on dismantling gender stereotypes, as all would see women in leadership as the norm rather than the exception.

Thinking critically about the breadth of their research provided members with tremendous insight into *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*. Members discovered how previous generations have shaped modern expressions of truth and the harms those false truths have caused. Armed with this knowledge, they believed they had a responsibility to future generations to disrupt these inherited truths and change their legacy from one of sexism to one of equality. This left the team incentivized to bring this knowledge onto campus and into the community.

Action

Investigating *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*, members learned how inherited truths about gender stereotypes

created a legacy of sexism. Having discovered an awareness campaign focused on combatting these inherited truths would help dismantle this legacy, the team planned a three-part campaign.

Two potential challenges emerged in planning the project. First, members were concerned the controversial topic could harm administrative support. However, the president and dean of student affairs both supported the members' plans. The second concern centered on difficulties related to the pandemic. Since all elements of the project would have to take place virtually, encouraging active participation would be a challenge. To combat this, members met with the marketing director to discuss effective social media marketing. With her guidance, members developed a marketing plan for each part of the project. College and chapter social media accounts were utilized to share information, along with members' personal accounts. This marketing was instrumental to the project's success.

Because sharing lived experiences can inspire change, members chose to hold a virtual TEDxPlano Salon event to explore the issue of toxic masculinity. Members co-hosted it with a sister chapter, Alpha Mu Tau (AMT), because they had experience hosting this type of event. Representatives from both chapters formed a planning committee and met biweekly with TEDxPlano. The planning committee secured five speakers: two Collin College (CC) students, one Southern Methodist University (SMU) student, a Texas Woman's University (TWU) gender studies professor, and a Grayson College (GC) professor who specializes in civil rights. Because men must be part of any successful movement to combat sexism, two speakers were men and the other three were women. CC and GC Student Life Departments helped market the event. The event was open to members of both campuses and their communities. The planning committee developed discussion questions for breakout groups that followed the speakers' presentations, and members from both chapters served as group leaders.

Women's contributions to history are largely unrecognized. To promote how women's leadership has brought forth societal change, members chose to create a video series highlighting five notable women. Members

selected a diverse group of women from different countries as this dearth of information about female leaders is not strictly a U.S. problem. Members met with a communications professor to learn best practices for presenting the material in their videos. Members uploaded the videos to the chapter's YouTube channel and shared them on college, chapter, and personal social media accounts.

The third part of the project centered on hosting a book club to discuss *Everyday Sexism* by Laura Bates. In the book, Bates shared information about the harassment and violence women face globally and also incorporated women's stories. The chapter marketed the book club online and created a sign-up form to join. The chapter applied for an Honors in Action grant to pay for the purchase and mailing of the books to 20 participants.

Impact

Members grew through their research, learning to set aside preconceived notions and investigate multiple perspectives. Twelve members gathered over 180 sources during their research and significantly improved their research skills. Twenty-one members worked together on the action portion, improving their communication and leadership skills. Weekly meetings with advisors helped members meet all of the project timelines. Members also learned to work through differences of opinion by having open and honest conversations about a difficult topic.

Ninety-eight people attended the TEDxPlano Salon event. Attendees discussed their experiences with gender stereotypes and toxic masculinity. Members learned through moderating these discussions how to maintain civility during difficult conversations. One male attendee admitted he was at first dismissive of the topic but "was surprised and pleased to learn these conversations can be had respectfully."

Members learned how women are overlooked in history, despite their many contributions. In producing the notable women video series, members learned proper lighting and recording techniques. Members also learned how to market and promote content through social media platforms, which resulted in the videos being viewed over 450 times.

Through the book club, members confronted their own inherited truths surrounding gender stereotypes. A father was horrified to discover how early predatory behavior toward young girls begins. Two members admitted to contributing to sexist behavior to fit in with other men despite knowing it was inappropriate. Four others discussed their experiences with gendered violence. Embracing this vulnerability allowed members to grow closer by understanding the strength that comes from having a shared purpose. Recognizing many had their own truths restructured through this project, members understood the power informed advocacy has in bringing forth societal change.

Members learned through this process how widespread the legacy of sexism is; it is a global issue. Through their reflection, members understood that while this legacy may exist, it can be challenged. Furthermore, members hoped that by addressing the issue locally, the project exposed others to new truths, and they will find themselves creating a new legacy. Members want this new legacy to spread as people go out into various communities.

Finally, members have grown as scholars and leaders. They learned how to use the information they researched, connect it with issues in the community, as well as nationally and globally, and actively address those issues to improve themselves and society. All who participated better understand, as well as find value in, leading a life of service. They recognize it is the only way to ensure a positive legacy for the future.

Resources

Burns, J. (2017). Biopolitics, toxic masculinities, disavowed histories, and youth radicalization. *Peace Review*, 29(2), 176-183. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10402659.2017.1308723>

Burns suggested that young men's increased radicalization to commit acts of violence is a symptom of an American culture that uses military violence to control populations. The author continued by stating this nationalistic male violence is caused by the perpetrators' perceived emasculation through increased discussions of the intersectionality of homophobia, racism, and sexism.

Flood, M. (2019). Gender equality: engaging men in change. *The Lancet (British Edition)*, 393(10189), 2386–2387. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(19\)31295-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(19)31295-4)

Flood asserted that progress cannot be made in gender equality unless men are part of the movement. Furthermore, the author argued men are harmed by the inherited truths of strict gender roles just as women are, so it is in men’s best interest to end the toxicity of gender stereotypes and sexism.

Knight, T. (2019). When fiction trumps truth: What “post-truth” and “alternative facts” mean for management studies. *Organization Studies*, 40(2), 183–197. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840618814557>

Knight argued there is no inherent accuracy or truth in language. Rather, Knight claims “post-truth” is more commonly used in which facts are less important in shaping views and opinions than emotion or personal beliefs. This reinforces the idea that for many people, perception is truth.

Silvan-Ferrero, M. & Lopez, A. (2007). Benevolent sexism toward men and women: Justification of the traditional system and conventional gender roles in Spain. *Sex Roles*, 57(7), 607–614. <https://doi.org/10.100/s11199-007-9271-8>

The authors identified two attitudes of sexism: hostile sexism, which is sexism-based prejudice, and benevolent sexism, which idealizes traditional gender stereotypes wherein men find value in taking care of women. Both types of sexism are harmful as they reinforce stereotypes that have created a legacy of sexism.

Sternberg, E. (2011). A self-fulfilling prophecy: Linking belief to behavior. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1234(1), 98–99. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-6632.2011.06184.x>

Sternberg illustrated that when exposed to others’ experiences, such as a child’s suicide due to bullying, people’s beliefs are impacted regardless of personal experience. Therefore, sharing experiences, or stories, could combat inherited truths without confrontation. By intentionally

providing new perspectives, it is possible to fight the broken narrative surrounding topics, such as sexism, and introduce a new outlook.

Swim, J., Eyssell, K., Murdoch, E., & Ferguson, M. (2010). Self-silencing to sexism. *Journal of Social Issues*, 66(3), 493–507. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2010.01658.x>

The authors determined that women have a propensity to self-silence, making them less likely to respond to sexist incidents. This is due to women prioritizing others’ voices over their own. They concluded this self-silencing would not end without first addressing women’s gender-consistent beliefs regarding their role in interpersonal interactions.

Wiesner-Hanks, M. (2007). World history and the history of women, gender, and sexuality. *Journal of World History*, 18(1), 53–67. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jwh.2007.0008>

The author commented on the lack of intersection between world history and women’s history. This is due to the presumption that women’s lives take place within the stereotypical private sphere of the home and family rather than the public sphere of politics and the economy. The truth, though, is women have always played an important role in history; however, few people know these stories as historiography has focused on men’s actions.

Xu, H., Zhang, Z., Wu, L. & Wang, C. (2019). The Cinderella Complex: Word embeddings reveal gender stereotypes in movies and books. *PLoS ONE*, 14(11), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.025385>

The Cinderella Complex is a narrative enhancing the stereotypical incompetence of women. The authors concluded feminism had gained power over time, with terms such as “brave” and “independent” becoming more readily associated with women in today’s society. However, a meta-analysis of 16 U.S. public opinion polls showed that while social expectations of women’s competence and intelligence increased over time, their agency remained low.



Improving Mental Health Culture for the Seventh Generation

Alpha Nu Sigma Chapter
Horry-Georgetown Technical College,
Conway Campus
Conway, South Carolina

Theme

Natural and Constructed Environments

Abstract

We began our project by reviewing the Honors Study Topic, *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*. We explored several themes, conducted preliminary research, and shared our findings in weekly virtual meetings. Mental health during the pandemic overwhelmingly emerged as our favored topic. We were empowered by the World Health Organization's vision that "all people achieve the highest standard of mental health and well-being" (WHO, 2020). This led us to explore global, national, state, and local mental health treatment and access to resources. We attended an online workshop with Horry-Georgetown Technical College's (HGTC) research librarian and completed Research Edge to learn how to conduct academic research. We were concerned by the differences in ways countries manage mental health treatment, particularly the percentages of the gross domestic products (GDP) being used toward affordable access (WHO, 2020). National reports indicated nearly 65% of respondents stated lack of awareness of resources and cost as barriers to treatment (Reinert, 2019). We surveyed HGTC students and nearly 45% stated the same reasons for not getting help. Committee members reviewed resources available to students at our college. We found one counselor serves over 6,000 students, and online resources were inadequate and difficult to locate. We set our goal to improve our college's mental health culture by improving access and advocating for additional mental health positions. Our action component consisted of identifying collaborators, requesting funding, creating and sharing a wellness bulletin, and re-designing the college website. We were fortunate to receive a Mellon Foundation grant and were

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS & MINDFULNESS

Balancing the struggles of daily and college life can be difficult in the best of times. Now add COVID-19 and it may seem downright impossible! Studies show that there are some stress relieving methods you can use on your own to help alleviate the tension and keep your mind on track. Below are a few self-help resources you can use to maintain your mental health in these trying times.

YOGA AND MEDITATION

Give your mind and body a break with stress-relieving yoga and maintain mindfulness with different meditation methods.

- For beginners or pros, try **Yoga with Adriene**. Adriene offers yoga for every schedule, with routines ranging from less than 10 mins up to 30 mins of stretching and relaxation.
- For a more holistic or traditional approach, check out **Akhanda Yoga**. This channel also offers yoga for all levels and even includes "yogic techniques to boost your immunity!"
- For calming sounds, daily 10-min meditations, deep breathing and sleep help, subscribe to the **Calm** channel on You Tube!

Artistic Expression

Put down your pencils and pick up a paint brush! Expressing yourself through the arts can be an engaging and creative way of maintaining mental wellness. Artistic expression has shown to be associated with "significantly lower levels of mental distress" (Wang et. al.). Below are some great resources for releasing your inner artist!!!

- Coloring is not just for Kindergartners! Bring out your inner child and try one of these adult coloring pages. **Mandala Monday** gives you a variety of mandalas (a diagram of geometric shapes) or you can go a little more festive with sheets from **Crayola!**
- For those that are a little more abstract, try watercolor painting with **Emma Lefebvre**.
- If you really want to get messy try a daily challenge from **Wow Art!** This You Tube channel has over 180 daily challenges that teach different paint techniques and images.

Journaling

Put your thoughts down on paper! Expressing yourself through creative writing or journaling is another simple and easy way to wind down from the stresses of life. Whether you record your thoughts for the day or author a great story, your writing skills can be highlighted with these resources.

- 365 Creative Writing Prompts**
- 10 Creative Art Journal Ideas**
- Bullet Journaling for Students**

Did you know?! Journaling notebooks are available at the HGTC Bookstore and can be included with your book order!

The resources mentioned above are recommended for general and self-help wellness. Counseling services are available for HGTC students by [clicking here](#). The personal counselor for students is Kimberly Lewis. You may reach her via email at kimberly.lewis@hgtc.edu or via telephone at 843-348-3689.

Alpha Nu Sigma Chapter at
Horry-Georgetown Technical College

PHI THETA KAPPA
HONOR SOCIETY

thrilled to use the money to save a student's life who was experiencing a horribly abusive situation. Our legacy is knowing our project will help the seventh generation of HGTC students improve their mental health and well-being.

Objectives

During officer training, everyone reviewed the Honors Program Guide and chose their favorite theme for further research. During subsequent meetings, we shared our discoveries and realized the most captivating research centered on mental health within the context of COVID-19. This led us to research Theme 2, "Natural and Constructed Environments" and to consider the question, "How has the natural environment of COVID-19 impacted our constructed understanding of mental health and our ability to achieve mental wellness?" After thorough collaboration, we developed our research question and objectives:

- Attend virtual database training with an HGTC research librarian
- Complete Research Edge
- Review at least 25 sources, including global perspectives
- Hold weekly online committee meetings to review research and plan our action
- Identify eight academic sources
- Research mental health resource availability by contacting area providers
- Explore the parameters contributing to our understanding of mental health

Our ultimate action objective was to leave a legacy at HGTC by increasing mental health resources and providing easier access to them. To accomplish this, we developed the following action objectives, being mindful of restrictions due to the pandemic:

- Assess student mental health resource awareness through an electronic survey
- Apply for a Mellon HIA Grant
- Create a mental health bulletin to empower students to use online mindfulness resources
- Advocate for additional mental health professionals at HGTC

Figure 1

We accomplished our action objectives through collaborating with:

- A psychology professor to learn about the pandemic's impact on mental health.
- HGTC Foundation to disburse Mellon HIA Grant funds.
- HGTC Director of Student Development to clarify how and why students obtain services.
- HGTC Web Services Coordinator to redesign the counseling services portion of the college website.

Academic Investigation

The natural environment of COVID-19 and subsequent constructed environment of social isolation impacted our mental and physical health in ways we did not anticipate. Our psychology professor's presentation taught us that humans are not biologically wired for chronic long-term stress management, causing increased anxiety, depression, and other physical and emotional health problems. This led us to research how the pandemic impacted our understanding of mental health and our ability to achieve mental wellness.

We discovered global mental health treatment differences by examining New Zealand, Canada, Germany, Italy, China, France, and India. We were stunned to discover that some countries have few mental health resources, and others offered no payment assistance even if they had resources. For instance, mental health spending per GDP in Germany is 15% and France is 11.27%, compared to the United States (U.S.), which is less than .05%. Through WHO (2020) reports, we began to see mental health as a serious issue. South Carolina ranked 44th in the US according to the Mental Health in America report, indicating "a higher prevalence of mental illness and lower rates of access to care" (Reinert, 2019). Our research indicated US college students were a vulnerable group affected by the pandemic. According to the American College Health Association (2020), nearly 50% of students reported anxiety and depression diagnoses. Zhai's 2020 article indicated these diagnoses in college students arose from restrictions brought on by the pandemic, such as social isolation, changes in class delivery methods, college closures, and

general fears about the virus. We were surprised to find over 65% of respondents stated cost and lack of awareness of services were the primary reasons for not seeking treatment (Reinert, 2019). The Sandmire 2016 study found arts participation decreased stress and increased cardiovascular function. Several studies concluded mindfulness-based activities, including yoga and coloring, reduced college students' stress and anxiety.

Our committee contacted area mental health providers and found nine serving two counties. We investigated local school districts and found they have sufficient student mental health resources. Other technical colleges and universities had a wide array of resources, including online appointment scheduling and easy-access icons for help. We examined our college and were shocked to discover only one full-time counselor serves over 6,000 students. In 2019 alone, 963 students, or over 16% of our enrollment, requested and received services. Online resources were limited and difficult to locate on our website.

Conclusions

We analyzed our research and concluded the pandemic drastically increased the overall need for mental health services, especially for college students. Our college lacked adequate resources to address students' mental health needs. We were determined to leave a legacy of improved mental health and mindfulness resources at our college.

Action

Our research led us to consult a local psychology professor to understand the impact of mental health conditions and treatment on the brain and to explain the effects of stress during a pandemic. Her virtual presentation changed the way we understood what mental wellness means and led us to explore mindfulness activities. We subsequently created a Mental Health Awareness and Mindfulness Bulletin (Figure 1), which was distributed electronically to all students via faculty, college email, and college-wide announcements.

Through our research, we found 65% of U.S. students identified cost and lack of awareness of mental health services as treatment barriers.

We partnered with HGTC’s Director of Student Development to understand how and why students seek mental health services, clarify the extent of student need, and redesign the college website to include mental health resources. We decided to apply for a Mellon HIA Grant to help students who needed mental health services the college cannot provide. When we discussed with her how to disburse the grant funds, the director suggested working with HGTC’s Foundation. Once we were awarded the funds, we worked with them as a fiscal agent.

We updated the mental health portion of the HGTC Community Resources Guide by calling area providers to verify their services and costs. We created and conducted an electronic student survey on awareness and use of HGTC’s mental health services. Because almost 45% of HGTC students reported being unaware of services, we proposed changing the college website by adding a quick link, the updated community mental health resources guide, and dedicated mental health resource pages.

Honors in Action (HIA) team members created a PowerPoint presentation for HGTC’s Executive Leadership Team, which ultimately makes decisions for the college. During our virtual presentation, we described our research findings, survey results, and proposed website changes. Additionally, we shared our mental health bulletin and advocated for improved mental health services and an additional counselor at HGTC.

We submitted a draft design proposal for our website including new mindfulness and mental health resources. The Web Services Coordinator reviewed our proposal and consulted with the marketing department. In a virtual meeting and through several email exchanges, we worked with him to identify sources, provide logos, and verify links. Our proposal was approved and implemented.

Through our actions and collaborations, we met our ultimate objective to leave a legacy at HGTC by increasing college mental health resources and providing easier access to them.

Impact

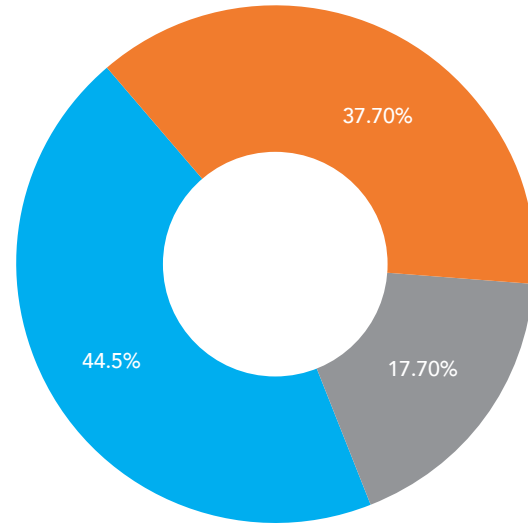
We developed an electronic student survey in Google forms to assess the need for and access

Figure 2

HGTC Counseling Services/Resources Survey

Phi Theta Kappa, HGTC’s Honor Society, is collecting data for a current project. Please take a minute to complete this two-question survey. Your responses are anonymous and completely confidential. Thank you for your assistance!

Choose the statement below that best describes you:



- I have accessed counseling services/resources at HGTC
- I have not accessed counseling services/resources at HGTC and would not
- I would access counseling services/resources if I knew how to

to HGTC mental health services. To conduct our survey, 21 out of 38 professors in nine programs shared it with over 2,500 students. We received 310 survey responses, a response rate greater than 10% (Figure 2). We were alarmed nearly 45% of respondents were unaware of services nor how to access them. Their comments included:

- “I did not know about counseling services at HGTC. It would be a huge help for a work, life, school balance.”
- “I didn’t know we have counseling.”
- “I think more people would use the counseling services if it were advertised more often.”

Our research identified cost as a barrier to treatment. To address this, we applied for and received a \$1,000 Mellon Foundation HIA grant. We collaborated with HGTC’s Foundation to administer the funds to protect student privacy. We asked our Director of Student Development to

identify students who needed financial assistance with mental health care. A few weeks later, we received an email from her describing a student in desperate need of shelter and protection from abuse. She asked if all the money could be used to help this student, and we readily approved. Her follow-up email stated:

“The student just left my office – she was absolutely in tears because she could not believe the help she received from the college and from Phi Theta Kappa. The generous support you and the students made possible will allow her to stay in school, receive some additional mental health assistance with one of our community partners, and have food and shelter as we try to figure out the other things we need to put in place for her physical safety and emotional well-being. You have surely changed this student’s life forever!” Although it was painful to know a student faced homelessness and abuse, we were humbled and grateful to be able to help.

HGTC administrators said we had “great suggestions,” and the Executive Leadership Team endorsed our recommendations for changes to the website and adding a full-time counselor. Due to COVID-19, however, the college was under a hiring freeze, and this step would have to be on hold.

To complete our final action objective, we collaborated with our Web Services Coordinator. Our website proposal included five pages: Counseling Services homepage, Community Resources, Crisis/911, Self-Help, and Counseling. We proposed three hotlines for the Crisis/911 page, 11 sources on the Self-Help page, and nine community resources with logos. The Web Services Coordinator worked with us to finalize the design in compliance with HGTC’s website standards.

We learned how to conduct academic research by completing Research Edge and attending the research librarian workshop. We acquired new software skills, learned Canva, and created attractive PowerPoint slides. Our confidence increased by rehearsing our presentation multiple times, resulting in a professional and cohesive effort. Our teamwork skills improved as we listened to each other, learned to be flexible, and collaborated on changes. We appreciated one another’s strengths, such as creativity and

organization, and capitalized on them. While working virtually was a challenge, we discovered benefits. We could have frequent meetings with increased participation. We improved our writing skills by using Google Docs for sharing and revising documents in our virtual meetings.

We became aware of the extreme need for mental health care at our college and the serious issues brought to college counselors, such as schizophrenia and domestic violence. We grew as scholar-servant leaders as we felt empowered knowing we changed a fellow student’s life and made access to self-help easier for other students and their families through our website changes and wellness bulletin. By positively affecting our constructed environment of mental health access for students during the natural environment of COVID-19, we created our legacy for future HGTC students.

Resources

American College Health Association. (2020).

American College Health Association-national college health assessment III: Reference group executive summary spring 2020. https://www.acha.org/documents/ncha/NCHA-III_Spring_2020_Reference_Group_Executive_Summary.pdf

This assessment reported data on students’ habits and behaviors on the most prevalent health topics, and it provided a vast spectrum of information on the health of the nation’s 20 million college students. The data surprised us and led us to investigate the mental health of our fellow students.

Daniels, D., & Ritter, D. (2018). How healthcare policy and laws have impacted mental health delivery. *Southern Law Journal*, 28(2), 229–245. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1016%2Fj.amepre.2015.01.022>

This article described multiple pieces of US legislation and their effect on mental health delivery and access throughout the years. It indicated the deinstitutionalization of mental health facilities is a significant consequence of legislation. This article led us to explore local mental health resources.

Kakunje, A., Mithur, R., & Kishor, M. (2020). Emotional well-being, mental health awareness, and prevention of suicide: COVID-19 pandemic and digital psychiatry. *Archives of Medicine and Health Sciences*, 8(1), 147. <https://www.amhsjournal.org/text.asp?2020/8/1/147/287374>

The article provided an overview of how COVID-19 negatively affected the mental well-being of the world's population. Practicing self-care and fostering interpersonal relationships can help maintain mental wellness. This directed our research toward the importance of self-care and led us to promote self-care resources to students.

Levin E. M., Krafft J., & Levin C. (2018). Does self-help increase rates of help seeking for student mental health problems by minimizing stigma as a barrier? *Journal of American College Health*, 66(4), 302-309. https://www.who.int/mental_health/evidence/special_initiative_2019_2023/en/

This article indicated self-help delivered online or through books increases the reach and impact of mental health services among college students. Self-help is cost effective, convenient, and reduces burdens on counseling centers and other university services. This led us to explore online self-help resources.

Reinert, M., Nguyen, T., & Fritze, D. (2019). The state of mental health in America: 2020. *Mental Health America*. <https://mhanational.org/sites/default/files/State%20of%20Mental%20Health%20in%20America%20-%202020.pdf>

This annual report provided state rankings for mental health categories, such as mental illness prevalence rates, access to mental health care, and unmet mental health service needs rates. This report led us to review mental health services in our state and community.

Sandmire, D. A., Rankin, N. E., Gorham, S. R., Eggleston, D. T., French, C. A., Lodge, E. E., Kuns, G. C., & Grimm, D. R. (2016). Psychological and autonomic effects of art making in college-aged students. *Anxiety, Stress & Coping*, 29(5), 561–569. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10615806.2015.1076798>

College students participated in a 2015 study measuring the physical and psychological effects of 30 minutes of arts activities. It concluded art participation is useful in reducing stress and improves cardiovascular functioning. We used this source to identify mental wellness resources for students.

World Health Organization. (2020). WHO special initiative for mental health (2019-2023): Universal health coverage for mental health. https://www.who.int/mental_health/evidence/special_initiative_2019_2023/en/

This report provided worldwide data on mental health issues and service availability. It calls for increased investment for mental health awareness and increased access to quality mental health services. This report led us to apply for a Mellon Foundation HIA grant, which we received.

Zhai, Y., & Du, X. (2020). Addressing collegiate mental health amid COVID-19 pandemic. *Psychiatry Research*, 288, 113003. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2020.113003>

This article provided recommendations to higher education institutions and health professionals to address collegiate mental health needs and challenges posed by COVID-19. We used it to advocate for mental health awareness and website changes at HGTC.



Racial Disparities in Perceptions toward Flu and HPV Vaccinations

Omega Sigma Chapter
Houston Community College
Houston, Texas

Theme

Perceptions of Progress

Abstract

After careful examination of the Honors Study Topic, *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*, we recognized that our chapter's interest fit best under Theme 6: "Perceptions of Progress." We focused on researching the barriers amongst different racial/ethnic groups that have over generations created a change in perspective toward the flu and HPV vaccines. Considering the historical backgrounds, financial status, cultural and personal beliefs, we noticed disparities in perceptions between racial/ethnic groups toward vaccines. Through our research, we discovered that communities that have low income or are under/miseducated about healthcare usually do not receive the flu and/or HPV vaccines. Although flu and HPV vaccines are not required in most states, they are recommended. Many health professionals are working on promoting these life-saving vaccines to influence decision-making and eventual vaccine uptake. After investigating vaccines and their efficacy over time, we decided to create a project whose impact would help inform others about the importance of flu and HPV vaccines. In this vein, the officers volunteered at a clinic that provides healthcare services to low-income or uninsured patients. We were also able to spread awareness by sharing infographics through emails to students and through social media blitzes. We then conducted a survey to connect with the public's opinions to see their current stance on receiving one or both vaccines. Through our volunteer service, patients could express their concerns and request more information on the effectiveness of the flu and HPV vaccinations.

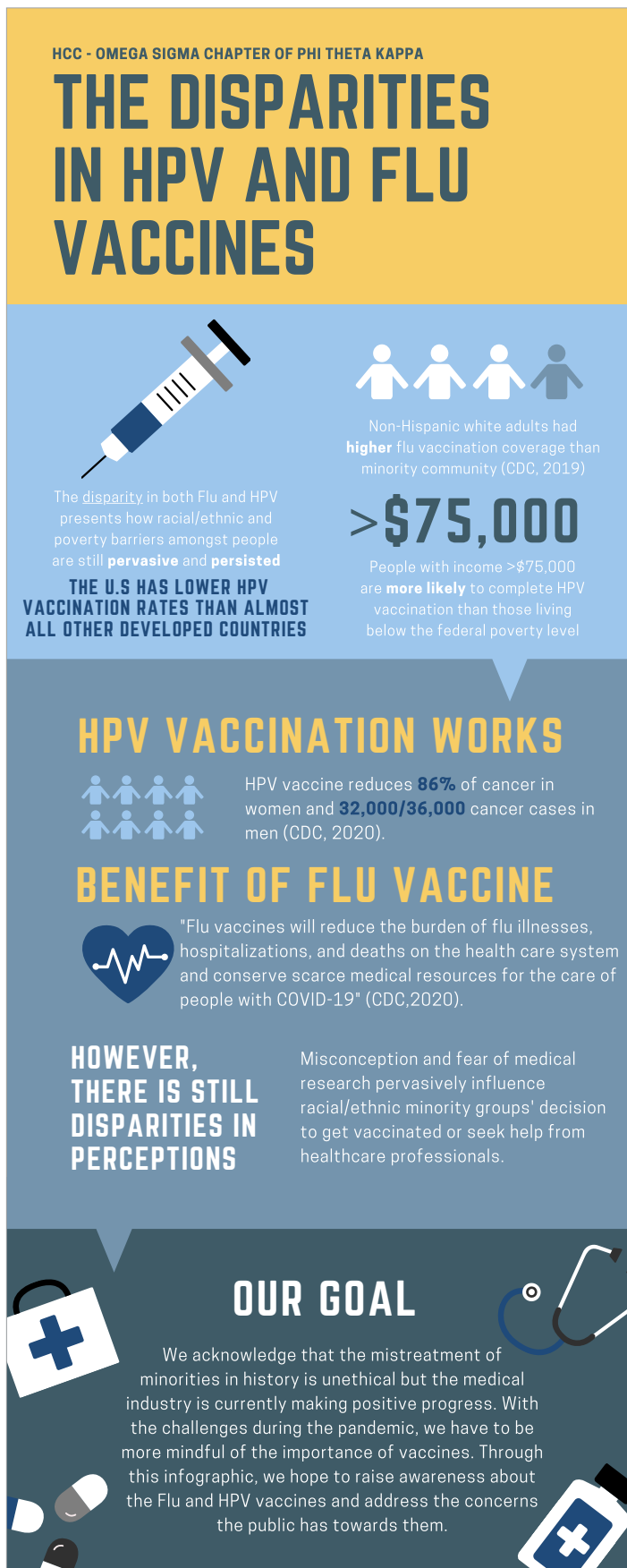


Figure 1

Objectives

Our research objectives were to:

- investigate the history of vaccines to gain increased knowledge about where the changes in perception toward them began.
- understand the impact of flu and HPV vaccines on public health; considering why the vaccines are not required but recommended by health professionals.
- identify the disparities in perceptions toward flu and HPV vaccines amongst racial/ethnic groups and examining the reasons why people refuse or are not able to take the vaccines.

Our collaboration objectives were to:

- collaborate with organizations within the college and community (eventually a clinic) to help others get educated about and access to the flu and HPV vaccines.
- volunteer at a community clinic to expand our outreach advocacy.
- reach out to a college librarian to get access to informative and reliable sources.

Our action's objectives were to:

- raise awareness and educate students and the community about current disparities and misconceptions toward flu and HPV vaccines through an infographic.
- advocate for the importance of vaccination coverage in the different racial/ethnic groups who don't normally participate in receiving the vaccines.
- support our local clinic by providing virtual assistance and donating vaccine doses to a clinic that provides service for low-income and uninsured patients.
- develop a survey to investigate the public's perspective and concerns about flu and HPV vaccines.

Academic Investigation

We began our research by exploring all of the Honors Study Topic themes and developing different ideas that could become a potential topic. After months of weekly discussions, we

chose Theme 6: "Perception of Progress." While reading the Honors Program Guide, we thought about how one can never know the outcome of an experiment or process. For instance, something invented for a positive reason could still have unintended negative consequences for some. We followed this train of thought as we began investigating racial disparities and barriers in the context of perceptions toward medical advancements. One of the most influential medical advances, vaccinations, were developed to protect people from deadly viruses. However, over the years, due to the misuse and misconceptions of these vaccines, people started to distrust them. To find more information and history on this topic, we reached out to our colleges' librarian for help and were able to find academic information on these issues. From this, our main research question was born, "What are the limitations and barriers between different racial/ethnic groups that changed their perceptions of the flu and HPV vaccinations?" We sought to explore whether there was still a misconception or fear of medical research amongst minority groups and whether we could change this for future generations. With guidance from our advisors and healthcare experts, we looked into historical reasons that affected different racial/ethnic groups' perspectives about vaccines, especially flu and HPV.

The Honors Study Topic, *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*, is about inheriting the world from our ancestors and leaving a legacy for the future generations. Our project is connected to the Honors Study Topic, because our collective legacy is heavily affected by past generations. They passed on their cultures, belief systems, and traumas. Our ancestors have endured physical and emotional pain in the name of medical "progress." This lasting legacy affects the way minority groups perceive healthcare professionals and the medical advancements they recommend. One example where we can see growing misconceptions and fear of medical research from racial/ethnic minority groups is the 1932 Tuskegee Syphilis Study. John Hopkins School of Medicine suggested that the Tuskegee study validates the minority groups' suspicions about ethical misconduct by the medical research and the federal government, especially when it comes

to African Americans. The medical industry is currently making medical advancements that, they hope, will lead to a shift in the negative perceptions toward vaccines. However, there are still other challenges that limit different racial/ethnic groups' access and/or ability to acquire the flu and HPV vaccinations. Issues, such as financial challenges, lack of education or information, misconceptions about vaccination's safety, and socio-cultural values about sexual issues, can all prohibit a person from receiving a vaccine. Our project focused on exploring financial challenges, one of the main factors causing the disparities amongst different racial/ethnic groups in flu and HPV vaccine initiation.

Conclusions

Our research found, "minorities under the age of 65 years were almost twice as likely than whites not to have health insurance" and "23% of African Americans compared to 7% of white Medicare recipients reported difficulty in paying for medical services" (Shavers-Hornaday & Lynch, 1997). Research from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for the flu vaccination coverage during 2017-2018 stated, "Non-Hispanic white adults had higher flu vaccination coverage than non-Hispanic black, Hispanic, Asian, and AI/AN adults and adults of other or multiple races" (CDC, 2019). For the HPV vaccine, there is no overall racial/ethnic difference in HPV vaccine initiation. However, "adolescents who were black or Hispanic were significantly less likely to complete vaccination than whites. Those whose living is below the federal poverty level were less likely to complete HPV vaccination than adolescents with household incomes of less than \$75,000" (Niccolai et al., 2011).

Action

We investigated the disparities amongst different racial/ethnic groups in the context of flu and HPV vaccinations and identified certain barriers that are still pervasive today. We recognized the need for a change in perspective toward positive outcomes of medical advancements, especially flu and HPV vaccinations. With the objectives of our action plan, we wanted to spread awareness and educate others about the importance of vaccines. San Jose Clinic, a non-profit organization, has

as its mission statement, “To provide quality healthcare and education to those with limited access to such services in an environment that respects the dignity of each person” (San Jose Clinic, 2020). It inspired us to collaborate and helped patients schedule flu vaccination appointments via phone. This opportunity helped us acknowledge different perspectives of patients. For instance, several expressed their concerns about the effectiveness of the flu vaccine. Considering this, we developed a survey and an infographic to ask for the public’s perspectives on vaccines and provide further information based on their concerns (Figure 1). Some responses expressed their mistrust toward vaccines due to the lack of information and different inherited understandings. This allows us to connect our action component to “Perceptions of Progress” and the overall Honors Study Topic, *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*. The development of medical advancements, particularly vaccines, could lead to negative consequences that affect communities. Moreover, inherited disbelief in the healthcare system due to institutional racism or discrimination against minorities contributes to possible distrust from future generations. Therefore, the medical community needs to be aware of how the past affects the future and work to heal the rifts in these communities. To build a long-lasting legacy, we must move further than just simply acknowledge the hardships our ancestors endured and work with those communities to ensure the efficacy of vaccines in future generations.

Through our action, we examined existing concerns toward flu and HPV vaccines and informed people about the misconceptions that will directly affect their communities. The service component in our plan allowed us to make a change and advocate for equality in vaccination initiation amongst the low-income and uninsured communities through a local clinic. We gained more insights into our community’s

concerns and perspectives toward vaccines. In general, our action component had a big impact by helping us identify and combat the disparities of perceptions amongst different racial/ethnic groups.

Impact

As a collective effort, we sought to reach a wide range of people. We began with our research committee to brainstorm ideas. This opportunity allowed members to grow their research and communication skills. Our officers reached out to the San Jose Clinic to bring awareness of flu vaccine availability. With our Honors in Action grant, we donated 60 vaccine doses to immunize low-income and uninsured communities. Throughout the project, we have also reached out to a cohort of students and patients at the community clinic via a combination of emails and social media posts with an infographic handout to educate about the disparities that flu and HPV vaccines have between social groups. With the struggle of COVID-19, we overcame the obstacle of social distancing and focused on remote access when calling patients to discuss the flu and HPV vaccine opportunity. In total, we contacted 35 patients to help them schedule immunization appointments with the clinic.

Our social media posts have reached over 500 people, a combination of students, family, friends, and others. Additionally, with the outreach of a cumulative effort of 600 students and chapter members via email, we have collected data via a survey to ask for the public’s perspectives toward flu and HPV vaccinations. Our chapter is thrilled to have 83 responses from a diverse community with different opinions and concerns about vaccinations. The survey data allowed us to examine the public’s understanding and perceptions about the two vaccines. For instance, we asked the public whether they were aware of racial/ethnic barriers that prohibit low-income minorities from receiving the flu and HPV vaccines. Although 79.5% agree that they were aware of the barriers within our community, certain challenges and racial disparities are still pervasive. Through this research, our chapter wanted to support

a non-profit clinic and to emphasize the importance of vaccines and help minority groups gain access to the flu and HPV vaccines.

The survey has played an essential role in our personal and research skills development. We wanted to break through our differences and advocate for equality in vaccination initiation together as members of the community. We were able to gain knowledge on pervasive disparities and develop our communication skills in order to navigate our stated collaborative and action objectives. Throughout the Honors in Action process, we grew as individual scholars and leaders, but part of our legacy includes supporting other leaders as well.

Resources

Agénor, M., Abboud, S., Delgadillo, J. G., Pérez, A. E., Peitzmeier, S. M., & Borrero, S. (2018). Intersectional nativity and racial/ethnic disparities in human papillomavirus vaccination initiation among U.S. women: A national population-based study. *Cancer Causes & Control*, 29(10), 927-936. doi:10.1007/s10552-018-1069-1

This research addresses racial/ethnic disparities in human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination initiation among U.S. women. There are significant challenges faced by women from different races/ethnicities such as financial challenges, language barriers, racism, and misconceptions about the vaccination's safety and socio-cultural values about related sexual issues.

Center for Disease Control. (2019, September 26). Flu Vaccination Coverage, United States, 2018–19 Influenza Season. <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/fluview/coverage-1819estimates.htm>

The CDC's research shows the disparities in flu vaccination coverage amongst different racial/ethnic groups during the 2018-2019 season. It also indicates that concern about safety and doubt about the effectiveness of vaccines are the common reasons why parents do not vaccinate their children against influenza.

Hotez, P. J. (2014). Vaccine diplomacy: Historical perspectives and future directions.

PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases, 8(6). doi:10.1371/journal.pntd.0002808

We chose this journal article as one of our sources because it acknowledges the current and future impact of vaccine diplomacy. The authors address the historical context of vaccines and why they are the most significant medical advancement ever created by humankind. They focus on vaccines because they are relevant to all countries, especially in the case of global pandemics. Scientists and world leaders work with the World Health Organization (WHO) to prepare and combat HIV/AIDS and the flu.

Jeudin, P., Liveright, E., Carmen, M. G., & Perkins, R. B. (2013). Race, ethnicity and income as factors for HPV vaccine acceptance and use. *Human Vaccines & Immunotherapeutics*, 9(7), 1413-1420. doi:10.4161/hv.24422

This study recognized the racial disparities and barriers that prohibit widespread vaccine acceptance. The common barriers among Black, Hispanic, and Asian communities include lack of information, lack of access to health insurance, and safety concerns. It is crucial to limit these barriers to decrease the risk of cancer amongst low-income and minority adolescents.

Niccolai, L. M., Mehta, N. R., & Hadler, J. L. (2011). Racial/ethnic and poverty disparities in human papillomavirus vaccination completion. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 41(4), 428-433.

This article examined the completion rate of HPV vaccinations based on the effects of racial/ethnic disparities and poverty. The study showed that, although HPV completion rates increased in 2008-2009, significant differences persisted in race/ethnicity.

Shavers-Hornaday, V. L., & Lynch, C. F. (1997). Why are African Americans under-represented in medical research studies? Impediments to participation. *Ethnicity & Health*, 2(1/2), 31. DOI: 10.1080/13557858.1997.9961813

We chose this source because it showcases how racial/ethnic minorities are underrepresented in research and healthcare. Within these communities, it is common for families to be influenced by

cultural barriers such as stigmas, traditional beliefs on healthcare/medicine, and language barriers.

Vupputuri, S., Rubenstein, K. B., Derus, A. J., Loftus, B. C., & Horberg, M. A. (2019). Factors contributing to racial disparities in influenza vaccinations. *Plos One*, 14(4). doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0213972

We chose this source because it provided us with the graph showing the geographic distribution of influenza vaccinations in the four main areas served by Kaiser Permanente Mid-Atlantic States (KPMAS) by race. It also allowed us to present details on racial disparities based on gender, income, and race of the patients.

Yoo, B., Kasajima, M., Phelps, C. E., Fiscella, K., Bennett, N. M., & Szilagyi, P. G. (2011). Influenza vaccine supply and racial/ethnic disparities in vaccination among the elderly. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 40(1), 1-10. doi:10.1016/j.amepre.2010.09.028

This article examined the racial/ethnic disparities in vaccination rates among the elderly and associates it with the influenza vaccine supply. The study found that improved vaccination supply decreased racial/ethnic disparities, whereas delayed or limited vaccination supply increased the disparities.



Voting Rights: Inheritances and Legacies

Beta Lambda Delta Chapter
Jefferson State Community College,
Shelby-Hoover Campus
Birmingham, Alabama

Theme

Perceptions of Progress

Abstract

The year 2020 marked the centennial anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. This amendment enfranchised white women, yet many African, Asian, and Native Americans remained disenfranchised. This contradictory status of enfranchised and disenfranchised individuals in a democracy led us to conduct an academic investigation into inheritances and legacies regarding voting rights. We studied and annotated over 60 sources, including academic books, journals, and interviews with scholars. We also surveyed 447 respondents that measured feelings toward voting. We discovered that while numerous citizens obtained the right to vote, primarily through the Voting Rights Act of 1965, many remained suspicious of their votes making a difference. Though they had inherited the franchise, a legacy of past injustice colored their perceptions of democracy. We identified a community need to intervene by educating the next generation of voters to embrace voting and civic engagement. We then developed a comprehensive curriculum on voting rights distributed to 6,333 students at 11 area middle schools. Our curriculum included:

- Zoom performances of both a 1912 Suffrage “Propaganda Play” and a Beta Lambda Delta original play examining contemporary voting issues.
- lesson plans and activities, including a “Suffrage Simulation” and poetry contest.
- reflection and a call to action.

Our project became a central part of the curriculum for 6,333 middle-school students at 11 schools in two school districts. After completing our curriculum, students reported an increased

commitment to voting rights and civic engagement at substantial rates.

Objectives

Initial research objectives included:

- conducting a community survey on attitudes toward voting and civic engagement.
- creating a research team to study and annotate at least 30 academic sources concerning the Women’s Suffrage Movement in the United States.
- creating an additional research team to study and annotate at least 30 academic sources concerning the Civil Rights Movement and contemporary voting issues.
- holding a scholarly symposium to discuss and debate what contemporary voting-rights activists inherited from past activists and what legacies they can leave.
- using multiple-genre sources, such as academic books, articles, archival artifacts, and interviews.

Stage-two research objectives included:

- studying early 20th-century clothing, music, and housing in the United States to make our play historically accurate.
- investigating filmmaking techniques and distribution options for local filmmakers.

To act, we developed a comprehensive curriculum entitled “Voting Rights: Inheritances and Legacies.” Our action objectives included:

- performing an authentic “propaganda play” from the Suffragist era.
- writing and performing an original play that addresses contemporary voting-rights issues.
- developing ancillary materials teachers could use alongside our plays.
- sponsoring a competition whereby students could use their creative writing skills to address the issue of voting rights.
- providing an opportunity for both project assessment and an internal assessment of how we grew through our HIA experience.

Still Photos of ELECTION DAY AND LINES (Figure 1)

- Photo Legend (Top to Bottom):
- Alabama Secretary of State John Merrill
- Still photo from ELECTION DAY
- Still photo from LINES



Figure 1

Collaboration objectives included:

- writing for and receiving grant funding.
- working with theater experts to produce professional plays.
- obtaining endorsements from state-level election officials.
- partnering with area school systems.
- establishing an online portal where collaborators could stay in touch with us, offering advice and insight as our project progressed.

Academic Investigation

To better understand attitudes toward voting held at our college, we administered a Voting Rights Survey. We had 447 respondents. Of those responding, 58.5% believed elections in the United States to be unfair, and 85.3% felt like their votes did not count because of money controlling politics. This told us that exploring the issue of voting rights and civic engagement, especially in the cradle of the American Civil Rights Movement, was vitally important. A member noted that 2020 was the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which gave (white) women the right to vote. This led to a discussion of past social struggles and their contributions to societal progression. We then formulated two research questions:

- How did the United States Women’s Suffrage Movement participants leave an inheritance of progressive strategies, especially concerning voting and social justice movements?

- How can we channel the inheritance left to us from the Women’s Suffrage Movement to leave a legacy of a more robust and progressive democracy?

Conclusions

We formed two research teams. Our “Suffrage Team” studied and annotated over 30 academic sources concerning the Women’s Suffrage Movement. Our “Contemporary Team” studied and annotated over 30 sources concerning the Civil Rights Movement and contemporary voting rights. We then held a symposium to discuss and reconcile what we had learned. These research conclusions emerged:

- The United States Women’s Suffrage Movement was more than a national struggle for the franchise; it was a pivotal moment in the ongoing struggle for human rights (Lemay, 2019).
- The Suffrage Movement left a legacy and gave future activists a blueprint of intersectional activism and coalition building (Dubois, 2020).

struggle. Elected representatives at the local and state level often seek to disenfranchise citizens and suppress the vote under the cover of voting “reforms” such as voter ID laws and voting roll purges (Anderson, 2018).

- Engaging with the arts could be an effective strategy for educating the next generation of voters on the importance of civic engagement and participatory democracy via the franchise (Dassori, 2005).

Based on these conclusions, we developed an initial action plan that would:


- utilize the arts to educate middle-school students about the inheritance left by the Suffrage movement and the future legacy of voting rights.
- teach the tensions within voting rights movements.
- encourage civic engagement in future citizens.

Action

Anderson, Dubois, Dudden, and Lemay convinced us of the value of educating young

people about voting rights struggles, including teaching the various movements’ triumphs and tensions. Dassori argued that the arts are an effective educational vehicle. Our action strategy began by recording a Zoom performance of Election Day, a 1912 Suffragist “propaganda play” written by Emily Sargent Lewis. We paired this play with *Lines*, an original play written by chapter officers. Together, these plays addressed historical and contemporary voting issues, showing what we inherited from Suffragists and how we can leave a voting-rights legacy (Figure 1).

Suffrage Simulation Classroom Activity (Figure 2)



- **Directions:** This activity can be done in the classroom or remotely.
- 1. The teacher will place paper squares in a box (one square per student). Two-thirds of the squares will be green, and one-third of the squares will be red. (If doing this activity remotely, the instructor may assign students colors randomly.)
- 2. The instructor will inform the students that an election is coming up! However, only students in the green group may vote. Students in the red group may not vote as “everyone knows the red group should not get to vote.”
- 3. The teacher will then ask the red group to create a suffrage campaign explaining why they should be allowed to vote.
- 4. The red group will present their ideas to the green group.
- 5. The green group will then respond by voting on whether the franchise should be extended to the red group.
- 6. Your teacher will debrief you after this simulation.

Figure 2

- Not all legacies are noble. Elements of the Suffrage Movement depended upon women privileged by race and social class advocating for the franchise by disparaging and demeaning African Americans working toward their enfranchisement (Dudden, 2014).
- Protecting the franchise is an ongoing

We also created supporting materials for teachers to use with our plays. These materials included a Suffrage Simulation, whereby students organized voting-rights campaigns within their classrooms (Figure 2). In addition, we sponsored a poetry contest where students could write about voting rights. We delivered our curriculum to schools via an online platform. Students could study our curriculum in their classrooms, and

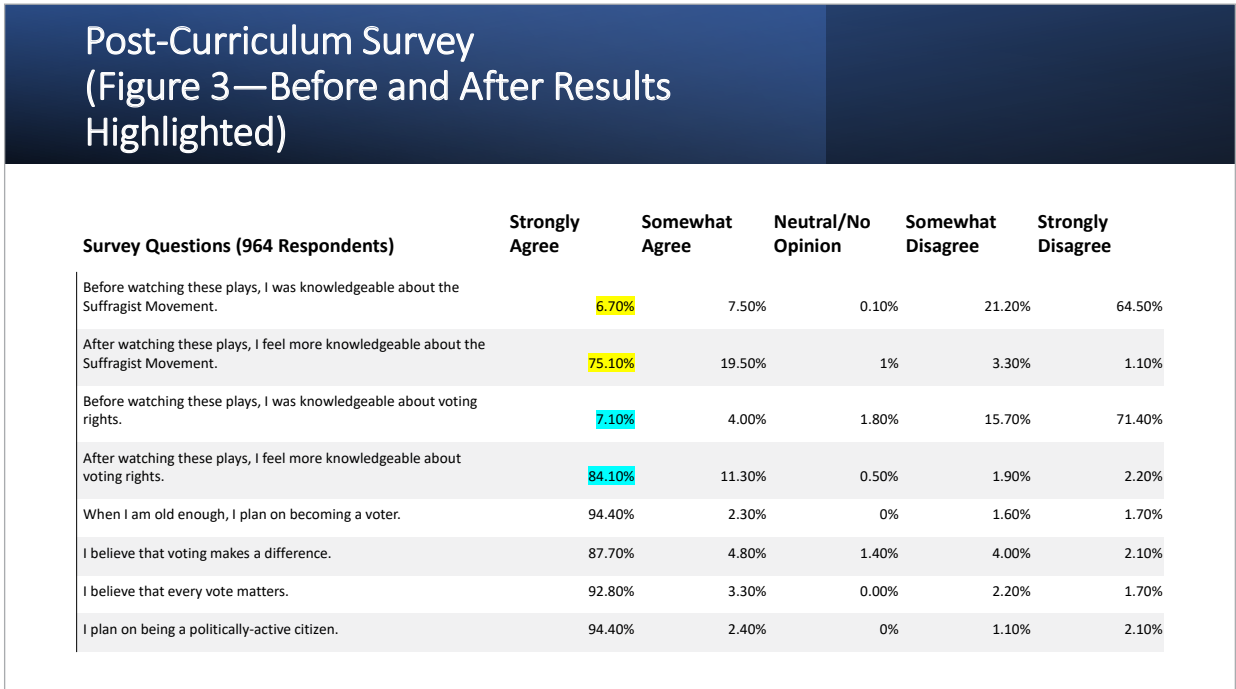


Figure 3

students at home, due to COVID-19, could also access and engage with our work. After completing our Voting Rights Unit, students participated in assessment and reflection activities.

These collaborative partners assisted us in emphasizing our goal to educate young people about our research conclusions:

- Alabama Secretary of State John Merrill. Mr. Merrill provided a video introduction for our plays. The endorsement of our state’s highest-ranking election official helped us promote our curriculum to schools.
- The Mellon Foundation. The \$1,000 grant we received from the Mellon Foundation defrayed our research expenses. This award enhanced our academic research and served as an action catalyst.
- The Shelby County and St. Clair County school systems. These school systems endorsed our project, making it an official part of their middle-school curriculum.
- These partners dovetailed with our research conclusion concerning the arts:
 - JSCC’s Spotlight Drama Club. Drama students helped us learn about playwriting and performance. They also helped us with dramaturgy and research, ensuring cultural and historical accuracy.

- Birmingham-Southern College and The Sidewalk Film Festival. Representatives from both entities worked with us in an advisory capacity and helped us learn how to produce films.

Impact

Quantitative results included that our curriculum reached 6,333 students at 11 middle schools from two school districts. Pre- and post-surveys measured learning outcomes. In our initial survey, participants exhibited a lack of knowledge about and a skepticism toward voting. After participating in our project, they overwhelmingly evolved to better understand the power of voting obtained through voting rights movements. These students reported:

- I believe that voting makes a difference: 94.4%
- I believe that every vote matters: 87.7%
- I plan on being a politically active citizen: 94.4% (Figure 3)

Qualitative results included that both middle school and PTK students better understood how voting rights were obtained among societal strata of privilege, giving participants a greater understanding of the voting rights progress we

inherited and the challenges faced as we leave a legacy for others. Our middle school students comments included:

- “I wish I could vote right now! But I can still be politically active until I turn 18.”
- “I used to think my vote would not make a difference. I don’t believe that anymore.”

Another student wrote: “I am Black. I hope they don’t stop me from voting,” showing the critical work that remains.

In addition, we grew as chapter members. Before our project, some members reported feeling lackadaisical about voting; not one officer currently feels that way. We learned about the struggles that others endured so that we could vote. We held a post-project virtual retreat where members reflected on our work. Some comments made were:

- “Suffragists and Civil Rights activists put their lives on the line for the vote. How can I ignore what I inherited from them? I need to leave a legacy as they did.”
- “I will do more than vote this year. I will get active. Citizens before me did their part; now, I will do mine!”

Chapter members also gained self-confidence. When COVID-19 intensified, we did not know if we could complete this project. We are proud of how we persevered as scholars, servant-leaders, and activists. This project is the beginning of lifetimes of activism and service that wait before us.

As we prepared to submit our Honors in Action Hallmark Award entry, inheritances and legacies of the Suffragist and modern voting-rights movements converged. Kamala Harris, a Black woman who is also of South-Asian descent, became the United States’ first female Vice President. President Biden said, “Today, we mark the swearing in of the first woman in American history elected to national office — Vice President Kamala Harris. Don’t tell me things can’t change.” The battle is long and often lonely, but it is worth it. We have witnessed the vote changing history. Through our project, we hope that we inspired

the next generation to make their voices heard and leave their legacy through the most precious, fragile, and powerful tool of democracy — the vote.

Resources

Anderson, A. (2018). *One person, no vote: How voter suppression is destroying our democracy*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Anderson, Chair of African American Studies at Emory University, provided a compelling account of current strategies deployed to suppress votes. Anderson focused on how techniques such as voter ID laws, purges of voter rolls, and gerrymandering all disproportionately suppress the votes of people of color and lower-income voters. Anderson’s work served as a crucial reminder that the franchise remains under assault. Her work proved essential in our decision to include robust voter education in our project’s action portion.

Colvin, A. (2020, June 30). Zoom interview with Beta Lambda Delta Chapter.

After reviewing and annotating documents housed in the Alabama Department of Archives and History, we interviewed Alex Colvin, curator and Auburn University history professor. Dr. Colvin helped us interpret what we learned about how the Suffrage movement unfolded in Alabama, including the intense opposition from many women based on their race and class privilege. She explained that many Alabama Suffragists’ qualities, such as persistence and truth-speaking, catalyzed future voting-rights movements in the state. This inheritance ultimately set the stage for America’s iconic Civil Rights Movement, in which Alabama served as Ground Zero.

Daniels, G. (2020). *Uncounted: the crisis of voter suppression in America*. New York University Press.

Law professor Gilda Daniels carefully examined current barriers voters face, including voter identification laws, voting roll purges, and false accusations of voter fraud. We were especially interested in Professor Daniel’s analysis of the assault on the Voting Rights Act of 1965 since the central court case that challenged the Act originated in Shelby County, Alabama, our home county. Professor Daniel’s critiques enlightened our

understanding of the quest for voting rights and enfranchisement as being a current issue instead of a merely historical one. Her arguments proved instrumental to our desire to address voting rights through our project's action component.

Dassori, E. (2005). Performing the woman question: The emergence of anti-suffrage drama. *ATQ (The American Transcendental Quarterly)*, 19(4), 301. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Performing-the-Woman-Question%3A-The-Emergence-of-Dassori/6553ed24870a4ba1bdb26312fb27559cc753d703>

Tufts University Professor Emma Dassori explored the emergence of late 19th-century and early 20-century anti-suffragist "parlor plays." These plays presented Suffragist women as being "self-absorbed, negligent of their duties as wives and mothers, [and] ridiculously passionate about the cause for women's rights." Ironically, these anti-Suffrage plays sparked a cottage industry of professionally produced pro-suffrage dramas. Dassori's work sparked the idea for us to use playwriting and performances in our action component.

Dubois, E. C. (2020). *Suffrage: Women's long battle for the vote*. Simon & Shuster.

This work, written by UCLA history professor Ellen Carol Dubois, provided an exhaustive overview of the American Women's Suffrage Movement. Dubois noted the intersectionality of the suffrage movement with social justice movements such as abolition, temperance, and family planning. She also noted many Suffragists' vacillation between cooperating with and opposing racial justice activists. Dubois's linkage of the Women's Suffrage Movement to larger social justice conversations illustrated the power of coalition building that future activists built upon to achieve progress for expanding the franchise.

Dudden, F. (2014). *Fighting chance: The struggle over woman Suffrage and black Suffrage in reconstruction America*. Oxford University Press.

Dudden, Professor of History at Colgate University, disrupted the mythology of an ideologically pure

women's suffrage campaign. She demonstrated how women and African Americans' goals advocating for the franchise splintered into an adversarial, even bigoted competition. In the process, many activists who argued for universal Suffrage for white women did so at the expense of people of color. We tended to view the activism of Suffragists in a universally flattering light. Dudden's work prodded us to see inheritances and legacies as nuanced categories containing positive and negative elements.

Goodier, S. (2012). *No votes for women: The New York state anti-suffrage movement*. University of Illinois Press.

Hamilton College's Professor Susan Goodier presented a fascinating view of women in New York state who opposed women's Suffrage. She explored the contradictions of women engaging in highly political activities with the ironic goal of excluding women from the most basic form of political expression: the vote. While these women's notions strike modern readers as antiquated at best, Goodier explained how anti-Suffragists viewed their primary power as rooted in domesticity, motherhood, and racial privilege. This volume helped us understand, though not agree with, women who advocated for positions seemingly against their self-interests.

Lemay, K. C. (2019). *Votes for women! A portrait of persistence*. Princeton University Press.

Historian Kate Clark Lemay provided us with a crucial piece of "bridge" research concerning the 19th Amendment's legacy. We had grown frustrated at research that analyzed the American Women's Suffrage Movement as a stand-alone movement instead of contextualizing it within the longer march toward justice. Lemay showed how the Women's Suffrage Movement influenced the American Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s and the Native American enfranchisement movement. Lemay's study helped us see the Women's Suffrage Movement as part of an ongoing struggle instead of a historical artifact.



Impact of Human Activity on Animals

Tau Theta Chapter
Labette Community College,
Main Campus
Parsons, Kansas

Theme

Natural and Constructed Environments

Abstract

As Tau Theta began focusing on the inheritance and legacy this generation is leaving on the environment through the COVID-19 pandemic, focus turned to researching the impact on animals specifically during the pandemic. It was discovered that our human activities are changing the behaviors of wild animals, birds, and butterflies as well as domesticated animals. Through Zoom meetings, Google Hangouts, and Google Drive sharing, members gained information through lengthy discussions on the impact of the decreased activity on the environment and animals along with how we can educate to keep these positive changes going once we are able to return to “normal” activity. We concluded that the best way to determine a proper action was to interview someone with daily contact with animals. The chapter reached out and interviewed staff from the Tulsa Zoo. The presentation increased the member’s knowledge of animals; and through the collaboration with the Tulsa Zoo as well as with the funds from the Honors in Action (HIA) Grant, it was determined to increase awareness of our daily activities on animals through an educational program. The chapter paid for the cost of the “Zoo 2 U” virtual presentation for 14 classrooms, reaching over 300 elementary school children in Labette county. This provided a local impact with a focus on how the children could help animals here and globally throughout their lifetime.

Objectives

The research objectives were determined during the virtual chapter meeting early in the fall semester. COVID-19 had an impact on the development of the objectives because we had

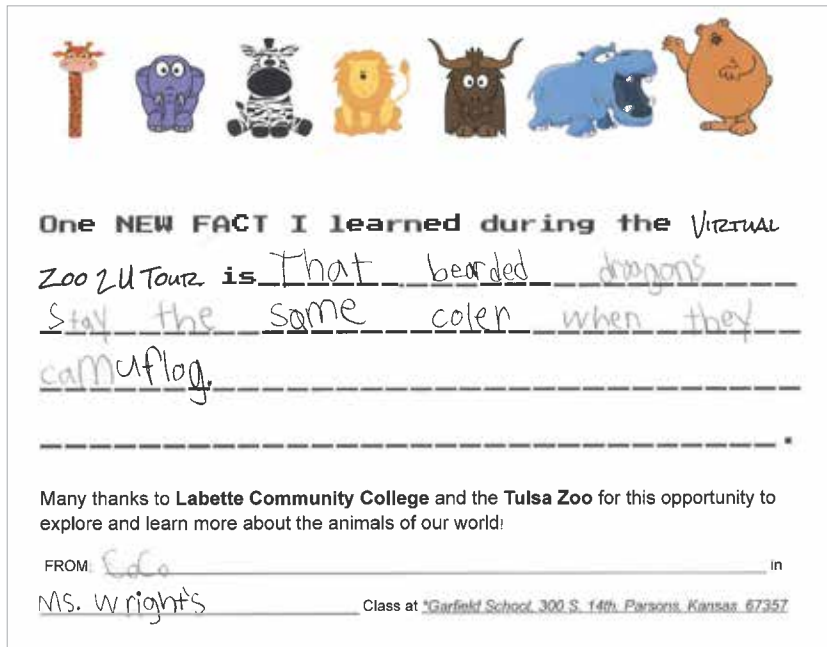


Figure 1

new leaders and members as the active members graduated in the spring. The first research objective was to collect by late August at least 20 research summaries from members through an email request. This email message included a presentation from the college librarian on how to complete thorough academic research using the online databases while off campus. In addition, an invitation to join the Honors in Action (HIA) Team was extended. The second research objective set a timeline of early September, after which the HIA team would review research, determine those sources that intentionally focused on the topic, and determine either a tentative answer to our research question or the next steps for additional research to be completed before the September meeting.

Finally, the third research objective was to have the members, during the September meeting of the fall semester, reflect on the research summaries, provide additional discussion through personal experiences with the pandemic and human activity on animal well-being, and then finalize the answer, leading toward the action portion of the project.

The chapter's action and collaboration objectives were straightforward and based on the research conclusions of needing to address education about protecting animals and their environments. Although environmental issues are global, the members were focused

on making a local impact through educating children, as they are the future. Tau Theta wanted to raise awareness and educate school children, therefore, the action and collaboration objectives emphasized this focus. The first objective was to reach out to all of the grade schools in the two-county service area of Labette Community College (LCC) in hopes of collaborating with them on this project. A second objective focused on receiving the HIA Grant to help fund the action portion of the project since there was no current fundraising

allowed on campus. The third objective was to not only collaborate with grade schools but also with the Tulsa Zoo to provide a virtual experience for students. A final objective was to inform the LCC campus and the community about the impact of COVID-19 through a press release about the project.

Academic Investigation

As the chapter completed its reflection on *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy* during the September meeting, the theme "Natural and Constructed Environments" was the constant theme in the many different areas of interest of chapter members. Through further discussion and brainstorming, the focus on animals and how they are impacted by human activity became a passionate focus, therefore leading to the research question, "How has COVID-19 impacted animals and their environments?" Research was received from close to a half-dozen members after the email request and training on academic research using LCC library resources. All members were given access to a Google Drive created by Ashley, a chapter officer.

Conclusions

The HIA Team reviewed the research and developed a tentative answer to our research question that animals are impacted by human activities such as vehicles, public transportation,

noise, and littering. During the September chapter meeting, the HIA Team facilitated discussions that included Fiona, a chapter officer, sharing changes in animals at the nearby Independence Zoo that she visits frequently. Another member, Katrina, discussed the impact of water pollution affecting animals. From this, the HIA Team reached out to the largest zoo near LCC to gain more information about these concerns. Once the Tulsa Zoo presented during the October chapter meeting, members determined they would like to address educating others about the way human activities can affect the environment of an animal, both good and bad. Although the impact of human activity on animals is a global issue, the chapter felt they could make a significant local impact by reaching out to schools in the two-county service area.

Action

After the presentation by the Tulsa Zoo Education Manager during our October meeting, chapter members discussed with the zoo manager our research conclusions as well as the information presented by the manager. As a result of our discussion, the group determined an educational advocacy and awareness action part of the HIA project focused on children would be the best way to impact the communities that LCC serves. This partnership with the Tulsa Zoo was key to meeting all action objectives that were set that addressed our research conclusion that education is a key to helping animals maintain their natural habitats. By working with children, our hope was that they would go home and share the experience with their parents and hopefully be more invested in protecting the animals and the environment as they grew older.

Chapter officers Fiona and Ashley developed the email message that was sent to the principals at all grade schools in Labette and Cherokee counties. From this communication, teachers contacted the chapter to schedule presentations by the Tulsa Zoo during November and December. The HIA Team worked together to send emails to each teacher with the Zoom link and request for pictures and comments (Figure 1). The group worked to ensure the 14 classrooms requesting the virtual "Zoo 2 U"

presentation would have what they needed to help educate the children. Our team had to be flexible at times due to the remote operations, but we surpassed each obstacle faced.

In addition, the chapter developed a press release that was sent to area media outlets and internal emails to all LCC students and staff on multiple occasions to let them know about the findings of the research and the action project. Throughout the action portion of our HIA project, members gained an appreciation for the impact they were having within their community on an issue that extends globally. Once the presentations ended, the HIA Team and other members were excited to read the comments sent by participating children and teachers. Tau Theta and the Tulsa Zoo staff had a final meeting to discuss the impact of the presentations on students and teachers. The zoo staff had never done so many presentations within such a short time frame and appreciated the learning experience this project provided them.

Impact

Tau Theta's project led to over 300 children in three different Labette County schools watching and learning from the "Zoo 2 U" presentations. This would not have been possible without the HIA Team writing and receiving the HIA Grant from the Mellon Foundation and Phi Theta Kappa. The chapter only had to contribute an additional \$50 to have all 14 classrooms experience this virtual adventure that left them excited but also aware of the impact they can have on animals and their environments. The grant allowed the first three action objectives to be achieved.

Tau Theta, along with collaborating with the Tulsa Zoo and grade schools, worked with the LCC Public Relations Department to ensure the fourth objective of educating the campus and community about the HIA project was achieved. A press release was sent before and after the action project to ensure the LCC staff as well as Labette county residents understood and were aware of the impact of COVID-19 on animals and their environments.

In addition to student comments (Figure 2), teachers provided comments about the opportunity including the following two quotes:



Figure 2

- “They all told me they enjoyed hearing about the animals. Several told me that they did not know turtles died when they lost their shell, crabs grew new parts of their body, and hedge hogs could roll up in balls when afraid. So with these conversations, I knew they had learned information they might not have gotten yet if it had not been for our ‘visit’ to the zoo. We had 21 children watch on those two days. Thanks again for a learning experience for my students.”
– Deana O’Conner, First Grade Teacher.
- “I thought the presenter did a good job. She was very knowledgeable. The kids were engaged the whole time. They loved that they were able to ask questions.”
– Penny Jacquinot, Third Grade Teacher.

The planning and implementation process of the HIA project has left a lasting impact on members and officers by helping them receive a hands-on experience to assist on a local level with a global issue affecting animals in society as well as wild animals and their environment. Katrina, a chapter member who assisted throughout the project stated, “As I researched the topic

and then worked with the teachers to schedule presentations, I could see the impact of our efforts and this excites me for this coming semester as we plan for additional projects to change our campus and our community.” Chapter officer Ashley learned more oral and written communication skills throughout the project. In addition, as an education major, working with school children and teachers allowed her to understand their challenges in scheduling activities for the classroom.

In conclusion, the project’s scope led members to understand how we have inherited our environment and how we can leave a legacy for generations when we take care of it.

Resources

Bar, H. (2020). COVID-19 lockdown: Animal life, ecosystem and atmospheric environment. *Environ Dev Sustainability*, 10, 400- 418. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-020-01002-7>

The article focused on how animal behavior as well as the environment changed when there was a global lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With less human activity, the environment improved, and animals changed their behavior, such as no longer hiding when in normally populated areas and busy streets. Turtles were able to nest in peace and the numbers of birds and butterflies surged across the country.

Diffenbaugh, N. S., Field, C. B., Appel, E. A., Azevedo, I. L., Baldocchi, D. D., Burke, M., Burney, J. A., Ciais, P., Davis, S. J., Fiore, A. M., Fletcher, S. M., Hertel, T. W., Horton, D. E., Hsiang, S. M., Jackson, R. B., Jin, X., Montgomery, A., Nadeau, K. C., Pataki, D. E., Randerson, J. T., Reicherson, M. et al. (2020). The COVID-19 lockdowns: a window into the Earth System. *Nature Reviews: Earth and Environment*, 1, 470–481. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s43017-020-0079-1>

The authors looked at the impact of the earth system interactions linked to COVID-19 and how it would enhance the earth despite creating a socioeconomic disruption. The motivation of the findings are to provide education and insight to humans on changing their behavior after the pandemic to ensure animals and our environment thrive.

Garvin, K. (2020, October). COVID-19 Impact on Zoo Animals. [Personal Interview by F. Bartelli].

Ms. Garvin indicated that during the pandemic shut down many animals seemed to miss people on property. For example, one of the grizzly bears loves to interact with guests so she definitely missed that. During that time, the staff would make extra effort to visit her more often. Once the zoo reopened, for the first few days, the animals were definitely aware that people had returned and would watch and look at them more than before.

Harvard T. H. Chang School of Public Health. (2020, July 6). Coronavirus and climate change. <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/c-change/subtopics/coronavirus-and-climate-change/>

The focus of this website was on the pandemic and the environment. One key point the article makes is the impact deforestation can have on animal migrations, which could influence the spread of infectious disease. It takes a hard look at the role climate change and human activity have on animals and their environments.

Lindsey, P., Allan, J., Brehony, P., Dickman, A., Robson, A. Begg, C., Bhammer, H., Blaken, L., Breuer, T., Fitzgerald, K., Flyman, M., Gandiwa, P., Giva, N., Kaelo, D., Nampindo, S., Nyamba, N., Steiner, K. Parker, A., Roe, D., Thomson, P., Trimble, M., et al. (2020). Conserving Africa's wildlife and wildlands through the COVID-19 crisis and beyond. *Nature Ecology and Evolution*, 4, 1300–1310. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41559-020-1275-6>

COVID-19 has impacted the financial funding and provided restrictions for many conservation groups, which impacts the ability to support animals and their environment. The authors recognize the critical impact on wildlife and the depleted funds to assist. Education and an international effort to protect and support the environment is needed.

Rutz, C., Loretto, M., Bates, A. E. et al. (2020). COVID-19 lockdown allows researchers to quantify the effects of human activity on wildlife. *Nature Ecology and Evolution*, 4, 1156–1159. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41559-020-1237-z>

Wildlife behavior has changed due to the pandemic, as in some places animals are roaming more freely. However, other animals have faced challenges such as fewer humans around to stop poachers and fewer people eating out to impact urban-dwelling animals. The authors focus on the solution of mobilizing and educating others to impact animals globally.

Saadat, S., Rawtani, D., & Hussain, X. M. (2020). Environmental perspective of COVID-19. *Science of the Total Environment*, 728, 2-6. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2020.138870>

The impact of medical waste being discarded in animal's environments brings a different view to the issue of COVID-19 within this article. Both animals on land and in sea may eat this and it could lead to their death. More study and education must happen regarding the impact of the epidemic on the environment as well as animals and humans within it.

Vincent, A., Mamzer, H., Ng, Z., & Farkas, K. J. (2020). People and their pets in the times of the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Society Register*, 4(3), 111-128. <https://doi.org/10.14746/sr.2020.4.3.06>

The focus of this article was on companion animals and the impact of the pandemic on these pets. To ensure animal welfare is to ensure freedom from hunger, thirst, discomfort, pain, injury, disease, fear, and distress as well as freedom to express normal behavior. The pandemic may be an opportunity for some animals to be adopted, but others may be less fortunate due to financial constraints of their owners.



Dam It! What Caused the 500-Year Flood of 2020?

Alpha Omicron Omicron Chapter
Mid Michigan College,
Harrison Campus
Harrison, Michigan

Theme

Natural and Constructed Environments

Abstract

Dam It! On May 19, 2020, both the Edenville and Sanford dams were breached, causing massive flooding and evacuations across mid-Michigan. Approximately 11,000 citizens from the Edenville, Sanford, Midland, and Saginaw regions were evacuated amid a pandemic while racing waters flooded their homes and communities. As we watched our community, including students, faculty, and staff from Mid Michigan College (MID) endure the effects of this devastation, we felt that Theme 2: Natural and Constructed Environments was the theme for us.

This was personal, Dam It! With a passion, we moved to further investigate this local tragedy. We wanted to know what caused the 500-year flood. The news was reporting that the owner of the dams did not maintain them properly, while he stated that Michigan regulations were preventing him from doing so due to environmental concerns. We wanted to know whether there were other factors involved. In the following months, our officer team focused on substantial research, analyzing over 20 diverse sources. We discovered that multiple factors came together to create the “perfect storm.” Heavy rainfall, failing infrastructure, and natural elevation levels of the land all contributed to the 500-year flood.

It later came to our attention that if Gladwin County's Emergency Management and Homeland Security Director Robert North could have a 3D topographical map, it would be immensely helpful to the people in the community and their understanding of emergency procedures and protocols. Upon our research and seeing first-hand the long-term devastation flooding

can cause in a community, we were convinced that this was a project best fitted to serve our community's needs. Not only is this project interconnected with the inheritance and legacy that we are leaving behind for our future generations, but this truly demonstrates just how central our natural and constructed environments are to such legacies and inheritances.

Objectives

Our research objectives were to:

- **collect** and examine a multitude of current and emerging sources that explore causes of the 500-year flood.
- assess how these complex issues affect our inheritance and legacy – exploring the past, present, and future.
- research how we can contribute to help our communities **affected by global climate change**.

Our action objectives were to:

- **create a 3D** topographical map of Gladwin County and the surrounding waterways, which will be utilized to educate the community about public safety and the potential hazards heavy rainfall, flooding and dam failures pose to the community.
- further serve our local and surrounding communities by spreading awareness through our action plan and collaborative networking.

Our collaborative objectives were to:

- consult with administrators, faculty, and community members affected by the flood, and experts in their field to research and explore the devastating effects and cause of the 500-year flood.
- collaborate with local businesses and institutions to create a **3D topographical map**.

Academic Investigation

Once we decided to investigate the root causes of the 500-year flood that so heavily impacted the lives of those in our community, our chapter was able to channel its curiosity and passion toward thoughtful consideration of the extent that natural and



Figure 1

constructed environments will impact our legacy. Climate change and how it will affect the lives of future generations was central to our research. We started our rigorous research process through collaborations with administration and faculty at MID. We shared our initial research objectives with our College Council. Scott Govitz, Associate Vice President of Workforce & Economic Development, and Dr. Stevens Amidon, Assistant Vice President of Academic Services, were extremely helpful in providing us with direction and connecting us with business experts in the field of emergency management, engineering, and environmental protection. In fact, Mr. Govitz suggested we reach out to Gladwin County's Emergency Management and Homeland Security Director, Robert North. Little did we know then that Mr. North would be, by far, the most influential person who would impact our journey.

Our chapter took a field trip to Gladwin County's Emergency Management Office to personally interview Mr. North (Figure 1). He gave us an interactive tour and an overview assessment of the flooding and dam breaches that affected our communities. He shared that the first floods were caused by heavy rainfall in Gladwin County; however, as this water traveled downhill toward the already-overloaded dams, the breaches occurred. In turn, as the dams emptied, rushing rapids created even more flooding. To make matters entirely worse, the remaining water had nowhere to be absorbed due to man-made structures interfering with the natural environment prolonging the flooding.

Conclusions

After interviewing Mr. North, conducting multimodal research, and annotating our academic sources throughout this process for months, our team convened to discuss our findings. We analyzed approximately 20 diverse academic sources ranging from journal articles, books, newspaper, personal interviews, speeches, posters, and documentaries. Through careful analysis of each source, we concluded that, contrary to initial beliefs, a single factor was not responsible for creating the 500-year flood. Instead, multiple factors compounded each other to disastrous effect. While official conclusions of fault and/or the cause of this disaster may not be declared until mid-2021, we do know that the heavy rainfall, dam breaches, man-made structure interference, failing infrastructure, climate change, and local topography were all key factors contributing to this local tragedy.

Action

As a result of our research conclusions, it came to our attention that a 3D topographical map of Gladwin County and the surrounding waterways would be greatly beneficial to Mr. North in explaining emergency procedures and protocols to people in the community. Specifically, by utilizing this 3D topographical map, their department could educate the community about public safety and the potential hazards heavy rainfall, flooding, and dam failures pose to the community. This map would largely be designed as a demonstrational tool that will serve in their efforts to establish communication and transparency between their department and the community for years to come.

After doing this research and seeing first-hand the long-term devastation flooding can have on a community, we were immediately convinced that this project served a crucial need in our community. Not only is this project interconnected with the inheritance and legacy that we are leaving behind for our future generations, but this truly demonstrates just how central our natural and constructed environments are to such legacies and/or inheritances. By helping people in the community understand emergency procedures and protocols, we are educating those

who will lead our future generations. By learning from our mistakes, our children and grandchildren will be better equipped to handle these tragedies.

A network of people worked together to help us achieve this action plan. To create the map, we initially worked with professor Eric Sander in our Computer Aided Design (CAD) department. Unfortunately, our 3D printing capabilities were not large enough to meet Mr. North's needs. After reaching out to local high schools with no success, we asked Professor Sander to reach out to his business partners to see if they had the necessary capacity to build the map. He connected us with a company in Pontiac, Michigan, called GoEngineer, which was expanding into the 3D printing market.

We hosted a Zoom meeting with the sales director, a CAD engineer, and education account manager from GoEngineer. Their team was excited to hear about our project; Michael Humphrey from their Midwest sales team stated, "I like seeing students get involved in extracurricular STEM projects like this. It could change their future and result in cutting edge jobs." We were disheartened to learn that the initial cost estimate for the project might be \$4,750. However, in exchange for co-marketing exposure with MID, GoEngineer generously offered to create the 3D topographical map at cost, which would take the cost to roughly \$2,500.

Thankfully, we received one of the Honors in Action grants from the Mellon Foundation and Phi Theta Kappa, a community grant, and fundraised locally to cover the remaining costs. Once the map is constructed, GoEngineer and MID will work on a collaborative campaign, spreading awareness of our research and action project through networking on blogs and social media and through news outlets to further our impact.

Impact

While we were not able to complete the 3D map and get it to Mr. North by the end of the year, as costly expenses, bureaucratic obstacles, and COVID-19-related issues created time-consuming delays, we fully intend to remain invested until we have reached our desired objectives. Things do not always go as planned, but we learned that how we handle

our challenges and adjust tells the tale of who we are and what we can accomplish.

As officers, we have had the opportunity to develop our research, communication, and critical thinking skills. This was also an incredible learning experience, as we discovered how to work as a team, develop our leadership abilities, and grow as scholars. This project allowed us to take on a different perspective, exposing us to our community's multiple demographics. This was a remarkable chance for us to realize our civic duty and take responsibility for the community in which we live – turning a tragedy into a unifying event. This project also brought out unique strengths in each individual officer, allowing us to meet personal and professional goals. It was exciting to see how the Alpha Omicron Omicron Wolfpack all became friends by flourishing on a project we are all passionate about.

Quantitatively, we will have more statistics to report once our action project is completed. Gladwin County's population is 25,337, and we are anticipating a rather large community-wide impact. Mr. North explained that he will be able to use the map to assist neighboring Bay (population 103,126) and Midland (population 83,156) counties. Through collaborative networking on blogs, social media, and news outlets, we also plan to reach even more individuals throughout our nation, spreading awareness about our project and our research. The knowledge we have gained via our research will be everlasting, affecting our legacy and future generations. It doesn't just end here; the flood came and went, and yet we are still talking about it. Our community will not forget this disaster. As a result of helping people in the community understand emergency procedures and protocols, we are protecting future generations who are learning from this one's mistakes. A lot of the damage was in the district MID serves, having a direct impact on our students, staff, and families. That's personal, Dam It!

Resources

Clark, E. L. (2020). Preliminary report on the Edenville Dam failure, response efforts, and program reviews. Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy.

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/egle/egle-EdenvilleDamPreliminaryReport_700997_7.pdf

In the preliminary report, Liesl Clark, Director of the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), provides a detailed response addressed to Governor Whitmer providing an update on the ongoing failure investigation and the response actions that followed the disaster. From May 16-18, 2020, six to eight inches of heavy rainfall hit central Michigan. The following evening, subsequent rainfall placed additional stress on many dams, including the Edenville and Sanford Dams. In correspondence to the disaster, more than 11,000 people were evacuated, 2,500 structures damaged, and more than \$250 million in preliminary damages. Miraculously, no major injuries or fatalities were reported. The specific cause or causes for these failures, however, are currently unknown. EGLE suggests that the dam failures will not be fully understood until an independent investigation is complete, anticipated in early 2021.

Hariri-Ardebili, H. M. (2020). Living in a multi-risk chaotic condition: Pandemic, natural hazards and complex emergencies. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(16), 5635. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17165635>

Providing a concise distillation of the dangers of living in a multi-risk world, this academic article explained that a plethora of man-made and natural hazards can make it difficult to plan for risks. Having models that show multi-hazard evacuations for an epidemic or pandemic is needed for overall community resilience. Having an emergency plan is key to a quick response to hazards.

McCully, P. (1996). *Silenced rivers the ecology and politics of large dams*. Zed Books.

McCully concisely outlined the ecology and politics of large dams and alludes to the dangers surrounding their bureaucracy. The dam industry makes approximately \$20 billion dollars a year building these structures, which compensate for water fluctuations, create electricity, and act as reservoirs. Because of this, considerations of technical and economic concerns become secondary. Dams are often plagued with

technical problems, many of which are inherent to technology itself; however, others are due to a lack of oversight in the building process. These problems can cause long construction delays and beset poor project performance, economics, and safety. Claims of viability are often made despite a lack of data. At times, unfavorable findings are ignored or are interpreted with false optimism.

Michigan dams by the numbers. (2020). Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy. https://www.michigan.gov/images/egle/Michigan-Dams-by-the-Numbers-Infographic_693967_7.jpg

An incredibly useful resource compiled by state officials, this infographic explained the quantitative data of Michigan dams. Out of the 2,521 dams in Michigan, only 92 of these dams are federally regulated, and astonishingly, 1,370 remain unregulated. Twelve percent of Michigan dams have a significant hazard potential. Eighty-five state-regulated dams are classified as “high hazard”; this means that in the event of a breach, there is a high expectation of severe damage and loss of life. In Michigan, 271 dams remain that are over 100 years old, and 67% have reached their intended 50-year life expectancy.

Nagelhout, R. (2017). *How do dams work?* (1st ed.). The Rosen Publishing Group, Inc.

By explaining the major types of dams and their purpose, Nagelhout demonstrated just how large of an impact dams have on our lives and environment. In fact, he suggests that some waterways never recover from the changes, or damage, dam construction brings. Nonetheless, scientists and engineers hope to harness the incredible power of these dams to positively impact the environment. As the climate and weather continue to change due to the actions of people across the globe, scientists one day hope to use dams to protect against the terrible impact global warming will bring.

North, R. (2020, July 20). Personal Interview [Personal Interview]. <https://gladwincounty-mi.gov/departments/emergency-management/>

Robert North, the Director of Emergency Management and Homeland Security from Gladwin County, Michigan, provided an astonishingly detailed account of the wide-ranging effects the dam breach had on the community. Wixom Lake was washed out by the flooding and is now gone, septic tanks and underground wells and aquifers have also drained out, or the water has become unsafe to use. Businesses and real estate have suffered as well, with no lakefront property as a part of their market. The people who live on Wixom Lake do not know if they will ever get the man-made lake back.

Sinclair, P. (2020, June 17). Michigan dam break shows how climate change strains infrastructure. *Yale Climate Connections*. <https://yaleclimateconnections.org/2020/06/michigan-dam-break-shows-how-climate-change-strains-infrastructure/>

Sinclair explained how, in many places, 100-year events are becoming increasingly common, happening closer to every 50 years. Similarly, 500-year flooding events are becoming more frequent, especially as older infrastructures continue to wear down. Heavy precipitation, warmer temperatures, and man-made infrastructures pose an increasingly dangerous threat to our communities. There have been many extreme rainfall events in Michigan and other states along the east coast. As a result, we see an increase in flash flooding, stranded assets, and millions of dollars in damages.

Stevens, F. (Director). (2017). *Before the flood* [Film]. Appian Way Productions; RatPac Entertainment.

This documentary, hosted by Leonardo DiCaprio, concisely explored the increasingly dangerous role climate change has on our planet. DiCaprio claims that the world cannot afford to have political leaders in power who do not believe in the scientific method or empirical truths; sharing that many U.S. politicians are in denial about climate change despite evidence of heavier rainfall, snowfall in areas of hot temps, increasingly warmer temperatures, and rising water issues.



Bridging the Digital Divide

Alpha Theta Iota Chapter
Monroe Community College,
Brighton Campus
Rochester, New York

Theme

The Heirs of Our Ways

Abstract

When our chapter began investigating the Honors Study Topic, *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*, we unanimously agreed to focus on education. The inequality already existing in our public education system has only worsened with the shifting of most schools to digital learning during the pandemic. We researched what additional skills K-12 students needed to succeed in the shift to online learning. We surveyed guidance counselors in Monroe County, New York, school districts to ascertain what they found to be the greatest needs for students, families, and teachers. We learned how self-regulation plays a key role in a students' successful engagement with course content and how introducing these skills at a younger age will help them now and in the future (Nilson, 2016). Our early research confirmed our focus on Theme 1: "The Heirs of Our Ways" but also led us to understand that we needed a multifaceted project to address COVID-19's impact on public education. We decided to build our own website, which can be viewed at 199.250.201.124/~alpha/ until it goes live on Monroe Community College's (MCC) website. With the money received from Phi Theta Kappa's (PTK) Mellon Foundation HIA Grant, we hired a professional web designer who enabled us to achieve our vision of providing an interactive and informative platform. Working with professors in various departments from MCC, we created content focusing on such subjects such as self-regulation and computer literacy; we also formed a tutoring network comprised of our chapter's PTK members. Our initial goal was to create a website that would be available to all public school students in Monroe County; however, based on our focus group survey, requests for tutors from Upward Bound, and

inquiries from parents out of state, we've realized that the potential reach of our project can be much greater.

Objectives

Our research objectives were to:

- understand the pandemic's impact on K-12 education.
- seek insight from guidance counselors working with K-12 students in Monroe County to ascertain needs of students, teachers, and families.
- investigate how enhancing students' computer literacy, online education, and self-regulation skills would increase academic success both in the immediate future and post-COVID-19.

Our Action component objective was to:

- build a website and/or application to provide tutoring to local students.

Our collaboration component objectives were to:

- talk to professors who teach computer courses and college success courses to assist in creating content and tutorials suitable for middle and high public school students.
- survey Phi Theta Kappa chapter members to establish a volunteer tutor base.
- interview freelance web designers with experience designing educational websites and hire the best candidate.

Academic Investigation

In June, our entire officer team began our regular summer meetings. We also enrolled in two one-credit courses through MCC's Honors Institute. In the first course, Exploration and Discovery (HON 102), we learned early research strategies, critical reading skills, and held Zoom sessions with MCC's research librarians. We refined our primary and secondary research questions with the help of these research workshops. Initially we investigated how to assist not only K-12 public school students but also new college students who may need assistance adapting to higher education. We found that our focus would be better spent on helping the K-12 students because colleges have more resources and

programs targeting at-risk students than do K-12 schools. Our research led us to recognize that self-regulation, self-awareness, and self-reflection are important skills for academic success, and that they need to be introduced at a younger age than they currently are.

We reviewed the fall 2020 reopening plans for all 18 public school districts within Monroe County. All delivery methods were hybrid or fully digital. The hybrid option varied among schools but typically consisted of students receiving in-person instruction two days per week and online instruction from home three days per week. Schedules could vary due to positive COVID-19 tests or COVID exposure, forcing students to have even more digital days.

We surveyed approximately 200 guidance counselors serving K-12 public schools in all 18 districts. We asked these counselors about how the shift to distance learning has affected students, teachers, and families in their schools. Through the approximately 70 responses we received (a 35% response rate), we learned that many students need assistance with basic computer skills, software, and digital literacy. The survey responses also suggested that many students need help understanding course materials and completing assignments (Figure 1).

Conclusions

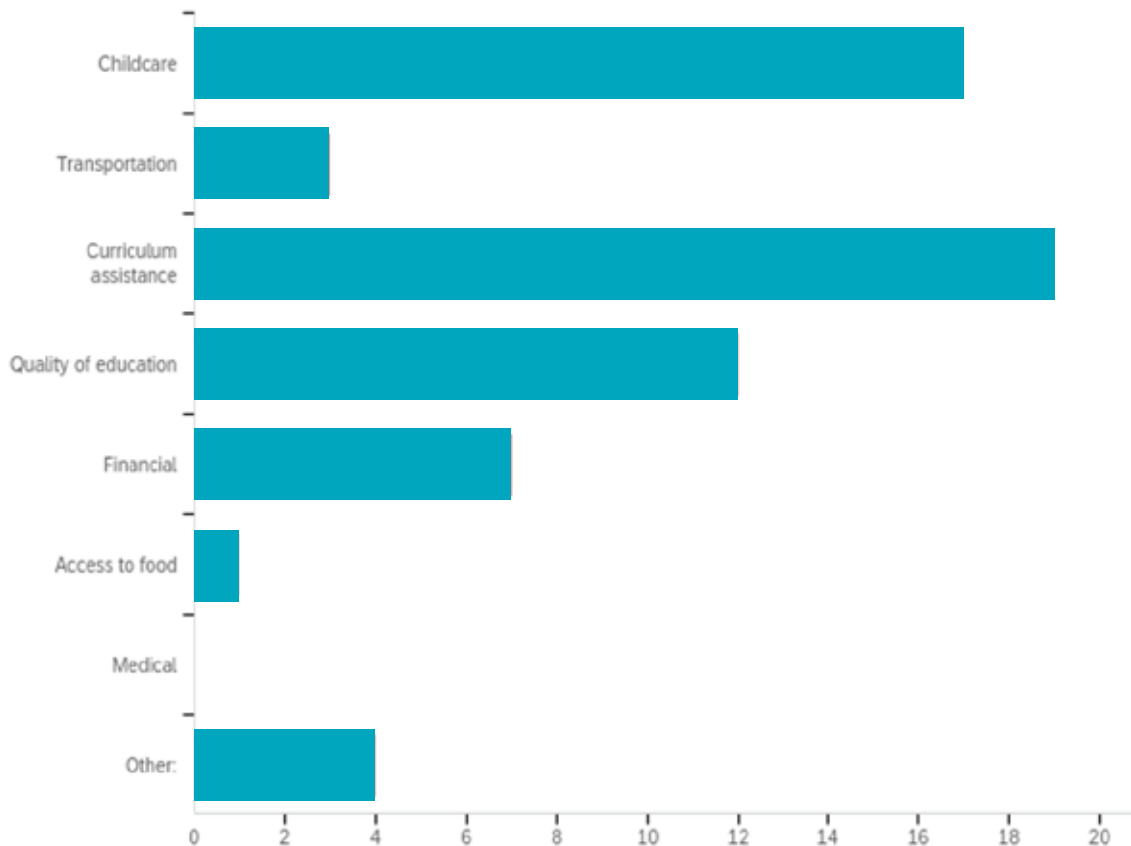
We concluded that we needed to form a network of tutors to help students with their coursework, and that we needed to create online content to help students with self-regulation and computer literacy. While our initial research focused on K-12 students, we found that middle and high school students are the ones who need these skills more as they become increasingly independent learners. Introducing these items to students will help them build confidence in the use of computer programs, allow them to fully engage in their education, and help them connect better with others to limit isolation. Through our network of volunteer tutors, students will be able to receive help from our chapter's PTK members.

Action

Based on our research and the survey responses from local public school guidance counselors, we

Figure 1

Question1: What are the top three concerns expressed by parents/guardians?



concluded that we needed to create a website to introduce self-regulation skills and computer literacy. Many of the responses detailed how students need assistance completing assignments, navigating course content, and securing mentoring and one-on-one tutoring. We created content that helped students to build understanding and confidence in the use of computer programs and self-regulation. We also concluded that the tutoring component required a website rather than an application.

Because of the scope of our project, we needed additional funding, so we applied for and received the PTK Mellon Foundation HIA Grant. With this money, we hired an outside website developer. We split up into teams. One team managed the design of the website as well as the hiring and supervising of the web designer, while the other worked with collaborators to create custom content based on our research.

We also enrolled in the second of our one-credit courses, Scholarly Process (HON 201), where we learned how to turn our research into action while refining our writing skills. Creating a website affiliated with the college required us to seek guidance from many offices and departments, such as Student's Rights and Responsibilities, Computer and Information Technology, and Institutional Research, to be sure we adhered to the school's policies and regulations. We then created a list of professors who could help with the creation of our content. Professor Stacey Lautenslager from Information and Computer Technologies helped create the tutorials about computer literacy. Professors Donna Burke and Diane Clements, from ESOL/Transitional Studies provided content on self-regulation. We then created and distributed a survey to our chapter's PTK members to establish a tutor base for the website.

The layout of our website (199.250.201.124/~alpha/) is as follows:

- Tutoring
- List of Volunteer Tutors
- Computer Skills on Microsoft Platform
 - Word
 - Excel
 - PowerPoint
- Google Applications
 - Tutorial (Classroom, Docs, Sheets, and Drive)
- Helpful Email Tips
 - Tutorial (Subject Line, Body Formatting, Grammar and Punctuation, and Attaching Files)
- Tools and Shortcuts for Computer Use
 - Snipping Tool
 - Keyboard Shortcuts
- Video Conferencing
 - Dos and Don'ts
 - Zoom Features
- Self-Regulation
- Introduction and Motivational Video: How to get "Un-stuck"
- Self-Regulation Documents
- Routine Setting
- Goal Setting
- To-Do List (Weekly and Daily)
- Additional Academic Tools
- Reflection
- Assignment Breakdown
- Reverse Outline
- SPUNKI Reading Rubric

We learned the importance of having dialogue with individuals who are experts in their fields. Not only did we learn from these experts, we learned an important aspect of leadership: delegation. We realized our project did not need to be limited to the skillsets of our team members, but, with enough planning and resources, we could make these outside experts a part of our team.

Having multiple professors take time to create content suited for younger students ensured that our project will provide valuable instruction to students who need it for the duration of the pandemic and beyond.

Impact

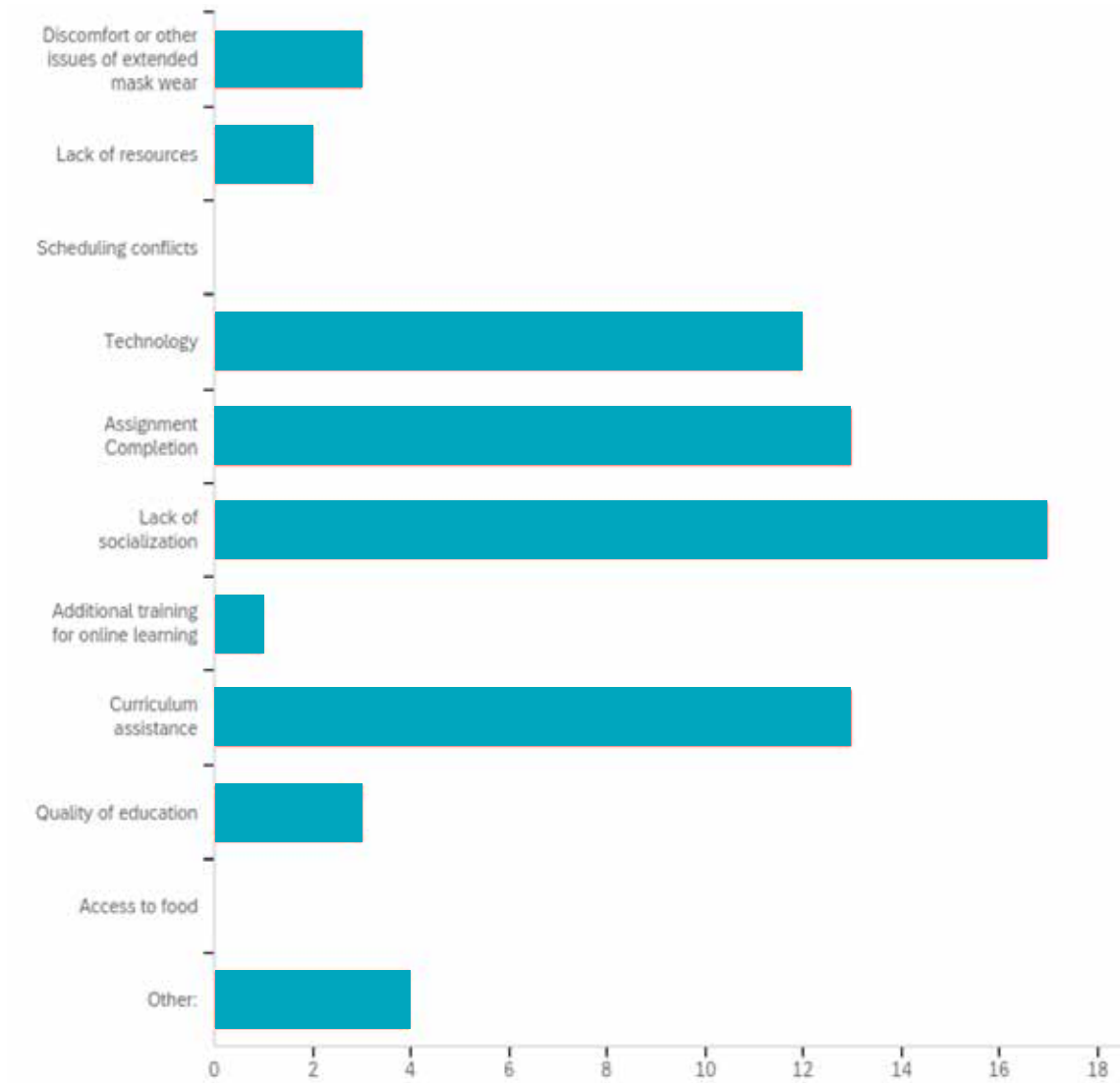
While we were unable to have the website live in time to get substantial feedback from the community, we conducted a preliminary focus group including five students ranging from seventh to 10 grades to determine their concerns (Figure 2). Each of the students in the focus group then selected the items that would best assist them, but all of the self-regulation items were highlighted by at least one of the students as being potentially useful to them. They found the video created by Professor Donna Burke extremely motivational and effective at highlighting goal setting, routine setting, and breaking down tasks by way of a to-do list. Regarding the computer literacy content, each thought that the breadth of subjects addressed would make the content useful for many students. Two of the students were enrolled in a high school keyboarding class that taught subjects our tutorials also cover; they agreed that students should have a basic understanding of the tools we cover in our website to assist in digital learning and communication. Moreover, all five believed that the tutoring service would be beneficial to them and/or other students.

Our website will be housed on the MCC server connected to our current Alpha Theta Iota page once it goes live. Until that time the website design and content can be viewed at 199.250.201.124/~alpha/. Moreover, MCC Upward Bound (a pre-collegiate program that works with high school students who will be the first in their families to attend college) requested that we partner with them to provide tutors for Upward Bound Students. We look forward to working with them starting in the spring 2021 semester.

This project will allow current and future PTK members to help local high school students and beyond, as parents from outside the county and even from other states have asked if the website will be available to them. Being completely virtual for the entirety of this project helped us

Figure 2

Question 4: What are the top three to five concerns expressed by students?



understand some of the connectivity issues, communication issues, and stresses that many students are dealing with at this time.

Problem-solving and troubleshooting became extremely important while working on this project. We gained experience in the delicate balancing of patience and persistence when communicating with collaborators. Other skills we learned include teamwork, working virtually, team-building, cooperation, time management, and in-depth research skills.

Resources

Guggenheim, D. (Director), Guggenheim, D., & Kimball, B. (Writers), & Chilcott, L. (Producer). (2010). *Waiting for "Superman"* [Motion picture on DVD]. United States: Paramount Vantage.

This documentary exposed the long-term failure within our education system and better enabled our team to help those affected by it. The director claims that only students who possess "luck" are able to attend one of the few thriving schools. Moreover, implementation of "No Child Left

Behind" assessments to measure competency levels give us some insight into where corrections need to be made, but not enough people are taking action to make these corrections.

Lambert, S. R. (2019). Six critical dimensions: A model for widening participation in open, online, and blended programs. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology, 35(6)*, 161-182. doi:10.14742/ajet.5683

Lambert emphasized digital inequalities, digital divides, and the correlation of these divides to inequalities in educational outcomes when looking at fully online or hybrid learning models. Some of the constraints found in online learning are isolation caused by the lack of interaction and insufficient time management skills. The six critical dimensions provided helped guide the creation of our website, including course purpose, learner skills, learning materials, learner support, autonomy, and technology. These dimensions allowed us to make more inclusive content.

Landrum, B. (2020). Examining students' confidence to learn online, self-regulation skills and perceptions of satisfaction and usefulness of online classes. *Online Learning, 24(3)*. doi:10.24059/olj.v24i3.2066

When students apply skills such as self-regulation, time management, and basic computer skills to their online courses, they become more confident learners. Landrum contended that the confidence acquired through the use of these skills allows students to engage more purposefully in the course content, resulting in higher student satisfaction. This article clarified our need to build students' confidence in all the content on our website.

Marcus, V., Atan, N., Talib, R., Latif, A., & Yusof, S. (2019). Promoting students' generic skills with the integration of e-service learning platforms. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning, 14(20)*, 14-17. <https://onlinejournal.publicknowledgeproject.org/index.php/i-jet/article/view/11455>

Although this article focused on e-service learning platforms, it highlighted how a learning platform running concurrently with course content can be extremely beneficial to students by focusing students' attention on the most important content.

This article showed us that a skills-based, self-guided website focusing on digital literacy would help students gain confidence in their own abilities without feeling overwhelmed.

Nilson, L. B. (2013). *Creating self-regulated learners: Strategies to strengthen students' self-awareness and learning skills*. Stylus.

Nilson emphasized that students are not "learning how to learn" properly at a young age, leading them to be poorly prepared for higher education. Using this book's self-reflection and self-observation techniques, students can understand how they learn and make their learning more effective. These practices helped our team develop material such as the self-reflection page in our website, which will assist students in their educational development.

Nordin, H., & Hashim, R. (2020). Online self-regulated learning strategies in moocss: A measurement model. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning, 15(8)*, 255-263. doi: <https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v15i08.12401>

This article evaluates a new way to measure the effectiveness of online self-regulated learning (SRL). Through this evaluation, the article validates six learning constructs: goal setting, environmental structuring, task strategies, time management, help-seeking, and self-evaluation. These categories helped us structure the content of our website.

Reich, J., Buttner, C. J., Fang, A., Hillaire, G., Hirsch, K., Larke, L., Littenberg-Tobias, J., Moussapour, R., Napier, A., Thompson, M., & Slama, R. (2020, April 24). Remote learning guidance from state education agencies during the COVID-19 pandemic: A first look. osf.io/k6zxy/

This article provided teachers and administrators with guidance on educational policies for digital learning. The three recommended categories are equity for "special populations," acknowledging limitations of distance learning, and communicating clearly in multiple mediums. This article helped us understand that every student is different in how they learn. By offering

tutorials on computer literacy and self-regulation in multiple formats, we can accommodate a diverse group of students.

Will, M. (2020, October 20). Most educators require kids to turn cameras on in virtual class, despite equity concerns. *Education Week*. <https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/most-educators-require-kids-to-turn-cameras-on-in-virtual-class-despite-equity-concerns/2020/10>

While most teachers would prefer to see students faces when in virtual classes, many understand that some are economically disadvantaged, self-conscious, or do not have a private place to learn. Many schools have consequences for having the camera off, ranging from notifying parents to being marked absent. This article showed us how important it is for students to know how to use all the functions on Zoom and other video conferencing platforms so they can stay fully engaged.



Positively Affecting Future Generations through the Education of Females

Alpha Beta Psi Chapter
National Park College
Hot Springs, Arkansas

Theme

The Heirs of Our Ways

Abstract

Our chapter's investigation into the Honors Study Topic, *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy* led us to develop a research question under Theme 1: "The Heirs of Our Ways." Our research into what impacts could increasing the educational level of females have on future generations and what barriers do females experience in achieving higher levels of education revealed unanticipated information. We discovered that increasing the level of education of females would have vastly positive effects, which include but are not limited to environmental/climate impacts, global population decreases, increased health and wellness of children, less domestic violence, and economic returns. Common barriers females experience in obtaining higher educational levels include financial deficits, lack of support from family and/or society, outdated beliefs that women do not belong in college, and having children to raise. Our research and local observations led us to establish a collaboration with our local branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) to assist with emotional and financial support for females seeking education on our campus and in our community. We established the state's first AAUW junior chapter on our campus. The purpose of the chapter is to provide emotional support for females on our campus and to raise funds for the AAUW scholarship fund at our campus foundation. To date, our AAUW junior chapter has 34 members, we have secured \$600 in funds to finance larger fundraising efforts, and we have established a payroll deduction partnership with our campus foundation to allow employees to donate to the AAUW scholarship fund on campus. The efforts of our action project have the potential to impact thousands of lives over the coming decades.

Objectives

Our chapter attended a sustainability breakout session at the OK/AR Regional Convention in March 2020. In this presentation, there was a section regarding a link between how educating females led to lower fertility rates and lower mortality rates in children. This piqued our collective interests, and it was the main topic of discussion in the journey back home from regionals. In a subsequent meeting, we set the following research objectives:

- form a research team with at least five individuals.
- develop our refined research question involving the potential impacts of increased education of females on future generations.
- find six articles per person on our team (30 total) that provided information on our research question with an emphasis on lifestyle, health and safety at home, societal status, employment, poverty rates, overpopulation, and resource usage.
- narrow down the articles to the most relevant two from each researcher.
- further narrow and annotate/format citations for our top eight sources.
- investigate what females, on our campus as well as in our community, see as common barriers to achieving a higher education.
- complete the research before the beginning of the Fall 2020 semester.
- apply for an HIA grant from PTK and the Mellon Foundation to assist our project.

Based on our research findings revealing common barriers to females obtaining higher levels across the globe and our observed need to support females on our campus and in our community, we set the following action and collaboration objectives:

- contact our local branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) to collaborate and help in supporting the education of females locally.
- educate our campus of the need to promote the education of females within our community.
- explore ways to financially support the educational endeavors of females in need from our campus and community.

Academic Investigation

After much discussion about the current Honors Study Topic, *The Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*, our team felt that Theme 1: “The Heirs of our Ways” fit our research interest most appropriately. Based upon our observations and discussions, we developed the following research question to guide our efforts: What impacts could increasing the educational level of females have on future generations? What are some of the barriers females experience in achieving higher education levels?

Our team collected a total of 30 articles that covered multiple angles about our research question. From them, we learned there are several major areas that could be dramatically impacted by the increased education of females. These include environmental/ climate impacts, global population, health and wellness of children, and economic returns. Furthermore, we discovered information concerning barriers females experience in attaining higher levels of education. Some barriers that females encounter when trying to gain higher education are that they think they are not financially capable, the outdated idea that females do not belong in college/ universities, lack of support, and life circumstances and children prevent them from going.

The analysis of our research findings revealed that increased education of females would lead to:

- a better lifestyle for females and their children.
- higher standards of living.
- lower mortality rates of females and their children.
- better diets for females and their children.
- improved home health with less domestic violence.
- a society with better national finances.
- a decrease in unemployment rates.
- a decrease in the number of females in poverty.
- women waiting until they are older to have children.
- a decrease in resource usage since higher education leads to an increase in climate responsibility.
- positive environmental impacts.

Conclusions

From our research, we concluded that the impacts of an increase in education of females on future generations are vastly positive across the board and lead to a better and brighter future for our heirs. Collectively, our research clearly demonstrates that supporting and advocating for increased levels of education for females across the globe would have seemingly endless positive impacts on future generations. Based on our chapter's informal investigation, it is evident that females locally experience significant barriers to education and that grass-roots, local efforts to support females in their pursuit of higher education is paramount to facilitating palpable change.

Action

From our research, it was clear that increasing the education level of females would undoubtedly positively impact future and current generations. Our team's personal investigations into common barriers campus and community females experience to achieve a higher education revealed that lack of money and family and/or general support as top barriers. Several of our chapter's female officers and members were recently awarded scholarships from the local branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW).

Our team realized that a project involving supporting them in their efforts to support the education of females was a perfect action that would align with our research results.

We met with and established a collaboration with the officers of our local AAUW branch. They requested that our PTK team investigate how to establish a new student organization on campus and for us to proceed with the establishment of a junior chapter of their AAUW branch on our campus. Their hope was that the campus junior chapter would assist with raising money for their scholarship fund at our campus foundation, hold local events, support the female population on campus, and provide a model for other colleges in our state to establish a campus junior chapter. Our team:

- contacted SGA and the Dean of Students on campus to discover the protocol for establishing a new student organization.

- secured the required faculty advisor needed to begin a new student organization.
- wrote the required constitution and bylaws for the junior chapter.
- secured 30 members and the required 4 officers to start the organization.
- submitted the above information to our campus SGA for approval of the junior chapter.
- applied for and was awarded an HIA grant from the Mellon Foundation and PTK.
- opened the required bank account with the campus business office.
- secured professional design and print services to produce 2,000 promotional rack cards that promote the AAUW Junior Chapter and our PTK chapter's sponsorship.

The new AAUW junior chapter is fully established and holds meetings twice a month. Our collaboration with the parent AAUW chapter will continue indefinitely on our campus. Our PTK chapter will continue to play a large role in this new organization.


Impact

Quantitatively, our chapter's HIA project has resulted in:

- the establishment of the AAUW junior chapter on our campus that is available to the approximately 1,235 females (65% of the 1,900 students on campus) enrolled in the fall 2020 semester and will be available to the approximate 65% of all future female students.
- the production of 2,000 rack cards that detail AAUW, how to join our junior chapter, and informs about PTK and our sponsorship (Figure 1).
- the establishment of a campus bank account with \$600 in funds to support fundraising efforts for AAUW scholarships for females enrolled on our campus.
- an AAUW junior chapter membership of 34 females.

Qualitatively, our chapter's HIA project has resulted in a:

- partnership with our campus foundation to solicit employee payroll deduction contributions to the AAUW scholarship foundation account.



Hot Springs/Hot Springs Village (AR) Branch

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.


AAUW is the nation's leading voice promoting equity and education for women and girls. Since our founding in 1881, AAUW members have examined and taken positions on the fundamental issues of the day—educational, social, economic, and political.

AAUW's nationwide network opens doors for women and girls and influences public debate on critical social issues, sponsors ground-breaking research on women, girls and education and provides millions of dollars in scholarships and fellowships.

The purpose of the NPC Junior Chapter of AAUW Hot Springs/Hot Springs Village is to support the affiliate chapter of the American Association of University Woman of Hot Springs/Hot Springs Village through membership recruitment and fundraising for AAUW scholarships awarded to National Park College students.

Membership to the NPC Junior Chapter of AAUW Hot Springs/Hot Springs Village is open to an individual seeking an associate's (or equivalent, e.g., RN) degree from National Park College or a higher degree from an NPC a campus university partner (i.e. Southern Arkansas University). For more information about or to join the Junior AAUW Chapter please contact Dr. Rebekah Roninette at rrobinette@np.edu

NPC Junior chapter of AAUW



PHI THETA KAPPA
HONOR SOCIETY

The NPC chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, Alpha Beta Psi, are proud sponsors of the NPC Junior Chapter of AAUW Hot Spring/Hot Springs Village.

PTK was founded in 1918 as a way to highlight the academic abilities and achievements of two-year college students. Today, it remains the Honor Society of two-year colleges and offers robust programming and scholarship opportunities for its members. The Society has grown from its humble beginnings to boast more than 3.5 million members in the United States and 10 sovereign nations. The Phi Theta Kappa Foundation awards \$1.5 million in scholarships to members each year, and the Society as a whole has a renewed dedication to help all students succeed, regardless of their past mistakes or their end goals.

Figure 1

- campus-wide initiative to support female students both on campus and in our community.
- general feeling by our female students that they are supported in their struggles to achieve a college education.

Our project has made a significant impact locally on the issue of barriers females experience to the achievement of their education. Our

AAUW junior chapter is providing much-needed emotional support for our female campus members and is beginning to have financial impacts as well. Through our project, our officers and members have grown significantly as scholars and leaders. The research process opened our eyes to the value of academic research to all aspects of our lives, and we gained a deeper appreciation for academic investigation. The experience of mediating the

outreach to the local leaders of AAUW taught us much about professional interactions, the negotiations with SGA, and the production of constitution and bylaws taught us much about parliamentary procedure. The members of our chapter who took officer roles in the AAUW junior chapter have sharpened their leadership skills. Our project is an overwhelming success that will impact many lives for decades. We grew as a team and as individuals through our efforts.

Resources

Abrar-ul-haq, M., Jali, M. R., Mohd, Islam, G. M., & Nural. (2017). Empowering rural women in Pakistan: Empirical evidence from southern Punjab. *Quality and Quantity*, 51(4), 1777-1787. doi:<http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.np.edu/10.1007/s11135-016-0365-7>

Education should be a priority because it is the most significant factor in the development of the rural environment. Education is the basis for foresightedness and creativity that triggers changes; it helps in the quality of human resources, quality of life, and economic growth. Education takes us away from overpopulation, poverty, and traditional backwardness. The present study investigates the association between education and empowerment of rural women in Pakistan by using primary data, which were collected from rural areas of southern Punjab by using multistage cluster sampling. The result of the study reveals that the main determinants of women empowerment are education and the socioeconomic condition of females compared to region or cost. The results also show clearly that the structure of the family has a relationship with the status of women as well as the participation of women in decision-making.

Baus, Doris. (2017). Overpopulation and the Impact on the Environment [Unpublished master's thesis]. City University of New York. https://academicworks.cuny.edu/gc_etds/1906

This research paper really emphasized to us that overpopulation is not a new issue for the world. This has been an ongoing concern for centuries and millennia. Due to the population increase, mass migration of peoples has been a regular occurrence in our world that still happens today. All of these new people needed somewhere to

live and the urban areas needed to be expanded. This increased carbon dioxide and reduced natural habitats.

Bedi, S., & Mishra, R. N. (2016). Knowledge about consequential effect of overpopulation, contraceptive devices, and attitude toward family size among post-graduating girls. *International Journal of Health Sciences and Research*, 6(3), 16-21.

The education of females impacting the environment is not limited to the United States. We discovered, from this article, that females in India have a higher-than-average birth rate at three or more children per adult female. This paper shows that females at different education levels desire a differing number of children. The higher level of education females acquires leads to a decrease in children desired.

Miller, L. C., Joshi, N., Lohani, M., Rogers, B., Mahato, S., Ghosh, S., & Webb, P. (2017). Women's education level amplifies the effects of a livelihoods-based intervention on household wealth, child diet, and child growth in rural Nepal. *International Journal for Equity in Health*, 16(1). <https://link-gale-com.ezproxy.np.edu/apps/doc/A510324304/NE?u=hot20953&sid=AONE&xid=79e57db6>

This source outlined why it is important that women in the household are educated: improved diet and nutrition of children, protection against mortality, improved child health, improved development, improved dietary diversity, and improved growth of children. The level of educational attainment of women led to a positive change in household wealth and income, household amenities, and hygiene practices. The level of education a woman has is correlated with the success of programs that support improved diet and nutrition for children.

Pradhan, E., Suzuki, E. M., Martinez, S., Schäferhoff, M., & Jamison, D. T. (2017). The effects of education quantity and quality on child and adult mortality: Their magnitude and their value. In *Disease Control Priorities*, (3rd ed., Vol. 8): *Child and Adolescent Health and Development*, 423-440. doi:10.1596/978-1-4648-0423-6_ch30

After we saw this report, we were excited when we discovered how the education of females can positively affect the healthcare system. We learned that females who are educated are less likely to contract sexually transmitted diseases and more likely to have fewer children than lesser-educated females. Because more educated females opt for preventative care, they are less likely to need more costly procedures in the future. Healthier children yield more healthy adults that can make their own educated decisions.

Sorensen, C., Murray, V., Lemery, J., & Balbus, J. (2018). Climate change and women's health: Impacts and policy directions. *PLoS medicine*, 15(7), e1002603. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1002603>

This source showed us the climate impact on females' health in low- to middle-income families. This was crucial to understanding the link between education and the environment. Females, especially those in poverty, face higher risks and experience a greater burden of climate change impacts. This is notably true for health impacts, making climate change a risk multiplier for gender-based health conditions. With more educated females, we would have more citizens, both men and women, mindful of the impacts of climate change. Empowering females as educators, caregivers, holders of knowledge, and agents of social change can improve society as a whole.

Yousaf, R. & Schmiede, R. (2017). Barriers to women's representation in academic excellence and positions of power. *Asian Journal of German and European Studies*. 2. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40856-017-0013-6>

This source outlined how women are underrepresented throughout higher education institutions and universities across different regions and countries in the world. There are many barriers that prevent women from obtaining a higher education, including societal, personal, and organizational. Some reasons include inadequate support at home, lack of opportunity networks that could impact a woman's future, and being a parent. It's apparent that women are still experiencing inequality throughout higher education.

Yaffe, Y. & Seroussi, D.-E. (2018). Intergenerational similarity and dissimilarity in parental authority among educated women. *North American Journal of Psychology*, 20. 445.

Parenting is a hereditary skill passed down from one mother to the next, calling this intergenerational transmission of parenting. This was fascinating to us and in the source's study, 111 women reported their perspectives on their own style compared to their mothers' parenting styles. Research showed most parenting styles are passed on from one parent to their child, therefore, having more educated females can reveal higher education is possible for their children and their heirs.



Finding Unity in Humanity: Beginning a New Legacy of Inclusion

Alpha Iota Chi Chapter
Northeast State Community College,
Blountville Campus
Blountville, Tennessee

Theme

The Heirs of Our Ways

Abstract

After examining the Honors Study Topic (HST), *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*, and its themes, we chose Theme 1: “The Heirs of Our Ways.” Utilizing a multiphase research process informed by our team’s completion of Research Edge, we consulted scholarly sources and monitored news media outlets. Identifying team interest in social injustice, we investigated multiple topics, settling on homelessness. Shocked by the prevalence of homelessness among LGBTQIA+ youth, we first asked: Are there correlations between social injustice and chronic social problems affecting LGBTQIA+ youth? After investigating the local landscape, we found that the queer community and its needs receive little attention, leading to our second research question: How can we promote justice for our invisible, silenced LGBTQIA+ community?

We assembled a steering committee to evaluate our research conclusions and collaborate on action objectives. Upon advice to gather data about the local queer community, we surveyed state and local officials and college students about homelessness among LGBTQIA+ youth. We concluded that social injustice underlies chronic societal problems disproportionately affecting them. In the process, a disconnect emerged: local and state leaders refused to acknowledge the LGBTQIA+ community and their challenges, while students identified a robust local queer community with unmet needs. After our own team experienced polarization, we found that Appalachian culture and religious beliefs often drive community silence and subsequent marginalization. Justice for the LGBTQIA+ community will remain elusive until we confront their forced invisibility.

Realizing we could not tackle homelessness among local LGBTQIA+ youth without first raising

awareness about their presence and needs, we

1. presented a master class for the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) statewide conference (attracting 50 attendees from across the state);
2. produced a four-episode podcast featuring artistic expression of and interviews with queer participants (reaching 161 listeners across the US and in Mexico); and,
3. created a resource page for the LGBTQIA+ community experiencing homelessness.



Figure 1

Objectives

We developed two phases of research objectives that guided our 10-week research process. Phase one research objectives included:

- ensuring all officers complete Research Edge.
- establishing a research completion timeline.
- developing a workshop on how to identify scholarly sources.
- creating a learning management system (D2L) portal as the HIA journal.
- forming research teams to examine the HST themes.
- monitoring themes-related current events at local, regional, national, and global levels.
- selecting three themes of interest.
- identifying and annotating 30-40 scholarly sources of broad significance.
- forming groups to present research findings weekly.
- posting sources and annotations in D2L.
- selecting one theme to ground phase two research.

Phase two research objectives included:

- analyzing the chosen theme and related issues.
- developing research questions to guide research.
- identifying and utilizing scholarly sources to answer research questions.
- researching and exploring opposing viewpoints.

- presenting group research findings weekly.
- articulating evidence-based conclusions
- **narrowing the theme to one research-driven community need.**

After completing two research phases, we developed collaboration objectives. We then formed a steering committee with whom we designed action objectives.

Collaboration objectives included:

- **partnering with TBR to propose a master class.**
- enlisting steering committee members and participants to appear in a podcast.
- applying for a Mellon Foundation HIA grant to fund the purchase of podcast equipment and a subscription to Castos podcast hosting and analytics.
- inviting college faculty, staff, and students to assist in podcast planning, editing, promotion, and implementation.
- collaborating with the college's Community Relations Department to market the podcast.

Action objectives included:

- planning and implementing a master class for a statewide audience.
- researching podcast formats and needed equipment for quality production.
- producing a four-episode podcast series for a worldwide audience.

- creating and distributing digital and hard copy LGBTQIA+ resource information.
- developing survey instruments and utilizing Castos analytics to assess project impact and progress.

Academic Investigation

After completing Research Edge, we began our 10-week research process (Figure 1). We studied the Honors Program Guide, identifying social injustice as a team passion. Groups examined HST themes, analyzing scholarly sources and monitoring news media before presenting findings weekly. After researching racial unrest, domestic violence, climate change, and homelessness, we connected most with “The Heirs of Our Ways.” Guided by phase two research and current events, we chose homelessness. We discovered a startling statistic: LGBTQIA+ youth represent up to 40% of all homeless youth (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2017). The intersection of queer youth needs and chronic social problems such as homelessness led to our first research question: Are there correlations between social injustice and chronic social problems affecting LGBTQIA+ youth?

We consulted 93 sources regarding social injustice and the queer community, finding direct correlations between social injustice and chronic social problems affecting LGBTQIA+ youth. However, our local and state level investigation produced perplexing results. Though homelessness is of great concern, state and local leaders do not acknowledge queer youth homelessness. Indeed, in all social issue areas, not just homelessness, the local queer community receives scant attention. This inspired our second research question: How can we promote justice for our invisible, silenced LGBTQIA+ community?

To address the first question, we examined the intersection of social injustice and chronic social problems affecting queer youth. We found disproportionate homelessness among queer youth, often the result of religiously motivated familial rejection (Irvine & Canfield, 2016). Once homeless, they have “more than twice the rate of early death compared to their non-LGBTQIA+ peers” (Morton, et al., 2018). Homelessness increases their risk for survival sex, unprotected sex, drug abuse, and

physical, emotional, and sexual abuse (Coolhart and Brown, 2017, Khan, et al., 2017, Morton, et al., 2018). Among all ages, LGBTQIA+ individuals lack access to proper medical and mental healthcare (Morton, et al., 2018).

Turning to our second question, we understood that promoting justice for our LGBTQIA+ community required understanding of the local landscape. Despite advances won by the LGBTQIA+ rights movement, in Appalachia bias prevails. Tennessee’s “Sincerely Held Principles” law, which allows licensed therapists to refuse treatment based on “sincerely held beliefs” illustrates such bias. Unsurprisingly, Tennessee ranks third highest for denying queer people mental health services (Grzanka, et al., 2020).

We next turned to community leaders. Jill Stott, the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth (TCCY) Regional Coordinator, withheld comment but emailed contact information for Chris Sanders, Executive Director of the Tennessee Equality Project (TEP). He recommended surveying local leaders regarding homelessness and queer youth. Most leaders refused to respond. Others described queer youth as an “insignificant” population. However, our survey of college students revealed that 75% of respondents identified with or knew members of the queer community, and more than half had or knew someone who had experienced homelessness. These conflicting results, our research findings, and this consultation with Sanders indicated that promoting justice for our invisible LGBTQIA+ community required first raising community awareness.

Conclusions

Meanwhile, debates rage regarding human rights vs. God-given rights. Burack (2015) claimed that human rights are “a modern construct that undermines God-given natural rights,” and recognizing LGBTQIA+ rights demeans victims of human rights violations such as poverty and violence. However, queer Christians are bridging the divide, with many youth leaving traditional denominations to join LGBTQIA+ affirming ones (Cummerlander, 2016). Even in restrictive religious groups, queer people are successfully arguing that LGBTQIA+ Christians must be acknowledged and welcomed (Burrow-Branine, 2018).

Action

Transitioning from research to action proved difficult as the project conflicted with some team members' personal and religious beliefs. During discussions, several remained silent, even turning off their video. Concerned, we contacted Dr. Blake Ellis, Vice President of Student Engagement at Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, to conduct a leadership workshop. He refocused our attention on research, encouraging us to engage in uncomfortable conversations and utilize scholarly sources to challenge our thinking. He made clear that we cannot tackle LGBTQIA+ homelessness without first bringing people together to discuss the community's presence and their needs. We acknowledged Southern norms that discourage debate, which enabled more open conversations. We agreed that everyone deserves equality and freedom from discrimination (The Human Rights Resource Center, 2007).

More unified, we contacted local and state leaders to establish a steering committee and determine needed action. We proposed to TBR officials a master class to fill gaps in their "We All Rise" conference. Because most presenters focused on race, they welcomed our LGBTQIA+ community presentation. We developed and presented a research-driven master class titled "Embracing Difference: A Conversation." In addition to research, we modeled effective communication when navigating cultural contexts regarding LGBTQIA+ community issues by sharing our opposing views. However, during the introduction, our advisor misgendered a chapter officer who identifies as questioning. Afterward, the officer rightly pointed out this missed teaching moment and stepped down. We reflected on having done exactly what the research said we would do. As James Baldwin stated, we reinforced "the filth [they] had been taught about [themselves], and half-way believed..." (quoted in Edwards, 2020, p. 7). Through a combination of privileged silence, obliviousness, and religiously motivated rejection, we pushed them out. Though painful, this moment illustrated the real-life consequences of discrimination. We thought ourselves unbiased, but this experience forced us to recognize we were, even if unconsciously. We attended an implicit bias webinar, leaving more personally committed to correcting our errors.

Returning to our action plan, we collaborated with Stott (TCCY), Sanders (TEP), and Dr. Matthew Thomas-Reid (author and Appalachian State University faculty advisor for Gay and Progressive Pedagogy), who guided our evaluations of local perceptions of the LGBTQIA+ community. Sanders recommended surveying state and local officials and the college's students. Most officials declined to complete our survey or agree to an interview based on the topic, Homeless LGBTQIA+ Youth. Those who did indicated that queer youth were not represented among the area's homeless population, which conflicted with our findings in both the scholarly research and the student survey.

The dismissal by local leaders revealed silences about social injustices plaguing our LGBTQIA+ community. To promote justice for our invisible, silenced LGBTQIA+ community, we produced a four-episode podcast, "Finding Unity in Humanity: Beginning a New Legacy of Inclusion." To ensure high-quality production, we researched podcast formats and needed equipment and invited college faculty, staff, and students to assist in podcast planning, editing, promotion, and implementation. We also collaborated with the college's community relations department for marketing.

In addition to featuring steering committee members, Thomas-Reid and Sanders, we engaged a new chapter member and two alumni who had submitted poetry and a narrative. Because our steering committee encouraged art, we invited LGBTQIA+ individuals to share written and visual expressions of their lived experiences to accompany the podcast. Finally, a chapter member created a digital resource page for the LGBTQIA+ community experiencing homelessness. We

distributed copies to local nonprofits, emergency personnel, and police departments.

Impact

To measure impact, we distributed an evaluation using a five-point Likert scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree. During our presentation, we achieved a 40% response rate from 50 participants representing eight Tennessee counties:

- 71% agreed or strongly agreed homelessness is a regional problem.
- 61% agreed or strongly agreed that the LGBTQIA+ youth population is particularly vulnerable to homelessness; none identified LGBTQIA+ issues as causing homelessness in their county.
- 65% indicated that the government is responsible for addressing homelessness; 100% indicated that little was being done to address homelessness.

Conference surveys confirmed earlier findings. People agree the LGBTQIA+ community is vulnerable but disagree that one exists around them. To enhance community visibility, our podcast showcased LGBTQIA+ lived experience and featured 10 written and visual art submissions. Thomas-Reid discussed life as an openly gay Christian man in Appalachia, and Sanders offered a call to action. Castos analytics show we reached 161 listeners nationwide and in Mexico. We also created a digital resource page for the LGBTQIA+ community experiencing homelessness, distributing 50 copies locally.

Despite challenges, we developed an evidence-based understanding of the effects of social injustice on LGBTQIA+ youth. We grew as scholars through researching answerable questions that stimulated critical thinking. We developed effective evaluations and made needed adjustments. We grew as leaders by navigating differing beliefs to complete a project that stands for equity. The most profound impact, however, has been on our team. A microcosm of Appalachian culture, some team members held strong personal and religious beliefs that made this project difficult. However, we answered Aquinas' call to "...love them both, those whose opinions we share and those whose opinions

we reject..." while taking seriously the question Edwards (2020) posed in response, "What legacies do we build when we search for and express truth?" (p. 6). The legacy we have begun to build is not one of silence but of truth and inclusion. By understanding and correcting the errors of our ways, we have begun a new legacy for all in our region to thrive.

Resources

Allan, B., Cameron, R., Chin, M., Nunes, M., Plyler, J., Ricciardi, J., Sakamoto, I., & Wood, N. (2010). *Coming together: Homeless women, housing, and social support with a special focus on the experiences of Aboriginal women and transwomen*. The University of Toronto.

Authors utilized photography and stories to empower marginalized participants. We recognized that art humanizes people, helping to end marginalization.

Behari, K., Chaudoir, S., Job, S., McConocha, E., Pachankis, J. & Williams, K. (2020). Brief online interventions for LGBTQIA+ young adult mental and behavioral health: A randomized controlled trial in a high-stigma, low-resource context. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 88*(5), 429–444. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ccp0000497>

Non-hetero, gender non-conforming youth completed writing assignments regarding their sexual orientation, resulting in decreased depression, suicidal thoughts, and drug use after three months. This informed our decision to produce a podcast featuring LGBTQIA+ participants.

Burrow-Branine, J. (2018). *Community of counter-conduct: Politics and practices of LGBTQ Christian activism in evangelicalism* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Kansas. <https://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/handle/1808/27873>

Burrow-Branine discussed LGBTQIA+ Christians and their efforts to promote inclusivity within faith communities. This inspired collaboration with our Christian gay steering committee members to develop strategies to topple barriers between the faith and LGBTQIA+ communities.

Coolhart, D., & Brown, M. (2017). The need for safe spaces: Exploring the experiences of homeless LGBTQIA+ youth in shelters. *Children and Youth Services Review, 82*, 230-238. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0190740917301135?via%3Diheub>

Researchers interviewed LGBTQIA+ youth in homeless shelters. Staff told them to "...repent for their LGBT lifestyle." Shelter leadership were unaware of these negative experiences, reflecting our research findings that community leaders are unaware of LGBTQIA+ issues.

Grzanka, P. R., Spengler, E. S., Miles, J. R., Frantell, K. A., & DeVore, E. N. (2020). "Sincerely Held Principles" or Prejudice? The Tennessee Counseling Discrimination Law. *The Counseling Psychologist, 48*(2), 223-248. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000019886972>

Authors described harm associated with Tennessee's "Sincerely Held Principles" law, establishing that discrimination prevents people from receiving adequate medical care. Researchers confirmed connections between social injustice and chronic problems in the LGBTQIA+ community.

Irvine, A. & Canfield, A. (2016). The overrepresentation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, questioning, gender nonconforming and transgender youth within the child welfare to juvenile justice crossover population. *Journal of Gender, Social Policy & the Law, 24*(2). <http://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/jgspl/vol24/iss2/2>

Researchers reported that between 20% and 40% of homeless youth are LGBTQIA+, thus facing increased risk of assault, robbery, and rape. These statistics helped drive our focus on this population.

Khan, M., Mclaughlin, K., Mezey, P., & Robertson, D. (2017). Challenges facing LGBTQ youth. *Georgetown Journal of Gender and the Law, 18*(3), 475+. https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A528328738/AONE?u=tel_a_nestcc&sid=AONE&xid=6f042330

Authors described how homeless LGBTQIA+ youth experience emotional and mental harm. Sixty-five percent of homeless queer youth and 75% of

homeless transgender and gender nonconforming youth self-reported mental health challenges. This report revealed LGBTQIA+ youth's vulnerability to chronic social problems.

Morton, M. H., Samuels, G. M., Dworsky, A., & Patel, S. (2018). Missed opportunities: LGBTQ youth homelessness in America. (Issue Brief No. 2). University of Chicago. 2020. <https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/VoYC-LGBTQ-Brief-FINAL.pdf>

Researchers concluded that queer youth must be understood holistically, not by gender identity alone. Thus, our podcast allowed LGBTQIA+ youth to express themselves as full human beings.



Deconstructing the Binary Complex in Racism

Alpha Rho Pi Chapter
Northwestern Michigan College,
Main Campus
Traverse City, Michigan

Theme

Resistance – Reform, Rebellion,
Revolution

Abstract

In examining the themes in this year's Honors Program Guide and Honors Study Topic, *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*, our chapter was drawn to Theme 5: "Resistance-Reform, Rebellion, Revolution." Although typically focused on environmental topics, due to our campus' location near the Great Lakes Watershed, we found ourselves compelled by the unfolding events centered around race in America.

A turning point for our focus was witnessing Minnesota resident George Floyd take his last breath at the hands of law enforcement. The collective passion we felt about this occurrence dominated conversations at our weekly meetings. While our desire to focus on sustainability hadn't dulled, we were inspired by this ongoing revolution. Our time together allowed us to process the events and grasp the need for change in our community. A recurring theme in our discussions was that the surrounding community is not entirely accepting of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) members. When area organizers hosted a Black Lives Matter rally, an open carry counter-rally was announced, sending a clear message of intolerance. Our research examined historical occurrences that propelled revolutions and protests spurred from racial violence. We chose to study rebellions, specifically the Civil Rights Movement, in light of the protests.

To be an impetus for change, chapter officers underwent a five-week course, *Understanding Racial Justice*, participated in a 21-Day Equity Challenge, and hosted a community screening of the documentary *John Lewis: Good Trouble* that included a panel discussion on race. We also held a songwriting workshop with local musician Seth

HONORS IN ACTION PROJECT VOL. 2020


**Northwestern Michigan College's
Alpha Rho Pi**

PRESENTS A SCREENING OF

JOHN LEWIS: GOOD TROUBLE
DIRECTED BY DAWN PORTER

AN INTIMATE ACCOUNT OF LEGENDARY U.S. REPRESENTATIVE JOHN LEWIS' LIFE, LEGACY AND MORE THAN 60 YEARS OF EXTRAORDINARY ACTIVISM - FROM THE BOLD TEENAGER ON THE FRONT LINES OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT TO THE LEGISLATIVE POWERHOUSE.

**DECEMBER 3, 2020
AT 7PM**



HONORS IN ACTION PROJECT VOL. 2020

Figure 1

Bernard, producing an original work co-written by chapter members. Our song was featured at a community event for Martin Luther King Day. Through this project, our chapter grew in multiple ways. We developed research skills by becoming more critical consumers of information. We also enhanced our leadership skills through the planning, organizing, marketing, and facilitating of events. Our greatest legacy was becoming catalysts for change.

Objectives

We completed Research Edge prior to beginning our research, recognizing we wanted to analyze a need relevant for our community and one reflecting an issue impacting our global society. We began to research Theme 5 as global Black Lives Matter protests broke out, and we saw a movement that would change the world. Our first research objective was to educate ourselves and others on systemic racism. The second objective was to understand the role of implicit bias and the concept of white fragility. A third objective was to explore the dynamics of microaggressions. Our final objective was to explore resistance to antiracism.

Our research objectives required us to understand more about the role race plays in society today. As we were reading headlines in local and national publications, we found scholarly articles to support or refute the information being spread. We needed to understand the context and construct of race, grasp how the binary complex perpetuates racism, observe the patterns of historical and present movements in regard to resistance and rebellion, and research ways to change the narrative. We learned movements have a cyclical nature. As we observed the effects across the most recent seven generations, we asked ourselves, how will others reflect upon our actions seven generations from now?

Our primary action objective was to promote change and increase belongingness of BIPOC students and community members in our region. Promoting an anti-racist agenda on campus and in our community was fueled by our newfound understanding and ongoing education regarding structural racism. We learned about ways in which we benefit from white privilege and ways we have perpetuated racism. We now know that self-awareness is a form of resistance and education is a tool for reform. We learned our role as advocates and how to utilize area resources to build a network of collaborators. These connections empowered us to enact change we desired on campus without relying on the labor of black and indigenous people of color to do the work for us.

A purposeful collaboration objective led to us identifying campus and community experts who could equip us with the tools and resources to ensure efficient advocacy. After the summer of protests, we asked our college administration to go beyond just sending a letter denouncing racism. President Nissley then formed a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force and a student sub-committee, with several of our members, which is now active on campus.

Our final objective was to challenge the legacies we have inherited and change the narrative we pass on to future generations.

Academic Investigation

A former faculty member shared with our college president that she did not feel our school and community were welcoming to a person of color.



Figure 2

Those sentiments compounded by headlines motivated us to understand the experiences of people of color in our community. Our officer team and advisor enrolled in a five-week Understanding Racial Justice course provided by Title Track, a local non-profit. This 10-hour course expanded our understanding of what it means to be anti-racist and how we could positively impact our community.

During chapter meetings, we discussed our observations from our psychology and sociology classes in relation to social movements. We explored the concepts of white privilege and white fragility. Introducing racism as a binary complex, we wrestled with the narrative that being “racist” is bad, and if a person is good, they can’t possibly be racist. If we changed that narrative, would people be more willing to evaluate the implications of their words and actions? From a sociological perspective, we knew that if we were to challenge ourselves, we would be led to impact others.

Conclusions

Looking back three generations, we were amazed at the similarities between the Civil Rights Movement and the racial conflicts of today. We were surprised to find there is a cyclical nature in combating racism. We grappled with the recurring question: what makes resistance – reform, rebellion, and revolution – effective, and can true change ever occur? Our seminal research piece, the Kerner Report, solidified for us that movements may stop but people cannot. Our question began to form: With the inheritance of systemic racism, will deconstructing the binary complex lead to change and reform at our institution, in our community, and in society? Our research conclusions led us to realize that the work begins with us, and to truly champion anti-racist behaviors and have reform, we must continue long after our project ends.

Action

Jha (2017) inspired our community focus for our action by stating, “People creating change in their communities over time got really clear about who they were and who they understood their community to be.” We were motivated to change our community, beginning with ourselves, by enrolling in a five-week Understanding Racial Justice course. This 10-hour course was provided by Title Track, a non-profit advocating anti-racism and encouraging diversity, equity, and inclusion in our community.

Meeting regularly with Northwestern Michigan College (NMC) President Nissley built a relationship of mutual respect and zeal for change. From Moore (2017), we knew there needed to be a group focused on improving belongingness for Black and Indigenous students on campus. Hearing our request, Dr. Nissley created the DEI board and student sub-committee.

Applying and being awarded a Mellon HIA Grant expanded our opportunities for action. Inspired by Lewis’ (2020) essay, penned shortly before his death, we knew we wanted to bring his passion for reform to our community. Collaborating with our Educational Media Technology, they purchased the documentary *John Lewis: Good Trouble* to be screened (Figure 1). This allowed us to use our grant to partner with Title Grant co-directors Seth Bernard and Elizabeth Wolf for an Evening of Social Justice. The evening began with Seth and Crystal Turner, another local musician, performing music prior to the community debut of the John Lewis film. A panel discussion led by Seth, Crystal, NMC sociologist Diane Emling, and DEI Student Representative Jorge Cruz, shared their perspectives and answered questions from students and community members (Figure 2).

The Mellon HIA grant provided us the opportunity to host a collaborative songwriting workshop for collective liberation, and we partnered once again with Seth and Crystal to write a song capturing lessons learned by our chapter. We dubbed ourselves the “Nerds of Justice” and titled our piece, *Ancestral Legacies*. Our song became the opener for NMC’s Martin Luther King Day celebration.

Figure 3 | Ancestral Legacies

Lyrics: *Alpha Rho Pi (aka: Nerds for Justice)*,
Seth Bernard and Crystal Turner
Music by Seth Bernard

Release me from the pain
Help me finish what you started
Share your stories with me to release
the heavy hearted

Sometimes it gets hard
To know which way to turn
Looking back on the past
I continue to learn

Heal me...guide your... wisdom within me

Ohhh, we are building a new foundation
With understanding, care and compassion
For Collective Liberation,
to leave a better world for our children

We can learn from John Lewis
As he peacefully protested
He was tested and arrested, yet and
still he reinvested

Don't be afraid to stand up
with a resilient sense of urgency
Good Trouble's needed now to leave the
world our legacy

Heal me...guide your...wisdom within me

Ohhh, we are building a new foundation,
With understanding, care and compassion
For Collective Liberation,
to leave a better world for our children.

Our final action component is a Somatic Practice workshop to be led by Title Track's Elizabeth Wolf, where we will explore the physical and emotional reactions of racism related trauma and opportunities for healing.

Impact

The individual growth of chapter officers, and the desire to continue to push for an anti-racist community, is by far the most significant impact of the project. Four chapter officers and the advisor attended the five-week Understanding Racial Justice course, growing their knowledge and empowering their resistance to norms that are not inclusive of all community members. Chapter officers also participated in the United Way 21-Day Equity Challenge. The qualitative outcomes from these events resulted in a wealth of knowledge and resources for the chapter to use and share.

Utilizing our research, we advocated for student representation on campus equity and inclusion. We met with our college president eight times over the course of the year, during four of which we discussed reform and our desires for more anti-racist initiatives. Those discussions came full circle with students from the newly formed DEI board speaking at our event. Witnessing our efforts come to fruition will empower us to continue making good trouble.

Our "Evening of Social Justice" commenced with performances by local musicians, followed with the screening of the *John Lewis: Good Trouble* documentary, and concluded with a panel discussion. The 50 viewers expressed their resulting gratitude and inspiration with comments shared via the Zoom chat. The collective conscience songwriting workshop hosted later in the semester allowed us to write a song that highlighted our affections for the tenacity of the late John Lewis and the fight for social justice (Figure 3). Our song about the inheritance of racism is a wonderful example of both qualitative and quantitative measures. The song was later performed live and our documentary re-screened for a Martin Luther King Day celebration with 85 attendees.

We emphasized the importance of establishing connections that would continue to evolve and further our work. Chapter officers learned and utilized new communication techniques for creating social media content and public speaking skills. Our Honors in Action project brought about life-changing realizations for chapter members. One chapter officer became a moderator for WOKE, a protest streaming community. Another chapter officer changed her major, empowered by our work and wanting to do more.

Through our objective to build an anti-racist community, we found ourselves wrapped in a supportive community who emboldens our journey to aid in collective liberation.

Resources

DiAngelo, R. J. (2018). *White fragility?: Why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism*. Beacon Press.

This book explained the context or construct of race and how the binary complex relates to racism.

DiAngelo writes that the binary complex limits people from confronting their prejudices. By saying you are bad if you are racist, people refuse to own the sentiment. Their virtues must abstain them from being a “bad” person, although their words and actions perpetuate stereotypes toward people of color.

Jha, S. R. (2017). *Transforming communities: How people like you are healing their neighborhoods*. Chalice Press.

In this collaborative book, people shared real stories of making changes in their communities. The actions captured of ordinary people who changed their corner of the world one block at a time serve as inspiration. Over a period of time, they got clarity about who they were and their community’s identity. They considered community involvement to be a “lodestar” when times got tough.

Lewis, J. (2020, July 30). Together, you can redeem the soul of our nation. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/30/opinion/john-lewis-civil-rights-america.html>

The New York Times published a letter written by John Lewis on the day of his funeral. This Civil Rights icon penned a love letter to people, inspiring the nation. “Though I may not be here with you, I urge you to answer the highest calling of your heart and stand up for what you truly believe. In my life I have done all I can to demonstrate that the way of peace, the way of love and nonviolence is the more excellent way.” He continued, “Now it is your turn to let freedom ring.”

Loessberg, R. & Koskinen, J. (2018). Measuring the distance: The legacy of the Kerner report. *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences*, 4(6), 99-119. <https://doi.org/10.7758/rsf.2018.4.6.05>

This article explores movements of the past and their patterns. Why are we still having the same conversations, and why is there still inequity? What has changed from resistance, and why has or hasn’t there been reform? Loessberg and Koskinen share what worked and what did not from the 1968 document on findings from a violent summer of racially charged protests across the United States.

Moore, W. L., & Bell, J. M. (2017). The right to be racist in college: Racist speech, white institutional space, and the first amendment.

Law and Policy, 39(2), 99–120. <https://doi.org/10.1111/lapo.12076>

This journal article explained how neoliberal color-blind racism occurs in institutions and suggests that modern racism has moved to a more subtle form called “color-blind racism.” Without having safe spaces for minority students to gather, and without a voice on campus for diversity, equity, and inclusion, a forced double consciousness is put on BIPOC students. The First Amendment rights can hinder inclusion and belongingness at an institution.

National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (The Kerner Commission). (1968). Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders. http://eisenhowerfoundation.org/kerner_report


The summer of 1967 saw racial disorder in a national spotlight. President Johnson established the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders to explore what was happening, why it was happening, and how it could be prevented. The report lays out the underbelly of systemic racism and is quoted saying, “Race prejudice has shaped our history decisively; it now threatens to affect our future.”

Satgar, V. (2019). *Racism after apartheid?: Challenges for Marxism and anti-racism*. Wits University Press.

This book discussed an impasse in South Africa inciting public debate and analysis. Going back to the policies and transition during the 1990s, a perspective to explain the underlying structural causes of the post-apartheid socio-economic crisis is exacerbated by race, class, and gender inequalities that characterize post-apartheid society.

University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing. (2016). Collective behavior and social movements. In University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing, *Sociology: Understanding and changing the social world*. J. Murrey Atkins Library at UNC Charlotte.

Regarding cultural consequences, the text shared that movements often influence certain aspects of a society’s culture regardless of whether they intend to do so. One scholar stated, “It is perhaps precisely in being able to alter the broader cultural environment that movements can have the deepest and lasting impact.”



Creating a Legacy of Racial Justice in Syracuse: Moving Past the Perceptions of Progress to Build a Better Community

Alpha Sigma Zeta Chapter
Onondaga Community College
Syracuse, New York

Theme

Perceptions of Progress

Abstract

Race-related conflicts erupted during the summer of the 2020 pandemic, yet some people in our society believe that racism is no longer a problem. As a response to the protests, we created a project to better understand the legacy of racial inequality. We scoured academic literature to understand the progress made, learning about residential segregation, the racial income/wealth gap, and perceptions of racism. Our research revealed the continued legacy of racism and racial inequality, both nationally as well as locally. We created initiatives to combat poverty, support Black-owned businesses, and educate our community about microaggressions and racial inequality to move us beyond the perception of progress and build a better community through our actions.

Objectives

We began our project during the summer as racial unrest escalated. Our first research objective was to examine inheritance and legacy within the context of the protests. Having no Black team members, we were apprehensive about discussing racism. We shifted to other subjects, thinking racial inequality was too large and controversial to tackle. While discussing our research at our next meeting, there was the elephant in the room. We were ignoring one of the most pressing issues facing our country, and protests were happening in our city. The continuing conflict was something we could not ignore, so we changed course.

While discussing the racial unrest, we began thinking about the perceptions of progress. Many people believe that racial progress is

evident while others do not. Our second research objective was to investigate the literature related to the interconnections of inheritance and legacy, perceptions of progress, and racial inequality. For two months, we scoured the literature to understand the progress made toward racial equality. We read more than 50 articles and books and spoke with a local race scholar, learning about residential segregation, the income/wealth gap, and other forms of racial inequality. This research helped us understand the legacy of racism and what we could do over the year to ensure that future generations inherit a more equitable society.

Our action focused on our society's and city's legacy of racial inequality. Based on our research, we created projects to combat microaggressions and poverty, support Black-owned businesses, and educate our community. We wanted to move beyond the perception of progress and build a better community to be inherited by future generations. Our action objectives included to:

- create a survey to assess the prevalence of microaggressions on our campus and get suggestions to build a more inclusive community.
- donate resources to Dr. Weeks Elementary, an under-resourced majority Black school.
- create a website and virtual events to promote Black-owned businesses.
- educate our community about racism through the 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge.
- write an educational op-ed article about Syracuse racial justice initiatives.

Academic Investigation

Using the Perceptions of Progress lens, we looked at the issue of racial inequality from several angles. Our primary research questions were: What is the legacy of racial inequality in our society and our city? Are racist attitudes increasing or declining? What forms of racial inequality have been remedied, and which continue today? We established committees to focus on each area.

We learned that although there has been some progress made, racism and racial inequality are still pervasive. Surveys suggest that racist

attitudes are declining. However, research indicates that whites are socialized to avoid discussing race or revealing prejudiced opinions, making it difficult to assess racism accurately. While both whites and Blacks acknowledge racial inequality as problematic in the past, whites are more likely to believe that racism is not currently a significant problem.

Our research suggested that racial inequality remains a significant issue. Racism is both overt and covert, ranging from systemic discrimination to informal, derogatory comments. Scholars have shown that society limits access to resources for minority groups. Practices like residential segregation, underfunding minority schools, and discriminatory employment practices have created significant racial gaps in opportunity and wealth. Black Americans have the lowest upward mobility rates and the highest downward mobility rates of any racial group, resulting in intergenerational poverty. Black-owned businesses are often viewed as less legitimate and therefore face greater struggles. While research indicates that many whites believe the lack of upward mobility results from problematic culture or laziness, scholars argue that it results from systemic policies and structural racism.

Conclusions

As our research concluded, we met with a race scholar who explained the history of racial inequality in Syracuse. Recently, Syracuse had the highest poverty percentage among Blacks of any large metropolitan area. The poverty rate for Blacks rose tremendously as factories moved overseas. The construction of Interstate 81 created a physical barrier separating Black and white neighborhoods, and the movement of wealthier citizens to the suburbs led to fewer tax dollars and impoverished schools. Syracuse's poor neighborhoods are evident, but we did not fully understand the legacy of racial poverty in our area.

Our research revealed that this issue is often met with discomfort, denial, and resistance. We had to create a multi-faceted approach to our action and get creative to reach those who might not appreciate the topic. While we knew that our actions would not end racism, we were confident



Figure 1

that our project could chip away at Syracuse's legacy of racial inequality and reinforce efforts toward progress and justice.

Action

We learned that racism is a multi-faceted issue and multiple initiatives were needed. One action was not enough. For each action, we formed committees responsible for all planning, partnerships, and logistics.

To learn about microaggressions on our campus and ways to make our campus more inclusive, we worked with our Institutional Review Board to create a survey. They helped us craft questions and ensured no harm to our participants. We worked with the Institutional Research Office to create an online form to collect our data. We distributed the survey campus-wide and created an exhibit displaying the data in narrative form, showing how seemingly innocent comments can impact others.

We met with Dr. Weeks Elementary, a majority Black school where 94% of students qualify for free lunch, to address poverty in our community. We learned that families needed food and basic household items. We organized a donation drive and collected hygiene items, food, clothing, household items, and monetary contributions. We partnered with campus departments, including nursing and human resources, who encouraged their students and staff to donate (Figure 1).

We created an initiative to help Black-owned businesses address their unique challenges. We contacted and met with many businesses and discussed what could help them most, which consistently was advertising. We partnered with our college media office and created a website to promote these businesses, listing details and deals to encourage patronage. We created a flyer campaign to further advertise 10 businesses that targeted college students. We distributed flyers on campus and via email. Several businesses created promotions specifically for students (Figure 2). We organized two real-time business demonstrations, offering free virtual classes in self-defense and yoga featuring a martial arts studio and a yoga studio.

We collaborated with our college for the CNY 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge, a community education initiative. We met with the organizers and created a PTK initiative, setting a goal to get 21 students to complete 21 days of racial equity education. We worked with professors to curate 21 educational activities and craft three emails detailing seven days of readings, videos, and activities to better understand racial inequality. We partnered with our media department and created a weekly survey to capture participation and assess understanding. Each student who completed the 21-day challenge received a certificate signed by our college president.

We partnered with a sociology professor to write an op-ed article to showcase racial justice initiatives in our community. While researching community organizations, we learned about Rise Above the Streets, an organization providing outreach for the homeless. Homelessness is a major issue for Blacks in Syracuse. Using a grant, we expanded our project to directly impact our community, and we donated winter hats and gloves at a weekly event to feed the homeless.



Figure 2

Impact

This project helped us learn how to create an academic survey. We collected 70 examples of microaggressions from students and staff. All but two respondents had experienced at least one microaggression related to religion, race, ethnicity, gender, or disability. Analyzing the data, we learned how damaging these microaggressions could be. Examples ranged from jokes about disabilities to being misgendered by a colleague. We created a campus exhibit using the narratives to personify the reality of microaggressions on campus. We collected suggestions to create a more inclusive community, which we will share with our college president. This project demonstrated the power that words have. We hope that our data will lead to change on our campus.

We collected six carloads of clothing, cookware, housewares, hygiene items, cleaning supplies, and food donations for Dr. Weeks Elementary. When we delivered the donations, the coordinator described the immediate impact we made. For example, thermal curtains would help a family whose window had been broken for months, replacing the garbage bag covering the window.

We fundraised \$300 and used an additional \$535 from a Mellon Foundation-PTK HIA grant to purchase complete Thanksgiving meals for 130 families at the school. Working with the school helped us grasp the inconceivable poverty that children in our community experience. While it felt good to help, the need for more outreach continues.

We contacted 30 Black-owned businesses and arranged 21 meetings to learn about them. We grew as leaders by listening and learning about the struggles that they were experiencing. This led us to create a website on which we showcased 21 businesses in our community including details, contact information, and current deals. Once the website went live, more businesses contacted us to be added to our site, bringing the total to 26. We received responses from all over campus, expressing thanks and excitement for a resource to support Black-owned businesses.

We created flyers for 10 of these businesses, which were shared on campus and via email. When we removed our flyer display to make room for another project, a staff member volunteered the wall outside his office as a permanent home, stating it was too important to take down. We held two virtual pop-up events to showcase a martial arts studio and a yoga studio. Thirty-one students attended our self-defense class and 16 attended our virtual yoga class. Feedback suggests that significant awareness was brought to these Black-owned businesses. While our goal was to increase their customer base, the most meaningful outcome has been the relationships we built with each business. We hope that each business learned that our community cares about and values them.

Twenty-four members completed the 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge, surpassing our goal of 21. Each participant completed a weekly survey, sharing the most meaningful activities completed. Several participants reported how learning about racism for 21 days in a row

changed their perception of racial inequality. Another student said they finally understood the reality of white privilege. By creating the weekly educational lists, we grew as scholars and built a more educated campus community.

We researched five community organizations for our op-ed article, which will help our community learn about community resources and programs. With grant money, we donated 96 winter hats and 96 pairs of gloves to Rise Above the Streets, an organization that helps the homeless.

Discussions around race are often difficult and while we felt nervous about tackling these significant and often divisive issues, discomfort creates change. Through research and in-depth conversations with our peers, partners, and community members, we found ways to address various forms of racial injustice and educate our community. Most importantly, we learned that by chipping away, small project by small project, we can help establish a legacy of racial equality in our community.

Resources

Acevedo-Garcia, D., Osypuk, T., McArdle, N., & Williams, D. (2008). Toward a policy-relevant analysis of geographic and racial/ethnic disparities in child health. *Health Affairs*, 27(2), 321-333. <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.27.2.321>

This article showed how race-based residential segregation negatively impacts the lives of children in areas with low access to resources. We learned that better access to resources can improve the entire course of children's lives, which helped us focus on outreach to children.

Bell, M. (2017). Polarized opinions on racial progress and inequality: Measurement and application to affirmative action preferences.

Political Psychology, 38(3), 481-498. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12342>

This article exposed how perspectives on racial progress differ for Blacks and whites. Many whites acknowledge that racism and racial inequality were former problems but believe they are no longer pervasive. Blacks perceive less progress and more racial inequality today than do whites. This difference of perception helped clarify the source of our community conflicts since many whites believe that racial equality has been achieved.

Bonilla-Silva, E., & Forman T. (2000). "I'm not a racist, but...": Mapping white college students' racial ideology in the USA. *Discourse and Society*, 11(1), 50-85. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926500011001003>

This article revealed that although survey data often suggests that racist ideology is declining, in-depth interviews indicate that racial bias is still prevalent. Because it's undesirable to be considered racist, respondents are less likely to report racist or prejudiced thoughts/actions. However, interview data shows that many whites continue to exercise racial bias and attribute inequality to Blacks being lazy and cultural differences, rather than a structural problem. This showed us the need for more education to help our community understand the structural barriers that disproportionately hurt Blacks.

Chetty, R., Hendren, N., Jones, M., & Porter, S. (2020). Race and economic opportunity in the United States: An intergenerational perspective. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 135(2), 711-783. <https://doi.org/10.1093/qje/qjz042>

This article indicated that economic opportunity is tied to race. A persistent racial wealth gap disadvantages Blacks and limits economic power and prospects. Blacks have the lowest rates of upward mobility and the highest rates of downward mobility, perpetuating intergenerational poverty. Proposed solutions toward reducing the Black-white wealth gap include creating programs to support black youth, reducing racial bias among whites through education, and facilitating greater interaction between races, which helped frame our action.

Ogbolu, M., Singh, R., & Wilbon, A. (2015). Legitimacy, attitudes, and intended patronage: Understanding challenges facing Black entrepreneurs. *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship*, 20(01), 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.1142/S1084946715500077>

This article explained the challenges facing Black business owners. Blacks own significantly fewer businesses than whites. Further, Black-owned businesses are often viewed as less legitimate, and whites often report intentionally supporting white businesses over Black businesses.

Quillian, L., Pager, D., Hexel, O., & Midtbøen, A. (2017). Meta-analysis of field experiments shows no change in racial discrimination in hiring over time. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 114(41), 10870–10875. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1706255114>

While some scholars argue that racial discrimination at work has decreased, this meta-analysis found no change in the levels of discrimination against Blacks since 1989. White applicants continue to receive 36% more interview callbacks than equally qualified Blacks. We learned that Blacks remain disadvantaged in the opportunity to secure employment, perpetuating poverty.

Shapiro, T. (2017). *Toxic Inequality: How America's wealth gap destroys mobility, deepens the racial divide, & threatens our future*. Basic Books.

Shapiro argued that racial inequality is driven by income and wealth gaps between whites and Blacks, resulting from systemic policies and structural racism. This academic book provided the foundation for our action and explained how society supports whites and limits access to resources for minorities through residential segregation, low-resourced schools, and fewer employment opportunities.

Sue, D., Capodilupo, C., & Holder, A. (2008). Racial microaggressions in the life experience of Black Americans. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 39(3), 329–336. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0735-7028.39.3.329>

This article showed that racism isn't always overt or intentional. Racial microaggressions are subtle forms

of racism in everyday interaction, often from people who don't see themselves as racist. Racist comments meant as jokes and inadvertent messages that make Blacks feel inferior result in stress and take a cumulative toll. We learned that this covert racism happens everywhere, even on our campus.



Passing the Plate: Serving, Cooking, and Nutrition Resources for the Next Generation

Alpha Eta Chi Chapter
Passaic County Community College,
Paterson Campus
Paterson, New Jersey

Theme

Trade, Craftsmanship, and Industry

Abstract

“Passing the Plate: Serving, Cooking, and Nutrition Resources for the Next Generations” explores how trade, craftsmanship, and industry affect immigrant acculturation and the assimilation of inherited dietary habits, culinary culture, and nutritional health. We conducted an explanatory sequential mixed-methods study to learn more about acculturation, beginning with a review of empirical literature. We learned acculturation can have a significant influence on the dietary behavior of immigrants, which may result in negative health outcomes.

To determine if our community aligned with the literature, we constructed a cross-cultural survey and interviewed students. We aimed to discover how the immigrant population within our community reacts to how key social incidents, such as unhealthy assimilation, food deserts, and loss of culinary traditions, affect acculturation. We questioned how inherited practices of trade, craftsmanship, and industry shape the health of an immigrant, and what legacies could be set to change the narrative.

We identified that resources provided within our diverse community offset much of the key incidents, which cause negative acculturation. While there is a disparity between our research and the empirical literature, the environment that our community creates inspired us to leave a legacy that would change the narrative of unhealthy acculturation. Reflecting on our diverse community and addressing our data, we created a multicultural cookbook and hosted a multidimensional conference. Both promoted the preservation of inherited culinary traditions, advocated for equitable and tangible resources

addressing food insecurity, and fostered invaluable community partnerships.

Objectives

We sought out members and created a committee to conduct intentional research pertinent to our interests. We delved into the Honors Program Guide to acquire a rich understanding of the Honors Study Topic and research process. As we began our research, we encountered struggles connecting to the research process, which led to an assessment of our research skills. To strengthen our skills, we met with librarians and completed Research Edge. Subsequently, we reorganized our process and set out to review a myriad of academic sources. We focused our research on immigrants' health, which led us to the topic of acculturation.

We set the following research objectives:

- assemble a committee of both full and provisional members to aid the research process.
- provide training in the research process.
- identify how acculturation is defined in the literature and its effects on immigrants' health with regards to "Trade, Craftsmanship, and Industry" by researching at least 30 sources.
- host a focus group to review and select eight impactful sources that guide our research toward action.

To leave a legacy of resources aligning with our research findings, we set the following action objectives:

- survey and interview students to assess how our research conclusions reflect our community.
- construct a cookbook to promote the preservation of inherited culinary traditions.
- host a virtual conference to bring awareness to unhealthy assimilation, food deserts, and loss of culinary traditions that affect dietary acculturation.
- provide community resources to promote healthy dietary habits.

To fulfill our action piece of our Honors in Action project, we set the following collaboration objectives:

- collaborate with research experts to design

and execute an explanatory sequential mixed-methods study.

- work with Student Advocacy to obtain resources for the cookbook and conference to align with our research findings.
- invite faculty, administration, and community partners to provide conference workshops that address the social problems presented in trade, craftsmanship, and industry.

Academic Investigation

We dissected the Honors Study Topic, *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*, to acquire a comprehensive understanding of action research. In order to execute a thorough project and develop our leadership and research skills, we attended the Regional Honors Institute. We participated in research workshops on using databases and how to examine, collect, and analyze literature. Finally, we completed Research Edge.

Each committee member conducted preliminary research into a topic of their interest, annotating and aligning it with the Honors Study Topic. This process led to our initial topic of childhood obesity in low-income communities. We presented this idea to the college president, who suggested looking into food insecurity within grade schools.

To further investigate our research, we met regularly with a sociological expert who assisted us with analyzing sources for key concepts relating to the Honors Study Topic. We unearthed the idea that negative effects in low-income areas correlate to childhood obesity. With this focus, we chose the theme "The Heirs of Our Ways."

With further research, the team realized that a significant number of obese children were immigrants. With this finding, we shifted our focus to obesity amongst the immigrant population. After several discussions of research findings, it became clear that obesity in the immigrant population was affected not just by location but by acculturation. This process relates to how the immigrant population adopts the cultural values of the country they migrate to. The theme then changed to "Perceptions of Progress," where we would examine immigrants' perceptions of American dietary culture. Having acculturation

as a broad concept, the team began to simplify the idea into categories. To craft our research question, our advisors suggested a research matrix, a method to help align the themes discovered in our research. They conducted a mixed-methods study workshop to teach us how to conduct a rigorous, methodological study that would situate our research.

Theories such as food deserts, unhealthy assimilation, and food insecurity stood out to the committee and shed light on a new theme: “Trade, Craftsmanship, and Industry.” This led to the development of the research question: How do inherited dietary habits guide immigrants’ quality of health once acculturated to the U.S.? Our new theme centered on how inherited practices of trade, craftsmanship, and industry have shaped an immigrants’ health. We interviewed the director of a local anti-food insecurity program to learn how local food pantries provide resources to the community. He exposed us to the systemic constructs of injustices

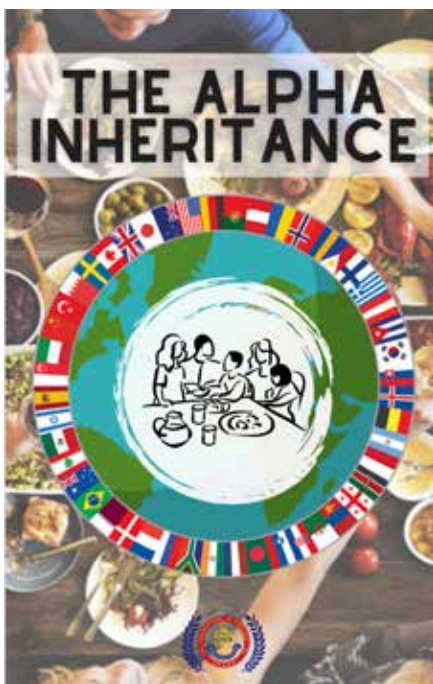


Figure 1

Conclusions

Each component of our theme suggests how an immigrant’s diet can be impacted in the U.S. Industry represents how immigrants assimilate

and inequitable aid that contribute to the poor quality of health. Through further extensive research, we concluded that the acculturation process to the U.S. could significantly impact the diet of an immigrant based on community resources. Having acquired myriad academic sources, we held a focus group to pare down and choose sources that would support our conclusions and inform our action.



Figure 2

to the American lifestyle inherited by economic activities such as purchasing poor nutritional goods and valuing sedentary services. When trade is disrupted by traffic gaps between the immigrant and supermarkets, food deserts occur, ultimately causing a disregard to the inherited diet. Craftsmanship links to the loss of culinary traditions and its replacement of unhealthy habits in the immigrant home. We observed within our own community that immigrants can sustain positive dietary habits when adequately using resources provided, such as food programs and environmental constructs.

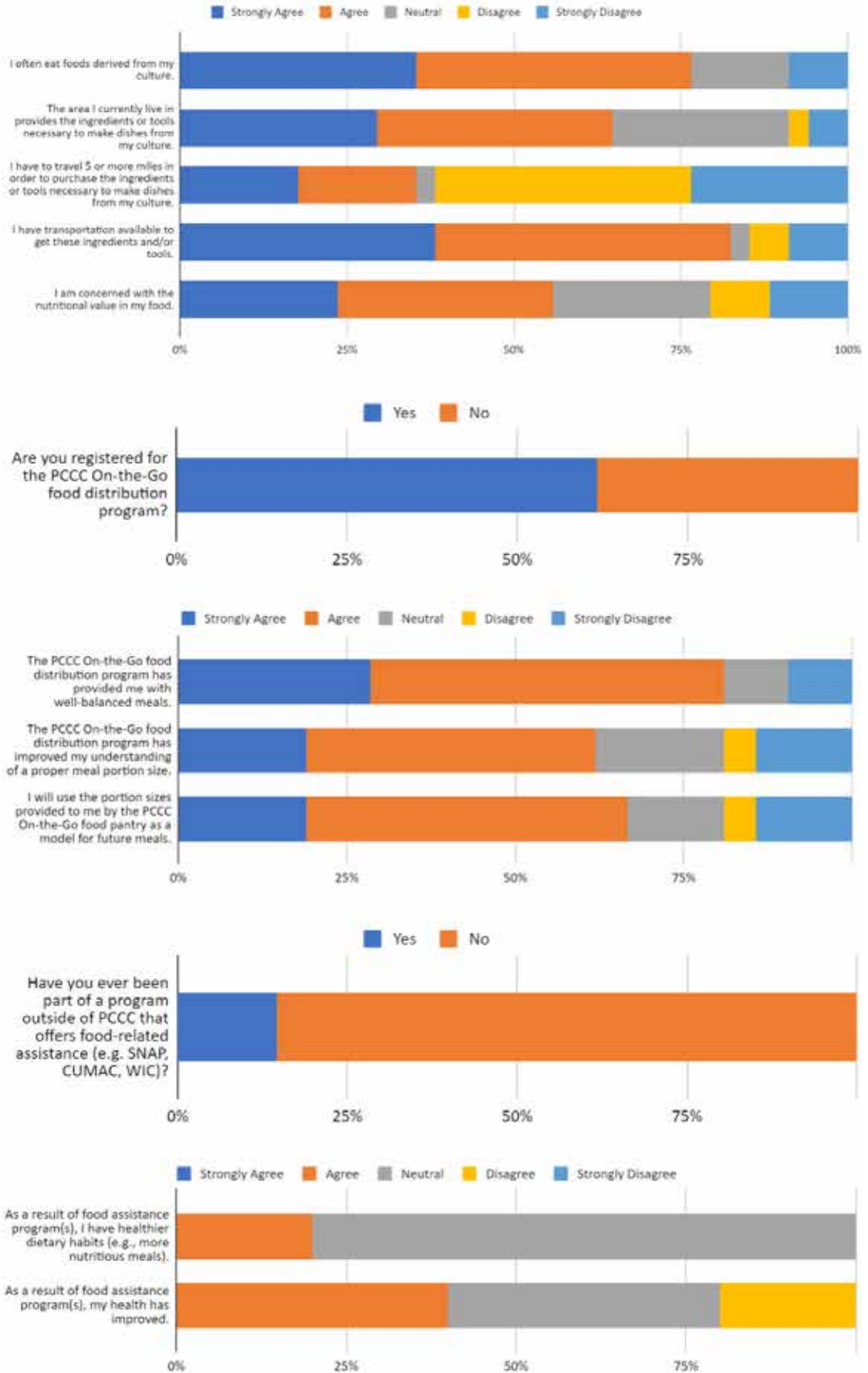
Action

Once we identified social issues that impact immigrants’ diet, we devised a plan based on our action objectives. Through our survey and interviews, we sought to collect data connecting issues in trade, craftsmanship, and industry that affect immigrants. The “Alpha Inheritance” cookbook shares our community’s tangible remembrance in the form of family recipes, provides local food insecurity resources, and supermarket locations (Figure 1). The “Passing the Plate” conference informed the community on healthy dietary habits, offered insight into food equity and justice, provided a history of cooking practices, and encouraged the use of food resources (Figure 2).

To achieve our action objectives, we collaborated with:

- Campus Student Advocacy Director: Provided 10 community resources, connected us to SNAP and community food bank representatives, and presented on debunking the stigma of governmental resources.

Figure 3 | Cross Cultural Acculturation Study



- CUMAC, anti-hunger organization, Executive Director: Conference keynote speaker who discussed the injustices occurring in food pantries and generational awareness of food equity. Served as an academic source.
- Campus Food Services Director: Presentation focused on maintaining good health and cost-effective food shopping.
- Community Food Bank of New Jersey/SNAP Representatives: Informed attendees about the benefits and application process for SNAP, promoting generational prosperity.
- History Professor: Presented with two committee members on cooking techniques from the Paleolithic period to current day and how culinary culture shapes society.
- College Librarian: Hosted workshops on how to conduct research and use databases.
- Middle States Region: Broadcasted our invitation for the conference to reach regional members.
- Campus Food Pantry: Served as the vehicle for survey and interview sampling.
- Campus Docu-Center: Printed cookbook for distribution.
- Chapter Public Relations and Service Committees: Helped promote the conference and cookbook, and assisted in the cookbook development and design.
- TRIO Student Support Services: Hosted a workshop on how to conduct research, develop research questions, and create an annotated bibliography.
- Community at large: Submitted cookbook recipes and participated in the conference.
- Sociological Expert: Assisted with the survey design and analysis of our research findings.
- College President: Conference contributor, providing insight and direction for the basis of the project.
- Amazon Kindle: Publishing the cookbook digitally.

Impact

Aligning with the theme “Trade, Craftsmanship, and Industry,” we were able to recognize the

dietary acculturation process within our local immigrant community and connect our findings to environmental constructs. With 14 student leaders, we engaged in action to change the trajectory of negative dietary acculturation and highlight positive resources. Through the engagement and action process, leadership among the members emerged. We gained a project co-chair, conference moderators, workshop presenters, and a cookbook coordinator. We applied for and received the Mellon Foundation Grant, which allowed us to fund the cookbook and conference.

Having grown as research scholars, we conducted an explanatory sequential mixed-methods study, where we surveyed and interviewed students to assess unhealthy assimilation, loss of culinary traditions, and food deserts in our community to interpret the social problems posed in the areas of trade, craftsmanship, and industry (Figure 3). First, we crafted survey questions to reflect the social problems presented in our research, and we measured the occurrences of the social problems when paired with resources provided by our community.

We surveyed 200 students, receiving a 33.5% response rate, and found the following:

- 76.4% agreed they often eat foods derived from their own culture, with 8.8% disagreeing.
- 64.7% agreed they live in areas that provide ingredients or tools necessary to make dishes from their own culture, with 8.8% disagreeing.
- 61.7% disagreed that they have to travel five or more miles in order to purchase the ingredients or tools necessary to make dishes from their own culture, while 35% agreed.
- 82.4% agreed with having transportation available to get to necessary ingredients or tools, while 11.7% disagreed.

Our survey data did not support the empirical research conclusions. After reviewing the data, we found that not all respondents were immigrants, and the majority of the sample resided in the same county; a diverse cultural community containing multiple factions.

Using purposeful sampling, we contacted seven students to interview to connect the qualitative

data and explain the quantitative results. As a result of examining the viewpoints of the participants, our findings addressed seven emergent themes:

- sharing cultural foods
- exploring other cultures through food
- replication of dishes
- keeping traditions
- transportation issues
- poor nutritional health
- assimilation.

Results indicated that the interviewees represent the small group of respondents who experience the key social incidents. This data supported our conference theme and cookbook design.

Fifty-three students, faculty, and administration attended the conference, 15 members worked to construct the cookbook, and four members constructed quantitative and qualitative questionnaires. We delivered 63 printed cookbooks to community partners, and the community was provided with access to digital copies.

Reflecting on the project, student leaders stated, "Being an active member in HIA gave me outstanding experience. I was interested in taking a leadership position to help with planning a successful project that serves a need in our community," and "I have learned from HIA that it is not too early to make an impact in your community."

Our College President commented, "PTK's work dealing with food insecurity was truly outstanding."

To achieve sustainability and continue providing resources to combat the unhealthy dietary acculturation and aid in serving the community, we are working to strengthen the relationship with CUMAC and our campus food services. The CUMAC Director stated, "I'm going to ask PTK to join CUMAC and commit to building a partnership to provide access to resources and opportunities to individuals and families."

Resources

Berthold-Lafontant, N. (2019). Impact of acculturation on body mass index in Haitian immigrants: Closing the gap in the literature,

[Doctoral dissertation, Walden University] Walden University Digital Archive. <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/6522/>

Berthold-Lafontant studies longer-term Haitian immigrants and their descendants who live in the U.S. According to her study, acculturation, the length of stay, age, gender, and physical activity were not indicators for unhealthy dietary factors, challenging the issue of unhealthy assimilation and providing us with insight into how lack of diversity is another issue for the immigrant.

Bovell-Ammon, A., Ettinger de Cuba, S., Coleman, S., Ahmad, N., Black, M., Frank, D., Ochoa, E., & Cutts, D. (2019). Trends in food insecurity and SNAP participation among immigrant families of U.S.-born young children. *Children*, 6(4), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.3390/children6040055>

Bovell-Ammon et al. study trends in food insecurity and SNAP participation. Results indicate that immigrant families are more likely to be at higher risk of food insecurity compared to non-immigrant families. This brought us to the conclusion that government food assistance programs are under-utilized and can promote food equity amongst immigrants for the present and future generations.

Creswell, J. W. & Plano Clark, V. L. (2018). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. SAGE Publications.

This text served as a source to support the research workshops. We learned about the key concepts of developing and executing a mixed method research study, arriving at an explanatory sequential design. This source helped us to learn how to examine how qualitative results help to explain quantitative results.

Dinglasan, M. (2020, November 11). Academic interview with the Alpha Eta Chi Chapter.

Dinglasan helped us to understand that ending hunger has nothing to do with giving people food, that there are several cultural factors that create public health threats, and that the opposite of poverty is not wealth, it's justice. He discussed creating a quality food hub that will empower families in the community. Dinglasan's interview served as a gateway to structuring the conference.

Economic Research Service: United States Department of Agriculture. (2019). Food access research atlas. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/documentation/#:~:text=Under%20this%20measure%2C%20an%20estimated,20%20miles%20from%20a%20supermarket>

This report asserted that limited access caused by traffic gaps in obtaining food resources contribute to negative acculturation in the areas of industry and trade, by denying immigrants the option of purchasing nutritional goods.

Vargas, P. (2017). Acculturation, dietary patterns and health indicators among Filipino immigrants in New Jersey [Webinar]. William Paterson Department of Nursing. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CINrTNpqXg0>

Vargas' webinar discussed her research on first generation Filipino immigrants in New Jersey. She informed us of how an immigrant's diet can fluctuate when exposed to a new culture, demonstrating how a lack of culturally based ingredients correlates to obesity.

Weaver, W. (1979). Food acculturation and the first Pennsylvania-German cookbook. *Journal of American Culture*, 2(3), 421–432. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1542-734X.1979.0203_421.x

Weaver's seminal research discussed how a cookbook can address acculturation. This research informed our action and affirmed that a cookbook could address assimilation. Weaver provided insight on how agriculture and social problems can affect an immigrant's style of cooking.

Weisberg-Shapiro, P. & Devine, C. M. (2015). "Because we missed the way that we eat at the middle of the day:" Dietary acculturation and food routines among Dominican women. *Appetite*, 95(2015), 293–302. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2015.07.024>

Weisberg-Shapiro and Devine asserted that shifts that occur in socioeconomic and physical environments disrupt immigrants' diets and connect the relationships between the systemic and cultural

milieu. This article helped us to explain how people who migrate from developing countries experience unhealthy dietary acculturation.



Back to the Future: Returning to Indigenous Cultural Burning Practices

Alpha Beta Upsilon Chapter
Redlands Community College,
El Reno Campus
El Reno, Oklahoma

Theme

Natural and Constructed Environments

Abstract

In addition to COVID-19, much of the United States dealt with unprecedented wildfires, so much so that the California fires were a topic of discussion in the nightly news and during the Presidential debates. In 2020 alone, California fires had damaged or destroyed over 10,000 buildings, killed 31 people, and destroyed 4.1 million acres. The increasing regularity of devastating fire seasons calls into question what can be done to influence the environment to minimize their impacts and destruction. Such wildfires are seemingly “natural” occurrences started by lightning strikes, errant campfires, or cigarettes thrown out of vehicles. Smokey the Bear, an icon of the U.S. Forestry Service, has emphasized the human action of fire, suggested such fires are preventable, and created a culture that “fire is bad.” The “bad fire” mentality is juxtaposed with a spirit of “good fire” in many of the plains states that use pyric herbivory as a range/farmland/woodland management tool. On the surface, forest and wildfires could be classified as natural and intentional fire considered a constructed environment, thus addressing Theme 2 of the Honors Study Topic, *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*. In reality, the reverse is true. The use of fire is more reflective of natural processes, and poor fire management techniques “construct” an environment more prone to wildfires. Interviews and academic research provided a framework for creating small demonstration fires illustrating key concepts in fire spread, influence of fuel load, and topography when considering the rate and destruction of a fire.

Objectives

Our research objectives were to:

- explore the primary schools of thought related to the use of cultural fire (and related

practices) as it applies to effective range and forest management, including overall impacts on vegetation and animal behavior.

- determine foundational concepts associated with fire that can be demonstrated and used as exemplars.
- provide team members experience in traditional research (lit review, annotations, hypotheses, etc.) while at the same time building other skillsets in communication and leadership.

Our action objectives were to:

- conduct comparative analysis of burn scenarios to explore impacts to wooded areas, with specific interest in the Cross Timbers region of Oklahoma.
- host a burn demonstration for the campus community, specifically targeting agriculture and range management students.
- produce a narrated PowerPoint presentation illustrating the major components of cultural fire/pyric herbivory and contribute the work product to The Prairie Project.
- create a learning tool for demonstrations to elementary students.

Our collaboration objectives were to:

- collaborate with faculty members at multiple institutions who participate in The Prairie Project, a federally funded agriculture program specifically designed to explore pyric herbivory and related burning practices as a means of restoring vegetative, animal, and soil health.
- interview area farmers and ranchers to learn more about their burning practices (or non-practices).
- interview at least two Native American firefighters to learn more about their perspectives of cultural fire.

Academic Investigation

After conducting some exploratory reading in the overall topic area, the Honors in Action team purposively narrowed the area of our study and research in order to better formulate research questions. The research questions generated were:

1. What are the historical approaches to using cultural fire/pyric herbivory in range/land management?
2. How do cultural fire practices conflict with more modern practices?
3. What are the research-based benefits of cultural fire?

To get a broad-spectrum overview of the topical area, the HIA Team conducted a fact-finding interview with two faculty members, one in agriculture and one in environmental science. At this point, the team began a more focused literature search in areas such as “cultural fire,” “controlled burn,” and “prescribed fire.” Through those interviews with faculty and initial literature review, the team was connected with The Prairie Project and its cadre of technical experts in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Arkansas. The Prairie Project is a federally funded grant dedicated to integrating research, education, and extension programs focusing on the use of fire and other strategies to increase livestock production and rangeland health in the Great Plains, which is the geographic area in which our chapter resides. Contact with The Prairie Project provided access to more resources, and the subject matter experts introduced the team to the technical term “pyric herbivory.” Additional insights were obtained by conducting interviews with area farmers and ranchers, as well as representatives from four of the 39 federally recognized Native American tribes in the state of Oklahoma. In sum, the team conducted a total of 22 interviews and collected 81 sources from both academic and non-academic sources. Non-academic sources were used primarily to read about news accounts of fire and fire management and develop a vocabulary in keeping with the technical subject area. Academic resources provided detailed information and the foundational material for projects.

Conclusions

Findings were, in summary:

1. Native American, or Indigenous, firefighters were highly valued members of their communities, and their skill sets were used to shape the environment and make it better suited for hunting, livestock grazing, and vegetation management. Native practices were commonplace and boast a

4,000-year history in some areas of what is now known as the United States. With the exception of one-time clearing of land for settlement, European influences typically considered fire to be an enemy prone to destroy achievements of construction, etc. Firelighting was discouraged and in some locations outlawed.

2. With the growing viewpoint of fire as an enemy, in modern times, the U.S. Forestry Service launched Smokey the Bear as the face of forest fire prevention. This campaign was tremendously successful and created a culture of “bad fire” and that all forest fires are negative and to be avoided or prevented.
3. Research-based practices acknowledge the proactive and preventative nature of controlled fire and recognize the ecological advantages in terms of herd management, vegetation, and the usefulness of purposeful burning on a schedule to help eliminate more damaging fire.

The team concluded the future requires going “back” to move forward successfully and sustainably.

Action

Collaboration with a wide range of subject matter experts greatly contributed to the success of and the learning included in this HIA project. By collaborating and including college faculty, scientists, and faculty from other institutions, practitioners, and tribal representatives, the team was better able to develop a more holistic approach to cultural burning and recognized the interchangeability of terminology depending on the audience. Cultural burning was preferred by Indigenous partners, while prescribed fire and controlled burn were most likely used by farm and ranch practitioners. Pyric herbivory was reserved for more technical partners and scientists.

The HIA project team worked collaboratively with a professor of Agriculture/Range Management to build model matchstick forests to demonstrate principles of fire management related to slope of wooded land, origin point of fire, extent of ignition, and presence of latent fuel sources. To conduct the experiments, the team cut 12”x12” Masonite squares and drilled 49 holes (7x7 grid). Each hole had the potential to represent the

location of a tree (represented by a matchstick). Additional holes were drilled along one edge to raise the matchstick forest to a specific slope. Once the model forests were complete, the team experimented with several scenarios. The mini fires were recorded and included in a presentation submitted to The Prairie Project. Community engagement and collaboration included working with the local Rotary Club. Rotary provides fire safety curriculum to local elementary schools, and the team’s work products were included with that distribution, impacting over 500 students. Live presentations were limited by COVID-19.

Impact

Quantitative Outcomes

We conducted 22 interviews with a wide constituency and created an internal research database with interview transcripts and both academic and non-academic resources. We developed a short video illustrating cultural fire and prescribed burn principles for use in a Range Management course taught at the college. We conducted a series of experimental burns using matchstick forests to illustrate key aspects of overall fire management and prescribed fire use. The video was distributed across agriculture classes on campus and was also provided to elementary school teachers for inclusion in fire safety curriculum provided by the local Rotary Club. We created a narrated PowerPoint slideshow and included it in the resource materials for The Prairie Project.

Qualitative Outcomes

Among the primary growth opportunities for team members was the development of leadership, organization, project management, and communication. The ability to interview professional scientists, faculty, farmers, ranchers, and tribal members required an understanding of pragmatic speech and adjusting questions and style depending on the audience. In addition, from a scholarly perspective, team members became more skilled in dissecting technical, scientific literature, which was out of their personal domain of prior study, and the ability to discern key facts for comparison. Finally, the team developed skills in presenting their new-found knowledge in a digestible format for younger and less educated individuals and the ability to create a work product worthy of inclusion in a resource database with The Prairie Project.

In addition to the more traditional, project-specific outcomes, the team felt they had personal growth in accomplishing a technical project during a pandemic. For much of the project year, face-to-face meetings were not feasible, and team members had to rely on shared document space and smaller meetings, and had to find non-traditional means of maintaining focus, drive, and contact with one another. This project helped build confidence in all participants. Our college is located near multiple tribal headquarters, and the “buy-in” from our tribal neighbors when they could see our project positively reflecting their cultural practice was of great benefit.

Resources

Bielski, C. H., Twidwell, D., Fuhlendorf, S. D., Wonkka, B. W., Allred, C. L., Ochsner, E. S., Krueger, E. S., Carlson, J. D., & Engle, D. M. (2018). Pyric herbivory, scales of heterogeneity and drought. *Functional Ecology*, 32, 1599-1608. <https://besjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/1365-2435.13083>

This resource provided a context for fuel load and provided some diagrams and other explanatory material used in the creation of the Matchstick Forest demonstration, which, in turn, was an experiential learning tool. The team used information from the pyric herbivory scales and used those to add or subtract types of fuel from the demonstration boards.

Costanza, R., Arge, A., & Groot, R. (2017). Twenty years of ecosystem services: How far have we come and how far do we still need to go? *Ecosystem Services*, 28, 1-16. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2212041617304060>

Our focus was on the idea of natural and constructed environments, and reading this ecological perspective created one of the team's biggest “aha” moments. Prior to reading the timeline, the team felt the constructed environment was the one in which prescribed fire was used as a fire management tool, but instead came to the realization that prescribed fire was a more “natural” historical use than previously thought. The wildfires, which have received so much attention in California, were not so much caused by

carelessness and the Smokey the Bear “only you can prevent forest fires” model of human failure, but rather the failure was poor range/forest management. Had smaller, strategic fires been allowed under the California codes, it is likely the fires would not have had sufficient fuel to cause such widespread devastation.

Fuhlendorf, S. D., Engle, D. M., Kerby, J., & Hamilton, R. (2019). Pyric herbivory: Rewilding landscapes through the recoupling of fire and grazing. *Conservation Biology*, 23, 588-598. DOI: 10.1111/j.1523-1739.2008.01139.x

The authors described the historical link between Native American practices of fire “lighting” (not fire “burning”) and restorative processes. Cultural burns help restore native plants and assist in overall fire management strategies, both of which create more optimal grazing strategies. The authors explained the historical use of fire in which low-grade fires were used to shape the landscape, encourage plant growth, and facilitate wild and domesticated animal grazing. In addition, the team found a summary of “Smokey the Bear Effect,” in which beginning in the 1940s, fire was considered “bad,” and an introduction to the concepts of both good and bad fire. This contributed to the team presentations on campus and the anticipated junction of the good fire effects in presentations for Fire Prevention Week (when COVID-19 will allow contact with elementary students in a live environment).

Handayani, R., Wilujeng, I., & Prasetyo, Z. (2018). Elaborating indigenous knowledge in the science curriculum for the cultural sustainability. *Journal of Teacher Education for Sustainability*, 20(2), 74-88. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1218151.pdf>

This source outlined the concepts of native ways of knowing, which are central to the examination of natural and constructed environments. Indigenous peoples have historically used fire as a tool – moving bison herds, clearing brush, insect control, etc. Among the most fascinating uses of fire was the intentional burning of an area in order to control overgrowth and to reduce the amount of available fuel for more catastrophic fire occurrences. In discussing indigenous knowledge sources from an ecological or sustainability perspective, the indigenous ways – even though they used fire

– prevented catastrophic fire such as the raging wildfires plaguing western states and prairie lands. In addition, these practices encouraged livestock to move toward new growth, thus allowing the regeneration of previously grazed lands.

Starns, H. D., Fuhlendorf, S. D., Elmore, R. D., Twidwell, D., Thacker, E. T., & Hovick, J. T. (2019). Recoupling fire and grazing reduces wildland fuel loads on rangelands. *Ecosphere*, 10(1), 15. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330642045_Recoupling_fire_and_grazing_reduces_wildland_fuel_loads_on_rangelands

Continuing with the fuel load discussions and historical progressions of fire damage increasing, this source provided a context for interviews with farmers and ranchers who use fire to strategically influence grazing. Of specific note was the idea that after a burn, cattle and other livestock will move to the burnt patch almost immediately because the new growth is more “palate-pleasing” than older vegetation.

Storey, M. A., Price, O. F., Almeida, M., Ribeiro, C., Bradstock, R. A., & Sharples, J. J. (2020). Experiments on the influence of spot fire and topography interaction on fire rate of spread. *PLoS ONE*, 16(1), 1-18. <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0245132>

After reading a number of more popular press and journals that were not peer-reviewed discussing the concept of a Matchstick Forest to illustrate many of the basic principles of fire management, this source provided technical information necessary to complete the design. In addition, it provided a simplified design for creating artificial burns depicting different topography, namely slope, and the idea of stand density, both of which influence the speed and rate of fire.

Sundararahan, L. (2015). Indigenous psychology: Grounding science in culture. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 45(1), 64-81. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jtsb.12054>

This resource provided rich context in terms of native people viewing fire as an ally, and in some tribes calling it with a familial name such

as “Grandfather Fire.” It also emphasized the importance of maintaining fire constantly in some form, and the fire builders having an elevated cultural position. In addition, the team benefitted from included anecdotal stories and was able to use these as exemplars when interviewing tribal members within the state of Oklahoma. Plains Tribes, such as those most frequently associated with our geographic region, used fire for vegetation and animal management, whereas Pacific Coastal tribes were more likely to be using fire as a forest/timber management tool. The outcome and efforts were identical, but the practices varied somewhat.

Weir, J. R. (2009). *Conducting prescribed fires: A comprehensive manual*. Texas A&M University Press.

The team acknowledged this resource is more dated than traditionally used for research projects, but we found it to be the most robust explanation of the overall topical area of prescribed fire/pyric herbivory. By reading the guidelines for setting and controlling such fires, the team gained a better understanding of the differences between uncontrolled wildfires and intentional fire designed to achieve a specific purpose, namely to clear excess vegetation, enhance new growth, and encourage grazing. In addition, this technical resource provided much of the foundation for one of the demonstration projects, the Matchstick Forests, conducted by the HIA team.



Understanding the Inherited Factors Affecting Perceptions of Science

Beta Zeta Mu Chapter
Western Iowa Tech Community College,
Main Campus
Sioux City, Iowa

Theme

Perceptions of Progress

Abstract

The COVID-19 global pandemic challenges have been severely impacted by the “Perceptions of Progress” as the theme relates to science. This was the impetus for the Beta Zeta Mu Chapter’s underlying research question about how inherited understandings of progress guide the future. The Honors Study Topic, *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy* led us to create a research outline designed to explore inherited factors affecting current perceptions of science. We learned that scientific progress has a legacy of controversy, and people do not always perceive scientific data as progress. As both history and science have proven, the fight against any viral outbreak can rest on public perception of the validity of both science and the scientists. For these reasons, it is critical to research and evaluate perception of progress. There are several factors that impact public perceptions. While socioeconomic and religious beliefs are factors, our research revealed that the most important factor is non-uniform public messaging. Another factor driving perceptions of science is inherited political manipulation. Even when there is overwhelming non-biased evidence supporting the science, public perception can be tainted by inherited distrust fostered by political leaders. This legacy of controversy affecting perceptions of progress in science has translated into our current national health crises. To help our chapter tackle this critical issue, we contacted several top national experts, researched many publications, and then called on health, psychological, and medical research experts to partner on a “Perception of Science” convocation. These source experts presented during the Beta Zeta Mu virtual convocation seminar on December 15, 2020. This public educational convocation

was advertised in various local media outlets, resulting in 189 people from the college and the community attending. It was later released as a news story on a regional news station with an audience of over 100,000 households.

Objectives

The chapter's research objectives were to:

- brainstorm ideas about the importance of the COVID-19 national crisis in the context of the current Honors Study Topic.
- conduct initial research on several topics including COVID-19 (Priyadarsini and Suresh, 2020), different perceptions about the pandemic, how it started, who was to blame, its transmission, and the severity of its effects.
- discuss the legacy of perceptions about science.
- Invite our chapter's many nursing and healthcare field students to facilitate our discussions.
- examine various perceptions of the legitimacy of science that have shaped the behavior of those who refuse to acknowledge it.
- explore inherited factors affecting current perceptions of science.

Our chapter was keenly aware of how this research could help our community find ways to overcome these perception barriers, which have worsened this global health crisis.

The chapter's action and collaboration objectives included:

- ensuring that the team's action directly connected to the action component of our HIA project.
- inviting experts to work with us to understand and convey accurate information about pandemics and science to project participants.
- working with college and community members to share information about the importance of science.

Academic Investigation

We agreed on the research topic of how people have different perceptions of progress and how

these differences are shaped by inherited beliefs. The original chapter brainstorming discussions quickly centered on the COVID-19 pandemic (Priyadarsini & Suresh, 2020) and why many people refused to believe the scientific evidence presented or believed the many conspiracy theories circulating society (2020). The research question developed by the chapter was, "How do people form their beliefs about science?" We then refined and narrowed our question to, "How do inherited understandings of progress guide the development of people's beliefs about science?" Much of our subsequent research focused on the psychology of thoughts and beliefs and how those can be inherited.

Through our research, we discovered that those with a predisposition to conspiracy theories were more likely to form misconceptions about science (Uscinski et al., 2016; Wood and Douglas, 2015). However, this was just one psychological factor. Further research focused on how humans come to form new perceptions based on inherited perceptions. Two studies (Lobato & Zimmerman, 2019; Pennycook & Rand, 2019) discussed the dual-process theory of thinking proposed initially by Daniel Kahneman in 2011. This theory suggests that judgments are first formed by previous knowledge and beliefs, which was also suggested by some studies. The research suggested that changing these beliefs and judgments requires analytical thinking, which can be achieved by presenting factual information. One research paper pointed to the legacy of public perception as it relates to historical global pandemics, like the Spanish Flu of 1918 (Beach et al. 2020). The conclusions from the chapter's publication research were that the presentation of factual information about COVID-19 could lead to analytical thinking and dispel some of the myths or conspiracy theories, as these too will be passed on as a legacy. Other research findings lead members to find that the most crucial component around perceptions of science is mostly relating to public messaging/information congruency. When there are many different messages being given by public officials, all claiming that their information is the most accurate, the confusion creates an enormous discord for perceptions of science. When this is coupled with inherited perceptions, it can lead to a major societal rift, which can in turn lead to a national crisis during a time when scientific

perception can be a matter of survival, as it has shown to be the case during the current pandemic.

Conclusions

The chapter's research concluded that there is an urgency for increased community awareness education to help people better understand what is causing negative perceptions of science; to understand the development of non-biased processes used to present valid scientific data; and convey the message to the public about the necessity of using science to battle a scientific problem. The legacy of how we perceive science today will undoubtedly affect the survival of this country, not just in terms of life, but also in terms of our livelihood. Much like the Spanish Flu of 1918 (Beach et. al., 2020), how the public perceives and responds to the scientific community's recommendation on battling COVID-19 will be our legacy for the future.

Action

Given the urgency and need for presenting the most current and credible sources for this topic, Beta Zeta Mu chapter members recognized the need for expertise sources. Chapter officers and members contacted several experts. Members contacted Dr. Eagleman's staff, who produced an extensive Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) television series on "How the Human Brain Works." He provided direct expertise for our research. We also contacted Dr. Anthony Fauci's office for additional information other than what was listed on the CDC site. The chapter collaborated with our college marketing and IT departments for advertising our project and to facilitate our virtual convocation. Furthermore, the chapter contacted four health field experts: Dr. Liewer, FACE Medical Director of Emergency Medicine, Mercy One of Siouxland; Dr. Briggs, a psychologist; Ms. Betty Gilbert, LISW, Siouxland Medical Foundation and therapist in the Siouxland; and a vaccine research expert, Dr. Becky Natali, who is a Clinical Pharmacist and the Director of Clinical Operations, Beverly Hills Cancer Center in California. These four experts presented during our virtual HIA convocation



Figure 1

on December 15, 2020, with the objective to educate our audience of college students, faculty, administrators, and people in the community, in order to meet our objective of helping the community understand how inherited perceptions on science will affect our future (Figure 1).

The chapter held a virtual convocation on the "Perceptions of Science," focusing on how people's beliefs can be inherited. The convocation was held virtually due to the COVID restrictions in our state and on campus. We obtained a panel of experts' services to assist with this informational forum. The experts who graciously agreed to participate in this worthy cause included:

- Dr. Liewer, the FACE Medical Director of Emergency Medicine, Mercy One of Siouxland, who discussed his personal experiences in dealing with COVID patients at Mercy One Sioux City.
- Ms. Betty Gilbert LISW, Siouxland Medical Foundation, who discussed her experience with clinical trials in developing pharmaceuticals.
- Dr. Becky Natali, a Clinical Pharmacist and Director of Clinical Operations, Beverly Hills Cancer Center in California, who discussed her COVID transmission mitigation efforts in California, as a scientist.
- Dr. Rhonda Briggs, a psychology professor who informed the audience on how the human brain works and perceptions are formed.

This panel of experts was able to convey important information by relating their personal experiences and research in a way that motivated the audience to participate. They succeeded in conveying the urgency of changing inherited skeptical perceptions.

Impact

Quantitative Impact

The chapter held a virtual convocation with a panel of experts to discuss the scientific facts surrounding COVID and the cognitive processes that form beliefs about the pandemic. The virtual convocation was attended by 189 people, drawing a diverse blend of students and interested citizens from the community. The educational convocation was reported by a local KCAU news channel, who also recorded interviews with our chapter president and guest speakers prior to the event. It was aired on the network with a regional viewing audience of over 100,000 households in the Siouxland Community.

Qualitative Impact

The panelists' presentations were highly informative, with a mixture of scientific data and personal experiences. This information was enthusiastically received by the participants, with many questions being asked in the chat, using an interactive format. The panelists' personal experiences put a human face to the topic's facts, adding to its relatability. Additionally, many chapter members relayed this topic and engaged in many classroom discussions about the topic after the convocation with other students eager to obtain more information. Chapter members were delighted to have been contacted by several faculty, who stated that they would use the information and data presented in their classrooms for future semesters. This was evidence that the domino effect objective of this educational forum had been accomplished, in taking steps to alter the legacy of public perception of this pandemic. Chapter members gained a valuable experience in research during this project. In addition to the information learned about COVID-19, the research and information gained on how beliefs are formed led to much reflection. Some of our own chapter members mentioned having preconceived ideas on this topic and others, providing evidence that there is a legacy effect. Chapter members found they need to think analytically about controversial

topics, which will lead to personal growth for all. Additionally, these presenters offered extensive data and information on the global COVID-19 pandemic, how different countries reacted to it, and how to better understand the psychology behind perceptions of the science. To add value for participants, we created an interactive session by requesting audience feedback using "chat," during the presentation. Audience members responded favorably. Many posted that this topic was timely and essential.

Resources

Adela, N., Nkengazong, L., Ambe, L. A., Ebogo, J. T., Mba, F. M., Goni, H. O., Nyunai, N., Ngonde, M. C., & Oyono, J. E. (2020) Knowledge, attitudes, practices of/ toward COVID-19 preventive measures and symptoms: A cross-sectional study during the exponential rise of the outbreak in Cameroon. *PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases*, 14(9). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pntd.0008700>

This study by Adela et al. examined the knowledge and attitudes regarding COVID-19 in Cameroon. COVID-19 is a global pandemic, so this study was included to examine if the pandemic's perceptions or practices were different than those experienced locally. It was interesting to note that of the 1,000 participants in this study, 100% reported mask-wearing, and a majority reported taking precautions such as social distancing.

Beach, B., Clay, K., & Saavedra, M. H. (2020). The 1918 influenza pandemic and its lessons for COVID-19. *National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper Series*, (w27673). <https://www.nber.org/papers/w27673>

Beach et al. describe the long-lasting devastating effects of misinformation in public health causing non-scientific conspiracy theories and unfounded misconceptions around how the 1918 influenza virus would spread. Scientific community was competing against groups who were labeling the virus as the "Spanish flu," trying to single out people from Spain as being somehow the cause of the problem, rather than the virus.

Lobato, E. J., & Zimmerman, C. (2019). Examining how people reason about controversial scientific topics. *Thinking*

& Reasoning, 25(2), 231-255. DOI: 10.1080/13546783.2018.1521870

This study by Lobato and Zimmerman (2019) examined how people form their beliefs about scientific topics. The study examined variables such as the dual-process model of cognition, cultural and community ideology, conspiracy ideation, and justifications for scientific beliefs. This study influenced the chapter's selection of panelists for the virtual informational seminar as we endeavored to find experts with real-life experience to present scientific material that would be relatable to the prospective audience.

Moyer, M. W. (2019). Why we believe conspiracy theories. *Scientific American*, 320(3), 58-63. Copy in possession of authors.

Moyer (2019) studied why people believe in conspiracy theories. The author's study suggested people are more susceptible to belief in conspiracy theories when they are stressed or anxious due to personal or societal setbacks. The author suggested that contrary to previous beliefs, presenting factual information does not always lead to the entrenchment of conspiratorial beliefs but may encourage analytical thinking.

Pennycook, G., & Rand, D. G. (2019). Lazy, not biased: Susceptibility to partisan fake news is better explained by lack of reasoning than by motivated reasoning. *Cognition*, 188, 39-50. DOI: 10.1016/j.cognition.2018.06.011

This study by Pennycook and Rand (2019) utilized the dual-process model of cognition to examine how people judge the accuracy of fake news. This study also focused on the dual-process theory of cognition as the previously mentioned Lobato and Zimmerman (2019) study. This study also examined the theory of motivated system two reasoning or the idea that analytic thinking exacerbates motivated reasoning. The study found this to be untrue and that analytic thinking could lead to the dismissal of prior beliefs.

Priyadarsini, L. S., & Suresh, M. (2020). Factors influencing the epidemiological characteristics of pandemic COVID-19: A TISM approach. *International Journal of Healthcare Management*, 13(2), 89-98. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20479700.2020.1755804>

The early discussions around the Honors in Action project originated with discussions around COVID-19 and the global pandemic. This paper, released in April 2020 near the beginning of the pandemic, was one of the early studies we reviewed. The article was a literature review of studies on COVID-19 available at the time. The discussion surrounding this paper and other information available through news media and online sources led the chapter to question how beliefs were formed and provided the direction for further studies and a topic for the Honors in Action project.

Uscinski, J. E., Klofstad, C., & Atkinson, M. D. (2016). What drives conspiratorial beliefs? The role of informational cues and predispositions. *Political Research Quarterly*, 69(1), 57-71. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44018529?seq=1>

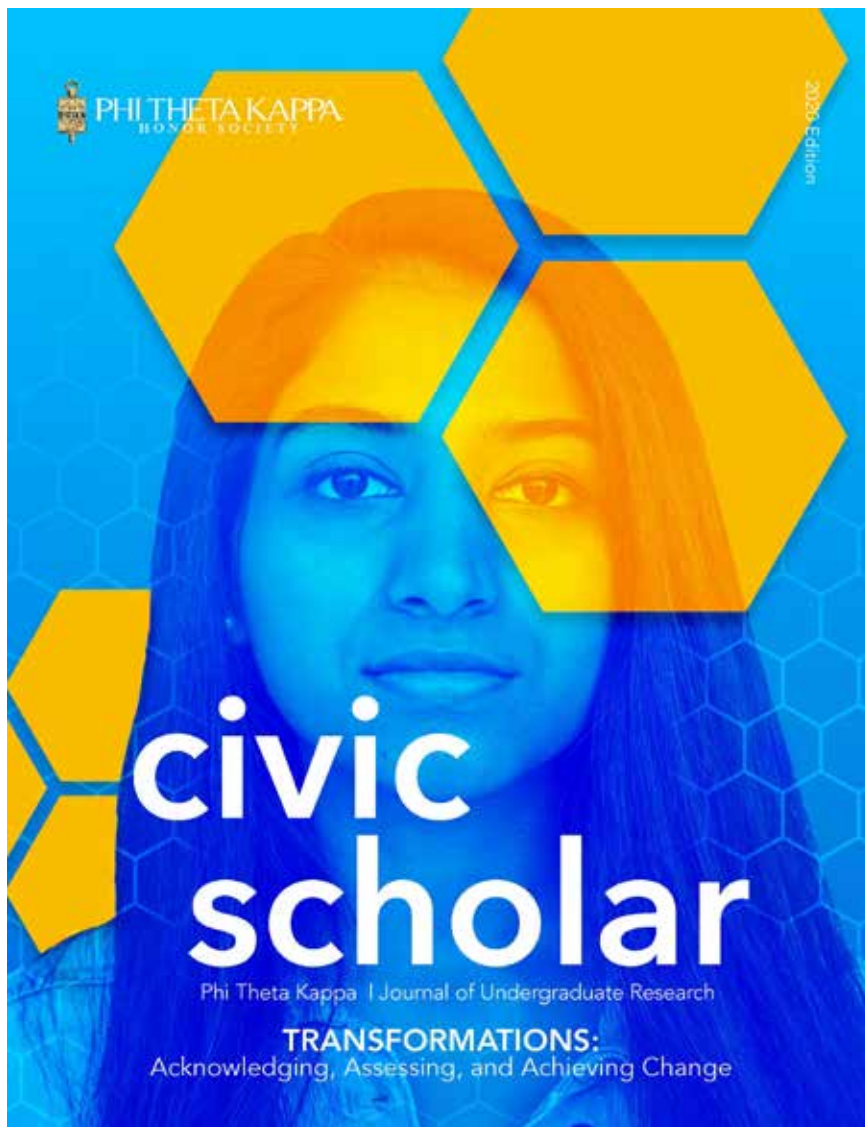
Uscinski et al. conducted a study to determine if predispositions influence the processing of conspiratorial beliefs. This study found that those who believed in conspiracy theories had a predisposition to do so. The study gave no indications as to why some had these predispositions, which fueled a more profound investigation by the chapter.

Wood, M. J., & Douglas, K. M. (2015). Online communication as a window to conspiracist worldviews. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 6, 1-8. <https://dx.doi.org/10.3389%2Ffpsyg.2015.00836>

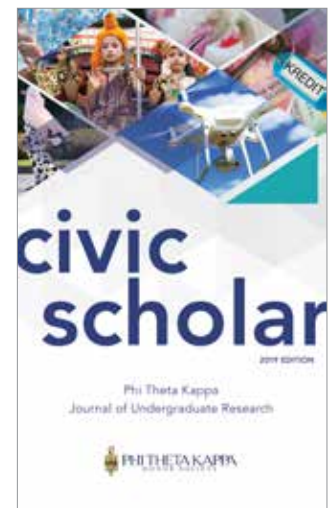
Wood and Douglas conducted a study of online communications and their relationship to the spread of conspiracy theories. The authors' review of online comments was consistent with other research that shows a predisposition to conspiracy theories. This study was included in the chapter's research due to the proliferation of online disinformation about COVID-19 and our quest to discover why such disinformation is accepted by many.

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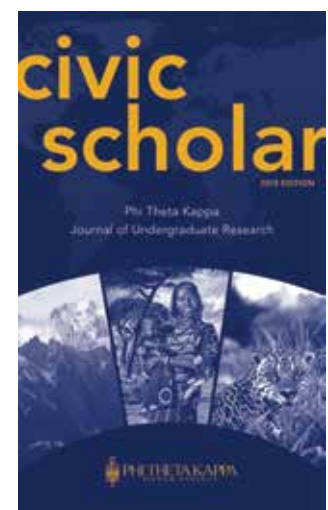
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