



UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME

ARTS & LETTERS



2021

SENIOR THESIS PROJECTS

Study everything. Do anything.SM

**Clare Armstrong**

- Majors: Chinese and Sociology
- Advisor: Lyn Spillman

Healing Trauma Caused by the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Human Rights Crisis — Efficacy of Canadian Private and Public Commemoration Tactics

My thesis focuses on the relationship between commemoration and the healing of individualized trauma and lessening of societal suffering. I looked at this relationship as it pertains to the missing and murdered Indigenous women social epidemic in Canada. Through my research, I argue that both public and private commemoration have a positive association to mending cultural trauma and revitalizing Indigenous cultures.

Growing up as a Native American woman, I have sought to find a window of opportunity to voice the long-ignored needs of Indigenous communities. I am grateful for the space that my thesis research has given me to mend social injustice through academics in a supportive, stimulating environment. I find it crucial to continue spreading the word about Native women's loss of rights however I can.

**Shantae Harris**

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Asian Studies
- Advisor: Alexander Hsu

South Korea: The Intersectionality Between K-Pop, Cyberbullying, and Gender Inequality

My paper explores how K-Pop has become a form of “soft power” for South Korea and how societal norms (e.g., gender inequality), stereotypes, and values rooted in Confucianism have helped to create a toxic environment within the entertainment industry and within society overall, which has contributed to an increase in the suicide rate.

South Korea is known for their soft power — from food to idols, cosmetics, and technology, all have been exported. Despite being known for producing great idols and innovation, it is also known for having one of the highest suicide rates in the world. As someone who has struggled with my own mental health, I wanted to understand why mental illness is such a large issue in South Korea and how it manifests in popular idols.

**Chloe Hemm**

- Majors: Neuroscience and Behavior and Chinese
- Minor: Linguistics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Kathleen Eberhard

Language in Cross-cultural Health Care Settings: A Study of Goal-oriented Communication

This project examines the use of language in health care contexts, specifically when health care providers and patients come from different cultural/linguistic backgrounds. Establishing common ground between both parties is essential for increased quality of treatment and successful health outcomes, so I decided to focus on the specific ways “grounding” is achieved in doctor-patient dialogues.

As the health care sphere becomes increasingly globalized, cross-cultural understanding is more important now than ever. Failure to effectively communicate across cultures, among many other complex factors, contributes to health care disparities among minority groups. Particularly in light of the disparities exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, I have been inspired to combine my passions for linguistics and health care to explore potential drivers of change.

Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.

**Brittany Keane-Murphy**

- Major: Design (Concentration in Industrial Design)
- Supplementary Major: Chinese
- Advisor: Ann-Marie Conrado

Integrating Kids' Gymnastics Equipment into the Home

My thesis project aims to better integrate gymnastics equipment into the home to keep young kids safe and active while promoting healthy childhood development through self-awareness, balance, strength, and coordination.

I was a high-level competitive gymnast for 14 years and a coach to young kids for the last three. I have always loved the sport and wanted to combine my love for gymnastics with my major in product design. That led me to look at existing gymnastics equipment to see how I could improve it. I conducted Zoom interviews with parents and took virtual tours around their homes to see their equipment, in addition to exploring hundreds of online images people have posted to look at how their equipment does or doesn't integrate into their home.

**James Luk**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Asian Studies and Computing and Digital Technologies (CDT)
- Certificate in International Security Studies
- Kellogg International Scholar
- Advisor: Alexander Hsu

Engaged Buddhism in Global Affairs

For my capstone project, I created a podcast on engaged Buddhism. Episode 1, titled *A Conversation Between Engaged Buddhist and Catholic Perspectives*, discusses different approaches to natural law, the impetus for social engagement, demythologization, human development, and interreligious dialogue. Episode 2, *Engaged Buddhist Perspectives in Israel Palestine*, is a discussion on introducing a non-Abrahamic faith perspective to the Holy Land.

The goal of my capstone project is to contribute Eastern concepts, such as engaged Buddhism, to the discourse on global affairs heavily influenced by Western thought and ideas.

**James Luk**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Asian Studies and Computing and Digital Technologies (CDT)
- Kellogg International Scholar
- Advisor: Michel Hockx

Self-censorship and the Limits of Political Expression in Hong Kong

My thesis for the Department of Political Science explores why people self-censor — and, more specifically, how the National Security Law in Hong Kong influences fear and self-censorship in society. Using ethnographic interviews, I aim to uncover how political ironic discourse emerges from self-censorship.

While conducting research for my faculty advisor as part of the Kellogg International Scholars Program, we encountered the difficulty of defining and proving the existence of self-censorship due to its inconspicuous nature. The implementation of the National Security Law in 2020 induced an atmosphere of extensive worry in Hong Kong, presenting a unique and important opportunity to access the presence of self-censorship in the city.



Augustine Pasin

- Major: Chinese
- Minor: Business Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Hesburgh-Yusko Scholar
- Advisor: Michel Hockx

Self-censorship and Hollywood: How Chinese Cultural Policy Influences American Media

My thesis project explores theories of self-censorship, Chinese domestic and foreign policy, and how these two things can be applied to gain a better understanding of how financial incentives drive American self-censorship in media productions.

I chose this topic because it suited my interests of media and cultural policy research. I found it especially engaging because I was able to apply my background in economics to a more traditionally cultural field.

**Susan Peters**

- Major: International Economics (Chinese)
- Advisor: Forrest Spence

Air Quality, Economic Output, and Lockdown Stringency in China During the COVID-19 Pandemic

In this project, I examine how the severity of lockdowns in different Chinese cities during the COVID-19 pandemic influenced air quality as well as economic output.

I chose this topic because I am interested in exploring how a better understanding of air quality during these lockdowns could influence future environmental policymaking.

Noemi Toroczka

- Major: Anthropology
- Minors: Japanese and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
- Advisors: Lisa Oglesbee and Maggie Mello

TESOL Teaching Practicum

For my capstone project, I am leading my own English class on conversational and professional English to adult English learners in the Notre Dame community.

I am planning on teaching English abroad after graduation, and this capstone provides me with hands-on experience that will be useful once I start leading my own classroom somewhere in the world.

**Natalie Ying**

- Majors: Political Science and Economics
- Supplementary Major: Japanese
- Kellogg International Scholar
- Advisor: Jazmin Sierra

Shifting Green Visions: Rising Economic Powers and Climate Change Discourse

My project investigates what conditions cause emerging economic powers to shift their climate change discourses. Major carbon emitters have shown varying commitments to mitigating climate change. While some countries have remained consistently devoted or opposed to the international efforts of climate change mitigation, other countries have shifted their climate change discourses over time.

With more visible extreme climate conditions occurring around the globe, increasing international attention is now devoted to the issue of climate change. However, climate change is mostly still understood through the scientific realm. I hope to connect the scientific and human narratives to contribute to solving arguably the most depressing issue in our world today.

**Lauren Yoo**

- Majors: Political Science and Sociology
- Minor: Korean
- Advisor: Daniel Philpott

Why States Apologize

My thesis explores the factors that influence states' decisions to apologize for human rights violations they have committed against minority groups. I offer five hypotheses and apply them to two cases — a lack of apology to Black Americans for slavery in the United States and an apology provided by the Australian prime minister to the indigenous people of Australia for the forced removal of indigenous children from their families.

I learned a lot about human rights violations in my political science classes, and I learned that most states do not apologize for their crimes. Since apologizing is such a common method of mitigating tensions in everyday life, I wanted to know why states were so hesitant to provide apologies to their people.