



Capstone 2020 Senior Presentations

Historical and Political Studies: Political Science/Politics, Government, & Law and Global Legal Studies

**Friday, May 1, 2020
1 - 4 p.m.
(Zoom)**

Dr. Angela Kachuyevski, Senior Thesis Adviser

Presentations

Democratization in the Post-Soviet Space: A Case Study of the Republic of Georgia and Ukraine

Serena Anton

Climate Crisis: Analysis of US Carbon Emissions and 2020 Democratic Environmental Policies

Shawn Berhel

Sex Work and Feminism: Redefining What it Means to be A Prostitute

Leslie De Leon

Understanding Universal Coverage: An Overview of Universal Health Care & Studies of Real-World Implementations

Amanda Dombroski

Voting Predilections, Do Methods Matter? An Australian-US Comparison

Catherine A Ewing

Right to Counsel: Improving Access to Justice in US Indigent Defense Systems

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International Policy and Climate Change-Induced Displacement of South Pacific Island Nation Populations

Karissa Noragon

Zoning Policy Reform in the United States: the West Versus the Rest

Eve Plotka

The Serious Plight of Foster Care and How the States Deal With It

Veandra Selby

The Codification of American Federalism: An Analysis of Events Preceding the Ratification of the United States Constitution

Timothy Spangler

Abstracts

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Politics, Government, and Law Thesis Projects 2020

*Democratization in the Post-Soviet Space:
A Case Study of the Republic of Georgia and Ukraine*

Serena Anton

In the early 21st century, public unrest grew in the post-Soviet spaces with many demanding better democracy for themselves. This period, known as the Color Revolutions, swept across the Post-Soviet space with democratic and anti-corruption reforms at the forefront of policy. Yet, almost two decades later, democratic consolidation has crawled to a standstill amongst the region with many states experiencing democratic backsliding. The Republic of Georgia and Ukraine represent an interesting paradox as both states seemed to have beat the impossible and have continued their journey of democracy despite the current atmosphere in the region. Through a controlled comparative study, I find that these cases hold the key to the question of why there is a disparity of democratization amongst the region and who may be responsible for said disparity.

Climate Crisis: Analysis of US Carbon Emissions and 2020 Democratic Environmental Policies

Shawn Berhel

Environmental policy doesn't get the lip service it deserves in the US, considering the role US emissions play in the overall climate crisis. Climate change for some time has been seen as a problem in the distant future, but in reality the climate crisis is already here and it shall bring dire consequences. However, in recent years the democratic party has made strides in policy proposals to reduce emissions in the US. Most notably the Green New Deal (GND), a comprehensive plan on the scale of FDR's New Deal program. There's stiff opposition in addressing reduction of emissions by 2030, most emissions come from four parts of the economy; transportation, energy production, industry, and agriculture. The democratic frontrunner Joe Bide along with Bernie Sanders and Elizebeth Warren have their own individual GND proposals. Through a controlled comparative study, I will analyze these policies to determine which one would reduce the most emissions by 2030, along with whether or not it would be able to pass.

Sex Work and Feminism: Redefining What it Means to be A Prostitute

Leslie De Leon

When Scarlot Harlot coined the inclusive term *sex worker* in the 1980s, she intended to (1) eliminate the negative stigma associated with the word prostitute, and (2) align sex workers’ rights to women’s rights. Prostitution is illegal in the U.S, with the exception of certain brothels in Nevada. Due to its illegality and negative moral reputation, prostitutes are stigmatized as being dirty, criminals, drug addicts, and sluts. The word sex work was intended to change the perception of sex workers into strong, powerful, and independant women. Decades later, the role of sex workers in feminism is still being challenged by anti-abolitionist feminist who believe that sex work is inherently coersive, exploitive, and partriachal. Pro-sex-work feminist, however, have successfully included sex workers in discourse of women’s empowerment through a sex positivist framework. To what extent does sex positivism align with the Sex Workers’ Movement? I conducted a discourse analysis on two sex positivist influencers on Instagram. My research concluded that sex work is being advocated through sex positivism in three main areas: ownership of deragotory terms, sex work as a human right, and sexual safety. Aligning sex work with feminist values give a greater voice and political standing to sex workers’ rights.

*Understanding Universal Coverage:
An Overview of Universal Health Care & Studies of Real-World Implementations*

Amanda Dombroski

The purpose of this project is to dispel the confusion and misunderstandings surrounding universal health care coverage. To do this, I will identify the four models of universal health care identified by scholars—Beveridge, Bismarck, National Health Insurance, and Out-of-Pocket—and provided real-world examples of these health care systems in practice through analyses of healthcare in the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada. The Out-of-Pocket model is not analyzed in practice, given it does not allow for equal access for all to health care. Through the identification and evaluation of the four forms of universal health care coverage through a controlled comparison, I was able to extrapolate a series of questions to be asked of each of the cases being studied. Upon analysis of the three countries, I was then able to determine the strengths and weakness of each of the models, as well as have a better understanding of the importance of variety within health care coverage, as its ultimate purpose is to best serve the needs of the population it is protecting. Universal health care coverage can be found in a variety of shapes and sizes, as its overarching purpose is to provide accessible, efficient, and equitable health care coverage to the population.

Voting Predilections, Do Methods Matter? An Australian-US Comparison

Catherine A Ewing

The very foundation of all democratic principles is founded in the belief that the population will take part in governmental processes, most commonly through elections. So why do people vote? What type of system is most effective in fostering voter predilections? Through a thorough analysis of the literature I apply process tracing to case studies Australia and the US, and draw conclusions about the future of voting and how it will evolve to better facilitate voter participation.

Right to Counsel: Improving Access to Justice in US Indigent Defense Systems

Travis Hartman

The Sixth Amendment guarantees the right to counsel for indigent defendants. Even though a constitutional right, indigent defense in the US suffers from significant problems. While scholars have attempted to provide solutions to the problems, a question persists, *How are Indigent Defense Systems impacting how Access to Justice is being provided in the United States?* To answer this question, a structured, focused comparison method was utilized to evaluate US indigent defense systems. Case studies were chosen based upon the delivery and majority of funding for indigent defense coming from counties. Right to counsel for Access to Justice was defined by the competence of counsel, rights of defendants, and space and resources afforded to counsel. I hypothesized an independent commission was necessary to ensure Access to Justice was provided. By asking the same questions of each case study, I determined the majority of case studies with an independent commission were providing Access to Justice adequately. Those case studies without, were not adequately providing Access to Justice. The presence of independent commissions is promising for Access to Justice for indigent defendants, since the presence of case studies with deficient systems shows Access to Justice is not being adequately provided.

ESL Education in US Public Schools: Best Practices for a Demographic in Need

Elizabeth Heiland

Immigrant and refugee students, or English Language Learning students, face the education and policy communities alike with a unique problem. There is little legislation regarding the issue, so ideas for how to education these students were illuminated by education scholars. Throughout my research, I sought to answer the following question: *To what extent are the education policies directed towards immigrant students adequate for those they are applied to?* The answer to this question was analyzed through the use of a two part pattern matching framework, which attempted to match the needs of this demographic of students with proposed educational solutions from members of the education and English as a Second Language scholarly community. I hypothesized that the current public school system in the United States does not adequately fulfill the needs of immigrant students. Ultimately, this hypothesis was supported and found to be true. It was also found that improvements can be made to the system if more personalized education practices and more consistent educator standards are put in place.

A Case For Modern Day Decolonization

Elliot Keil

When certain bilateral relationships begin to exhibit signs of colonial influence in the modern day, reparations/corrections are significantly rarer occurrences now compared to during historical decolonization. Through a pattern matching approach, this thesis explores examples of those occurrences and looks at which colonial elements were at play in the relationship. I examine both with modern day instances and with past affected areas and groups that gained independence or other status changes as a result. Finally, I examine how the system might be failing to apply the same standards used during decolonization to nations now affected in the modern world. I find that there are existing colonial elements in numerous bilateral relationships in the modern world and that there is a failure to adhere to proper reparations.

Development and Authoritarianism in China

Steven McCreery

The traditional view held by development theorists, which tends to be based on Western Liberal Democracies, is that authoritarianism operates in direct opposition to development. This project seeks to reassess the relationship between development and authoritarianism by studying the case of China. China has been under the authoritarian rule of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) since 1949. Since then, China has seen explosive growth and made progress on the path towards development. This was made possible by modern changes to authoritarianism, such as increased discourse and the launching of development programs, which are collectively referred to as New Authoritarianism. Through New Authoritarianism, China has discovered an alternate path towards the expectations of development theorists. Three different schools of thought inform these expectations: modernization, dependency theory, and a global systems theory. This project first outlines and, through a pattern matching framework, analyzes those expectations, then argues the extent to which China has met them. This analysis reveals that New Authoritarianism has put China on a different path towards an outcome similar to what development theorists would expect, justifying a reevaluation of authoritarianism and development’s relationship.

"Your Enemy is Anyone Who Opposes the Fourteen Words"

Murdoch Murdoch: A Case Study in Presentations of Threats to Ontological Security in Far Right Propaganda

Julian Morein

Adapting the Ethnographic Discourse Analysis method developed by Stanton Wortham and Angela Reyes this thesis traces the language employed in the ethno-nationalist web series *Murdoch Murdoch*. While not as widely known as other examples of the burgeoning landscape of far-right internet content such as news sites like InfoWars or Brietbart, *Murdoch Murdoch* can still reveal crucial details about how far right propaganda seeks to radicalize its viewers. This thesis argues that *Murdoch Murdoch* uses its visual and discursive indexicals to present a near absolute dichotomy between a Positive Self that consists of white ethno-nationalism, and a Negative Other that includes virtually all other ideologies and people groups. By presenting politics as a choice between these two absolutes and positioning the series’ protagonists as protectors of traditionalism and white identity, *Murdoch Murdoch* seeks to present demographic changes and social progress as threats to the viewer's ontological security. This thesis then concludes that *Murdoch Mudoch*’s approach to propaganda is emblematic of methods far-right propaganda has often employed.

*International Policy and Climate Change-Induced Displacement
of South Pacific Island Nation Populations*

Karissa Noragon

Climate change has advanced significantly in the last few decades resulting in some of the predicted effects, such as sea level rise, to start to appear and to cause displacement, especially in more vulnerable, developing nations. Though current estimates have found that the majority of the displaced populations will be able to relocate within their country's borders, there are some nations, such as many of the small island nations in the South Pacific, where internal relocation will not always be an option. The question that will be explored in this paper is, what are the limits to current international policy on climate change-migrants or 'environmental refugees' and what sort of framework could be implemented in response to the displaced populations of South Pacific island nations? Using pattern matching, my analysis finds that current international policy regarding displacement caused by the effects of climate change that is forced in nature and requires one to relocate to another state is extremely limited due to these populations not meeting the criteria under the 1951 Refugee Convention or the International Organization on Migration's Internally Displaced Persons criteria and there are no regional agreements regarding climate change-induced migration; therefore, in order to protect this vulnerable population, the proposed solution to create and implement a new framework, convention, or protocol that is strictly meant for this specific category of persons will best serve this population and best provide the protections needed in the relocation process.

Zoning Policy Reform in the United States: the West Versus the Rest

Eve Plotka

Land-use zoning policies are vastly important to how society works, in that they determine what goes where. According to the literature around this topic, zoning policies have implications for the environment, economy, and concerning discrimination. Therefore, as zoning policies evolve, they should try to adjust for these three factors. Theoretically, zoning policies should evolve in the same way throughout all 50 states, but this is not the case. The zoning policies on the West coast of the United States have evolved to compensate for these factors, while the rest of the U.S. has not. In this paper, I use the process-tracing method to create a timeline that answers the question: why are zoning policies on the west coast more reformed than the rest of the United States? I conclude that the main time points that have resulted in the position of zoning policies today are: the creation of National Parks, the Supreme Court Case *Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Company*, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, historic preservation, the current policymakers, and advocacy groups.

The Serious Plight of Foster Care and How the States Deal With It

Veandra Selby

The foster care system is home to approximately 450,000 children. This number is continuing to rise over the years, and as population increases, states struggle to meet the basic needs of the children. Foster care is a collaborative system between the state and federal governments. While federal mandates guide state practices, the power to create and implement policies remains within the state governments. Scholars have agreed on three specific policy needs of children in the foster care system; permanency, education and healthcare. The question that this project seeks to answer is how states are addressing the policy needs of children in foster care, and to what extent are they meeting them? Using a controlled comparison method, this project spotlights three states; Pennsylvania, Ohio and Illinois and their efforts in meeting those three specific policy areas. By asking the same questions of each case study, the differences in states meeting these needs was revealed. This study was able to tease out best practices in order to create a comprehensive reform plan for foster care to benefit the children it in

*The Codification of American Federalism: An Analysis of Events Preceding the Ratification
of the United States Constitution*

Timothy Spangler

The focus of my project is American Federalism, a cornerstone of American political thought for centuries. American Federalism is a political system where power is divided between federated states and a central government, and the federated states retain a large portion of their original independence and police powers. The question this project seeks to answer is: How and why did the idea of a federated system, where the states retain their own sphere of sovereignty, become codified in American political thought? Scholars have attempted to answer this question, but their arguments look at American Federalism in a vacuum and ignore the basic fact that political decisions exist in a continuum. In short, all of the presented theories ignore one or more pieces of the timeline or they fail to acknowledge the complexities of a certain piece of the timeline. These theories will be critiqued using the methodology of American Political Development. Using this methodology, I argue federalism became codified in American political thought due to a changing definition of republicanism with heavy influences from a changing definition of a constitution and a desire to change from the established British system.

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