

Undergraduate Research Symposium May 20, 2016 Mary Gates Hall

Online Proceedings

SESSION 1L

MCNAIR SESSION - SOCIAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE WELL-BEING OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Session Moderator: Stewart Tolnay, Sociology

MGH 288

12:30 PM to 2:15 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

Student Advocacy in Mexican Rural Teacher Colleges

Elizabeth Castro, Senior, International Studies

McNair Scholar, Zesbaugh Scholar

Mentor: Angelina Godoy, Jackson School of International Studies

In September of 2014, 43 Rural Teacher College students disappeared as part of a series of human rights violations that brought unprecedented global attention to the Raúl Isidro Burgos Rural Teacher College in Ayotzinapa, Guerrero. Within the context of these events, this research centers on the student-driven advocacy that emerges across Mexican Rural Teacher Colleges today. These Colleges historically serve as an avenue for young men and women from humble, rural, or farmworking backgrounds to train as elementary and bilingual educators. Rural Teacher Colleges emerged from the spirit of the Mexican Revolution, and they have long weathered disenfranchisement, including accusations of being nests for communists and school closures in the 1960s. The aim of this study is to illuminate how Rural Teacher College students are continuously advocating for school maintenance, student essentials, and education programs. This research identifies student-driven advocacy strategies, which may exist beyond calls for justice for the missing 43 students. The study is based on three primary questions: What are Rural Teacher College students advocating for? Which strategies do students engage in to promote those issues? What are the benefits and challenges of different advocacy mediums? This study draws from semi-structured interviews with one Rural Teacher College student. Interviews are transcribed and translated, and they lend a student perspective and voice to research analysis. Further, an online document analysis examines social media statements and Rural Teacher College webpages. Preliminary results indicate students face numer-

ous barriers in maintaining consistent educational opportunities. The study serves as a platform to highlight how students organize themselves in innovative ways. Further, it has implications for understanding the political and social justice consciousness attached to a Rural Teacher College education. This study will influence future research on the issue of student-led advocacy and the development of civic engagement via online platforms.

SESSION 2C

GENDERED HIERARCHIES IN CULTURAL AND GLOBAL TRANSITION

Session Moderator: Judith A Howard, Sociology

MGH 231

3:30 PM to 5:15 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

The Sexual Politics of Veganism in Fitness

Meghan Leean (Meghan) Jones, Senior, Political Science, Comparative History of Ideas

Mentor: Maria Elena Garcia, Comparative History of Ideas

Though the post-colonial mainstream American diet has changed over time, what seems to remain constant is the emphasis of a protein source (typically meat) at every meal. New trends have emerged which advocate for deviances from this dominant paradigm, such as veganism, a diet that excludes meat, eggs, dairy, and any product or by-product of non-human animals. Some scholars such as ecofeminist and animal rights author/advocate Carol J. Adams have set out to demonstrate how societal expectations of gender roles have shaped the dominant discourse surrounding our diets and those who choose to opt out of these dominant food ways. But no one has yet addressed how the alignment of masculinity with meat is addressed in male-dominated sports, and how the current infiltration of the vegan diet into these realms may be changing the way we look at meat vs. plant-based diets. I seek to investigate what happens when the epitome of muscle and masculinity, male bodybuilders, adopt what is sometimes referred to as a “feminine” vegan diet. I also seek to explore whether marketing or demonstrations of one’s ability to build muscle on a vegan diet help to change people’s perspective

of vegans as “weak” or “feminine”, or if these carnophallogocentric ideals rather promote and prolong the ideology of necessity of meat in the diet. Through analysis of mainstream media representation of veganism, online responses to well-known bodybuilders “gone vegan”, and critical readings of current pro-vegan advocacy works, I seek to discover if it is truly possible to adopt a vegan diet while separating oneself from a dominant post-colonial dietary paradigm. I expect to find that gender and diet are intricately linked, and that until our society addresses the underlying ideology which places femininity on a hierarchy below masculinity, veganism will continue to be viewed as feminine, and therefore inferior.

POSTER SESSION 4

Commons West, Easel 14

4:00 PM to 6:00 PM

Solidarity in a Context of Ongoing Political Violence

*Angie Liliana (Angie) Tamayo Montero, Junior, Psychology
Mary Gates Scholar*

Mentor: Angelina Godoy, Jackson School of International Studies

This research aims to explore the roots of solidarity in the ongoing violent political context of Colombia. By challenging the general rhetoric of “rescuers” as privileged and educated people, I will try to answer the following questions: Why are people willing to risk their lives or privileges to help others, who are they, and what are their characteristics? My initial findings indicate that in the Colombian context, acts of solidarity and courage are often performed by dispossessed populations. I argue that in Colombia, victims of crimes against humanity become the helpers because solidarity becomes a form of survival. I am exploring some of the most relevant factors shown by victims of State violence such as critical consciousness, sense of community, moral agency, and political agency, which are related to the victims’ commitment to social change. Based on interviews I will do with members of the MOVICE (National Movement of Victims of State Crime), a memoir about my own personal experience as a teenager involved in the social movement, and videos and testimonies from the web archives from the National Center of Historical Memory, I try to identify a pattern for solidarity. By doing this, I highlight different forms of solidarity as processes of resistance against hegemonic powers, where victims play the main roles challenging the status quo. Overall, I attempt to show that in this context, where solidarity is a form of survival, it is also a form of healing from the trauma of political violence, because it establishes relationships rooted in reciprocity.

POSTER SESSION 4

Commons West, Easel 13

4:00 PM to 6:00 PM

”To Aim for Equality is Dictatorial”: German Anti-Feminist Mobilization in the EU’s 2015 Gender Equality Public Consultation

Lauren Theresa (Lauren) Moses, Senior, International Studies

UW Honors Program

Austin Hudgens, Sophomore, International Studies

Mentor: Sabine Lang, International Studies

The public consultation on “Equality between Women and Men in the EU,” launched by the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers, received an astounding 4,896 contributions in 2015. In comparison, most public consultations garner less than 500 replies. Although each of the 28 European Union (EU) Member States contributed, 51.7% of the organizations were based in Germany, and 47.5% of contributing individuals lived in Germany. While this level of involvement merits attention by itself, a substantial group of individuals in Germany answered in an eerily similar negative manner to all questions of the consultation. Their responses were highly critical of gender equality policies and denounced action at an EU-level. Why did this group of individuals in Germany, in contrast to the other responses of Germany organizations and individuals from other countries, react in this negative manner? Moreover, apparent from the patterned responses and almost-verbatim comments, how did this group with anti-feminist tendencies coordinate and mobilize? Our research examines this consultation on gender equality among several others addressing female genital mutilation, paternity leave, and gender imbalance on corporate boards to analyze potential collaborative networks between European civil society. To organize our data, we code consultation responses into matrices, which allows us to view patterns that could indicate occurring collaborations. From here, we attempt to unearth the motivations behind and intricacies of these mobilizing networks. Ultimately, our research seeks to explain this uniquely German anti-feminist phenomenon within the public consultation context.