

SPRING 2020

MINERVA

CELEBRATING UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH & CREATIVITY AT UNCG



A PROJECT OF THE RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES
AN OFFICE OF THE UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMONS

Welcome.

Research is an essential part of the undergraduate experience at UNCG and at the Residential Colleges in particular. Regardless of their majors or career paths, our students learn from our faculty the importance of scholarly inquiry and are encouraged first to ask important questions and then to seek creative and innovative ways to find the answers. At the University Teaching and Learning Commons, we are honored to have the opportunity to encourage the work of our students through initiatives like our Residential Colleges, faculty mentorships, and the Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creativity Office. In this magazine, we present to you a sampling of the projects our sophomore, emerging researchers are producing in the Residential Colleges written by students in the Capstone Courses of Ashby, Strong, and Grogan Residential Colleges. Together they are shining examples of the high quality of work being produced by our undergraduate students.

The name of the magazine, *Minerva*, pays homage to the Roman goddess of wisdom, who has served as an unofficial mascot since the school opened in 1893. The image of Minerva has graced every diploma, appears on the official college seal, and welcomes visitors with open arms from the east courtyard of the Elliott University Center. And in these pages, we offer you stories that reflect UNCG's dedication to academic excellence and creative inquiry.

We believe that Minerva would be proud.

MINERVA

— SPRING 2020 —



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Thanks to Jennifer Whitaker for her editorial support!

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Tony New demonstrates the power of good nutrition.

NUTRITIONAL POWER

Using Nutrition to Build Strength in Athletes

By Will Burnett

Nutrition is a vital aspect to everyone's daily lives, especially for someone deeply invested in athletic performance. Tony New, who is a sophomore within the Ashby Residential College program and who majors in Kinesiology, decided to explore how better nutrition practices have positively influenced athletic performance over time. He feels that nutritional practices are constantly expanding as our knowledge of what's good and bad

grows. Tony recognizes that there has been immense progress in the nutritional field since the 1960s, which has contributed to athletes' "performances that transcend their bodies and push their performances to an entirely new level." This is great news for those who really care about nutrition practices. It is even better news for the thousands of athletes that need to perform at a high physical rate on a consistent basis. Tony wants to shed light

on the fact that the practice of sports nutrition is important for so many career fields, ranging from nutritionists to football coaches. Without proper nutritional practices, players would not be able to perform at the level they need to. Previously, there was not a clear grasp on which vitamins athletes need to have and the amounts they need to consume to ensure they remain healthy. For example, athletes who constantly ate too much potassium may have been missing out on some of the key nutrients that nutritionists know we need today. However, with every mistake made, nutritional professionals learned and started advocating for new practices.

Tony wants to continue to shed light on these practices because, surprisingly, this heavily affects his decision not to pursue sports nutrition. Tony explains why gaining a foundational knowledge of this career takes him one step closer to his future, whether that is an Athletic Trainer or a Sports Nutritionist. “I was at a crossroads between these two careers, but with a lack of knowledge of sports nutritionists, I could not choose which path to take.” This lack of knowledge about the field has led many to think that sports nutrition is not as essential as it most certainly is.

Tony also explores why this lack of knowledge of sports nutrition is hurting the sports nutrition community as a whole. In order for people to make the

necessary career choices, they need to have adequate information to make an evaluation. But this practice does not seem to be as focused as other nutritional fields are. By doing this research, Tony hopes that he can change that perception and help people interested to see why there is an “importance for sports nutritionists, the nutrition advice they provide, and their ability to offer

“Unless you have a perfect diet already calibrated to the goals you set, then an adjustment to your diet can still improve your performance.”

foundational knowledge about this occupation.” He wants to make an impact within the sports community and is still trying to decide the best way to do that.

As Tony researched sports nutrition, he was not shocked to see that his beliefs on its importance were “confirmed.” When asking Tony about his reasoning behind choosing sports nutrition as his topic of interest, he explained his love for nutrition and his love for athletics. “One hundred percent, I am certainly a health and wellness enthusiast; I am always looking at how I can improve myself to get stronger, more explosive, and



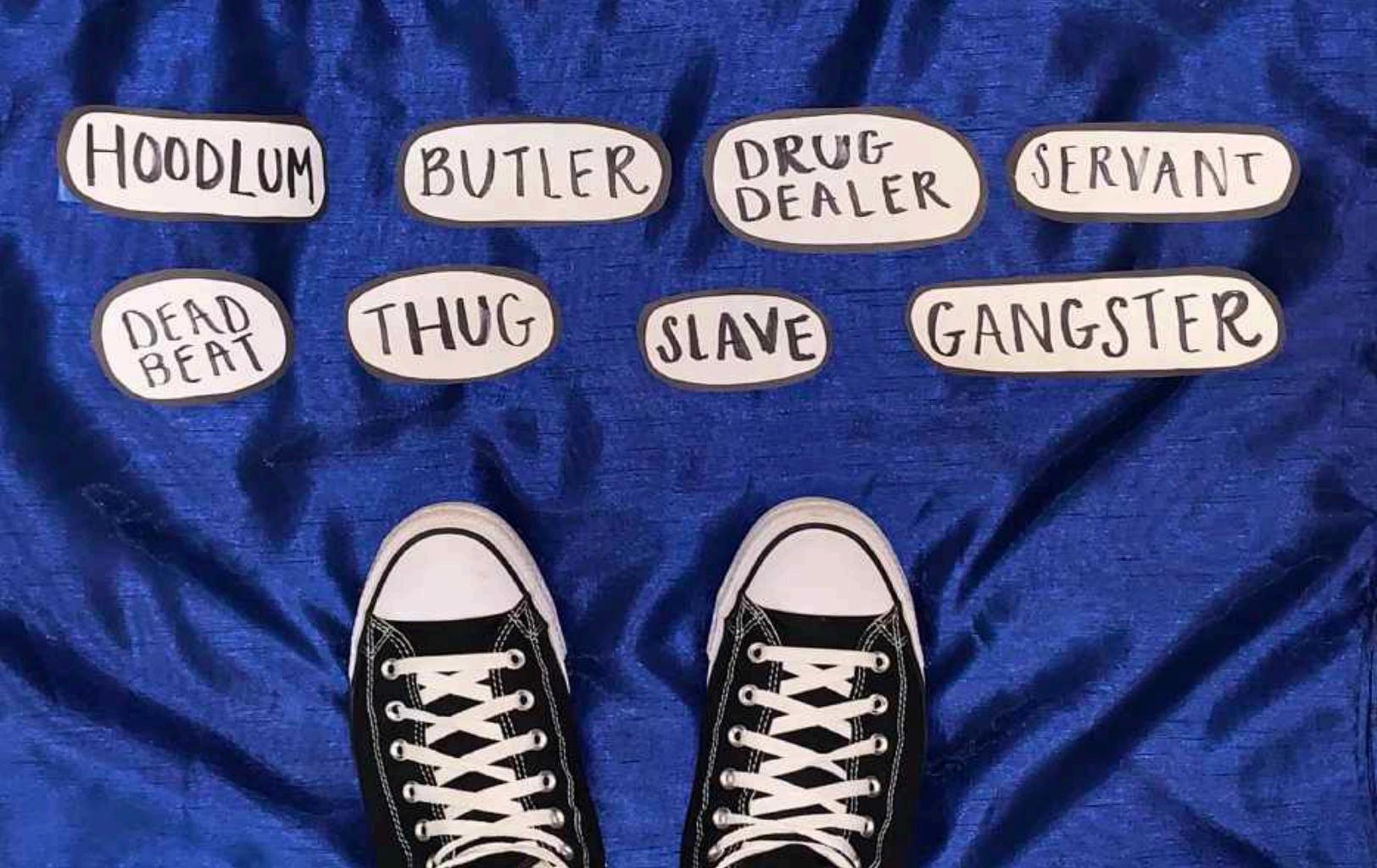
*Kinesiology Major
Tony New*

faster. I want to become a master of that knowledge and teach it to the athletes that want to become elite and unlock their full potential.” His love for nutrition is a driving factor in his passion to help bring some additional clarity to this field. In fact, the biggest struggle Tony faced during his research was the lack of information on past diets of players, as there was not as much structure to diets as there is today. Tony wanted to show

that increased modifications in sports nutrition has given way to great results in the athletic community, boosting athletic performance to new heights. Looking at the trends in America helped Tony see that the structure that former nutritionists had earlier were way worse than what we have now, which Tony found to be quite astounding, but still not all that shocking.

“Everyone is human and has to eat. If you don’t understand the importance of eating well, you won’t get proper nutrition. If you understand the importance of eating well but don’t know how to do it, you won’t get proper nutrition. If you don’t know where to find the proper resources to educate yourself, you won’t get proper nutrition.” A nutritionist’s job is to help make daily life better by educating people on what they should and should not eat; thus, as they continue to make improvements for the athletic community, it will help us all in the long run as we, too, need to maintain good nutrition to increase the performance of our daily activities.

Tony admits that this research caters more towards those who are “nutrition enthusiasts, American football enthusiasts, or general health and wellness enthusiasts.” However, he still emphasizes that this issue is important for everyone, because even if you think sports nutrition does not affect you, it still does. “Unless you have a perfect diet already calibrated to the goals you set, then an adjustment to your diet can still improve your performance!”



This image illustrates the often limited range of roles for black male actors.

RACISM IN ROLES

Racial Inequalities Within the Entertainment Industry

By Sophia Priest

You watch as the curtain opens to a stage filled with actors in costume. The costumes are brilliantly detailed; much care and consideration went into every stitch. The start of the first song begins to play, with notes reverberating through the entire theatre. You can even feel it within you. The theatre is cold even with your jacket on, but something else is at the forefront of your mind. You, a person of color, originally auditioned for this play. You brought your best self to that audition, and did

not even see your name on the callback list. On the stage ahead of you, you see a full cast of white men and women. You do not see a single person that looks like you, and you wonder why it has to be this way.

This is a reality that is known all too well, not only by actors of color in the theatre industry, but in the entertainment industry as a whole. Zarek Williams, a student at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, set out to

research this concept and find out why there is still, in the year 2020, such a large gap in opportunities between white and non-white entertainers.

According to his analysis of interviews and books, as well as his own personal experiences as a black actor, Zarek

“Zarek is proud of who he is, and that is what will get him far in this field, despite all of the obstacles that he may face along the way.”

found that the entertainment industry was dominated by white, cisgender, heterosexual men, and that group is holding onto their traditional ways of navigating the field as a whole. It seems hard for this particular group of people to move past casting non-white actors in roles that enforce stereotypes, and most of the time, not even casting non-white actors at all. Though it is a long standing, historical practice learned from their industry predecessors, this does not excuse it. The entertainment industry as a whole needs to embark on a path of inclusivity and give opportunities to incredibly talented actors who have been shunned because they are not white. The more people who know about Zarek's research, the better.

Zarek is not only interested in the entertainment industry. He also plans to pursue a career in it. He is a Drama major at UNCG and plans to have a career in acting and the arts. With that being said, this topic of racial inequalities within the entertainment industry came to Zarek very easily, as he is a black actor. All of this puts Zarek in a really unique position for his research project, as he lives his project: He is a black actor who has been cast aside due to who he is, and that makes him the greatest expert for a project like this, and also the perfect person to research this topic.

Zarek also identifies as queer, making it even harder for him to feel at home in this industry. Just as non-white actors are cast into roles that endorse the stereotypes that are laid out for their race, queer actors are as well. Oftentimes, a gay male is cast into a “sassy best friend” role, just like how a black male is often cast into a “thug” role. When speaking on this, Zarek said, “Though I am a queer black male, and I am damn proud of being that, that is not all I am.” Zarek is proud of who he is, and that is what will get him far in this field, despite all of the obstacles that he may face along the way.

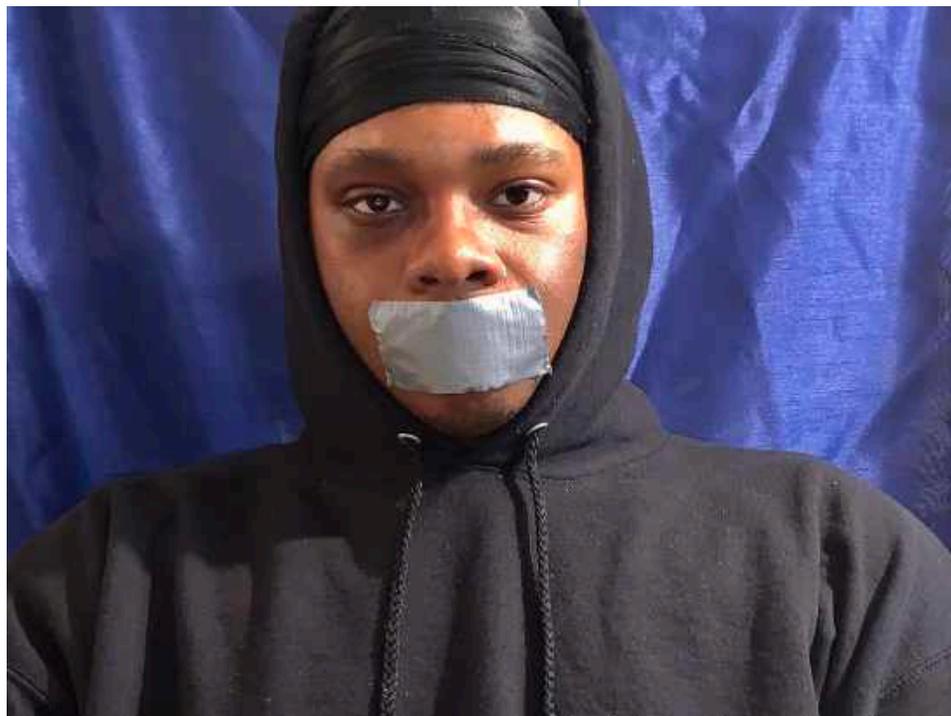
Conducting this research and having this project on his mind for an entire semester helped Zarek realize both some of his doubts concerning the project itself, and doubts about himself and the

industry as well. His ideas surrounding his project changed drastically over the semester.

Zarek, at one point during this process, was considering scrapping the idea entirely because he felt as if he was not doing the topic justice in a way. He took some time to reflect, and came out of it with a stronger handle and idea of his topic. Sometimes, we have to go through some doubt about the things we're passionate about in order to truly master it. Conducting this research also made Zarek deeply ruminate about how having a future career in this industry may be difficult for him, as both a queer and black man. For example, Zarek remembers this remark from a friend: "Do you really think that you can get a role that is made for a white person?" Despite how this reality weighed heavily on his mind when conducting this research, Zarek will overcome each and every hurdle he runs into during his career, just like the ones he experienced during this project. It's clear that there will be obstacles in his path, but the rest of the path lies beyond those obstacles, and he most definitely will find a way to handle them and be a better person after going through it.

Though UNCG is an incredibly diverse school, and one of the most diverse universities in the state of North Carolina, it still struggles to have equal access of opportunities to students of

color when compared to white students. "From being a part of UNCG's drama department, I have seen a fair number of these injustices, pushing the black students into doing roles that are more stereotypical (which makes them uncomfortable), or casting few to no black students at all," Zarek said in reference to this issue. Even though the demographics at our school would



suggest a very racially representative cast in a play or musical, that is not what we see on stage at UNCG.

Representation is so important, as it has been demonstrated across various forms of media. If a young black child who dreams of being an actor sees a black actor on their television screen, they will feel validated and motivated to delve into their interests, because if someone else can do it, so can they.

*Fieldwork Research
Capstone award
winner Zarek
Williams re-enacts
the feeling of being
silenced in the
entertainment
industry.*



Researcher Mariann Juarez studies the stars.

STARGAZING SCIENTIST

The Imminent Supernova of Betelgeuse

By Jason Naude

The night sky is the eighth wonder of the world. It is a truly spectacular sight to behold, but unfortunately city lights make it hard for most of us to appreciate the beauty of this spectacle, and we often find ourselves forgetting that it even exists. However this could all change with the explosion of the star Betelgeuse. If you're not familiar with this star, Betelgeuse is easy to spot as it is the bright red star located on Orion's shoulder. It is located 600 light-years from Earth,

meaning it would take 600 years to get there if we could travel at the speed of light. It is nearing the end of its life and will explode in a beautiful type II supernova that could be seen here on Earth. Researcher Mariann Juarez, a student at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, believes that there will be a cultural shift in both astronomy and the night sky once Betelgeuse explodes. This collective experience will cause people to encourage the increase of funding and

curiosity for space exploration. “People’s perception will change, and it would help increase curiosity and funding for space exploration as this is a once-in-a-lifetime event,” says Mariann. She argues that “the supernova will create a new spectacle in the beautiful night sky that will catch the attention of every human on Earth and remind everyone of the childlike curiosity we all have for astronomy.”

Once the explosion happens, Betelgeuse will leave behind a small neutron star that will be visible once the supernova dissipates. It will take a long time before it does go away though--enough time for everyone in the world to admire the event. This event could have an effect on us just like the first moonwalk. It will boost space exploration funding and encourage people to find careers in STEM.

First led to this research by her curiosity, Mariann wanted to discover how the explosion of this star would affect us on Earth. Since a young age, Mariann has wanted to study astronomy, and her interest in conducting research has led her to pursue a career in astronomy. Mariann believes everyone has at least some interest in astronomy even if it only involves stargazing. There are a few concerns about being in this field, and Mariann is aware that in such a small field as astronomy, being an Hispanic woman would probably make her stand out.



The Timelessness of Stargazing

Regardless, Mariann hopes to reach a broad audience with her research and tried to provide enough context for those with little knowledge about the star, as she also wants everyone to understand and feel what she finds so exciting about her research. “I hope this project will be expanded beyond class, because everyone grew up loving the night sky and most are still curious about the universe we live in.”

Mariann's research clearly reflects a part of herself as it directly links to her hopes for the future. It could help raise interest in the field of astronomy, perhaps. Through Mariann's passion for astronomy and research, she inspires curiosity among her readers. Who wouldn't want to know more about Betelgeuse?



Chrishay Pearce argues that young children do not benefit from exposure to social media.

KIDS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Negative Effects of Social Media on Children

By Rylee Bennett

Most people today have, or at least know about, a social media account. We are constantly bombarded with new research or information about the effects of social media usage. However, there is a large group that is often left out of this discussion and that is children under the age of eleven. Chrishay Pearce took a look into this group's social media usage and posed the question of how exactly social media affects elementary-aged children. She came to a very

definite conclusion: Social media usage among elementary-aged children has negative health impacts on their development.

Chrishay Pearce is a member of the Cornelia Strong Residential College and identifies as a twenty-year-old African American female, majoring in Human Development and Family Studies with a concentration in Child, Youth, and Family Development. Chrishay loves

to work with children and families and hopes to work in either health or governmental agencies after graduating from her program at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

The inspiration for Chrishay's topic came when a friend showed her the social media account of a five-year-old child on Instagram. Chrishay recalls, "I then started to wonder if children that young had a social media account, how would that impact their health, and would it become the new norm? The more I thought about it, the more it appealed to my interest." This started the process that eventually led to Chrishay's narrowed final research question. She focused on the specific effects that social media usage can have on children.

Social media is still relatively new. Instagram is only ten years old. Not only is there a lack of information about social media in general, but the age group Chrishay was researching is especially underrepresented. "Eventually, I found websites and books, with data that was both old and new," says Chrishay. "Since the topic is fairly new there is not a lot of research on this topic especially with popular apps like Instagram and Snapchat. Most research is on teens and young adults because this is the group that uses social media the most. I received more information on the impacts of social media on teens and young adults than any other age group." She optimistically continues,

saying "with my research project, I hope to change that." Chrishay mostly hopes to reach parents, but then she "realized everyone should be aware of this topic because it is detrimental to all kids." She further adds, "most people have a social media account and know how distracting it is, and how it impacts their overall health and development. If they know how social media impacts

"All of the negative health impacts that individuals have with social media, children will struggle more because they are not old enough to handle that much responsibility."

them maybe it can get people thinking about how impactful that would be for a child." Again, you can see how Chrishay's passion for children continues to drive her research and her need for a solid answer.

Chrishay also talked about how investigating this issue could be beneficial for communities on a larger scale. She believes that this research topic can make the UNCG community stronger since it is able to be a part of a newer research area, delving into something that has yet to be a primary conversation. "Information is scarce for

this particular group of children,” and she believes that her research will open more opportunities to address the issues that come along with it.

Throughout this process, Chrishay was able to reflect and think about how things could’ve been done differently

favor and not in favor of kids with their own social media account. [...] I believe I can go much further with this research project and collect raw data and statistics on this growing issue. I truly believe that this seemingly harmless question can have a devastating impact on children’s overall health and development. I want individuals to understand that this issue is not something to be aware of at the last minute.”

This topic is so important for a variety of reasons. Chrishay points out how devastating the health impacts can be to our young children. She states, “I’ve concluded that while doing my research, kids will have the same problems as teens and adults who have social media. All of the negative health impacts that individuals have with social media, children will struggle with more because they are not old enough to handle that much responsibility--not to mention the internet is dangerous in terms of potential predators and sex traffickers if we are not careful.”

Perhaps Chrishay's most powerful statement could very much sum up everything: “My purpose here is not to tell parents how to raise their children or individuals to randomly monitor the first elementary-aged child they see on social media. The purpose of this project is to have people understand that this is an issue that has damaging impacts on a child’s overall health and development, if we are not careful.”



Chrishay questions the relationship between young children and social media exposure.

or better to even further strengthen her topic. She reflected about her desire to have been able to interview with children and get their perspective and understanding on the issue. She mentioned maybe even visiting a local elementary school to be able to get some more first-hand interaction with children. “If I had more time, I would have added pictures of elementary-aged children with their social media account and pictures as visual evidence. I would have interviewed parents who are both in



Researcher Estefani Ramos Picasso

ONGOING ABANDONMENT

Analyzing the Impact on Adolescent Behavior

By Joseph Berry

Close social connections and relationships are a crucial part of psychological development for adolescents and teens. Society and the media show adolescents and teens as moody and rebellious individuals that never leave their room; however, this is a critical time for the psychological development of relationships and connections, especially relationships with primary caregivers. When this bond is broken by a parent or primary caregiver

abandoning them, it can have long-lasting psychological effects. This can be seen in the research conducted by Estefani Ramos Picasso. Estefani, a native of New Bern, North Carolina, currently residing in Wilson, North Carolina, is a twenty-year-old college student, pursuing a degree in psychology and a minor in communication studies. Estefani's research focuses on the negative psychological effects that arise from the abandonment by a primary

caregiver during the adolescent stage of development. Estefani's goal for her research project is to help individuals who have gone through abandonment to understand the psychological effects that they have experienced as a result, as well as to inform others who are seeking knowledge about the detrimental psychological effects that abandonment can cause in one's life.

“Future relationships and adulthood can be impacted, therefore perpetuating a negative mindset for the rest of one's life.”

Estefani's own personal experience with abandonment by a caregiver as an adolescent was one of the major influences that drove her to delve into this research topic. Estefani wanted to emphasize the vast importance that this disruption has for individuals and the trauma it creates. She states, “The psychological effects could have resulted in trauma and an increased risk for mental disorders in adulthood.” This coupled with the research used to compose this report came to a fine point in her thesis: “Abandonment caused by a primary caregiver generates psychological effects on one's perspective, to the extent that future relationships and adulthood can be

impacted, therefore perpetuating a negative mindset for the rest of one's life.” This issue was shaped and sculpted through the research process and Estefani's prior knowledge as part of the psychology department here at UNCG. She states that her previous psychology professors have significantly influenced her understanding of the the information she uncovered. This includes data on PTSD and depression, which she was able to use within her paper. This can be further observed in the career that Estefani is hoping to pursue in the future.

As a licensed clinical therapist that centers on child development and family relations, she can help those who have experienced these situations of abandonment from a primary caregiver as well as mental disorders that can arise from these kinds of instances, such as post-traumatic stress disorder and depression. Estefani strongly states that abandonment “perpetuates a negative mindset for the rest of one's life,” which is a major point she hopes people will take away from her research. This abandonment can cause a domino effect of negativity and psychological issues that can linger with someone forever.

This research and writing process did come with some bumps along the way. If she had more time to compose her paper and conduct her research, she would add more personal information and

examples from her own experience with abandonment from a primary caregiver. During the process of researching and writing, Estefani also came to some new standpoints on the topic that she is exploring. As she was conducting research on abandonment, Estefani realized just how serious abandonment is and how detrimental the effects of it can be. This discovery led her to reevaluate her viewpoint on the topic, changing her opinions on the subject matter. During the research process, she realized how serious this issue is, and the long-term implications it can have on people.

Over the course of this research topic, Estefani also came to some realizations on how this research topic reflects who she is. Estefani went through her own experience with abandonment from a primary caregiver, and she finds this incident still impacts her ability to form and maintain relationships. Estefani states, “It’s been 8 years, and I have yet to find answers for the experience I went through. Being abandoned includes seeking a sense of belonging and having negative schemas; however, I am proud of the person I have become after all.”

The intended audience for Estefani’s research is reflected by this. Estefani wanted the intended audience for her report to originally be those who have personally experienced abandonment from a primary caregiver and wanted to understand the possible psychological

effects that could have been triggered by this experience. However, her intended audience transitioned to a broader audience than what she’s originally imagined. Estefani wants her findings and research to be used within the community to acknowledge that the issue of abandonment is more frequent than people may think. Speaking about “a triggering topic that most people are not comfortable speaking about in broad daylight” helps raise individual and community awareness. By coming to



terms with this issue, the community can learn to understand it and its repercussions. Abandonment is a serious issue that can lead to social and psychological issues for the rest of a person’s life. Estefani’s research on the effects of abandonment highlights the serious nature of this issue and the need for public knowledge and awareness.

Estefani as a young girl with her father.



Giovanna Kast's assembled artifacts for the practice of witchcraft.

WITCHCRAFT EMPOWERS

Understanding the Value of the Practice

By Zoe Lewis

What are your thoughts when you hear the word witchcraft in terms of media? Well, there are many different imaginable responses. However, Giovanna Kast's research project confirmed that media “kickstarted the practice of witchcraft as a religious and spiritual practice for many people.” This topic is a great fit for Giovanna because of the “oddball and eclectic” concept that describes her personality. Coming to college has made Giovanna want

to dive even more into this topic because she had heard about it on campus and her friend's roommate was a practicing witch, which is a very surprising and interesting practice to hear about. Who would not be eager to learn more about it? Though this topic started as more of a hobby and curiosity for Giovanna, it was fun for her to research because she loved the aesthetic of it and how witchcraft could be a positive factor in people's lives.

According to Giovanna, the portrayal of witchcraft in the media comes from a very feminist background and that was very empowering to her as a woman. It helps bring people together, too. In the late 1990s, the entertainment industry found an untapped love for media depictions of the occult, specifically witchcraft, such as ABC's *Sabrina the Teenage Witch* (1996). As mass media has become more widely available to the general public, so too has the normalization of magic, as well as the rise in self-proclaimed "witches." The movement for new age and paganistic practices can be attributed to its media popularization and it has become a great comfort and spiritual solace for many individuals. Through mass media, many people's infatuation with witchcraft and occult practices has become ingrained and celebrated within Western society.

According to Giovanna's research, the word witchcraft is derived from the Old English word "wiccian," meaning to practice sorcery. The practice or "craft," as it is portrayed today, comes from a mixture of superstitions and beliefs dating back to the Middle Ages all the way to its modern interpretation, which was solidified through movements and publications attributed to Gerald Brousseau Gardner and his colleagues around the 1940s and 50s. However, Giovanna affirms that modern witchcraft is an eclectic practice that is extremely personalized to each and every



Researcher Giovanna Kast

practitioner. In terms of worship or religious standing, witches as individuals can vary greatly from one another in their personal beliefs. The commonality lies within the practice of magic itself, which includes but is not limited to rituals such as spells, divination, and conjurings using consecrated tools in order to create a certain outcome.

Giovanna argues that there is more to this topic than just popular films and pretty aesthetics. An entire spiritual movement is sweeping the internet, yet very little research is being done on its effects. Further research is called for from outside the witch community, focusing on how non-practitioners view the rise in witchcraft and its presence within media.



Alicia Marrero before a 2019 Chicago performance of Hamilton.

HISTORICAL INFLUENCE

Hamilton's Musical Role in History

By Kayla Mercer

The Broadway megahit *Hamilton*, written by Lin-Manuel Miranda, pioneered a new way of shedding light on American history. Miranda was inspired by the best-selling biography *Alexander Hamilton* written by Ron Chernow. The critically acclaimed play became a universal hit because Lin-Manuel Miranda incorporated one of the most popular musical genres, hip-hop. The play itself sheds light specifically on the first U.S. Treasury Secretary and a Founding Father. The story of Alexander Hamilton is

well known in American history, but if you aren't that familiar with the complete story, the musical will inform you in a creative way. Alicia Marrero argues the value of the musical *Hamilton* as an educational tool. Yet, it is also true that the bright lights, songs, and choreography over-idealize and over-simplify the real stories behind these characters that are a part of American history. Her research touches on three specific topics: Hamilton's character and the characters of his wife, Eliza,

and his killer, Aaron Burr, were the first to be analyzed. Next was the issue of Hamilton's stand and actions on slavery, and lastly, Alicia analyzed how accurately the situation of women was portrayed in Miranda's musical.

In the first examinations of the accuracy of their characters, Alicia notes that Hamilton is celebrated as an immigrant. In her research, she gives an example from the musical when characters say, "Immigrants: We get the job done." But according to other historical and scholarly sources, Hamilton instead was a man who sailed from one part of the British Empire, the British West Indies specifically, to another of its mainland colonies--so not exactly an immigrant in the usual sense. Alicia also shows how the musical and biography differ from scholarly sources. She states that Miranda and Chernow focus more on how Hamilton was a poor orphan growing up, and how that set him apart from his wealthy counterparts among the Founding Fathers. The musical is able to portray that yes, he had a different upbringing than his peers, but he was still accepted on a social level. However, Hamilton as a character represents how the United States has always drawn people from everywhere and that Hamilton definitely showed that immigrants are essential to our society.

Following this, Alicia recognizes that in both the biography and musical, Hamilton and his killer, Aaron Burr, have accurate portrayals of their similarities

and differences with one another. The last character that Alicia researched was Hamilton's wife, Eliza Schuyler. Alicia states that because of the way she is portrayed, Eliza could be seen as the real hero in this history. In the musical, all of her accomplishments are accurately shown.

Next, Alicia analyzed Hamilton's standpoint on slavery in the musical and how it coincided with the actual historical facts. Alicia went on to confirm the truth of Hamilton's standpoint: he was against slavery; however, he was always ready to compromise on full equality. In *Hamilton* the musical, Angelica Schuyler, Eliza's sister, sings, "and when I meet Thomas Jefferson / I'm 'a compel him to include women in the sequel." This view is corroborated: after Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence, he mentioned in a private letter that, "[o]ur good ladies I trust have been too wise to wrinkle their foreheads with politics."

Alicia concludes that *Hamilton* overall is an effective introduction to the man, his contemporaries, and his times. Even though she knows that the musical over-idealizes and over-simplifies because of the limits and needs of the stage format (Lin-Manuel Miranda acknowledges that he omitted or even fictionalized some of the historical facts for entertainment purposes), *Hamilton* is more than just an entertaining Broadway show: it's a good history lesson!



A tower of
Hamilton sources!



Researcher Asha Moore discusses how toxic relationships are a big gamble.

TOXIC RELATIONSHIPS

The Dehumanizing Dynamic

By Scotty French

If you were in a relationship with someone who constantly put you down, made you feel worthless or even physically harmed you, would you stay? The answer may seem obvious: a resounding no, but it's not as black and white as it seems. In fact, many do not get the luxury of choice. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, as many as one in four women and one in nine men are victims of domestic violence in the

United States. Sophomore Asha Moore is a psychology major who is interested in women who stay in toxic, abusive relationships, and for her, it's personal. Asha has been in and witnessed multiple abusive relationships, all with varying degrees of toxicity: "Not only do I have personal experience with emotionally abusive relationships, but so do my friends and family. It's just so prevalent in my life, so I really wanted to shed some light on this issue."

She acknowledges how toxic abuse and toxic relationships can affect anyone regardless of gender, but since she is a woman, she saw it fit to focus on that demographic, especially since a lot of the research is done on women as survivors. Interestingly, she also disclosed a more personal note about the functionality behind dependency in relationships, a topic she goes into in her research: “I grew up lower class, so there have been times, and still are times, when I have only pennies in my pocket, which isn't enough to survive on. And as someone with six siblings, my mom rarely has money to spare, so sometimes I rely on my relationships with men to meet my needs.” We can see that there are many nuances to this topic. This research project was a difficult process for Asha. Such sensitive subject matter has a tendency to elicit visceral reactions. She ultimately decided on the intermingling of dependency on a partner, the dehumanization of the abuse survivor, trauma, insecurities, and manipulation as the overall reasons behind why people stay in toxic relationships.

In order to understand this research, however, we first have to understand what constitutes a toxic relationship. Patterns of manipulation, gaslighting, and controlling behavior are some of the signs Asha's research touches on. Relationships start out well, but after some time, red flags pop up. It starts with little things and builds up, which

is part of the reason many victims don't realize how toxic of a relationship they've ended up in. These behaviors are long term and break down victims and dehumanize them. Soon, victims begin to blame themselves for their situation. Perpetrators make their victims feel like there's no way out. Psychologically, there are a lot of processes happening at once. Victims have attachments to their perpetrators that can be intensified if

“Asha hopes that women see her research and become more aware of the types of relationships they're in.... Awareness is the first step.”

they had issues with attachment growing up. Attachment issues can set people up to be more susceptible to getting trapped in toxic relationships and fuel a cycle of self-blame that prevents them from holding perpetrators accountable for their actions and ultimately leaving.

Asha hopes “that women see this research and become more aware of the types of relationships they're in. Expecting them to leave such a relationship is the ultimate goal, but I know that it is more complicated than that, so awareness is the first step.” She hopes that women who have been

in these relationships can possibly learn, retroactively, what exactly they went through and outline the thought processes they might have had during the relationship, along with their abuser's thoughts.



Researcher Asha Moore

“It’s such a big issue, but we see it all the time. Sometimes it gets swept under the rug, and this is my way of bringing it to light.” She sees that toxic relationships are quite common, and on average, most people will either be part of, or witness, a toxic relationship, but that doesn’t mean everyone actually recognizes the red flags. This research is also helpful for people who don’t realize the situation they’re in and are repeating the cycle of self-doubt and dismissing their partner’s actions. For them to see this and recognize what they’re doing would be incredibly helpful. Asha says, “knowing

the signs of toxicity and being proactive about who you see romantically will, I think, really be helpful for not only future relationships, but a healthy sense of self.” Further, and potentially the most important focus for this project, would be those who don’t understand why they stay, those who victim-blame and think they could never end up in a toxic or abusive relationship because they would just leave. These people oversimplify situations without taking the time to truly understand the question they’re even asking: why?

According to Asha's research, mostly, there is a significant lack of knowledge in the public of how to help people in toxic relationships. We are taught to turn away and mind our own business, because who are we to tread in someone else’s relationship? This mentality is not only just toxic and unempathetic; it can lead to unintentionally letting someone be hurt emotionally or physically. When asked if the topic she chose reflects a lot about who she is, she said, “Definitely! I care so much about others and really, all I want is for people to take care of themselves. I know how hard that can be, so hopefully they can use my research as a guide to do that, at least in terms of their relationships.” That’s the key idea behind Asha’s research: empathy and humanizing victims to understand them as survivors who are people and capable of being stuck in situations that are not their fault.



Scotty French analyzes the complexity of parasocial relationships.

PARASOCIAL RELATIONS

Stand-ins for Emotional Support

By Asha Moore

Have you ever felt close to a singer, TV character, book character or other media persona? We're talking so close that you felt as if you knew everything about that person and the connection you had with them was almost unreal? What about being a "stan?" If you have, or if you are, don't worry; you're not alone. In fact, some may consider it normal. But do you ever wonder why you feel this way? Scotty French does, so he dedicated his

semester to finding answers. French is a lover of media and social psychology, which is why he considered this topic to be a "perfect fit." As someone who has "multiple marginal identities--of color, queer, and transgender," Scotty knows the importance of creating a voice for other marginalized groups. When asked how his identity, in all meanings of the word, impacted his research and his want to represent marginalized groups, he said, "I care

about people being represented in the media and having someone to look up to. I am interested in mental health so that affects my outlook on this topic because I ultimately want people to be supported and mentally healthy.” His career of choice is to be a therapist, which only further shows the care he has for other people: “Mental health is important to me and developmental psychology is an incredibly huge part of understanding mental health,” Scotty says, which is the basis of his research.

In order to understand why people find such closeness to people they've never met, he thought it was important

“I'm looking at the public's relationship with people in the media...how people perceive relationships with celebrities even though they've never met in person.”

to find out who was in these sorts of relationships with media personae: the who and the why. These relationships with media personae are called parasocial relationships, or PSRs. This is any one-sided relationship with a celebrity, band member, book character, etc., based on frequent or continuous exposure to said person, which generally

results in an attachment that intensifies over time. “I’m looking at the public’s relationship with people in the media,” Scotty says when asked exactly what he is studying, “I’m interested in how people perceive relationships with celebrities even though they’ve never met in person.” Scotty’s research says that these relationships form out of loneliness or a need for comfort. When there is nowhere or no one else to turn to, it isn’t uncommon to look for support in the media. This is especially true in today’s world due to our reliance on technology and the easy access to social media, streaming sites, and more that most people have now. With instant access to so much information, it is easy to know almost everything about a celebrity with the click of a few buttons. It makes sense that the more information you gather, the closer you feel to someone who does not know you exist. Scotty’s argument is that the core reason behind the formation of PSRs is due to, as previously stated, a lack of personal social support, which forces people to “seek out connections through other mediums.”

So, who exactly is the target audience of his research? Scotty explains that his goal is “always to educate,” to help explain “the psychology behind having a bond with a media personality,” which may be hard for some people to understand. From my interview with Scotty, I gathered that he is not aiming to “attack” or undermine those who experience these types of

relationships, but simply to understand the psychological aspects behind it and to ask the question, are these relationships unusual or unhealthy? French's research goes in depth on the pros and cons of PSRs. One major con was that, because of how humans learn by observation, mimicking these figures may be a problem (since not all celebrities behave well). On the other hand, a positive effect of PSRs is identity formation. These interactions have a low possibility for rejection, which is what appeals to adolescents and helps them understand who they are.

I asked Scotty French about how he believes his research can make UNCG and the greater community stronger, to which he replied, "If we can understand the importance of relationships, maybe we'd be more willing to extend a hand to people more often than we already may." When asked what he would add to his research if more time were available, he said, "I would go into the effects of this hard-core dependency that some fans can have along with Stan culture. I am also interested in capitalism/materialism and how these phenomena affect parasocial relationships." Scotty hopes to pursue this research further at some point in the future.

Scotty is committed to this research. It's important because "developmentally, having a good social support system is crucial to becoming a healthy-minded

adult. That isn't a reality for many youths for a variety of reasons, so parasocial interaction provides a means of having and creating that support system. "It's a slippery slope; however," says Scotty, "because sometimes it can go too far and put people at risk, possibly contributing to increased social isolation, depression, or worse, bad behavior that might mirror the bad behavior of the celebrities they worship. Since this is the first time in history that this is happening to this extent, we don't really know the full consequences of this dependency."

This novelty makes the issue even more important to research. His care for others and emphasis on mental health and wellness inspires timely and important content. Parasocial relationships are on the increase, which makes his research even more relevant.

I think it is clear that Scotty's goal is important: he aims to educate the public on how media intensity and availability, as well as mental health vulnerability, are the driving factors behind the development and growth of parasocial relationships, all of which are converging in an unprecedented way. His research helps us remember to keep an open mind and be accepting of yourself and others, because, as Scotty pointed out, we all need a good social support system, no matter where it comes from, in order to keep our minds healthy as we develop in this media-filled world.



This photo illustrates the joy that some parasocial relationships can provide.



Researcher Will Burnett researches the appeal of CBD for college-aged students.

CBD'S YOUTHFUL APPEAL

Younger Generations Advance the Use of Medical Marijuana

By Tony New

Will Burnett is a public health major in his sophomore year at UNC Greensboro. During his time on campus, he has been involved with Ashby Residential College, in which he is a Co-Chair of the Membership Committee and has been involved in several other committees. Will is also a member of the RHA Association with Housing and Residence Life on campus. His contributions to Ashby College make sense,

given his larger goal to work in public service for the CDC or the WHO, where he one day hopes to have a future career, since he is “an epidemiologist at heart.” Will believes this is a great field for him as he loves studying diseases and patterns. Will’s research question is about the noticeable rise in young adults looking for alternatives to chronic pain, particularly using marijuana as an antidote. Through the research

and analysis Will has completed, he has found that the use of marijuana and its derivatives has increased in the past ten years due to medical marijuana use. In Will's research, he is not stating whether or not he believes marijuana should be legal; instead, he is stating that one reason for the increase in use and growing acceptance of marijuana use in the United States is due to younger people flocking to it for medicinal purposes in order to relieve their chronic pain.

He found that younger people's desire for marijuana has caused a high demand, which made it not only more accessible to the people safely, but also brought about a major change in our culture and state laws. There are now only eight states with strict regulations on marijuana. Will says, "This shows that the cultural perception has changed our laws against marijuana." When I asked Will what his solution may be, he stated, "I think there could be more research done because the only way you can say this drug is harmful is to prove it with medical evidence. And there is mounting evidence that this approach to pain is beneficial and a viable option for people suffering with pain." This certainly is not your common question pertaining to the topic of marijuana, yet it is something many Americans overlook. Will says that "the use of marijuana is intriguing as a public health concern because it falls into the

realm of research that the CDC might conduct. I want to take this knowledge and apply it to my future career there. Maybe my research here will help lead to a new discovery there." The CDC is currently studying the opioid epidemic in our country, so it is not so far-fetched for them to take an interest in



marijuana. This civic-minded approach makes sense to Will: "Marijuana is a widely used drug, and I do not believe it could all simply be for recreational use. Plus, as a young adult, the rumored pain relief benefits marijuana may offer have always intrigued me." As a young adult myself, I couldn't help but ponder the thought that marijuana, something so controversial now, could very well become a common medicine in my lifetime.

Traditional medicines no longer have the same appeal for younger generations.



Ocean Bailey Ramirez illustrates the kinds of desperate feelings that solitary confinement inspires.

SOLITARY DAMAGES

Outdated and Cruel Practices of Solitary Confinement

By Samaya Blango

Prisons have been around for centuries. We see people go in, come out, but then it is not long before we see people, once free from prison, quickly on their way back to the same place they wanted to be released from. Why is that? Why are some of the inmates not making improvements? Could it be that they just do not care enough to change, or is it the way they were treated while on the inside? Ocean Bailey tackles this issue by focusing on solitary confinement

and how it affects the inmates who are punished with this sort of treatment. Solitary confinement is a popular form of punishment within prisons. When inmates deviate from the rules of a prison, prisons tend to look towards isolation as the preferred method of inmate correction. If an inmate attempts suicide, depending on the number of offenses, they are then sent to isolation for what sometimes can turn into a lengthy period of time, rather than initiating

proper healthcare for the inmate. Ocean's research question asks about the efficacy of solitary confinement as a deterrent to crime and bad behavior in and out of prison. Through her research, Ocean finds that it is not effective at all, and it comes with more negative consequences than positive outcomes. This topic is important to Ocean because "the way inmates are truly treated in prisons is often suppressed and concealed. I want to inform the community and shed light some on their treatment inside. Isolation is a practice that should not continue within prisons, but rather be replaced by alternative methods that improve the mental and physical health of inmates." Inmates should leave prison in a better condition than they entered, not leave worse off than before. The proper healthcare should be implemented so that inmates learn ways to help themselves outside of prison and find ways to improve when they get out.

Solitary confinement is nothing new or unheard of; solitary confinement dates back to the 19th century and has been used in prisons for years, but that doesn't make it a justifiable or sound practice. Through her research, Ocean found that confinement comes with a high risk of suicide, along with other serious psychological problems. Nelson Mandela once said, "I found solitary confinement the most forbidding aspect of prison life. There is no end and no beginning; there is only one's mind,



Ocean Bailey Ramirez

which can begin to play tricks. Was that a dream or did it really happen? One begins to question everything." This quote is important because it speaks to some of the insidious effects of this practice. Solitary confinement may not seem as extreme as other methods because of how its definition has changed over the years, but it is severely threatening to the psyche and physicality of an individual.

The way that inmates are treated does not stop once they leave jail; they carry their experiences with them, and that affects the people around them, not just themselves. Ocean's research helps others understand the importance of properly rehabilitating inmates and thinking of better ways to treat them while in prisons and jails, and life after. "Even in the stressful population of prison, solitary confinement is still considered cruel punishment. People aren't wired to be alone."



Braylin Campbell argues for the positive impact of art programs on youth success.

YOUTH AND THE ARTS

The Power of Community Arts Programs

By Aleeah Harris

Community spaces are valuable, special, and positive places for people to come together and be free about who they are. Community spaces are in place not only to allow people to be free, but they can also provide some respite from issues happening around them. Society may be the cause of some issues humans face, but it may also be the cause of why residents look to each other for guidance. Leaders can mentor, protect, and empower young individuals who

might be more vulnerable. Listening to Braylin Campbell talk about the role that community spaces play in young lives felt truly inspiring, I could see and hear the passion when she spoke about her research.

Braylin Campbell is a woman from Raleigh, North Carolina, where she has attended, listened to, and experienced many cultural gatherings and movements. The Research

Triangle area is known for research, innovation, and cultural diversity. Cultural diversity does more than show a group's way of life; it is able to bring out the differences between groups that should be celebrated and respected. Movements, festivals, even concerts bring people together from all walks of life to fellowship with one another. Those types of events can range from a number of categories such as civil rights, LGBTQ equality, and feminism. There are festivals that celebrate different cultures, art, and music that move people to want to impact the world. Yet, some people don't have the financial stability or resources to see and experience these moments.

Low-income communities can be filled with gangs, violence, drugs, and other harmful situations that children and young adults may be exposed to. The lack of guidance and care in young people's lives can contribute to the origin of these problems. Maybe children are from single-parent households, parents are stuck in a cycle of minimum wage employment, or the child doesn't have the proper mentorship that could expose them to social, emotional, and cultural enrichment. Taking all of these aspects into account, Braylin realized that many people who deal with these issues need a push in the right direction, so they won't find themselves feeling too far gone to succeed. Lack of access to the arts restricts young people's ability to grow



Art projects from local programs

and thrive. Braylin's research project is about showing how community arts can improve the emotional, mental, and physical health of youths. "Through the different sources that I found, I was able to analyze and evaluate the different programs and activities the adolescents were participating in and how those helped them grow socially and emotionally."

If one community sees other communities thriving, there is hope that others would want to thrive as well. Benefactors, leaders, and support groups might then begin to invest money, supplies, and mentors. "If people notice the positive effects that community arts have on people then they may strive to start or improve community arts programs, or even invest more of their time into these programs." If we want to change society for the better, we need to be like Braylin Campbell and take the first step to engage, empower, and enrich our youth.



The Star Wars legacy lives on forever on the arms of fans.

STAR WARS: EPIC POEM

The Timeless Appeal of the Hero's Journey

By Grace Will

Tales of heroes, adventure, and war have been a source of entertainment to humans for thousands of years, so it is no surprise that new tales of epic proportion are with us. Modern epic poems may have different settings than those created in the past, but Sophia Priest's goal was to see how similar the modern epic of *Star Wars* was to ancient epics such as the *Odyssey*. Her journey took her through the core elements of Greek and Roman epic poems, as well as

through the *Star Wars* universe. In her research, she wanted to compare the original *Star Wars* trilogy to classical epic poetry, note the similarities, and see if the overarching themes that run throughout the classical epics could be applied to *Star Wars*. She found that *Star Wars* shared many elements with epic poetry, such as a hero's journey, an epic hero, and verse-style writing for parts of the movies. Other elements she noticed in common with epic poetry were

themes such as deities (the deity in *Star Wars* being The Force) and trials for the hero to overcome (in this case, the training Luke received from Yoda).

Sophia hopes this research project illustrates to other people that stories do not necessarily change over time, that many elements and themes have stayed the same for thousands of years, which makes sense since she discovered that the trilogy was based off of “Monomyth” by Joseph Campbell, which itself was based off of epic poetry. She also hopes that her project shows that UNCG is a good university for interdisciplinary research, her own research being a combination of Film Studies and History. She said that she was completely unbiased on the topic, aside from being a fan of the *Star Wars* series. “Luckily, with a topic like this, it is more difficult for it to be swayed by my demographic indicators.” Even the fact that she liked the series didn’t seem to impact her conclusion, in her opinion.

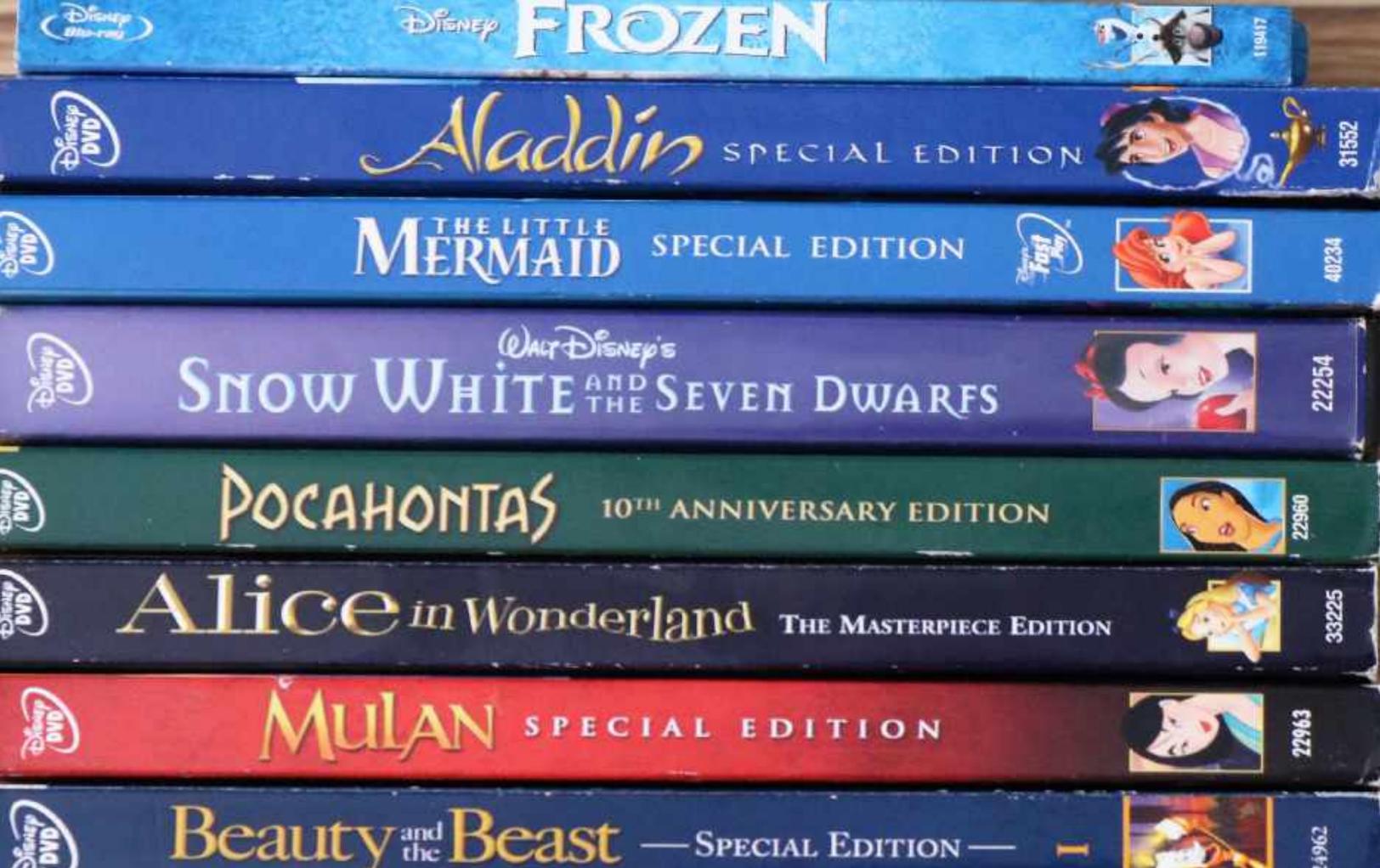
Her passion for the series has enabled her to do research through interesting methods, such as observing as people watch one of the movies from the original trilogy and noting their reactions and comments, or conducting interviews. This was made easier because of her experience with the movies and her knowledge of the films and the lore behind them. This research is about something deeper than *Star Wars* or epic poetry: it is research that is meant



Sophomore Sophia Priest

to illustrate how people still like the same types of stories as they always have, which haven’t changed very much throughout history. “It is within our nature to love stories about an underdog who saves something despite the inner turmoil they are going through, and that’s essentially what *Star Wars* and epic poetry are all about.” It would have been great to have taken a look at other movies in the *Star Wars* saga, as well as to have explored the idea of C3PO and R2D2 being the “chorus” from classical poetry.

Sophia’s research has given her the opportunity to dive into two subjects that are meaningful to her, classical studies and *Star Wars*. With any luck, she will be able to continue exploring and analyzing elements of classical poetry and apply them to her future experiences with *Star Wars* movies.



Researcher Emma Albrecht's collection of Disney films illustrates a range of female heroines.

MORE WOMEN PLEASE

Making the Case for an Increased Female Presence in Film

By Gary Lin

Since the old studio system in the film industry, female film directors have not enjoyed an easy path to success or received the recognition and accolades they deserve. This topic is at the heart of Emma Albrecht's research, which initially aimed to answer the question of how more women can get involved in the making and producing of film. From there, it underwent several changes and eventually she settled on why the world needs more female directors

and how their work influences the world. Though it is clear that the world needs female contributions to the film industry, Emma specifically argues that the work of female directors tends to portray female characters more realistically and as more well-rounded people compared to their male director counterparts, which is critical since movies and other media directly influence how people view the world. Female directors tend to showcase

differing female characters rather than the cookie cutter “damsel in distress” or overly sexualized female main characters. In addition to that, more films could be showing young girls everywhere that their gender should not limit them in pursuing their dreams. These women and their films will go on to empower the next generation of young girls to also become directors and show them that they need not change themselves to break into the film industry.

Emma Albrecht is one such aspiring filmmaker, and upon watching Greta Gerwig's adaptation of *Little Women*, her perspective on life changed. She realized that she wanted to write/direct films and other media portraying women as real people. If women are portrayed as only damsels in distress or sexual symbols, it limits them. There are some more progressive female characters such as Mulan, Tiana from *The Princess and the Frog*, and Merida from *Brave*. These “princess” characters break the stereotypical mold that older Disney princess movies used to showcase. Yet it is these outdated character tropes that need to stop. Emma argues that the film industry elite believe that hiring a female director is a bigger financial risk than hiring a male director.

As a result, many female directors face greater resistance and barriers to their success. For example, “In the entire history of the Academy Awards, only

five women have ever been nominated in the category for Best Director, and only one woman has ever been awarded the Oscar.” That one woman was Kathryn Bigelow in 2010 for her film *The Hurt Locker*. Of course, this award was now 10 years ago and since then, no other woman director has won the Best Director award. The most recent female nominee was Greta Gerwig for her film *Lady Bird*.

The tides of change in the film industry are a slow trickle when they need to be a roaring current. By pointing out the challenges faced by women directors and the disparity of success compared to their male counterparts, Emma hopes to



convince the predominantly male studio owners to hire more female writers and directors. This is not just for herself as an aspiring female film writer and director, but for the future generation of female writers and directors who she hopes will be in a film industry that has female and male directors on equal footing.

*Ashby Digital
Capstone Award
winner Emma
Albrecht practices
her craft.*



Second-place EXPO winner Bailey Thompson researches how to meet mental health needs of minors.

MINOR MENTAL HEALTH

Supporting Mental Health Services for Minors

By Lizz Roberts

UNCG, like most colleges, has students just out of high school who are stressed about all of their classes, but they are also stressed out about becoming adults. Many of these students may have had problems since they were young, well before they got to college. Bailey Thompson's research ties directly into a vulnerable age group in a pivotal growth and development stage: that of teenagers and young adults. According to Bailey's findings, "approximately 20% of children and adolescents worldwide

suffer from mental disorders, with 4% to 6% being in need of clinical intervention." That's not a number you can simply brush off. But it seems that many do, and in fact, there are likely many unreported cases of these struggles with mental health caused by parents trying to cover up their child's problems, or simply ignoring the issues. In the worst cases, children and teenagers are completely unable to seek help due to the lack of any accessible resources, which is unfortunately quite common. That

people in this age group need protected rights is generally agreed upon, with emphasis towards what is considered to be in the “best interest of the child,” yet sometimes young people, because of their minor status, don't have access to mental health treatment.

During her research, Bailey found that “only 8 out of the top 20 high income countries have systems in which they can monitor mental health needs,” suggesting this is a global as well as local issue. In the Americas, she found that more than a quarter of countries lacked resources to treat children and adolescents. Bailey's research suggests that there are more problems than just locations. Another aspect of inaccessibility is poverty; with a strong correlation between poverty and mental health decline in adolescents, financial instability makes our future generations have greater mental problems than their parents. Mental health is expensive, locking out those with lower income of getting treatment, even if everyone around them acknowledges their mental problems.

Bailey also researched treatments, and which ones work well with teenagers and children. She found that mindfulness exercises help adolescents with problems including anxiety, stress, self-esteem, and other mental irregularities. Counseling can also help reinforce this mindfulness, and increasing the availability of it for teenagers and young adults would be a great start: the Counseling Center on UNCG's campus is a good example of

such resources, but Bailey argues we need more facilities like it. Treatment doesn't just have to be counseling, either; Bailey also believes that medication is key to some mental illnesses and problems in teenagers. As a Pre-Pharmacy major, Bailey knows how important it is to get medication to at-risk teenagers who may not be able to get it due to their circumstances. Lowering the costs and making it much more widely distributed would be excellent.

Bailey has a clear passion for those who suffer from these issues, and she will continue to try to help people by making their voices heard and signal boosting



their struggles. She hopes that not just teenagers, but everyone can learn from the research she has undertaken and that people understand how we must fix our systems to serve future generations. Mental health is an issue that impacts nearly everyone's life, and it's time we treated it that way.

Students struggle with different medications, trying to address their concerns.

developmental disorder.
Methods 12 children (mean age 6 years [range 3–10], 11 boys) were referred to a paediatric gastroenterology unit with a history of normal development followed by loss of acquired skills, including language, together with diarrhoea and abdominal pain. Children underwent gastroenterological, neurological, and developmental assessment and review of developmental records, ileocolonoscopy and biopsy sampling, magnetic-resonance imaging (MRI), electroencephalography (EEG), and lumbar puncture were done under sedation. Barium follow-through radiography was done where possible. Biochemical, haematological, and immunological profiles were examined.

Findings Onset of behavioural symptoms was associated by the parents, with measles, mumps, and rubella vaccination in eight of the 12 children, with measles infection in one child, and otitis media in another. All 12 children had intestinal abnormalities ranging from lymphoid nodular hyperplasia to granuloid ulceration. Histology showed patchy chronic inflammation in 11 children and reactive ileal lymphoid hyperplasia in seven, but no granulomas. Behavioural disorders included autism (nine), disintegrative psychosis (one), and possible postviral or vaccinal encephalitis (two). There were no focal neurological abnormalities and EEG tests were normal. Abnormal laboratory results were significantly raised urinary methylmalonic acid compared with age-matched controls ($p=0.03$), low haemoglobin in four children, and a low serum IgA in four children.

Interpretation The identified associated gastrointestinal disease and developmental regression in a group of previously normal children, which was generally associated in time with possible environmental triggers.

Lancet 1998; 351: 637–41

They all had gastrointestinal symptoms, including abdominal pain, diarrhoea, and vomiting and, in some cases, food intolerance. We describe the clinical findings, and gastrointestinal features, in these children.

Patients and methods

12 children, consecutively referred to a department of paediatric gastroenterology with a history of a pervasive developmental disorder with loss of acquired skills and intestinal symptoms (diarrhoea, abdominal pain, bloating and food intolerance), were investigated. All children were admitted to the ward for a brief, uncomplicated by their parents.

Clinical investigations

We took histories, including details of immunisations and exposure to infectious diseases, and assessed the children. In 11 cases the history was obtained by the senior clinician (JWS). Neurological and psychiatric assessments were done by consultant staff (PH, MB) with HMS-4 criteria. Developmental records were reviewed, including a review of prospective developmental records from parents, health visitors, and general practitioners. Four children did not undergo psychiatric assessment in hospital; all had been assessed professionally elsewhere, so these assessments were used as the basis for their behavioural diagnosis.

After bowel preparation, ileocolonoscopy was performed by SHM or MAT under sedation with midazolam and pethidine. Paired frozen and formalin-fixed mucosal biopsy samples were taken from the terminal ileum, ascending, transverse, descending, and sigmoid colons, and from the rectum. The procedure was recorded by video or still images, and were compared with images of the previous seven consecutive paediatric colonoscopies (four normal colonoscopies and three on children with ulcerative colitis), in which the physician reported normal appearances in the terminal ileum. Barium follow-through radiography was possible in some cases.

Also under sedation, cerebral magnetic-resonance imaging (MRI), electroencephalography (EEG) including visual, brain stem auditory, and sensory evoked potentials (where compliance made these possible), and lumbar puncture were done.

Laboratory investigations

Thyroid function, serum long-chain fatty acids, and cerebrospinal-fluid lactate were measured to exclude known causes of childhood neurodegenerative disease. Urinary methylmalonic acid was measured to random urine samples from age-matched and sex-matched

Joseph Berry researches the hold that keeps some people believing false research.

FEAR AND ANTI-VAXERS

The Fuel That Fires the Persistence

By Estefani Ramos Picasso

Joseph Berry is a second-semester sophomore, a student in the Strong Residential College, and a double major in Biology and Environmental Studies. Joseph describes himself as “a researcher and an environmental and social freedoms advocate.” Originally from Long Island, New York, but living in Wake Forest since 2011, Joseph researched the psychological elements that contribute to the growing numbers of the anti-vaccination movement in modern-day

America. Furthermore, the decision-making processes that make individuals side with the anti-vaccination movement align with the psychological processes that contribute to what and why they align themselves with different arguments and causes. During Joseph’s research, he realized and revealed that we are all interconnected in both cognitive processes: decision making and creating conclusions. Joseph’s research project is based on answering

the following question: “Why do individuals continue to leave themselves and others unprotected against ailments such as the flu, chickenpox, and measles? Why put yourself in peril?” Joseph's research revealed several elements of the human psyche that influence the framework for thoughts and decision-making such as fear, the reliability and safety in numbers, distrust of modern non-natural solutions, and idolization of false information.

Joseph explains that the previous elements have increased the momentum of the anti-vaccination movement over the past few years and caused misinformation to increase in American society. An example is Andrew Wakefield, an ex-physician who published false information linking vaccines to autism.

Another cause for non-medical exceptions behind why people opt out of vaccines is religion. In certain religions, the use of drugs such as penicillin is not allowed, and vaccines are not allowed either. Joseph researched a study conducted by Pennsylvania State University Children's Hospital and found that 92% of Amish children between 2005-2015 were not vaccinated due to their religion. Joseph maintains, however, that “the group who is the majority of non-religious-based exemptions in today's society is the ever-growing anti-vaccination movement in the Pacific

Northwest and westernmost states in the U.S.”

Joseph explains how this topic is personal for him: he comes from a family of immigrants, and his grandparents on both sides decided to migrate to the

“Why do individuals continue to leave themselves and others unprotected against ailments such as the flu, chickenpox, and measles? Why put yourself in peril?”

United States for modern medicine, a long life span, and the American dream. So it's hard for him to understand how people could reject the science behind modern medicine, such as vaccines. His research has led him to a better understanding of the anti-vaccination movement, though, with his curiosity growing immensely to know why people continuously deny modern medicine even after it is given to the population.

Joseph elaborates that he is more than lucky to have many professors at his disposal from both the departments of Biology and Psychology that have brought him a vast wealth of information about vaccines. Moreover, Joseph's

entire research is mainly for those who are uneducated about vaccines and want to allow themselves to become more informed about the vaccination landscape in America. He also hopes to appeal to those individuals who think that the anti-vaccination movement is



Joseph Berry as a well-vaccinated baby.

simply a choice and avoid the whole foreground of decision-making that goes into that specific choice. As stated before, the idolization of false information influences the framework for decision-making. In American society, “Fake news” is used to describe information that is not adequately aligning with one’s opinion, such as the anti-vaccination movement.

Joseph found in his research that the anti-vaccination movement has used false statistics, methods, and information

to support anti-vaccination biases and standpoints. For instance, Andrew Wakefield’s report has been considered fraudulent ever since Brian Deer investigated false data and poor sampling methods that showed bias-interest on Wakefield’s behalf. Doctors and other investigators retracted this publication in 2010, after it was republished for more than 12 years. Joseph states the consistent belief in “false information continues to be one of the main tools implemented by the anti-vaccination movement to this day,” clearly proving that misinformation leads many people to refuse vaccines. Joseph’s research is the start, for many people, to understand the anti-vaccination movement and realize the importance of vaccines--and, he hopes, as time goes by, with the help of health departments and physicians, to make a change in today’s society.

Joseph recognizes and understands that many psychological factors play a role in the rise of the modern-day anti-vax movement such as false information and several other contributing elements, as well as psychological patterns of development. Joseph’s research project investigates the important pieces that play a role in how all humans make decisions and choose sides in arguments. Therefore, before judging someone’s decision, take into consideration where the person’s viewpoint is coming from and in doing so, one might find a relatable viewpoint after all.



Kayla Mercer researches black representation in film.

BLACK IN WHITE FILM

Arguing for Increased Black Representation in Films

By Alicia Marerro

As much as anywhere else, in Hollywood, money talks. A movie can be critically acclaimed, but if it does not make money, it is not considered a real hit by movie makers or producers. The biggest box-office hit of the last few years, however, is *Black Panther*, which in 2018 got rave reviews and has earned \$1.344 billion in worldwide receipts, topping *Titanic* to become the third-highest grossing motion picture of all time. That is without

even considering *Moonlight*, which, in 2017, won the 89th Academy Award for Best Picture, becoming only the second winner in the top category to have been created by an African-American director (the first having been *12 Years a Slave*, directed by Steve McQueen). So why, asks Kayla Mercer, a second-year Media Studies major, has Hollywood been so unresponsive to the sound of movie theater cash registers--that metallic sound that most clearly

testifies to the appeal and profitability of films by African American artists? Kayla notes that Hollywood has made some efforts in recent years to acknowledge and promote black cinema artistry. However, in view of its dismally poor track record, given minimum effort, Hollywood couldn't help but improve.

“Today, there is change, but the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences is still 94% white and 77% male, with African Americans representing only 3% of its voters.”

As Kayla notes, until recently, African Americans have mostly been portrayed in films written, directed, and produced by others. Tragically, this led to the formulation and entrenchment of, as she says, “caricatures, stereotypes, and misinterpretation of Black people in films.”

Today, there is change, but the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences is still 94% white and 77% male, with African Americans representing only 3% of its voters. These skewed numbers cannot help but yield skewed results where African Americans are ignored in front of and behind the cameras and, ultimately, at award ceremonies. Kayla, who intends to become a film

cinematographer, is not prepared to wait another 100 years for African Americans to become duly represented in the Academy membership. Cinema has long been one of the world's most important form of artistic and intellectual expression. African Americans have overachieved beyond their numbers in all aspects of American life, to the extent that popular American culture is unrecognizable separate from African-American culture.

That African Americans are underrepresented in movies, perhaps the most American of art forms, is a matter that Kayla struggles to explain. She straightforwardly names the problem: the entrenchment of racism in an industry that prides itself of its progressivism, but that sadly has a record of disparaging, minimizing, and marginalizing black artists. It is ironic that an industry that excels in recording and reflecting changes in the world has itself changed so slowly on the crucial issue of equal racial representation. Kayla's research and conclusions, however, do more than relate the sorry past or portray the inadequate present. She is quick to note the green shoots that signal hope for the future. Today, artists such as Robert Townsend, Spike Lee, and Jordan Peele, not to mention Viola Davis (who would be on anyone's list of greatest living American actors), are creating their own films, not just lending their talents to someone else's vision. No other group of Americans has had

a more dramatic and vital story than African Americans. And storytelling is what the movies are about. To ignore the African American experience in moviemaking would be to eviscerate the American narrative. As actor and filmmaker Robert Townsend said, as quoted by Kayla, “man, we can’t let Hollywood tell our stories. We gotta tell our own stories, dude. They’ll make us do anything and everything and these images travel around the world.”

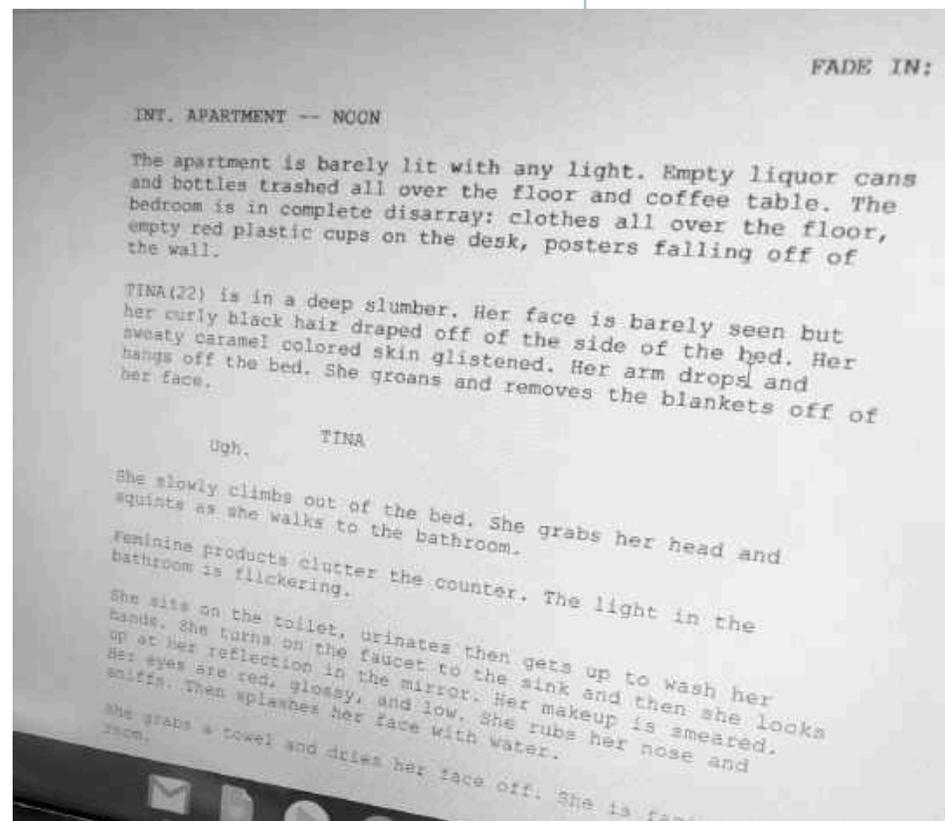
Crucially, the issue that Kayla highlights is one of agency. She notes a past in which African Americans were “presented” as others saw them. She argues that “Black creatives need to take ahold of their own stories and should be acknowledged by the art that is made by and from them.”

In essence, this is what the civil rights movement is about, the insistence that one group should never presume unchallenged superiority over another. At a minimum, this means that no one should speak for someone else. Every cinema artist willing and able to do so should tell and interpret their own story. The days of *Gone with the Wind* are, well, gone.

Kayla argues that black cinema is “more than just slavery, shoot-outs and hip-hop.” Black cinema transcends genres. It is, as Kayla says, “real life.” Beyond race, she argues that film should be more than profitable sequences of special

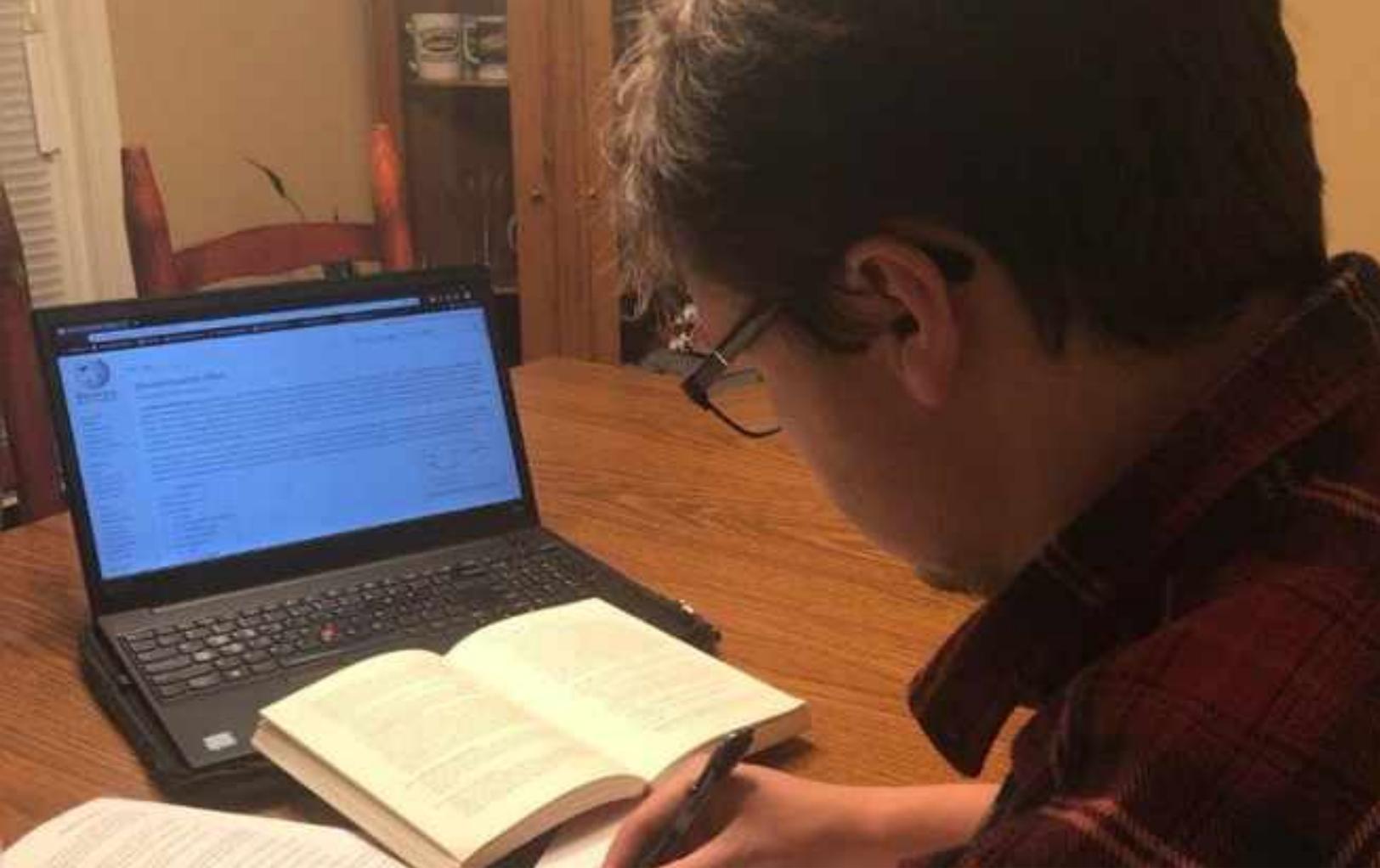
effects, chase scenes and nearly magical superheroes. Movies should not be filmed cartoons. Here, she reveals her belief that movie audiences are ready for not just the exhilarating adventure of *Black Panther*, but also the heart-wrenching character development of *Moonlight*.

Is Hollywood ready to tackle a story like that of Emmett Till, or would audiences stay away from stories that present too much truth? Ultimately, Kayla asks



the fundamental question of what films should be about—escapism and entertainment, or an exploration of history and ideas? With the participation of American artists of every race and background bringing their own stories to the big and small screens, it should be all of the above.

This computer snapshot of a sample screen play illustrates the issues raised in Kayla’s research.



Jacob Goin researches Wikipedia's reliability.

WIKIPEDIA'S UPSIDE

Analyzing the Validity of Collaborative Knowledge-Building

By Hannah Jones

If you have participated in schooling since the age of the internet, there is a solid chance that you have come into contact with misinformation. This can be troublesome in many situations, but glaringly obvious when it comes to utilizing resources. Jacob Goin, with a major in Information Science and a minor in Computer Science, brings us on a journey of why it is vital to always question the underlying truth behind what we're told in school as well

as life, and why it's beneficial to have access to a plethora of multifaceted resources. "It doesn't make sense to me that a lie told a thousand times becomes the accepted truth, and Wikipedia is a very good example of this," Jacob elaborates while discussing the inspiration behind choosing to work on his topic. As technology progresses and the continuation of research pursues, it is nothing short of imperative that we take into consideration the

need for sources like Wikipedia in order to move past simple-minded ideologies and research methods.

Inspired by his passion for studying misinformation and information dissemination, Jacob dissects the rationality behind the lack of acceptance of Wikipedia as a valid academic, scholarly source. He believes that due to “similarities and discrepancies of other publications in similar rankings,” Wikipedia should be seen as a scholarly source to begin to allow for people to question their surroundings and teachings more and to allow for a future of scholars who put an end to the spreading of such misinformation. As an Information Science major, Jacob found the research to flow naturally with his interests and future career aspirations, and so he decided to use his project to convince others of his findings.

When asked to discuss his personal relations with the topic, Jacob believes that his closest tie to the topic at hand is intertwined with age and the social relevance of being told what is and isn't appropriate as a valid scholarly source while growing up during a time where virtual technology (such as computers and tablets) in schools were being forced more and more. The urge and strive to seek the truth behind the relevance of Wikipedia, Jacob claims, indeed is just who he is, pushing further for answers in the field.

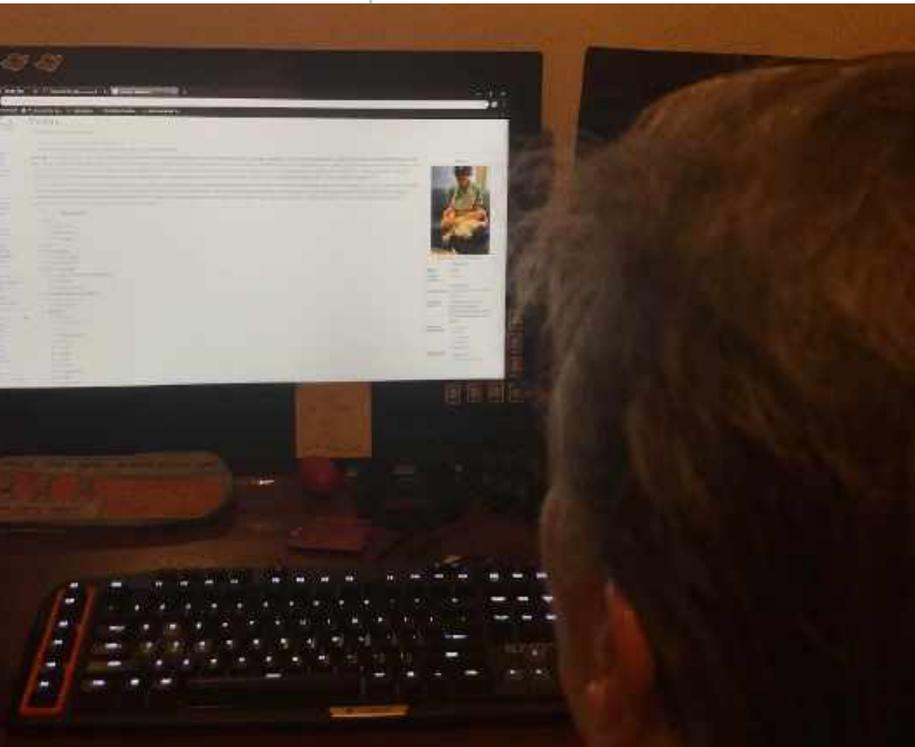
Even though he has had first-person encounters and experiences with the progression of the internet and the misinformation accompanying it, Jacob explains that his biggest obstacle during research was trying to find sufficient sources, only further reiterating that once the reputation of something becomes “invalid” as a scholarly resource, many non-factual opinions will begin to fog the actual information.

Instead, Jacob encourages a community of awareness that doesn't blindly accept information given to them. Most people have encountered negative and inaccurate information posted

“I think people are becoming increasingly complacent with the information that we are fed. We don't question things like we should.”

on Wikipedia. However, Wikipedia also allows for a stronger and larger database compiled into one website. Jacob argues that people should be more conscientious about what they accept as the truth rather than patently dismissing all of Wikipedia as a viable resource to be used in academia. In reality, though, there are more barriers fighting against its legitimacy than for it. In his attempts

to delve deeper into this issue, Jacob sees areas of research and evidence to pursue, such as consulting and interviewing Information Science professors, or professionals in the field, to add another



Jacob illustrates how many people rely on Wikipedia as a go-to source for information.

layer of ethos to his project. Another spot he felt worth adding more to in order to further strengthen the weight and relevance of his paper would be to increase statistical and graphic content that would further drive home the hard-hitting points. Though there is certainly no harm in the addition of a few statistics added here or there, his argument and evidence is very convincing.

Through reiterating key components of his argument and following up with professional sources, Jacob does a good job with persuading the reader.

The issues that this research raises are timely and relevant. “I think people are becoming increasingly complacent with the information that we are fed,” says Jacob. “We don’t question things like we should and a lot of false information is spread by the media. I believe that every person should find their own truth in the situation that they are in.” It is hard to argue the accuracy behind this claim.

With his goal clear and his arguments hitting home, Jacob makes a compelling argument as to why we should think more clearly and more independently about the broad academic dismissal of Wikipedia as a source. Doing so forces us to risk losing millions of pages of research in just about every field known to humankind, built from the collaboration of many people working together for a similar goal: information sharing. It is important not to shy away from resources due to inaccurate claims, and the sooner this is accepted, the broader our possibilities of discovery become.

Whether you agree with his research or not, with the information given to you, make sure that you don’t just take it for what it is; begin to think in terms of curiosity, even if you’re led into confusion. If you wind up confused about wherever your curiosity leads you, there’s a good chance you can find answers and debates over on Wikipedia’s page.



Illustrating the benefits of artistic expression for troubled youth.

REHABILITATING YOUTH

Analyzing Alternatives for Juvenile Offenders

By Jacob Goin

In our country today, there are thousands of children who have been misled, who have struggled, and who are not able to seek treatment for their mental health struggles, and they are paying the price. The implications of the juvenile justice system stretch far further than beginning a criminal record at a young age. Those who struggle with going in and out of juvenile detention centers also are at a much higher risk of reoffending and being

placed in prison later on and developing severe mental and social issues. Hannah Jones, who is majoring in social work and sociology with a concentration in criminology, developed research that highlights feasible ways that support systems can be developed to help troubled youth through counseling, artistic expression, and other resources. Hannah was inspired to choose this research topic because she is interested in the juvenile justice system

and mental health, and how they tie into each other. This is very fitting as, in a recent interview, she stated, “I hope to work with underprivileged youth in the juvenile justice system, so it seemed like a solid fit for a project.” Not only does she want to help develop solutions, but she wants to work in the system to make

“While learning of the development of the juvenile justice system, the importance of rehabilitation greatly stood out to me.”

sure that the solutions fit the problem and to help struggling children develop into mentally stable adults.

It is extremely important to develop the experience for the youth in a well-rounded and inclusive way that connects the children to their counselors because these relationships are extremely meaningful to the children. Hannah herself stated that, “It’s hard to ignore that there are overrepresented and underrepresented populations in the prison system and that doesn’t exclude the juvenile branch. I feel it is important to acknowledge this division in order to understand and aid those involved to the best ability possible.” This statement shows one of the major points that

Hannah wishes to make through her research: it is extremely important to understand the different backgrounds of the youth in question because this is the best way to decide what type of support to provide them. However, it is also important to be able to dig deep into resources to find professionals in the field who have done surveys with legitimate evidence supporting the research, which Hannah has done very well. Hannah found it very important to place the evidence and writing of the project into the frame that adolescents would understand, so that the message gets across to them and maybe they would be able to seek help if they know they need it.

Research like this is also important to show this population that their problems are being heard, that someone is backing them and attempting to help amplify the voices of thousands who struggle every day. Research and development in the field of youth mental health will not only keep children out of the juvenile justice system, bettering their lives, but early intervention will also help build communities of strong adults who can take the lessons that they have learned from their counselors, artistic expression, or other types of mental health resources. These new adults who once struggled with the juvenile justice system can go on to do profound things, but it is important that their individual needs are met when they are young to

ensure that they can reach their full potential. Though Hannah personally has never been in juvenile detention, she wants to advance her studies to become the rock that youth can lean on during their transition from the juvenile justice system to the world while growing up, and to make sure that these young adults do not find themselves in prison in the future.

Hannah has further research goals as well, wanting to include more hands-on experience with individuals to make the work that she has done more personal and meaningful so it would be easier for the youth to connect with a real story. “While learning of the development of the juvenile justice system, the importance of rehabilitation greatly stood out to me,” says Hannah, which was an evolution of thought that happened during the research process. It is very important that when showing our research, we are also developing our own opinions and keeping an open mind. When looking through Hannah’s research, it is clear that we need to push for rehabilitation efforts rather than punishment because for many of our youth, help is exactly what they need and what they didn’t have early in life. Instead of punishing them, according to Hannah’s research, it would be more beneficial to provide them with a support system and the mental health resources that they need to ensure that they won’t have to make a return to juvenile

detention, or to prison in the future. Hannah believes, and shows, that this research is important not only because it can change the lives of misled youth, but also because it will help those who are underrepresented in the system. It will give a voice to those who have none, and help provide a balanced system that supports troubled youth through their tough transition periods, instead



of providing punishment, which will ultimately lead to increased likelihood of them reoffending in the future. Each individual will have different needs that must be met to make sure they won’t offend again, and providing a structure that is capable to support this type of aid can change the lives of thousands of people, for generations to come.

Youth recreational activities that can promote rehabilitative change.



Downtown Wilkesboro, home to about 3,000 residents.

URBAN INFLUENCES RURAL

The Impact of Urban Culture on Small-Town Life

By Emma Albrecht

Rural communities have always been the backbone of American society. They are where farming communities reside, providing the nation with food. Without them, life in more urban areas would change irrevocably. However, since the beginning of the industrial revolution in the late 1800s, America has become increasingly more urbanized, which means that rural communities have been slowly disappearing. This issue matters to Gary

Lin, who grew up in rural communities for most of his life. He was born in a rural village in southern China. When he was seven, his family moved to New York City, and at the age of 11, he moved to Southern Pines, which he describes as “a quiet rural town located in central North Carolina.” He currently attends UNCG, located in an urban environment, which puts him in a position to be able to analyze the urban influence on rural societies.

Lin is currently a sophomore, majoring in media studies. Having grown up in both rural and urban settings, he hopes that his “experiences of living in rural communities can provide some primary information as to how modern urban societies have influenced modern rural societies.”

Since there is no denying that urban communities have a major influence on rural ones, a majority of Lin’s research was spent identifying specific positive and negative influences. Rural communities are positively affected because with an urban influence comes more connectivity to the outside world. Cities are where a majority of the high-paying jobs are held, and with greater connectivity, members of the rural communities can reach the city faster, meaning they have more access to well-paying jobs.

A negative influence can occur to the environment. For example, “Industrial hog farms here in NC usually store livestock manure in several man-made lagoons. The manure slowly leaks out into nearby streams, rivers and other bodies of water, contaminating local water supply.” This means that the rural community’s drinking water is directly affected by industrialization. Because rural societies are no longer viewed as the backbone of America, these problems typically go unnoticed for a while.



Southern Pines storefronts

Also, rural societies and the people who live in them are plagued by outdated stereotypes. Rural people might be viewed as “less than” other members of society just based on where they live. As a self-proclaimed “country boy,” Lin recognizes that these depictions are not necessarily true of all (or any) rural communities, especially with the rapid growth of urbanization. One of Lin’s goals with this project was to show rural communities for what they really are and disprove some common stereotypes about them. He says, “In the 21st century, there is no place for such stereotypes to inaccurately depict a culture or way of life.” By pointing out the positive and negative influences, Lin hopes to shed more light on rural societies and make sure that they don’t disappear forever. “It is important to learn about each other’s cultural and environmental backgrounds and differences in order to be more accepting and friendly with each other.”



Researcher Luke Myrick's photo evokes the two-spirit Native American identity.

TWO-SPIRIT IDENTITY

Native American History of Gender Identities

By Branna Campbell

The history behind Native tribes and the expression of various gender identities has existed long before the creation of the LGBTQ+ movement and community, and as an “aspiring anthropologist” and an advocate for the LGBTQ+ community, student Luke Myrick explores Native gender variant identities as it transitioned into the expression “two-spirit” in the 1990s. The fight for Native presence and representation goes far beyond the need for more Native faces present in the media, to

the need to raise awareness of Native gender variant identities and their origins. As a future researcher, Luke’s passion is to explore gender and sexuality as it relates to various cultures and ethnic groups. “I had heard about the term two-spirit and the variant genders among Native Americans, and I wanted to investigate the similarities and differences.” As an individual that supports and advocates for the LGBTQ+ community and as a gay man, Luke feels as though he can offer a relevant

and accurate perspective on the subject matter. Nevertheless, there are some slight precautions one must acknowledge when investigating a population of people that are generally oppressed and underrepresented. “As a white man, I need to tread carefully and avoid further judgments and subtle racism against indigenous communities.”

Initially, the idea of Native gender variant identities sounds like a topic that would have little existing research considering how controversial gender identities can be, as well as how small the Native population is. On the other hand, Luke states, “A large amount of literature on this topic does, in fact, conflate both pre-1990 gender identities and the two-spirit identity. It made examining the differences between the two quite difficult.” However, Luke’s research expresses a clear difference and similarity complexity that shows how the two-spirit term does not match its pre-colonial meaning.

With a topic that is typically unheard of yet so controversial, individuals of all types are in need of engaging with content that brings social awareness to such subjects, and Luke does just that. What we find interest in, for the most part, says a lot about who we are as people. For many of us, our interests drive our later careers, engagements, and ultimately, our purpose. For Luke, his overall adoration and respect

for indigenous peoples and cultures motivates his desire to work with Native people as well as continuing his involvement within the LGBTQ+ community. In addition, his eagerness to educate himself and others on indigenous people should be the type of behavior we all strive for, especially while the political and social climate is in the need of change. “Understanding



the diversity amongst us, whether that be in cultural identity or LGBTQ+ membership, and the history of that diversity, is vital to social progress.”

For the love of anthropology and Native, indigenous peoples, Luke explores the wonders of Native gender variant identities and wants to share his research with the world.

*Luke Myrick
researches gender
identity in Native
American culture.*



Jason Naude argues for increasing infrastructure for electric chargers.

BUILDING THE CHARGE

Expanding Access to EV Chargers Nationwide

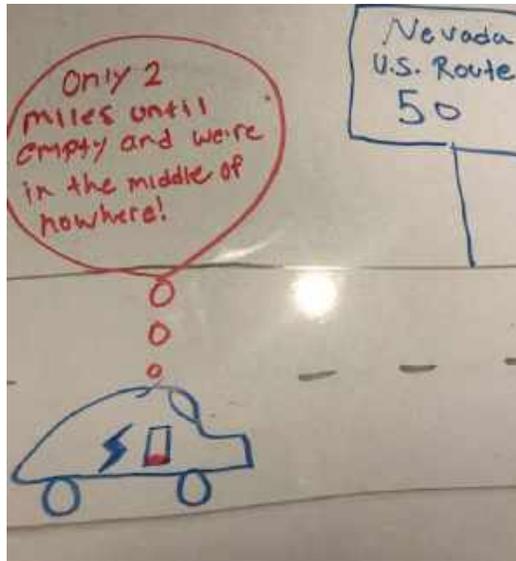
By Mariann Juarez

Jason Naude decided to conduct research on electric vehicles and how to create a future where it would be convenient for many families to own an electric vehicle. Jason may not be looking for a career in the automotive industry, but he is passionate about cars and their advancement throughout the years. He has been interested in cars since he was a young boy and has been excited about the rise of electric vehicles. He is thrilled to see competition and to

see what Americans would choose to purchase. He sees the benefits of people owning electric vehicles and believes it should be accessible for more families in the United States. He believes that there need to be more charging stations in rural areas of the United States as well batteries that have faster charging times. Jason believes this is important because electric vehicles should rival combustion engine vehicles, and this would allow people to make their own

choices without any worries about convenience. In fact, Jason believes that electric vehicles will eventually replace combustion engine vehicles completely. It did, however, catch him by surprise to learn that it will take longer than a couple of decades for this transition to occur. Technology has been advancing so quickly that it may have the ability to adapt, but the obstacle is humans, who are much less susceptible to change.

Jason noticed that younger people are more interested in electric vehicles, especially since many relate the cars to the worry of climate change. Although there are plenty of people who choose to buy an electric vehicle, there are still many who hold off. They understand that electric vehicles are more appealing and can be better for the environment than combustion engine vehicles, but they are still working on practicality. The convenience of combustion engine cars is currently better. All that is needed is a quick fill-up on gas and they're good to go. Electric vehicles currently have a battery that could take hours to charge depending on where it is charging and how empty it may be. Of course, the lower the battery, the longer it will take, and some struggle to charge the car every day, especially if the owner doesn't have the means or access. Younger people who live in the United States are interested in doing their part to lower the air pollution in their area, but it can be difficult when they have to rely on battery instead of



gas. Jason realizes that there needs to be more access to charging stations as they are only present in major cities. While there may be young people moving into major cities, there are still people in rural communities who would prefer to stay but wish to have the option of going electric. While younger people are more interested in electric vehicles, Jason wants more people to learn about the benefits of owning an electric vehicle and how it would improve our future.

Although Jason wants more Americans to learn about electric vehicles, he does struggle to share the information he knows. Jason truly believes that the United States converting over to electric vehicles will only do good; now we just need to make adjustments to complete the goal. Jason is also excited to see how this future looks, as it may sound unbelievable that we are already working towards this clean future and it will not be as hard to get used to as many believe.



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University Teaching
and Learning Commons

ABOUT *MINERVA*, THE UTLC, AND THE RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES

The University Teaching and Learning Commons through its Residential Colleges Office supports co- and extra-curricular engagement of undergraduates in faculty-mentored research projects through its three Residential Colleges: Ashby, Grogan, and Strong. It is the goal of the Residential Colleges' curriculum to engage students in learning the elements of the research process, working on semester-long projects of their own design.

With articles and photos generated by students, Minerva magazine profiles a few of these projects every year. Front Cover Photo: Mariann Juarez with her favorite telescope! Back Cover Photo: Samaya Blango researches the impact of prejudicial practices on minority preschool children.

