UNDERGRADUATE THESIS CONFERENCE

May 3 - 4, 2018

WATSON INSTITUTE
INTERNATIONAL & PUBLIC AFFAIRS
BROWN UNIVERSITY

Schedule of Events

THURSDAY, MAY 3 (12 - 4:30 P.M.)

12 - 12:15 p.m.

Welcome remarks
*Ed Steinfeld, Director of the Watson Institute
and Professor of Political Science*

12:15 - 1:15 p.m.

Servicing Families: Local and Global Perspectives
(Moderator: Tony Levitas)

Breastfeeding Trends Across Socioeconomic Status in Mexico and Implications for Current Promotion Efforts
Leah Hardenbergh (DS)

Falling Through the Cracks: Homeless Students in Rhode Island
Marjorie Pang Si En (PLCY)

Fulfilling the Needs of Our Families: Exploring Rhode Island's Temporary Caregiver Insurance Program, 2014-2017
Abigale Sanft (PLCY)

Innovating Access to Reproductive Health Care: Care Groups, Information & Communication Technology, and Community Health Actors in Southern Senegal
Zachary Witkin (DS)

1:15 - 1:45 p.m.

Q & A

1:45 - 2:30 p.m.

Reconciliation and Nation-Building: Language, Art, and Memory
(Moderator: Patsy Lewis)

Becoming Bilingual: Power, Politics, and the Failed Promise of Bilingualism in Postcolonial Cameroon
Liliana Hertling (DS)

A Right to Remember: Reconciling the Armenian Genocide Through Visual Art
Ilgin Korugan (DS)

Violent Conflict, Nation-Building, and Language Policy Formation: A Comparative Study of India and Indonesia
Arundhati A. Ponnapa (IR)

2:30 - 3 p.m.	**Q & A**
3 - 3:15 p.m.	**Break**
3:15 - 3:45 p.m.	**Women, Politics, and the State: Cases from Latin America** *(Moderator: Claudia Elliott)*

The Language of Violence: Gender, Murder, and the Patriarchal State—A Feminist Case Study of Femicide in Chile, 2007-2017
Margot Cohen (IR)

The Influence of Societal Dynamics on Impeachment: The Interrelated Forces of the Brazilian Upper-Middle Class on the Removal of Dilma Roussef
Tamara Upfal (IR)

3:45 - 4:15 p.m.	**Q & A**
4:15 - 4:30 p.m.	**Closing remarks** *Steve Bloomfield, Associate Director of the Watson Institute*

FRIDAY, MAY 4 (12 -4:00 P.M.)

12 - 12:45 p.m.	**Making Hard Choices in Fast-Changing Economies** *(Moderator: Edward Steinfeld)*

Rebranding the Steel City: Uber's Self-Driving Car Project in a Changing Pittsburgh
Paul Butler (PLCY)

Diplomatic Approaches to International Watercourses: Analyzing Chinese Policy on the Mekong and Brahmaputra Rivers, 1997-2018
Vaughn Campbell (IR)

Shifting from an Extractive Growth Model to an Innovative Growth Model: A Comparison of Israel and Chile
Helen Gerstenfeld Abreu (IR)

12:45 - 1:15 p.m.	**Q & A**
1:15 - 2:15 p.m.	**Justice, Violence, and Rights** *(Moderator: Nina Tannenwald)*

Evaluating Participant Perceptions and Experiences of a Community Based Reentry Effort: The OpenDoors Employment Program
Sarah Cronin (PLCY)

"From Persecutors' Offices to Prosecutors' Offices": The Effects of Racial and Gender Diversity in U.S. Attorneys' Offices
Mili Mitra (PLCY)

The Effects of Terrorism on State Governance: Armed Struggle in Italy, 1968-1988
Ginevra Maria Sole Bruno (IR)

The "Savior" State: Uncovering the Violence of U.S. Humanitarian Immigration Law
Erin West (DS)

2:15 - 2:45 p.m.	**Q & A**
2:45 - 3 p.m.	**Closing remarks** *Steve Bloomfield, Associate Director of the Watson Institute*
3 - 4 p.m.	**Closing Reception**

PANEL I: SERVICING FAMILIES: LOCAL AND GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES
Moderator: Tony Levitas

Breastfeeding Trends Across Socioeconomic Status in Mexico and Implications for Current Promotion Efforts
Hardenbergh, Leah (DS)
Advisors: Professor Margot Jackson, Socicololgy, and Dra. Diana Bueno-Gutierrez, School of Medicine at La Universidad Autónoma de Baja California

I examine the evolution of the relationship between breastfeeding rates and socioeconomic status (SES) in Mexico over the last 50 years. Based on Mexico's compatibility with a model that predicts future trends, it is expected that rates will continue to fall among women of low SES and are beginning to rise in women of high SES. I explore how women of different SES experience current promotion efforts, and find that current promotion efforts disproportionately benefit women of higher SES. I argue that for promotion efforts to be more impactful, they should work to include lower SES women, as rates will continue to decline in these communities without intervention.

Key words: Breastfeeding, Mexico

The Invisible Students: Evaluating the effectiveness of the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act in Rhode Island
Marjorie Pang Si En (PLCY)
Advisors: Irene Glasser, Anthropology, and Margaret Weir, Political Science and the Watson Institute

I investigated the effectiveness of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (MVHAA) as implemented in Rhode Island. The MVHAA is a federal law that seeks to provide homeless children and youth with equal educational opportunities to their non-homeless peers. I employed a mixed-methods approach, using qualitative interviews with state coordinators, local education homeless liaisons, shelter staff, and homeless families, as well as quantitative educational outcomes data from RIDE. I found that the current version of the MVHAA implemented in Rhode Island severely under identifies homeless students, consequently impeding homeless students' access to resources that they are entitled to under the MVHAA. This under identification is compounded by the lack of funding of the MVHAA for school districts and limited collaboration between liaisons and other service providers. Based on my research and the best practices of other states, I provide policy recommendations to improve the implementation of the MVHAA in Rhode Island.

Key words: Education, Liaisons, Homelessness, Under identification, McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act (MVHAA), Funding

Fulfilling the Needs of Our Families: Exploring Rhode Island's Temporary Caregiver Insurance Program, 2014-2017
Abigale Sanft (PLCY)
Advisors: Eric Patashnik, Public Policy and the Watson Institute, and Catherine Lutz, Anthropology and the Watson Institute

Beginning with a literature review and explanation of methods, my thesis explores the impact of Rhode Island's Paid Family Leave program, called Temporary Caregiver Insurance, which was passed in 2013. My research first explores a quantitative overview of how TDI and TCI funding is being used in the state of Rhode Island; that is, to whom these funds are being disbursed, at what time, and for what reason. Then, my qualitative research continues into a deep-dive of rhetoric within the paid family leave program in Rhode Island, coupling experiences of passage and impending expansion with the real-life experiences and viewpoints of those who are users of this system. The thesis ends with an analysis of user experiences and trends, as well as lessons learned in implementation for the state as the legislature considers an expansion of the TCI program.

Key words: Political Ethnography, Paid Leave, Maternal and Child Health, Family Policy, Labor Policy, Gender Studies

Innovating Access to Reproductive Health Care: Care Groups, Information & Communication Technology, and Community Health Actors in Southern Senegal
Witkin, Zachary (DS)
Advisors: Daniel Smith, Anthropology, and Jennifer Johnson, History

This thesis examines the ways in which a project implemented by Africare called Collaborative Community Based Technology To Improve Maternal and Child Health in Senegal (CCHT) affects access to reproductive health services. Using a theoretical framework engaging scholarship on community participation, social network theory and social determinants of health, I interrogate how the implementation of maternal health support groups (Care Groups) and an informational and community technology platform (CommCare) affect relationships between communities, community health actors and professional health workers as they provide and seek out reproductive health care. I examine the role of Care Groups as structures of social and economic solidarity and support that enable women to seek out preventative reproductive health services, while subverting traditional patriarchal household structures. I also look at the effect that CommCare has on the ways in which community health actors provide care to the communities they service.

Key words: Reproductive health care, Care groups, Community health, Senegal

PANEL II: RECONCILIATION AND NATION-BUILDING: LANGUAGE, ART, AND MEMORY
Moderator: Patsy Lewis

Becoming Bilingual: Power, Politics, and the Failed Promise of Bilingualism in Postcolonial Cameroon
Hertling, Liliana (DS)
Advisors: Jennifer Johnson, History, and Rachel Kantrowitz, Education

Since independence, leading Cameroonian scholars and politicians have called for widespread bilingualism to foster greater unity between the French-speaking majority and the aggrieved Anglophone minority. In 2009, Cameroon's Ministry of Secondary Education (MINESEC) launched a pilot bilingual curriculum in 40 secondary schools across the country, open to high-achieving students. Using a case study of the program at the Lycée Bilingue d'Etoug-Ebe in the capital city of Yaoundé, based on interviews with students, teachers, and parents, this thesis concludes that framing language competency as a way of remedying social tensions alone has limited potential. While the program demonstrates a promising shift away from reliance on European knowledge and systems, to have an impact on Anglophone-Francophone relations, such an educational program must be accompanied by changes in institutions that give more weight to the minority cohort. While this study is unique to Cameroon, it has broader implications for the potential of educational intervention to tackle social and political issues in a postcolonial setting.

Key words: Colonialism, Language ideology, Bilingualism, Education, Cameroon.

A Right to Remember: Reconciling the Armenian Genocide through visual art
Ilgin Korugan (DS)
Advisors: Melten Toksoz, History, and Hanan Toukan, Middle East Studies

The Armenian Genocide of 1915 in the then Ottoman Empire took more than one million lives. During World War I, amidst the rise of nationalist politics around Europe, the Ottoman CUP (Committee of Union and Progress) government took violent measures to eradicate any Armenian presence in the region, which they saw as a threat. Despite its massive consequences, this massacre is still denied by the Turkish government, blocking the way of any potential reconciliation in Turkey, and, as I argue, sustainable development. Recent works of Armenian visual artists that were exhibited in Istanbul place visual art in relation to reconciliation and thus unravel another use of art that both creates connections between communities and provides healing for survivors. As such, art exhibited in Istanbul can speak for the right to remember in the place of the genocide, therefore contributing to the justice process necessary for the development of Turkey.

Key words: Armenian Genocide, Turkey, Transitional justice, Reconciliation, Visual art, Memory

Violent Conflict, Nation-Building, and Language Policy Formation: A Comparative Study of India and Indonesia
Arundhati A. Ponnapa (IR)
Advisors: Prerna Singh, Political Science, and Ashutosh Varshney, Political Science

In multilingual states, the process of language planning and policy can have significant social, political, and economic impacts. For postcolonial states, this issue is amplified by the complex relationships shared with former colonial powers, with respect to the choice between adopting or not adopting colonial languages as official languages. Among the most prominent explanations for this variation is the process of nation-building in postcolonial states. This thesis finds that nation-building processes are influenced by violent conflict in postcolonial states, affecting language policy choices. This finding is based on a historical, comparative case study of India and Indonesia with the English and Dutch languages. I examine the impact of violent conflict on nation-building and language planning processes, using parliamentary debate records for the former, and historiographical studies of both states. This approach seeks to historicize language planning decisions and reframe narratives concerning official language policy formation in postcolonial states.

Key words: Official language, Nation-building, Violent conflict, Postcolonial states

PANEL III: WOMEN, POLITICS, AND THE STATE: CASES FROM LATIN AMERICA
Moderator: Claudia Elliott

The Language of Violence: Gender, Murder, and the Patriarchal State--A Feminist Case Study of Femicide in Chile, 2007-2017
Margot Cohen (IR)
Advisors: Nina Tannenwald, Political Science and the Watson Institute, and James Green, History

Latin America continues to report the world's highest rates of femicide, the gender-motivated murders of women. Over the past decade, eighteen Latin American states have adopted specific femicide legislation following the emergence of a transnational movement. Despite these reforms, femicide rates remain staggeringly high. Analyzing the case of Chile, I show that femicide is situated in the historical, economic, and socio-political context of the patriarchal state, which normalizes structural and cultural violence against women. Based on fieldwork I conducted in Santiago, Chile, I use content analysis and feminist critical discourse analysis to compare the language of the state to that of civil-society actors. This thesis contributes to feminist and normative theory on domestic policy implementation by showing discourse as a site where violence and power is reproduced. This discourse exposes other forms of violence against women, presenting new challenges in accessing justice and enacting social change.

Key words: Chile, Violence against women, Femicide, Patriarchy, Discourse, International norms, Domestic policies

The Influence of Societal Dynamics on Impeachment: The Interrelated Forces of the Brazilian Upper-Middle Class on the Removal of Dilma Rousseff
Tamara Upfal (IR)
Advisors: James Green, History, and Nick Barnes, Watson Institute

What causes impeachment? Scholars have overwhelmingly considered impeachment as an example of democracy successfully at work, particularly in newer democracies where political institutions and the rule of law are being tested. However, Dilma Rousseff's 2016 impeachment based on an unimpeachable crime indicates that there are other forces at play. In contrast to recent explanations that have tied singular forces—such as the economic crisis, corruption scandals, and the media—to the 2016 impeachment, I offer a holistic model that depicts how multiple forces interact with each other in order to ultimately cause impeachment. Based on congressional discourse analysis, media content analysis, economic analysis, and public opinion polling, I find that societal dynamics, specifically the changing attitude of the upper-middle class, are central to bringing forth impeachment. Within the context of "global declining democracy," this thesis re-conceptualizes what forces cause impeachment and presents theoretical and practical implications for preserving democracies.

Key words: Impeachment, Middle class, Dilma Rousseff, Brazil, Partido de Trabalhadores

PANEL IV: MAKING HARD CHOICES IN FAST-CHANGING ECONOMIES
Moderator: Edward Steinfeld

Rebranding the Steel City: Uber's Self-Driving Car Project in a Changing Pittsburgh
Paul Butler (PLCY)
Advisors: Michael Kennedy, Sociology, and Margaret Wier, Political Science and Watson Institute

The collapse of the steel industry in Pittsburgh brought about an identity crisis for the city. Eager to shed the image of a bygone, polluted, Rust Belt city, civic leaders worked to refashion Pittsburgh as the site of a knowledge-based, service-oriented urban economy. Among other recent developments, tech companies including Google, Duolingo, and Uber have opened offices in the city. This thesis examines Uber's self-driving car initiative in Pittsburgh. The project has encountered a number of setbacks, which have shed light on the challenges and opportunities that cities face when seeking to embrace high-tech industries. Drawing from a series of interviews with relevant actors in and outside of Pittsburgh, this study critically examines the city's rebranding efforts, situating Uber's self-driving initiative within a broader debate over the future of Pittsburgh.

Key words: Technology, Urban branding, Rust Belt, Regulation, Inequality, Uber

Diplomatic Approaches to International Watercourses: Analyzing Chinese Policy on the Mekong and Brahmaputra Rivers, 1997-2018
Vaughn Campbell (IR)
Advisors: Nina Tannenwald, Political Science and the Watson Institute, and Jordan Branch, Political Science

How do powerful upstream states determine diplomatic interactions on international rivers? Recent literature does not reach a consensus but argues that differences in approaches toward downstream states are the result of either external regional norms or internal bureaucratic processes. I argue that such frameworks give insufficient consideration to the upstream state as an actor. Instead, I propose a framework of expedient statecraft, which centers upstream states as decision-makers and analyzes the opportunity cost of non-cooperation across a variety of spheres as the primary factor determining the diplomatic approach. I support this through comparative case study. I analyze Chinese official statements and actions, as well Chinese media discourse, regarding four events on two of China's international watercourses: the Mekong and Brahmaputra Rivers. This study aims to shed light on the diplomatic considerations of powerful upstream states, in order to better understand the factors leading to cooperation on shared rivers.

Key words: China, Mekong, Brahmaputra, International watercourses, River diplomacy

Shifting from an Extractive Growth Model to an Innovative Growth Model: A Comparison of Israel and Chile
Helen Gerstenfeld Abreu (IR)
Advisors: Mark Blyth, Political Science and the Watson Institute, and Claudia Elliott, Watson Institute

Why are some countries able to shift from an extractive to an innovative growth model and others are not? The digital economy has led to a realization that dependence solely on extraction of commodities is detrimental to economic growth and society. Three explanations—elites, networks, and state capacity—are offered separately in the innovation and growth-models literature. This thesis suggests a more holistic approach. I argue that these explanations should be considered together in order to illuminate historical, political, and economic mechanisms that enable this kind of shift. I illustrate the argument by comparing Israel –a success case of shifting growth models from extractive to innovative—and Chile, a nation unable to shift despite strong innovation policies. Based on process tracing (1950-2016), I find that specific mechanisms such as a shared identity enable a shift. These findings imply that innovation policy should be cross-cutting and address specific historical mechanisms.

Key words: Innovation, Extractive, Growth model, Economic-political mechanisms

PANEL V: JUSTICE, VIOLENCE, AND RIGHTS
Moderator: Nina Tannenwald

Evaluating Participant Perceptions and Experiences of a Community-Based Reentry Effort: The OpenDoors Employment Program
Sarah Cronin (PLCY)
Advisors: Ross Cheit, Public Policy and the Watson Institute, and Glenn Loury, Economics and the Watson Institute

This thesis evaluates the OpenDoors Employment Program by analyzing the perceptions and experiences of participants that engaged with the program between August 2015 and October 2016. The program attempts to aid formerly incarcerated participants to obtain and maintain employment through basic skill development and support. All unincarcerated former participants (n=186) were contacted for qualitative interviews, but lack of interest, unavailability, and incorrect contact information led to a response rate of 13%. Overall, 85% of the limited respondent pool reported satisfaction with the program. Respondents appreciated the organization's dedication to the formerly incarcerated population, and 75% of respondents credit OpenDoors as partially responsible for their current stability as reintegrated citizens. However, respondents also identified multiple factors that work against the program's success. The presented results directly reflect the respondents' individual perceptions and experiences, thereby informing seven recommendations to improve the program in the future.

Key words: Incarceration, Recidivism, Community reentry, Employment, Participant engagement

"From Persecutors' Offices to Prosecutors' Offices":
The Effects of Racial and Gender Diversity in U.S. Attorneys' Offices
Mili Mitra (PLCY)
Advisors: Ross Cheit, Political Science and Watson Institute, and Susan Moffitt, Political Science and Watson Institute

In recent years, many observers have pushed for greater diversity within court communities as a means of criminal-justice reform. But, though an emerging body of research has investigated how diversity affects judges, juries, and law enforcement, there has been almost no research on how it impacts arguably the most powerful courtroom actor: the prosecutor. This thesis attempts to close that gap using a mixed-methods approach. Regression analyses of prosecution rates in 89 federal districts suggest that offices with a higher proportion of minority prosecutors — and particularly Hispanic prosecutors — tend to have significantly lower prosecution rates for street-level crimes. Drawing on interviews with 13 former U.S. attorneys, this thesis also finds evidence that diversity among prosecutors has tangible effects on prosecutorial decisions, shifting their priorities away from narcotics and street crimes to other less racialized categories. These results provide preliminary evidence of substantive representation effects among federal prosecutors and highlight the need for further research on how the demographics of prosecutors' offices interact with prosecutorial decision-making.

Key words: Incarceration, Recidivism, Community reentry, Employment, Participant engagement

The Effects of Terrorism on State Governance: Armed Struggle in Italy, 1968-1988
Ginevra Maria Sole Bruno (IR)
Advisors: David Kertzer, Anthropology, and Jordan Branch, Political Science

As the scope and intensity of terrorist attacks increase globally, it is imperative to examine the effects of counter-terrorism measures not only on the potential terrorist but also on those who administer them. This thesis analyzes the effects of terrorism on state governance. Examining political terrorism in Italy, 1968-1988, a period of intensified armed struggle, I analyze state governance capacity before and after the assassinations of Aldo Moro and Fulvio Croce. Drawing on government documents, media, and the National Institute of Statistics, I find that terrorist attacks negatively impact fiscal policies. Efforts to countervail terrorism reduce state government budgets, thus undermining the efficiency of local governments which are then disrupted by social unrest. Efforts to strengthen citizen security can, paradoxically, result in increased domestic instability. This finding has implications for theories of state capacity and governance and draws attention to the need for counter-terrorism measures that do not endanger state efficiency.

Key words: Terrorism, State governance, Red Brigades, Italy

The "Savior" State: Uncovering the Violence of U.S. Humanitarian Immigration Law
Erin West (DS)
Advisors: Amy Howe, Religious Studies, and Elena Shih, American Studies

The United States' immigration system categorizes a significant portion of its programs as humanitarian efforts. Purporting to offer refuge from violence, USCIS grants legal protection to political refugees, battered women, victims of trafficking, and other non-citizens in precarious situations. My thesis unearths the inherent contradiction between USCIS' declared humanitarian aims and the systemic violence it perpetuates as a system built on regulation and exclusion. Humanitarian immigration law crafts rigid stratification as to who is worthy of entry to the United States. This system shuts out thousands of migrants seeking shelter from violences not recognized by the state: economic exclusion, displacement through settler colonialism, and other global systems of violence in which the United States government plays a central role. Through a discursive analysis of six humanitarian immigration applications (asylum, VAWA petitions, and T-visas) filed in Providence, RI, my thesis investigates how immigrants to the U.S. are compelled to script their experiences within stratified categories of worthiness--a stratification that is violent in who it excludes. My work is especially concerned with how worthiness relates to constructions of race, gender, sexuality, and violence. Ultimately, my work aims to demonstrate how an immigration system enacts violence upon those very people it purports to protect.

Key words: Violence, Immigration, Law, Visas, US government

The Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs at Brown University seeks to promote a just and peaceful world through research, teaching, and public engagement.

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