Virtual Poster Session 1:

Social Sciences Collegiate Division
When We Give Each Other Grace: Analyzing the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on SEL Implementation in Title I Schools
Amara Cohen, 4th-Year, Public Policy, Statistics
Mentor(s): Dr. David Johnson, Consortium on School Research

The COVID-19 pandemic took a major toll on the mental health of students and teachers, especially low-income students. Historically, schools have supported student and teacher wellbeing through social and emotional learning (SEL), which is the process through which people develop social and emotional skills such as self-management and relationship skills. Drawing on interviews with teachers from across the United States, this study focuses on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on SEL implementation in Title I schools. Using CASEL’s Guide to Schoolwide SEL as the basic SEL framework for schools, this research examines teachers’ experiences of implementing SEL during the pandemic. This study finds that only schools that had fully integrated SEL into the school structure continued their SEL practices, while teachers created new SEL techniques and methods in response to the pandemic. Policy recommendations include integrating SEL into school structures and incorporating teacher voice and leadership into SEL planning and implementation.
Explaining the Mismatch Between Hotspots of Auto-Loan Debt and Delinquency in the United States
Atman Mehta, 4th-Year, Political Science, South Asian Languages and Civilizations
Mentor(s): Prof. Luc Anselin, Sociology, Center for Data Spatial Data Science; Dr. Julia Koschinsky, Center for Spatial Data Science

Although the recession of 2008 revealed the catastrophes of over-indebtedness, the ensuing decade witnessed a significant rise in auto-loan debt, which stood at its highest level in history in 2019: over a trillion dollars. Simultaneously, auto-loan delinquencies also steadily increased, with heavy concentrations in the South. This is especially surprising since the South has the fewest proportion of debtors in the country, and the North-East, which has the highest proportion of auto-loan debtors, has the lowest proportion of delinquencies. What accounts for this spatial mismatch between hotspots of debt and delinquency? My first hypothesis is that those areas which receive greater federal welfare for medical expenses, housing, and income support will not be as delinquent because these supports mitigate financial pressures. Further, I hypothesize that those areas in which employment centres are more accessible will also be less delinquent due to lower dependencies on automobile ownership. Contrary to my first hypothesis, I find that the relationship between income support and delinquency is such that the areas which receive greater income support are also more likely to be more delinquent, which shows that instead of providing substantial pecuniary support, income support programs are proxy measures for a precarious economic situation. However, in key parts of the population, medical welfare programs do mitigate delinquencies: among counties where the majority of the population are people of colour and low-income counties, those which receive greater medical welfare are likely to be less delinquent. With respect to my second hypothesis, I find that especially among counties in the South where delinquency ranks the highest in the country, those with shorter commutes to work are also likelier to have lower levels of delinquency. Above all, my findings reveal that different regions face different challenges with respect to their debt burdens, and thus require case-specific solutions.
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Irrationality in Crisis: Emotional Language in the President’s Daily Intelligence Briefings
Austin Christhilf, 4th-Year, Political Science & Economics
Mentor(s): Prof. Austin Carson, Political Science

Rationality is a key assumption undergirding many of the predominant theories in International Relations. Specifically, many statist theories assume that although individuals might have imperfect rationality, a state’s entire beaucratic apparatus necessarily has constraining effects on imperfect rationality. As a result, these theories generally believe state decision makers are forced to operate nearly perfectly rational. I attempt to empirically test these assumptions, through a textual analysis of almost two decades of Presidential intelligence briefings. Specifically, I ask if decision maker’s individual emotive responses can be seen increasing in times of crisis and heightened tension. To do so, this paper leverages LIWC’s dictionary and wordcount based methods for measuring textual sentiment to determine emotional language use at the entry level within the PDB corpus. We measure across several dimensions, but specifically focus in on positive and negative language use in entry references involving certain states during periods of conflict and crisis. I find that over the course of crises and engagements, briefing language becomes more emotionally charged than otherwise, with a notable large increase in negative sentiment becoming more prevalent. Individual emotions can cloud judgement, and these findings confirm this. Since this corpus’s output was briefings that sat atop the US intelligence bureaucracy, the finding of emotional language here is odd from a statist view. These findings show that in fact state decision makers cannot simply be constrained to rationality by the state and its beaucratic apparatus. Moreover, these findings broadly serve to raise questions around rational actor assumptions in crisis negotiation and conflict resolution as it reveals state decision maker’s clouded judgement in these situations.
Urban Sustainability and Social Justice: A Study of Brownfield Redevelopment in Chicago
Cinque Carson, 4th-Year, Public Policy
Mentor(s): Prof. Chad Broughton, Public Policy

Unsustainable development and discriminatory urban policies have precipitated blight in Chicago’s Black and low-income communities. Brownfields—sites of former industrial activity that have the perception of contamination—are indicators of blight and disinvestment. To address the issue of brownfields in the city, Chicago launched the Chicago Brownfields Initiative in 1993 to remediate sites and attract developers to help spur economic revitalization. This paper investigates the issue of brownfields and brownfield redevelopment in Chicago, ultimately using findings to help craft a policy proposal for the future equitable and sustainable development of these sites. This paper uses sociological, environmental justice, and human rights concepts to create a theoretical framework to evaluate aspects of brownfields and redevelopment, analyze the impact on communities, and inform policy recommendations. Spatial analysis and qualitative methods are used to explore this important issue in Chicago and investigate its impact on local communities. This study addresses gaps in previous research and provides a much-needed update on sites remediated under the Chicago Brownfields Initiative. Given the recent pushes for fostering sustainable urban development and addressing issues of historic inequity, this paper aims to signal the potential of brownfield redevelopment in larger sustainability and social justice efforts.
Political Amnesia: The “Forgetting” of American Intervention in Late Twentieth-Century Chile
Diego Quesada, 3rd-Year, Law, Letters, and Society & Sociology, Human Rights
Mentor(s): Prof. Austin Carson, Political Science

Throughout the twentieth century, the United States promoted instability, poverty, authoritarianism, and incredible violence, etc., in Latin America through decades of multi-dimensional American intervention. For instance, in Chile, the United States helped create the socioeconomic conditions which engendered the 1973 coup d’état; furthermore, America supported the Pinochet Regime which fostered inequality, repression, etc. Yet, in the Central Intelligence Agency’s President’s Daily Briefings (PDBs), America’s role in the devastation of Chile, and in the devastation of Latin America more broadly, goes largely undiscussed; that is to say, the reality and consequences of American intervention are ignored and seemingly “forgotten.” Why? Through a socio-historically contextualized analysis of PDBs from the late twentieth century, I aim to use the case study of American intervention in Chile to theorize political amnesia: a political phenomenon by which the American government, and to some extent American society, “forgets” and thus abdicates its moral responsibility for past atrocities. First, I will briefly historicize my discussion by illuminating the reality of American intervention, and its consequences, in late twentieth century Chile. Then, through an in-depth analysis of contemporary PDB entries regarding Chile, I will show how even at its highest, most classified level, the American Government tonally and substantively “forgets” its role in promoting instability, poverty, and authoritarianism, etc., in Chile. Finally, I will suggest that this phenomenon, in Chile and in other contexts, has enabled the United States to abdicate its moral responsibility to certain populations, notably Latin American immigrants to the United States. Overall, along with implicitly characterizing PDBs as inherently political documents, I hope to suggest that the United States avoids righting its past wrongs by simply pretending they never happened.
The Construction of Law and Justice in Malawi’s Village Tribunals

Emily Williams, 4th-Year, Law, Letters, and Society, Russian and Eastern European Studies
Mentor(s): Dr. Sarah Johnson, Law, Letters, and Society; Prof. Jenny Trinitapoli, Sociology

For decades, scholars have endeavored to put together a comprehensive theory of African law that takes into account both the influence of colonial legal structures and surviving traditional customs. My research project engages with this effort by exploring the practices of traditional tribunals in rural villages in Balaka, Malawi: how do these communities construct and engage with concepts of law and justice through tribunals? Based on this knowledge, can we better understand whether customary law and constitutional law are competing for dominance, integrating into cooperative but dual polities, or evolving together into a customized hybrid system? My data for this project include informal interviews with twelve traditional headmen, observations of tribunal proceedings in two locations, and tribunal case records from three villages, all collected from the region surrounding the town of Balaka. First, I use these sources to identify what kinds of laws are organizing these village communities. I find that headmen enforce rules that originate from both traditional customs and state laws and do not differentiate between the two when describing their role in the community. As a result, traditional leaders observe a rule of law whose source of authority is ambiguous. Second, I look at how traditional tribunals approach conflict resolution and pursue justice. These tribunals have been influenced by the constitutional law of Malawi but are rooted in traditional African customs and the practical experiences of these tight-knit, interconnected village communities. They therefore prioritize communal values such as reconciliation and family unity over individual liberty. Overall, my analysis describes a hybrid system of integrated government where tradition and practicality interact with centralized democracy to inform the growth and development of rural Malawian communities. This hybridized interpretation of local law challenges the dichotomy that is typically drawn between customary law and constitutional law in post-colonial African states.
**A Vietnam in the US: American Racial Politics in the Vietnam War**

Ethan Hsi, 3rd-Year, History & Law, Letters, and Society, Creative Writing  
Mentor(s): Prof. Austin Carson, Political Science

In recent years, historians have produced a body of scholarship that has benefitted from the merging of two previously separate fields of historiography: that of the civil rights and Black liberation movements of the 1950s and 1960s, and that of Cold War international relations. A key argument advanced by this body of scholarship is that the American claim to leadership of the free world on the international stage was undermined by obvious racial injustice at home, prompting U.S. executive authorities to favor federal civil rights legislation. Scholars have treated the heating up of the Vietnam War in the mid-60s as the endpoint of the Cold War-civil rights connection, arguing that American military intervention in Vietnam displaced American racial injustice as the crucial factor in international prestige. However, using the recently declassified Presidential Daily Briefs (PDBs), daily intelligence documents produced by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) for the President’s personal review from the Kennedy to the Ford administration, I argue that the periodization of the Cold War-civil rights connection can be extended into the late 1960s. These new sources, specifically a cluster of PDBs offering detailed reports on North Vietnamese broadcasts on American racial injustice, demonstrate that foreign perceptions of American race relations continued to be an issue of significant concern to the late Johnson administration. But here, the influence of Cold War foreign policy on racial justice at home is qualitatively different from its form in the previous decade. In the context of rising antiwar dissent and perceptions of weakness abroad, the attitude of U.S. authorities towards the racial justice movements of the late 1960s turned more repressive, identifying Black activists with the antiwar movement and the revolutionary threat of the North Vietnamese themselves.
Who’s Minding the Neighborhood? The Role of Neighborhood Associations in Neighborhood Planning
Eugen Craciunescu, 3rd-Year, Public Policy, Environmental and Urban Studies
Mentor(s): Prof. Emily Talen, Urbanism Lab

“Who’s Minding the Neighborhood?: The Role of Neighborhood Associations in Neighborhood Planning,” is aimed towards creating a better understanding of the role of neighborhood associations in urban planning in Chicago. In order to ascertain the scope and consequence of neighborhood-level organizing when it comes to guiding the future of the neighborhood, we interviewed the leaders of 17 neighborhood associations in Chicago. We wanted to know, first, how neighborhood organizations view themselves and their role, and second, how neighborhood organizations approach neighborhood planning. Through these interviews, we found that these organizations generally fall within one of three types, and that each type employs a different kind of approach to neighborhood planning: servicing, protection, and promotion. Servicing-oriented associations are primarily concerned with providing more social services and resources to residents as a means of empowerment. In the case of protection-oriented associations, planning is focused on blocking developers and changing zoning codes, mainly in order to preserve the quality and character of the neighborhood. Finally, promotion-oriented associations serve primarily as amplifiers of small events and tactical urbanism geared towards promoting the economic vitality of retail corridors. While this research is limited to a relatively small number of associations within one American city, our findings point towards an overall limited role played by neighborhood associations in neighborhood planning activities. In none of these approaches did we find neighborhood planning taking place in a proactive sense—where residents come together to formulate and implement a vision for their neighborhood.
The Impact of Medicaid Expansion on Substance Use Referral Trends: A Mixed-Methods Approach

Jacob Sims Speyer, 4th-Year, Public Policy, Statistics
Mentor(s): Prof. Harold Pollack, Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice; Samantha Steinmetz, Chapin Hall

This thesis analyzes the impact of Medicaid expansion on substance use disorder (SUD) referral patterns in order to assess whether lowering the cost of care changes how individuals enter treatment. While existing literature examines the overall effect of Medicaid on SUD utilization, this paper utilizes both quantitative and qualitative data to assess whether expanding Medicaid changed the referral source of patients, including self-referrals and referrals from criminal justice sources. TEDS-A data from 2010 to 2018 is used to conduct a differences-in-difference and event study model to assess the causal effect of Medicaid expansion. Qualitative interviews with healthcare providers, policy advocates, and researchers provide a broader understanding of the mechanisms behind how Medicaid expansion impacts referral source. This paper finds that while Medicaid expansion did not necessarily change patient referral habits, it provided a payment source for otherwise uninsured patients entering treatment. These findings suggest that payment is a necessary but insufficient condition for care.
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**Child Care Providers Responding to COVID-19**
Jacqueline Lewittes, 3rd-Year, Law, Letters, and Society  
Fady Shokry, 4th-Year, Economics  
Mentor(s): Prof. Julia R. Henly, Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice

The Covid-19 pandemic has negatively impacted almost all small businesses in the US and around the world. Childcare centers and home providers in the US are no exception. Many programs had to close during the first few months of the pandemic, thus exacerbating pre-existing financial vulnerabilities in the childcare industry. Our research is part of a larger study that assesses the effects of the pandemic on childcare centers and home-based providers in Cook County and downstate Illinois. We consider financial challenges facing center and home-based programs. Our research investigates the different financial challenges providers have experienced because of the pandemic as well as their experiences applying for and receiving governmental and non-governmental COVID-related assistance. The sample includes 75 childcare program directors purposively sampled by type of care, region, size, and dependency on public funding. Interviews were approximately 60-minutes in length, conducted via Zoom, and transcribed, coded and analyzed using Dedoose software. Providers who remained open or reopened experienced enrollment declines due to reductions in demand and/or public health measures related to social distancing and capacity restrictions in classrooms. These conditions led to a substantial reduction in revenue, while at the same time costs to care provision increased because of new expenses related to additional cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment. Our findings will consider variation in experiences by type of care (centers vs homes), program size, dependency on public funding, and geography. The implications for the child care and early education market will be discussed.
Exploring the Closet: Reconceptualizing Machismo through Masculinity
José Morin, 4th-Year, Sociology, Gender and Sexuality Studies
Mentor(s): Prof. Kristen Schilt, Sociology, Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality; Xiaogao Zhou, Sociology; Agatha Slupek, Political Science, Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality

Current scholarship uses *machismo*, a concept characterized by complex historical and socioeconomic interactions manifested through values, ideology, and behaviors, to examine Latinx masculinity. However, researchers rarely consider how machismo impacts Latinx, openly queer men and their gender performance. Building upon concepts from masculinity studies, the present study aims to create a framework to reconceptualize the cultural value of machismo within U.S. born, second-generation immigrant, queer Latinx males. Drawing from 15 qualitative interviews, this study examines how the participants negotiate their cultural expectations of machismo within Latinx communities when they disclose their non-heteronormative sexuality. Specifically, I focus on the strategies my participants deploy to navigate potential violence under the expectations of machismo while attempting to maintain personal autonomy. These findings highlight the need to contextualize studies of masculinity within narratives and intersections of both ethnic spaces and sexuality in order to get a clearer understanding of structural properties affecting and being reproduced by individuals.
From Objects to Solutions: Explaining Individual Differences in Need for Cognition
Madeleine Ferrara, 2nd-Year, Economics & Visual Arts
Mentor(s): Prof. Howard Nusbaum, Psychology; Dr. Shannon Heald, Attention, Perception, Experience (APEX) Lab

Attributions of innovative behavior positively correlate with the agent's interest in thinking (Need for Cognition). Need for Cognition is a self-assessed measure of one’s enjoyment of problem-solving, but does not relate to one’s problem-solving abilities. In previous studies, problem-solving relating to Need for Cognition has not been differentiated into more than one type; however, this study suggests that one’s Need for Cognition rating may be impacted by the type of problem-solving that they are considering at the time of the rating. Here, we looked at two distinct types of problem-solving. The first involves a process in which one identifies a problem and then tries to come up with a solution (known as problem-first problem-solving). In the second, one encounters an object and reasons about its potential uses, which might lead one to understand the object as relevant to solving a problem previously unknown to one (a process referred to as need-solution pair recognition). In an experiment ($N = 61$), we examine how individual differences in Need for Cognition relate to both forms of solution-generation. In two different blocks of trials participants were instructed to generate solutions for a given problem or to come up with uses for novel objects that could solve a problem with the order of these blocks counterbalanced across participants. We measured the number of unique solutions generated for presented problems (problem first block) and number of unique uses for presented objects (object first block). Results demonstrate that object-based solution-generation is positively correlated with Need for Cognition, while problem-based solution-generation is only marginally so. Our findings demonstrate the importance of expanding our understanding of innovative behavior to also include solution-finding via need-solution pair recognition.
Racial and Ethnic Backgrounds of U.S. Randomized Controlled Trials in Obstetrics and Gynecology and Comparison to U.S. General Population: A Retrospective Review

Noel Cercizi, 2nd-Year, Chemistry & Psychology
Yifei Wu, 2nd-Year, Biochemistry
Crystal Park, 3rd-Year, Linguistics
Mentor(s): Dr. Yuzuru Anzai, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Lenox Hill Hospital; Dr. Maria-Teresa Benedetto; Dr. W. Spencer McClelland; Dr. Teresa Cheon, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Lenox Hill Hospital

Randomized controlled trials (RCTs) are considered the highest level of evidence in the hierarchical system used to classify the vast number of research publications available. Evidence derived from RCTs is thus given particular importance in evidence-based medicine, and consequently in clinical guidelines. Despite this, RCTs can lack external validity due to the narrow clinical settings in which they are conducted. Since race and ethnicity are associated with prevalence and outcome of diseases, racial and ethnic composition of patients included in RCTs can alter their results and thus the generalizability of the conclusions of the studies to the wider population. The primary aim of this study was to determine if the racial and ethnic background distributions of RCT study populations reflect that of the U.S. general population. In this retrospective analysis of the racial and ethnic compositions of RCTs in the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* and *Obstetrics and Gynecology* from January 2010 to April 2020, the racial distributions of study participants were compared to those of the parous and general female populations of the United States. Chi-square analyses showed significant deviations from the U.S. general population in both Obstetrics and Gynecology (p<0.05). We observed an overrepresentation of Black participants and an underrepresentation of Asian participants in overall Obstetrics and in most subcategories as well as in the overall Gynecology category and most Gynecology subcategories. White participant representation was similar to the general population on average, but with wide variation across studies especially among the subcategories. Hispanic ethnicity was overall underrepresented. RCTs in the field of Obstetrics and Gynecology conducted in the U.S. deviate from the general population with regard to racial and ethnic distributions, prompting a mindful consideration of the characteristics of study conclusions as they are often incorporated into practice guidelines geared towards the general population.
Tianhao Hou, 4th-Year, Sociology
Mentor(s): Prof. Elisabeth S. Clemens, Sociology

This presentation introduces a theory of a new form of the Chinese authoritarian regime after 2013, in contrast to Maoist and bargaining authoritarianisms presented in earlier literature. The new form is characterized by the fact that the central government directly regulates local officials and social actors by selected institutionalization and repression divided by a no-trespassing line. Based on ethnographies and interviews, the author illustrates the new form with a case study of xinfang in the realm of stability maintenance. Specifically, the author shows how both local officials and petitioners are institutionalized and repressed in different scenarios. This case draws together central-local relations and state-society relations in an authoritarian regime and addresses the institutional and non-contentious elements of stability maintenance, which are largely neglected in previous works on authoritarian resilience.
Psychological Resilience and Distress During the COVID-19 Pandemic
Yena Kim, 4th-Year, Psychology
Mentor(s): Prof. Howard C. Nusbaum, Psychology

There is substantial variation in individuals’ responses to potentially stressful experiences. One source of resilience may include psychological factors drawn from self-determination theory (SDT), which posits that individuals better cope with adverse circumstances when pursuing intrinsically motivated activities. Here, we test the hypothesis that such eudaimonic living buffers psychological distress, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Adults (N = 240) from New York City, North Carolina, and South Carolina completed measures of mental wellbeing as well as intellectual and civic virtues. Our findings suggest that greater levels of wise reasoning and resilience buffer pandemic-related psychological distress. Higher reported distress was associated with increased civic engagement. Additionally, wise reasoning, but not resilience, mediated the association between COVID-19 stressors and psychological distress. We discuss possible accounts of the relationships between intellectual and civic virtues with respect to mental wellbeing, suggesting that some societal challenges uniquely require eudaimonic living for adapting to changing social norms.