

2021 Moravian College InFocus Town Hall

President's Research Award

For Excellence in an Individual Research Gallery Exhibition and Research Project



Title Representation of Non-traditional families**InFocus Challenge Area:** A Flourishing Community, Nation and World

Socialization about the value of family structures happens even before teachers begin professional training. This socialization can be seen in the events like father's day or mother's day in schools, use of texts that predominantly depict traditional family structures, and language used in the classroom and forms sent home that only adheres to nuclear families. Pre-service training doesn't always provide or support learning about non-traditional family structures. For normalization of Non-traditional family structures to take place, there needs to be a change in the way educators view non-traditional family structures and they need to be recognized and normalized by the institutions children and young teachers are in. A support group for students of Non-traditional families would provide emotional support as well as a voice for underrepresented students, and a place for teachers to learn more about their students and their non-traditional backgrounds.

Frances Hendricks

**Major:** Undeclared**Town Hall Course:** Educ 160
B Culture, Community,
Diversity**Instructor:** Dr. Song

UDL and Art Education

InFocus Challenge Area: Accessibility

Abstract

Many traditional art classrooms in public school spaces are inaccessible in terms of space, seating and materials. This injustice must be remedied through physical and pedagogical adaptation, namely, Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Research has shown that UDL and removing barriers enhances learning for all students, regardless of disability status.

Janelle Winchester



**Major: Art Education
K-12**

Town Hall Course: EDUC 560

Instructor: Dr. Yosung Song

The Double Edged Sword of Surveillance Capitalism

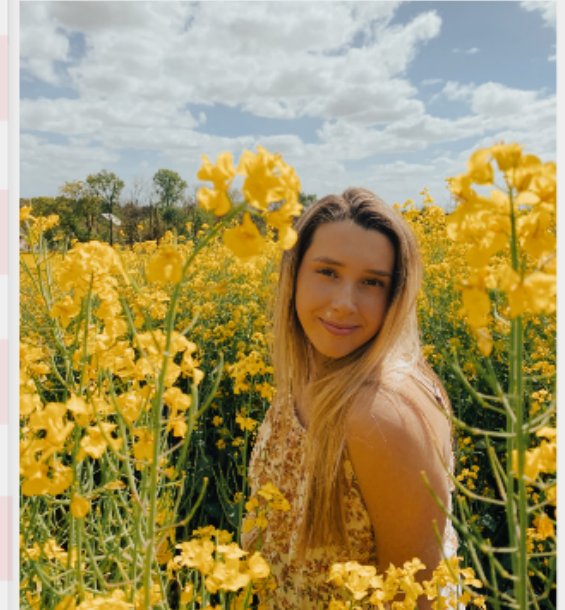
InFocus 2021 Student Research Projects

InFocus Challenge Area: Artificial Intelligence/ Data/ Social Media/ Surveillance

Living in today's society, we are working with technology on a daily basis. Technology has become a huge part of this world and is all around us. We rely on technology. We're constantly searching on google what insurance company is better, going on facebook to see what your friends are up to, or ordering packages on amazon. But do we truly understand what these high-tech experts are doing with the interactions we have with their corporations and products? Advanced technology has made us blind and deaf to the way high-tech experts in Silicon Valley, working for corporations such as Google and Facebook, exploit our personal data for their own ends. These experts are mining our information to predict and shape our behavior, a theory known as classical/ operant conditioning created by theorist B.F Skinner. Shoshana Zuboff (Author, Harvard Professor and Social Psychologist) created and defines the term Surveillance Capitalism as "an expropriation of critical human rights that is best understood as a coup from above" and believes, as myself, that we must fight for a different digital future (Zuboff, 2020). Surveillance Capitalism is a movement founded on "predictive algorithms and mathematical calculations of human behavior." My research addresses not only the creation of this movement and the issues behind it, but possible solutions we can take to end the age of Surveillance Capitalism.

Surveillance Capitalism puts our humanity and our ability to function
as a democracy at risk.

Ashley Beiser



**Major: Psychology &
Early Childhood
Education Certification**

**REL 245 Religion &
Politics**

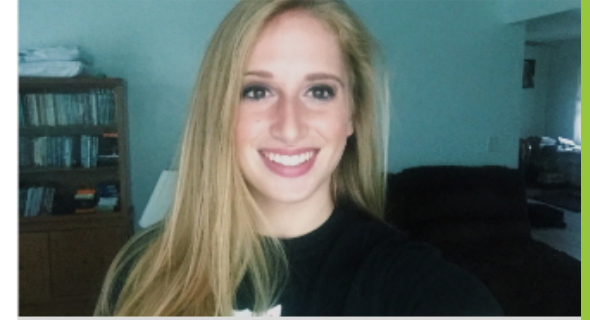
**Professor Kelly
Denton-Borhaug**

Prevalence of Survivor's Guilt and Potential Solutions to Improve Guilt

InFocus Challenge Area: Community, loss, and grief

Survivor's guilt is a term that first appeared in the middle of the twentieth century that described a feeling that individuals had after surviving a drastic event where other people had died. These types of events would have been things such as war, natural disaster, and diseases like AIDS. The term "survivor's guilt" was coined by Dr. Stanley Cobb and Dr. Erich Lindemann, and they defined it as a feeling of tension, loneliness, or any sort of mental disturbance that was caused by mentioning those who are deceased or receiving some sort of sympathy. Those who have survived cancer have reported feeling symptoms of survivor's guilt. In one study, over half of the participants reported feeling survivor's guilt after overcoming lung cancer. Different factors and support groups seem to have an overall positive impact on those suffering with survivor's guilt, and utilizing these resources may help them to no longer feel symptoms associated with guilt, such as anxiety.

Kasey Hanlon



Major: Biology

Town Hall Course: Cancer Biology

Instructor: Dr. Thevenin

Decisions associated with Dysphasia and Palliative Care

InFocus Challenge Area: Difficult Decisions

Dysphagia is an abnormality in swallowing and can occur at any age but is most common among older people. Palliative care is focused around patient and family-centered care that optimizes quality of life by anticipating, preventing, and treating suffering. Additionally, palliative care addresses physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual needs and to facilitate patient autonomy, access to information, and choice. What people consume often contributes greatly to quality-of-life, therefore there is a significance paired with SLP decisions (Archer et al., 2013).

Bridgette Francis



Major: Speech Language Pathology

**Town Hall Course: SLP 533:
Acquired Communication Disorders**

Instructor: Dr. Kaniyamattam

Impact of Death Anxiety on Young Adults



Katey Dewitt and Mae Dienes, Class of 21* Undergraduate Nursing
Helen S. Breidegam School of Nursing & Public Health
NURS 316: WI: Applied Research
Clinical Faculty: Dr. Paulette Dorney PhD, RN, CCRN-K, Dr. Karen Groller PhD, RN, CV-BC, CMSRN, Dr. Pamela Adamshick, Kristine Petre



Katey Dewitt

In this presentation, our goal is to inform and explain the research conducted with the hope of providing multi-disciplinary implications of our findings. For the purpose of this study, a cohort of thirteen senior nursing students conducting a miniature scoping review of three databases with the intention of answering the following questions:

Priori Question: What types of behaviors influencing health status in young adults have been reported?

Subquestion: What influences the grief experience and coping strategies of the young adult currently enrolled in college to death and non-death losses?

Searches were conducted within the Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL), Medline OVID and PsychInfo. Within each database limiters were applied including English language only and full text articles. For the purpose of this miniature scoping review, articles from all databases were collected and reviewed to find common themes or subject clusters that describe the sub question. The themes were discussed and determined to best describe the sub question by the research group and articles were assigned accordingly. These are as follows: Supportive strategies, Type of loss, Death anxiety, Coping strategies (sub question), Suicidality among minorities and mental health issues-depression (main question). Results from the searches were then organized into themes and divided between members for analysis. This presentation focuses on death anxiety in young adults enrolled in colleges to connect to the InFocus theme of Difficult Decisions.

Keywords: death anxiety, grief, fear of death

Impact of Death Anxiety on Young Adults



Katey Dewitt and Mae Dienes, Class of 21* Undergraduate Nursing
Helen S. Breidegam School of Nursing & Public Health
NURS 316: WI: Applied Research
Clinical Faculty: Dr. Paulette Dorney PhD, RN, CCRN-K; Dr. Karen Groller PhD, RN, CV-BC, CMSRN; Dr. Pamela Adamshick; Kristine Petre



Mae Dienes

Scoping reviews are an intensive literature synthesis used by researchers in collaboration with librarians and other healthcare professionals to map a priori questions and capture the related evidence known and not known on the subject. The main objective of this review is to investigate the behaviors influencing the health status of young adults. Research included three sub-topics which were explored by the senior nursing students. The sub-topics are weight change, substance use or abuse, and grief and loss. Through the examination of specific behaviors that influence the grief experience and coping strategies, death anxiety is a specific theme that was selected to be investigated. To further investigate the health behaviors of college students, this scoping review examines how death anxiety influences the grief experience and how it affects coping strategies in young adults.

This scoping review analyzes five articles in which included data that was related to death anxiety in the young adult. The results of the studies concluded that: people with low levels of searching for meaning generally have low levels of anxiety related to death and dying regardless of the amount of meaning present in their lives; graduate students had lower levels of death anxiety than undergraduate students; people who have more religious attitudes and have higher fear of self dying have more general health conditions and the fear of other's death has a meaningful relationship with inappropriate general health conditions; an high purpose in life was found to be predictive of low death anxiety; and an inverse correlation between self-esteem and death anxiety and a direct correlation between self-esteem and spiritual wellbeing.

Keywords: death anxiety, grief, fear of death

Moravian College InFocus:
Mental Health

The Effects of Isolation on People with Aphasia

Presented by:

Cailee Carmella

Graduate Speech-Language Pathology Student



Cancer Alley, LA: A Case Study of Environmental Justice in Response to Systemic Racism

InFocus Challenge Area: Health and Environment

The nickname 'Cancer Alley' is warranted in the southeast region of Louisiana, which has an increased incidence of cancer and other poor health outcomes. This increased risk is due to a combination of environmental pollution and insufficient healthcare access. These circumstances have arisen from a long history of racism, redlining, and poor environmental policy, all of which constitute environmental racism. Such inequitable environmental policy increases the amount of harmful air particulates, pollutes water systems, and causes irreparable harm to the people within these communities. While this is an issue of institutional racism that is heavily entrenched in the way that these states and governing boards have operated for hundreds of years, all is not lost in terms of remedying this egregious harm. By utilizing methods of environmental justice, as seen in the case of Cancer Alley, marginalized communities can act to improve their health outcomes and fight environmental racism.

Charlotte Reid



Major: Biochemistry

**Town Hall Course:
Cancer Biology**

**Instructor:
Dr. Thevenin**

InFocus Challenge Area: Education

Throughout recent years, music education has seen a major decrease in the curricula of public schools. Various factors lead to decisions by districts to cut music in schools entirely. However, there is no clear-cut set of reasons as to why music education is often the first program to be eliminated from school curricula. In addition, little concrete research has been performed to document the reasons why music is so devalued in schools. This project attempts to identify and bring awareness to reasons why music is disappearing from schools in the hope that more knowledge on the subject will prevent future districts from cutting music programs.

Mitchell Hourt



Major: Music Education

Town Hall Course: EDUC. 160

Instructor: Dr. Yosung Song

Student Exchanges From SCI Muncy

InFocus Challenge Area: Mental Health

- According to Mental Health America, 1.2 million individuals living with mental illness sit in jail and prison each year. Under the law, inmates have the right to engage in outdoor exercise. This right applies even when the prisoner is in solitary confinement. But prison systems today have the final say in each person's outdoor time and in doing this, they may deny a person's 8th amendment right by holding them in solitary confinement for however long. With already very limited access to the outdoors, one must remember that prisoners are human beings as well, and should be treated as such.

Renard Nicholson



Major: Sociology & Anthropology

**Town Hall Course: AFST 195:
Who Owns the Outdoors?**

Instructor: Dr. Hinnefeld

Web link: <https://www.mhanational.org/issues/access-mental-health-care-and-incarceration>

The Correlation Between Identity Factors and Substance Use Among College Students

InFocus Challenge Area: Mental Health

Abstract: The purpose of a scoping review is to help further clarify and identify gaps in the literature or research. This scoping review examines the areas of substance use, weight change, and grief and loss, but this manuscript particularly focuses on the scoping review question of what types of behaviors influencing health status in young adults have been reported, and the sub-question of what psychological factors relate to substance use/abuse in young adults currently enrolled in college? In order to complete a scoping review, and identify gaps in the literature corresponding to these questions, as a group of fourteen students, we collectively searched three databases. The three databases we searched were CINAHL, Ovid MEDLINE, and PsycInfo. It is also important to note that the students also searched several grey literature databases, but no articles were extracted for further analysis. All databases were searched with several keywords and subject terms such as 'substance abuse', 'student', 'college', 'drinking alcohol', 'cigarettes', etc.. Common limiters were applied to all database searches and they included full-text and English language only, additional limiters were applied to subsequent databases as appropriate. A list of articles were produced from each database after the keywords were searched and limiters were applied. Students then divided up the total potential articles into four small groups and then each group screened their designated articles' titles and abstracts. Students then collectively came back as a larger group and made the final decision on which articles to keep, and which to exclude, as well as identify any duplicates. This process was repeated for each database. All the articles that were kept, based on the larger group's collaborative discussion, the articles were then placed into one of seven themes. The themes were decided amongst the group, as they saw appropriate. The themes included identity, mental health/distress, prevention/intervention, protective behavioral strategies, risky behaviors, social influences, and spirituality/religion.

For purposes of this presentation, the theme of identity will be represented. Students then were paired and placed into a theme. Students then each picked five articles from their assigned theme and critically appraised those articles in the form of a mini-scoping review research paper. This presentation serves as a synthesized guide of the search strategy, implications, and data extraction of the ten articles that were critiqued from the identity theme. The students then decided that this theme was well suited for the InFocus Challenge Area of Mental Health. Some of the findings of the ten articles are displayed on the presentation and address key factors related to the interconnectedness of substance use, identity and mental health. For example the role of collegiate events such as sporting events, 21st birthday, and organized events events can serve as motives to drink and use other substances relating to identifying as a college student, along with the influence of their counterparts. It was also noted that loosely regulated college policies relating to alcohol can also impact the motivation of young adults to use substances. Some implications mentioned are to further increase the physical and psychological education on the dangers and risks associated with substance use among young adults in college students. The need for further research on the role of identity, and its associated factors such as motives, should be pursued further. Both the use of preventative educational measures, and interventions provided by nurses and other healthcare professionals can help combat and reduce the high prevalence of high consumption of substance and make the transitional period of college for young adults safer. *Note this slide will advance in 45 seconds.

Student Name: Shannon Gallo



Major: Nursing

Town Hall Courses:
Nurs 210: Applied Nursing Research

Instructor: Dr. Adamachick

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The Correlation Between Identity Factors and Substance Use Among College Students

InFocus Challenge Area: Mental Health

Abstract

A scoping review examines all the evidence about a specific topic and identifies any gaps in the literature by answering a priori question. It connects the current evidence and uses it collectively towards future implications. The main objective of this review was to examine the behaviors that influence health status in young adults split among three student groups. Each group looked at three different themes of behaviors that influence the health status of young adults including weight change, substance use/abuse and grief and coping. Each group conducted their own searches based on their sub-theme following the scoping review protocol. The searches were conducted in 3 main databases including CINAHL, Ovid MEDLINE and PsycINFO and then in the gray literature as well. The PCC (population, concept, context) construct was used and highlighted during the search and screening process to limit our search. Each group of 14 students split into smaller groups where articles were identified, screened, and retained based on title and abstract in small groups of 4 students with a final decision made in the larger group. The articles were screened and retained based on the scoping review protocol and determined if they addressed the main and sub-question. This presentation describes the search strategy and protocol performed by the substance abuse group and explores the articles examined that answers the sub-question of the psychological factors that influence substance use or substance abuse in college students. This presentation shared key information found in the literature highlighting the influence of identity factors in relation to substance use or abuse.

Substance abuse is a leading cause of preventable death on college campuses making it a public health concern. Alcohol use is a decision that is influenced by a number of factors including biological, personality cognitive, affective, environmental, sociocultural (Martin et al., 2020) Critiques of 10 articles were performed and analyzed in connection to the main question, sub-question, and the highlighted theme of identity and how this research can be applied to future implications of screening, interventions, prevention and outcomes in nursing. The review of these 10 studies show that substance use and abuse in college students is influenced by a number of psychological factors of identity. This review highlights important sub themes of identity including beliefs, motives, perceptions, gender, culture and how these aspects of identity influence substance use or abuse. The results of the 10 articles show how prevention and intervention programs need to be put in place tailored to specific identity factors. Nurses have the front line opportunity to make an impact with programs focusing on gender, specifically females, drinking motives like coping, relationships and personality traits. Intervention/prevention programs that aim at helping females cope in a healthier ways and create individualistic gender identity when making drinking choices. Also intervention/prevention programs that aim at identifying specific personality traits such as neuroticism, extraversion, and conscientiousness and working with these individuals to not create sensation seeking and impulsive behaviors. Identifying negative outcomes more than positive outcomes to readjust disposition when making drinking choices. Another important finding was to create programs that identify internal drinking motives and working towards decreasing those motives to drink. Mental health is strongly linked to the concept of identity and substance use and as nurses we can use the current and future research to help address the issues of mental health influencing these drinking behaviors specifically in college students for an overall healthier community.

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Student Name: Ashley Hutchinson



Major: Nursing

Town Hall Courses:
Nurs 210: Applied Nursing Research

Instructor: Dr. Adamachick

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Mental Health In Relation to Online Learning

InFocus Challenge Area: Mental Health

Abstract: Everyone has been effected in a great way by Covid-19. One of the most affected areas was education. Students had to suddenly change their educational process completely during the spring of 2020. One second they're in class, and the next they are at home learning from their computers. The mental toll taken on these students can not be underestimated. Throughout my project, I discuss the research I have done, the action plan I intend to implement, and an overall synopsis of my own experience.

Ben Carlin



Major: Special
Education

Town Hall Course: EDUC 160
B

Instructor: Professor Song

Child Food Insecurity in Pennsylvania



InFocus Challenge Area: Public Health for Women and Youth

Food Insecurity refers to the social and economic challenges which prevent an individual from accessing food. In the United States, nearly 35 million people, of which 13.9 million were children, experienced some level of food insecurity in 2020 (Silva, 2020). For children, this can prove to be devastating to their development. In a recent study, it was found that children who do not receive adequate levels of nutritious foods are more likely to experience academic challenges, lower immune system functioning, and delayed growth (Feeding America, 2021). Due to the negative effects food insecurity can have on children, it is important that steps are taken to ensure all children have access to food.

Alesha White



Town Hall Course: HLTP 315

Instructor: Dr. Cathy Coyne

Women of Color Living in Low Income Areas and a Late Stage Breast Cancer Diagnosis

InFocus Challenge Area: Public Health and Women/Youth

Cancer is one word everyone knows. It has become something to be feared, something no one wants to experience or see. In order to avoid a terminal cancer diagnosis, preventative care and regular screenings are key. For breast cancer, preventative checks are done through mammogram screenings. Theoretically, everyone has access to screenings such as this, but it is well documented that there is a disparity between women of color and white women in late stage breast cancer diagnoses. This disparity can be linked to a number of factors, the most common being socioeconomic status and race. Outside of these factors, there is also a number of other pressures that can be linked to these discrepancies. Multiple studies have demonstrated that women of color in low income areas are less likely to be screened for breast cancer, more likely to be diagnosed at a late stage, and are shown to have higher mortality rates. It was shown overall that race is a negligible genetic factor in its contribution to a late stage diagnosis, but it can still be connected to other elements that do affect diagnoses. One might not directly affect the other, but it indirectly contributes to the overall cause. Women of color in low income communities are underserved and underrepresented when it comes to breast cancer screenings and diagnoses.

Avery Korner



Major: Biology

**Town Hall Course:
Cancer Biology**

**Instructor:
Dr. Anastasia Thevenin**

Potential Link between Late-stage Cancer Diagnosis and Planned Parenthood Defunding

InFocus Challenge Area: Public Policy

Two of the most prevalent cancers affecting women in the United States are breast and cervical cancer. Regular breast exams and pap smears are required for prevention and early detection of breast and cervical cancer; cancer screenings are made available by healthcare providers. Planned Parenthood and clinic closures will lead to increased rates of late-stage breast and cervical cancer diagnoses within the United States. Previous research on this topic has focused on large-scale trends of women obtaining regular cancer screenings over an extended period of time, as well as examining the number of women each year who are diagnosed with breast and or cervical cancer. The goals of this research were to determine a correlation between women's health clinic closures and rates of cancer diagnoses in women, as well as what can be done to prevent further closures. To achieve these goals, the rates of cervical and breast cancer diagnoses within the past decade were analyzed, as well as compared across different states. The results of this research showed that government "defunding", a decrease in federal grants provided, of women's health care clinics is correlated with negative impact on overall screening of cervical and breast cancer, as well as early-stage diagnoses. Widespread citizen education is necessary to properly educate the citizens, especially those most vulnerable, on all of the services offered by Planned Parenthood and other family healthcare clinics. In order to protect Planned Parenthood from mass closure, legislature must be passed to preserve the resources provided by federal grants and allow for Planned Parenthood to rejoin the Title X program.

Lara Ormiston



Major: Biology

**Town Hall Course: BIOL 372
(Cancer Biology)**

Instructor: Dr. Thevenin

Prison-Based Occupational Therapy: An Opportunity to Reduce Recidivism in the United States

InFocus Challenge Area: Public Policy

The current state of the prison system in America is something that has long been an issue in the United States. America currently has the highest incarceration rates and some of the highest recidivism rates in the world (World Population Review 2021). Incarceration acts as a temporary solution to the larger issue of crime, however when these inmates are released from prison, they are thrown back into society with little to no resources to be reintegrated. Without occupational skills and proper education on how to apply for jobs, released prisoners often fall back into bad habits and increase their risk of being reincarcerated. In order to reduce recidivism, it must be ensured that programs are in place to help prisoners gain independent living skills and occupational skills in order to be successfully reintegrated into society and reduce rates of reoffending. A program that could be a solution is including occupational therapy programs in state prisons that would facilitate individual intervention plans including educational and vocational rehabilitation and counselling on prosocial behavior and healthy lifestyle choices for prisoners to be reintegrated into the general population (Royal College of Occupational Therapy, 2017).

Laura Roberts



**Major: Health Sciences,
Pre-O.T. Track**

**Town Hall Course: HLTP 385
A: Health Policy**

Instructor: Dr Cathy Coyne

Why “All Men Are Created Equal” Is Tragically Ironical

InFocus Challenge Area: Race, Ethnicity, and Justice

The statement “all men are created equal” is found in the Declaration of Independence and it has caused an immense amount of controversy as it is found to be tragically ironic. This project begins with a first person perspective from Frederick Douglass as he shares his personal experiences as a former slave in America. *White Too Long: The Legacy of White Supremacy in American Christianity* by Robert P. Jones is used to exemplify how and why African Americans are still living in an oppressive society as they face racial inequality in this nation.

Valeria Aguilar



Major:
Computer Science

Town Hall Course:
REL 245 PM
Religion and Politics

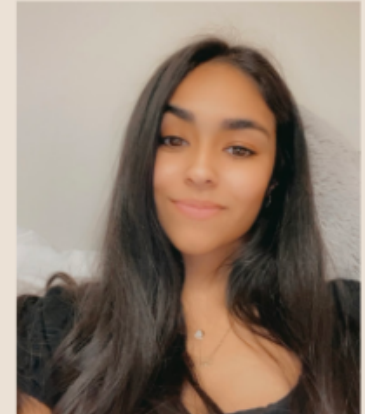
Instructor:
Dr. Kelly Denton-Borhaug

The Effects of Race on Breast Cancer Risk, Presentation, Treatment, and Outcomes

InFocus Challenge Area: Race, Ethnicity, and Justice

Breast cancer, being the cancer most commonly identified in women is a disease caused by the abnormal growth of cells, which begin to divide rapidly until eventually they may form a mass. Breast cancer can affect anyone individual unfortunately African American women suffer the most in their breast cancer risk, presentation, treatment, and outcomes when compared to White women. Black women are known for presenting with larger tumors and more aggressive and advanced-stage forms of breast cancers with some subtypes that may not always have treatments that benefit and help the same way that they do for others. Black women also often experience about a 62 day lapse in time between their diagnosis and treatment process, much longer than White women which leads to valuable time wasted. And although white women have a slightly higher incidence rate black women are more likely to die from the disease with a 40% higher death rate that leaves the question of why are Black women dying more? Whether an individual is White or Black should not have such an impact on their odds of survival. Possible solution in combating the disparities between African American women and White women include enhancing the knowledge of the doctors and caregivers in areas largely populated by the black community so that they can better relay information. Also, increasing the number of Black women included in research trials recognizing more than just a few populations with results that are found. Finally, the idea of free statewide cancer screening in areas of poverty allowing for access to those who are underserved and earlier cancer diagnosis to catch the disease early and possibly save more lives. There is no one answer to the cause of these disparities it can only be assumed to be the results of genetics, socioeconomic status, and lack of knowledge.

Yzatis Nieves



Major: Biology

**Town Hall Course:
BIOL 372 A WI:SEM
Cancer Biology**

**Instructor:
Anastasia Thevenin**

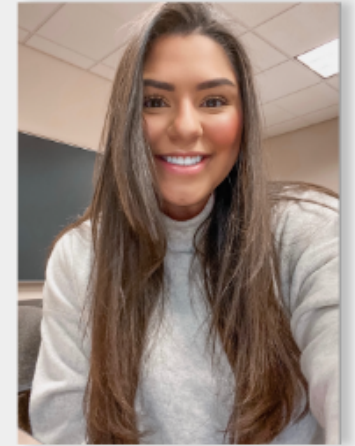
Title: The impact of salinity on *Juniperus Virginiana* seedling establishment

InFocus Challenge Area: Sustainability and Climate Change

Abstract

Juniperus virginiana also known as the Eastern Red Cedar (ERC) is native to eastern North America on the Atlantic coast stretching from southeastern Canada to the Gulf of Mexico and as far west as the great plains. This species is known to grow approximately 40 to 50 feet and belongs to the family of *Cupressaceae*. The average lifespan of ERC is 150 years. ERC can be found along the east coast and is moderately salt tolerant. ERC is highly disturbed due to salt inundation and has greater exposure to salinity relative to inland tree species on the mainland. In light of sea level rise and increased storm frequency and intensity along the east coast, ERC and other maritime forest tree species are declining. As long-lived tree species die people that depend on these species for added protection during hurricane season are more exposed to the elements. Particularly vulnerable are people of color who have historically existed along the coast in pocketed populations (i.e. Gullah-Geechee people). Sea-level rise threatens to displace these communities, which could be detrimental to the preservation of their culture. As trees succumb to saline conditions, it is unknown if long-lived tree species will regenerate. This study aims to examine the extent to which ERC seedlings can survive over a five-week period when exposed to increased saline conditions. If tree species are unable to regenerate, people living in coastal communities will continue to be vulnerable during storms.

Brittany Gomez



Major: Biology

Town Hall Course: Biostatistics

Instructor: Dr. Proud

Racial Disparities Within Education

InFocus Challenge Area: Systemic Racism and Access

➤ Abstract

My project aims to outline the influence of cultural/social capital in education and how it contributes to academic and racial disparities, depriving children of necessary friendships and networks; highlighting how these adversities affect them into their adulthood.

Tatiana Lopez



Major:
Political Science

Town Hall Course:
POSC 250

Instructor:
Dr. Haddad

Side Effects of the Use of Agent Orange During the Vietnam War

InFocus Challenge Area: War, Peace, Conflict

This paper investigated the use of Agent Orange during the Vietnam War. Agent Orange was a herbicide used to deforest the tropical terrains of Vietnam. The key component of Agent Orange is the chemical “Dioxin TCDD” which is a carcinogen that is known for causing various types of cancer, infertility, birth defects, and many other health issues. The environmental effects include contaminated soils and sediments that have had a lasting impact over the last 50 years. The U.S military was warned by Arthur Galston (whose soybean flowering research inspired the creation of Agent Orange), that the use of Agent Orange could be dangerous, although the military chose not to listen to what was advised. These lessons beg a question: “What can be done to avoid these consequences again?”. Multiple research articles were reviewed on the creation and history of Agent Orange, as well as the effects it had on human health and the environment. Possible solutions include doing extensive research before using any type of tactical weapons, having scientists such as toxicologists and environmentalists evaluate military actions, and to avoid chemical warfare overall because innocent lives will be at stake.

Marwah Tajdar



Major: Biology

Town Hall Course: Cancer Biology

Instructor: Dr.Thevenin

War Related PTSD - Cancer Link and Barriers at Accessing Healthcare for Immigrants

InFocus Challenge Area: War, Peace, Conflict

American Psychiatry Board defines Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a psychiatric disorder seen among people who experienced extremely traumatic events like war, political oppression, natural disaster, childhood abuse, or rape/sexual assault. PTSD is very common for immigrants and refugees who were forcibly displaced from their countries of origin. This study aims to investigate evidence in the literature regarding the incidence of cancer - PTSD link and through this research, to highlight the health care needs of immigrant populations along with the barriers they face at accessing health care in the host country.

Several studies done on war survivors showed that populations who experienced war and war-related stress disorders had higher rates of cancer compared to control groups. Although the exact physical causes of this pattern in the war setting are impossible to point out with accuracy, the long-term psychological effect of being exposed to the extremely tragic nature of war and oppression is the same for many people and commonly manifests itself as PTSD. Today, modern science presents plenty of evidence that stress is a stimulus capable of disrupting the homeostasis of the body by excessively triggering hormones and impairing the proper functioning of the central nervous, immune and endocrine systems. Hence seeing the effects of PTSD on war survivors is very insightful to understand the health needs of the refugee and immigrant populations today. Revising health care settings and providing resources to increase health system literacy for immigrants in developed countries, along with the development of mental health support systems to immigrant populations can be a crucial step to overcome the barriers to accessing healthcare for immigrants and refugees.

Nihal Capan



Town Hall Course:
**BIOL 372 : CANCER
BIOLOGY**

Instructor:
Dr. Anastasia Thévenin

Kara Walker

InFocus Challenge Area: Poverty and Inequality

Kara Walker is an artist that uses many different materials to create her artwork. She is the most known for her silhouette artwork which she makes using paper. She typically creates room-sized cycloramas (a panoramic image inside of a cylinder shaped platform to give the audience a 360° view) with her silhouettes. Kara's artwork represents the injustices in race, gender, sexuality, and violence in the US. She centers her art around the ongoing psychological trauma that was caused by slavery, as well as, current racial and gender stereotypes. Her artwork has caused some concerns and critiques with some people. There are actions that could be taken to address the issues of race, ethnicity, and justice that are ideas that Kara focuses on in her artwork.

Janessa Ortiz-Delgado



Major: Health Sciences
(Pre-OT)

Minor: Public Health

Town Hall Course:
Art 119 Art Processes &
Structures

Instructor: Dr. Baxter