

**Morgan Benson**

Majors in Anthropology and Economics

Minor in Africana Studies

Glynn Family Honors Scholar

Adviser: James McKenna

***“Kangaroo Mother Care in Southwestern Uganda”***

For this project, I spoke with healthcare providers, mothers, and Village Health Teams in Uganda to explore the acceptability and perceptions of Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) for premature and low birth weight newborns. Cultural and practical barriers to the practice are revealed, as well as unique opportunities for KMC’s potential. After studying KMC, and specifically skin-to-skin contact, as a research assistant in India, I further explored the practice while studying in Kampala, Uganda.

**Rachel Brandenberger**

Major in Visual Communication Design

Minor in Anthropology

Advisers: Jean Dibble and Richard Gray

***“With the Old Comes the New: Situating Traditional Handicraft Textile Techniques Within a Contemporary Aesthetic and Economic Framework”***

This project looks at traditional textile techniques and finds ways to implement strategies of design education and aesthetic innovation into the handicraft production model, to increase the economic competitiveness of the handicraft worker. I chose this topic as an extension of an internship I had last summer in Nepal. With a grant from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts, I traveled to the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C. for research.



**Stephanie Bruns**

Major in Political Science

Minors in Anthropology

and Education, Schooling, and Society

Adviser: Michael Hartney

***“Civic Education in Theory and Practice: Furthering Democracy and Creating Citizens”***

My thesis looks at the theories that guide public education and its role in democracy within the United States. I examine the theory of what civic education should include, as well as current practices in several local school districts. With a minor in Education, Schooling, and Society, I have learned a great deal about the education system in the U.S. However, many of these classes have focused on standardized testing and individualized achievement for standards of success. With my background in political science, I was curious about the role education plays in democratic success.



**Catherine Cichon**

Major in Anthropology

Supplementary Major in Arts and Letters Pre-Health

Adviser: Vania Smith-Oka

***“When Health Systems Meet: Narratives of International Partnerships and Medical Education in Rwanda”***

I compare the “cultural scripts” of U.S. and Rwandan medical professionals working in Kigali, Rwanda. I wanted to learn about their motivations for entering medicine, their understandings of Western biomedicine, and how they overcome their differences while working together. As a pre-med and anthropology student, I have focused most of my coursework on medical anthropology. Seeing Rwanda’s success in achieving the Millennium Development Goals in health care through medical partnerships inspired me to learn more about why those partnerships have succeeded and how they could be applied to similar situations to improve health care and medical education.



**Kaitlyn Davis**

Major in Anthropology

Supplementary Major in Environmental Science

Adviser: Mark Schurr

***“Environmental Analysis of Native American Settlement Patterns in Late Archaic and Early Woodland Periods in Northern Indiana”***

This project explores differences in site distribution between the Late Archaic and Early Woodland periods in LaPorte and St. Joseph counties. Using a comprehensive map of sites, I analyzed trends in settlement pattern. I examined individual sites to determine what environmental features seemed to be selected for settlement and if those features differed between the two periods. Through this project, I gained experience in settlement pattern analysis and archaeological survey work—research areas I plan to pursue in graduate school. I am very grateful to the organizations at Notre Dame that encourage independent undergraduate research and make it feasible.



**Margaret Duffy**

Major in Anthropology

Supplementary Major in Latino Studies

Minor in Peace Studies

Adviser: Karen Richman

***“Brother Coyote Crosses the Desert: The Myth and Metaphor of United States-Mexico Border Crossings”***

My thesis investigates how myth and folklore construct our cultural understanding of the human smuggler, or coyote. I explore how the folkloric representation of the coyote as a trickster character influences our perception of his role in migration. While volunteering with a humanitarian organization in the Sonora Desert, I met a coyote. Upon hearing his story, I was surprised that he was not the “villain” I had expected. I wanted to understand why this was not the case, and where I had developed this preconceived notion.



## **Hayley Evans**

Major in Political Science

Minor in Anthropology

Adviser: Rev. Sean McGraw, CSC

### ***“A Case Study of the Policy Writing Process: Fianna Fáil Policy on Human Trafficking”***

This thesis examines the extent to which various groups determine the policy process by applying a theory-oriented method of process-tracing to the 2014 Fianna Fáil policy on human trafficking. Last summer I collaborated with eight human rights and immigration non-governmental organizations for Irish Senator Mark Daly, while writing a policy for his political party, Fianna Fáil. To explain how my ideas evolved, I examine best practice, existing policy, internal policy dynamics, and interest group politics. I received funding for research on human trafficking in Ireland through the Nanovic Institute, which led me to an internship at the Seanad Éireann (Irish Senate).



**Katy Gorentz**

Major in Anthropology

Supplementary Major in Arts and Letters Pre-Health

Glynn Family Honors Scholar

Adviser: Catherine Bolton

***“We Want to Show Them: Identity and Disability in Sierra Leone”***

I studied the moral judgments in Makeni, Sierra Leone that have helped create negative social perceptions of persons with disabilities.

Ethnographic interviews with those close to the disabled community depict a reality far removed from such negative views. Understanding the source of these misperceptions is key to overcoming them through advocacy and empowerment. Although Makeni is home to several disability awareness groups and two schools for children with disabilities, discrimination still occurs in a variety of ways. The people I met there inspired me to be an advocate for their strength and abilities.



**Erin Hattler**

Majors in Anthropology and German

Adviser: Carolyn Nordstrom

***“The Human API: Microsourcing and Online Factories”***

I have been exploring a new trend in data processing called microsourcing. Microsourcing essentially transfers industrial revolution business practices to the online sphere and is already revolutionizing the workforce. I examine the topic through the lens of short fiction to provide a broader speculative look at the potential benefits and consequences. As the online and offline worlds become more intertwined, the potential for invisibility and exploitation increases. Because microsourcing is new, standard labor practices have not been fully developed. I hope to shed light on this issue so that the potential for labor exploitation decreases.



**Amy Klopfenstein**

Major in Anthropology

Adviser: Vania Smith-Oka

***“Men Are Being Trafficked Too: Masculinity and Vulnerability in the Human Trafficking Discourse”***

I explore the ways in which perceptions of masculinity interact with other facets of the human trafficking dynamic, such as gendered division of labor, vulnerability, and the labeling of a person as a trafficking victim. I also examined the reasons that such topics ultimately contribute to the relative invisibility of male victims in the contemporary trafficking discourse. I became keen on the subject after interning at an anti-trafficking organization in Bangkok last summer. As I learned more about male victims of trafficking, I wanted to explore why the general public is less aware of their existence.



**Sian Kresse**

Major in English

Minor in Anthropology

Adviser: Kinohi Nishikawa

***“Uncovering Closure in Fun Home”***

I am performing a narratological analysis of the graphic memoir *Fun Home* by Alison Bechdel, particularly how its content is conveyed through the visual structures and forms that characterize the medium and the subgenre of autobiography. I argue that Bechdel’s shifting representations of herself suggest a movement from a disjointed to a stable reading of her early life. Historically, comics have been associated with over-simplicity and the least desirable aspects of “low culture.” Since this medium was separated from the literary mainstream, it attracted writers and artists who want to tell complicated stories about marginalized figures. *Fun Home* continues this tradition; its careful juxtapositions offer fascinating interpretive possibilities.



**Nicole Madrilejo**

Major in Science Preprofessional Studies

Minor in Anthropology

Adviser: Jada Benn Torres

***“Paternal Ancestry of Jamaican Maroons”***

This thesis looks at the paternal ancestry of Accompong Town Maroons, a semi-isolated community in Jamaica. To understand the contributions of men to the descendant Maroon community, I conducted this study to determine the sources of paternal ancestry through the analysis of y-chromosomal DNA. Since my sophomore year, I have worked in a lab on both mitochondrial and y-chromosomal DNA. This year, I have conducted a significant portion of the primary research on the y-chromosomal DNA and decided to write my thesis on this work.



**Sarah McGough**

Major in Anthropology

Minor in Portuguese and Brazilian Studies

Glynn Family Honors Scholar

Adviser: Carolyn Nordstrom

***“The Biospiritual Transmission of HIV in the Candomblé Religion of Salvador da Bahia, Brazil”***

I examine the transmission dynamics of HIV in the context of the Afro-Brazilian folk religion of Candomblé in Salvador, Brazil. I explore the cosmology of Candomblé to analyze notions of health, healing, and body as they drive a “biospiritual” understanding of blood and sex. I also sketch a visual representation of the multidimensional Candomblé contact structure to illustrate the layers on which HIV infection can occur and spread. I lived abroad for six months in Salvador da Bahia. Immersed in the rich African-Brazilian syncretism, I became fascinated by the grassroots campaigns against AIDS within houses of worship.



**Caroline Merriam**

Major in Anthropology

Supplementary Major in Arts and Letters Pre-Health

Adviser: Holly Donahue Singh

***“The Role of Community in Caring for Juvenile Diabetes”***

When children are diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes, they must learn a new skillset to manage their blood sugar for the rest of their lives. Although diabetic summer camps play an essential role in teaching and reinforcing healthy habits, their greatest value lies in their ability to foster communities shaped around the common experience of coping with a chronic illness. While working at Camp Sweeney, I was fascinated by the way they built that community. When I described this sense of solidarity to Professor Singh, she introduced me to the topic of biosociality, which has served as the perfect launchpad for my analysis.

## **Margeaux Prinster**

Major in Anthropology

Minors in Peace Studies and Italian

Adviser: Vania Smith-Oka

### ***“Breaking Barriers: Female Empowerment, Development, and Gendered Spaces in Rajasthan”***

The deeply gendered spaces within traditional Indian society—carved out by an intermixing of patriarchy, caste, and class—hamper international development programs geared toward female empowerment. By analyzing the interaction between microfinance and vocational training programs for low-caste women and gendered space, I deconstruct the cultural definitions and realities of empowerment, while also prescribing strategies to improve empowerment programs to allow for the transcendence of gendered space. After participating in a Kellogg Institute internship in Rajasthan after my sophomore year, I developed a passion for improving Indian women’s empowerment programs.



**Patrick Salemme**

Major in Anthropology

Supplementary Major in Arts and Letters Pre-Health

Adviser: Carolyn Nordstrom

***“Apocalyptic and Post-Apocalyptic Metaphors: Representations of Power Struggles and Social Change”***

This thesis looks at the conflict between apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic storylines as representations of struggles over power. Apocalyptic tales tend to focus on restoring previous social structures while post-apocalyptic ones bring about a new order and way of seeing the world, one where previous divisions and boundaries no longer exist. I examined periods in history that have experienced spikes in apocalyptic mentalities—such as the beginnings of Christianity or the start of the Enlightenment—and how this is evidence of the major social changes we face today. I enjoyed delving into a project I was passionate about and developing new writing styles.





**Debra Smetana**

Major in Anthropology

Supplementary Major in Medieval Studies

Minor in French

Adviser: Mark Schurr

***“Prestige in Death: The Use of Prestige Grave Goods in Hopewell and Mississippian Burial Mounds”***

This study focuses on the distribution of prestige goods at four mound centers, with Seip and Elizabeth representing the Hopewell mortuary expression and Cahokia and Etowah representing that of the Mississippians. Age and gender are taken into account to determine the demographics of those who received the honor of a prestige good burial, and conclusions are made as to the symbolism of prestige grave goods and implications on the social structure of the two cultures. After working for Professor Schurr as a research assistant last year on a project involving prehistoric burial mounds, I was captivated by this subject.

**Mark Stechschulte**

Majors in Anthropology  
and Science Preprofessional Studies  
Adviser: Carolyn Nordstrom

***“Minecraft: The Building Blocks of an Online Nation”***

I examined the online virtual world of Minecraft in the context of globalization and found cooperative and constructive behaviors which suggest new ideas for creativity and social structure. I chose this topic because I feel that there is a real offline academic relevance to this arena, which many people either take for granted or scoff at as insubstantial. This thesis project has given me a wider understanding of the sheer impact of virtual worlds and gaming culture, and the research potential they hold.

**Marianinna Villavicencio**

Major in Anthropology

Minors in European Studies and Business Economics

Adviser: Jada Benn Torres

***“The Indigenous ‘Problem’: Social Belonging and Mobility in Guatemala City”***

I explore the paradoxical nature of neoliberal multiculturalism by examining indigenous identity and socioeconomic mobility in Guatemala. Most participant observation and interviews were done with students of privately funded, independent scholarship programs in Guatemala City. Because I grew up in Guatemala and saw the lack of awareness about the country’s ethnic diversity, I aim to contribute to policy development by providing insight into quotidian interethnic relations and cultural identities. I am troubled by the disregard for deeper dialogue regarding ethnic issues because, along with the growing social inequality in Guatemala, the country is in a state that is socially and economically unsustainable.