



Left to right: Iris Tavarez, Desiree Douglas, Grace Festin, Nijah Cunningham, Gaille Gourgues (Counselor), Morgan Wilson, Farrah Desrosiers, Kojo Gyasi, Richard Paul, Jodi-Ann Burey, Rossanna Contreras-Godfrey (Assistant Director)

Abstracts

Jodi-Ann Burey

Major: Communications/Political Science

Mentor: Jamel bell, Assistant Professor in Communication

Title: Global Media, Hyperconsumerism, and Social Identity: An exploratory study.

Drawing on the images and messages of hyperconsumerism embedded in American* entertainment television programs, this study seeks to examine the extent to which these images and messages help sustain US unipolarity through the propagation of hyperconsumption. A review of previous research explores the advantages had by the United States that nourished the development of its media industry, trends in media flow, and roles of transnational corporations and its use of advertising as a means of social control. While many scholars and critics have expounded the global media discourse, few empirical studies have been conducted that analyzes the media content in it of itself. As such, this research employs an ideological analysis to decipher messages of consumerism in *The Simpsons*, *Law and Order: Special Victims Unit* and *Desperate Housewives*, and their concomitant social implications. In addition, tenets of Social Identity Theory and Hegemony analysis explain how international television audiences may negotiate their national identities in respect to the preeminence of the United States.

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Nijah Cunningham

Major: Communications/Political Science

Mentor: Roberto Avant-Mier, Professor in Communication

Title: Critical Discourse Analysis and the Discourse of Men and Women for Others

Focusing on a qualitative methodological approach, this paper employs Critical Discourse Analysis as a current method for exploring public discourse related to the controversy over the selection of U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to be honored by Boston College and to speak at the recent commencement ceremony in May 2006. This paper specifically analyzes an official university statement about the selection Secretary Rice, unearthing the discourse that prevailed in this debate and determining its social significance. By concentrating on this event, I seek to shed light on the broader sociocultural practices that the discourse in my sample maintains. In light of my findings, I discuss how the discourse officially endorsed by the institution of Boston College promotes and sustains asymmetrical social power relations that divide our society.

Abstracts

Desiree Douglas

Major: Psychology

Faculty: June Horowitz, Professor in Nursing

Title: Postpartum Depression: Investigating Demographic Variables as Risk Factors

Background: The prevalence of postpartum depression is currently between 10-15% and about half of all cases either go undetected or treated, therefore it is imperative predictors of PPD be noted so that women who are at risk can be easily detected before the problem affects a woman's relationships. Additionally, because single women; women from lower socioeconomic statuses; younger women; and women from certain ethnic backgrounds experience more daily stressors than most other women in better conditions and psychological stressors are associated with postpartum depression, I would hypothesize that a combination of being single; young; having less education and income; and being of non-white ethnic background would put women at higher risk for PPD.

Objectives: To examine demographic variables of postpartum women from a current study done on an intervention program for depressed mothers and their infants.

Methods: Analysis of demographic variables of 1545 women ages 14-49 from the Boston area (10.9% Latina; 75.9 White; 10.5% Black; 6.6% Asian; 7.1% Other) on SPSS using data collected from a current study.

Results: The data analysis revealed that the Latina group was significantly associated with PPD under one analysis, but under a more powerful analysis the Latina group was insignificantly

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associated with PPD. When combining the three variables education, age, and Latina, the model is significant with a p-value of .047; however the r-value was very small and education was the only contributing factor to the model. At this time there is not enough data on marital status and income.

Conclusion: All women should be screened for PPD as part of standard healthcare because there is no difference in levels of PPD across all variables analyzed. However, in the future it would be beneficial to recruit women specifically to examine the relationship between psychological stress, demographic variables that may cause higher daily stress levels and PPD.

Farrah Desrosiers

Major: Sociology

Faculty: Michael Malec, Associate Professor in Sociology

Title: A Content Analysis of Beauty: a pilot study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the contemporary standards of beauty of African American and European American women, as depicted in the "beauty magazine" industry. Using one of the oldest mainstream women's magazines from each sub-culture, Ebony and Cosmopolitan, this study examines the shifts in images of beauty from 1955 until 2005. The author employed qualitative content analysis to evaluate the advertisements based on skin tone, broadness of nose, hair length, hair texture, body image, and product categories.

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Grace Festin

Major: Chemistry

Faculty: Steven Bruner, Assistant Professor in Chemistry

Title: Synthesizing B-fluro Tyrosine

The novel tyrosine aminomutase SgcC4 is an enzyme utilized in the biosynthesis of the anticancer antibiotic C-1027. The enzyme catalyzes the complex conversion of tyrosine in to S-(β) tyrosine and is currently the only known aminomutase that contains a 4-methylideneimidazole-5-one cofactor. In order to elucidate the mechanism of the S-(β) tyrosine formation by SgcC4, we plan to synthesize a number of inhibitors that will bind to the active site of the enzyme. Furthermore, the potency of the inhibitors will be evaluated using kinetic assays developed in our laboratory. Two of these inhibitors are (3*R*)-fluorotyrosine and (3*S*)-fluorotyrosine. In this paper, we will describe our progress towards the synthesis of these two novel molecules.

Kojo Gyasi

Major: Economics

Faculty: Robert Murphy, Associate Professor in Economics

Title: The Global Poverty Crisis: Does Better Governance Attract Official Development Assistance?

This paper investigates the relationship between the governance of the world's impoverished nations and the amount of development aid they receive. In particular, I seek to discover whether more development aid is directed toward

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countries with good governance compared to those with poor governance. Many economists have argued that development aid is more likely to augment economic growth and decrease poverty in countries with good governance. My analysis builds upon Steven Radelet's "Aid Effectiveness and the Millennium Development Goals" (2004). Using 1996 and 2002 data, Radelet compares governance and aid distribution receipts, looks for shifts between the two periods, and uses an increasing exponential decay econometric model to control for any effects national income may have on governance. I update his data and replicate his analysis for several additional years from 1996 to 2004. I find that the relationship Radelet established between national income and governance prevailed throughout this eight-year period. In addition, my results agree with his conclusion that in recent years aid has been directed toward countries with good governance. I perform simple linear regressions of development aid per capita on governance (after controlling for differences in national income). I find a positive but statistically insignificant relationship between 1996 and 2002, with the relationship becoming statistically significant in 2004. This suggests that donors are beginning to direct more development aid to good policy environments.

Richard Paul

Major: Geology/Geo-Physics

Mentor: Rudolph Hon, Associate Professor in Geology & Geo-Physics

Title: Water Quality at the Cambridge, Massachusetts, Drinking-Water System

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This research endeavor aims at studying the variations in the water quality parameters in the Cambridge drinking-water reservoir system in Massachusetts. The Cambridge drinking-water supply system, noted for its elevated chloride concentrations in the distributed residential water, consists of 2 reservoirs located in the close proximity of Rt.128, an area strongly influenced by salt bearing highway runoffs particularly in the winter season. Hobbs Brook and Stony Brook Reservoirs are storage reservoirs from which water is then pumped to Fresh Pond for water treatment and distribution into the public water supply network. The heavily developed area of the drainage basins that contributes water to these reservoirs contains major highways, secondary roads, and areas of residential, commercial, and industrial land use that adversely affects the water quality. This project evaluates the impact of sodium chloride (NaCl) enriched road salts on water quality of the Cambridge, Massachusetts, drinking-water supply system and places particular emphasis on the real-time acquisition of specific conductance data, which directly relate to chloride (Cl^{-1}) concentrations, over the course of the last three years of water quality monitoring.

Iris Tavarez

Major: Sociology

Mentor: Eve Spangler, Associate Professor in Sociology

Title: Success Stories: Ten Latina Students Identify the Factors that Influence Their Decision to Attend College

The purpose of this study is to identify some of the key factors that influence Latina student's decision to attend college. The

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subjects of this study are the success stories of ten Latina students from Lawrence, Massachusetts. A qualitative approach was employed using an interview format. The focus of the study is on the responses of the participants that were collected through interviews. The following questions are addressed: 1. What are the similar themes from the stories of successful college-bound Latinas? 2. What are the similar themes from the stories of successful Latinas currently enrolled in college? 3. What are the factors present in the success stories of the Latina students? 4. What can the city of Lawrence do to encourage more students of Hispanic descent to further their education?

Parental, school, and friend support were a major factor along with being a role model to younger siblings, and being the first one to go to college from their immediate family. The Latina's own perspective about their academic success gives this study a window into the factors the participants recognize as being helpful in their success.

Morgan Wilson

Major: History/Romance Languages

Mentor: Davarian Baldwin, Associate Professor in History

Title: "The Negro Became A World Problem": Imagined Communities, Black Worldliness, The 1945 Moment

Focusing on the WWII moment, between the years of 1935-1950 specifically, my research examines the formation of a "Black imagined community." Within the specific wartime experience, African Americans envisioned themselves as part of a larger global network of belonging, what author Benedict

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Anderson termed, “imagined communities.” What has been called the “1945 moment,” brought many groups together around the clarion call of anti-fascism, which became a transnational organizing framework that was translated most prominently in the U.S. through the “Double V campaign”—victory for democracy abroad and at home. What appeared to be isolated and nationally specific realities of oppression, racism, and non-citizenship were magnified and exposed, within the globalizing circuits of World War II, as shared experiences among globally oppressed minority communities. Therefore, this wartime climate and the contradictions of spreading democracy abroad without democracy at home became the ground on which a black “imagined community” was forged. When placed at the center of Euro-American notions of “democracy”, “citizenship”, and “nationalism”, Black Imagined Communities not only critique the meaning ascribed to these words, but offer an alternative blueprint for organizing global social relations. This powerful and provocative black imagined community of the past can serve as an archive for building a more humane “globalization” in the present.

Within the burgeoning scholarships on Black/Third World internationalisms, much of the literature examines the emergence of such a framework from the perspective of foreign policy and military records, documents from established political organizations or the recorded thoughts of intellectuals. However, this approach leaves unexamined layers of experience where “everyday people” equally built and bolstered black imagined communities as soldiers, journalists, artists and as simply part of the rank and file of a growing black working class. This project seeks to get at this

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experience—black imagined communities “from way way below”—AND PLACE IT IN CONVERSATION WITH EXISTING ANALYTIC APPROACHES by using a cultural historical analysis of the period. I will be pulling from cultural artifacts such as: newspapers, novels, poetry, letters and music to OFFER A MORE COMPREHENSIVE UNDERSTANDING OF the political, social and economic factors that helped black people imagine themselves within a national and international framework of belonging and dissent.