

# SOCA Undergraduate Symposium

Spring 2021



## SOciology, Criminology and Anthropology Undergraduate Conference

April 24, 2021

11AM - Virtual Symposium Opens

1PM – 4PM

Synchronous Q&A

Presentations available through May 15, 2021



West Virginia University

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

**SOCA Undergraduate Symposium 2021**  
*Department of Sociology and Anthropology*  
*West Virginia University*

**WELCOME**

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology would like to invite you to the First Annual SOCA Undergraduate Symposium. This event celebrates research and other academic works by students majoring in one of our three undergraduate programs: **S**Ociology, **C**riminology, and **A**nthropology.

This is a virtual event. Students will present posters and papers via asynchronous videos. Student presentations will be made available on our [website](#) at 11:00 AM on Saturday, April 24 and will be available afterwards for a minimum of three weeks. All are welcome to “attend” this event by viewing presentation videos, asking questions, and commenting: parents, friends, faculty, fellow students, and members of the public.

**SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE**

*Saturday, April 24, 2021*

11AM          Symposium Opens and presentations are available

1PM – 4PM    Synchronous Commenting

Presenters will monitor and respond to questions and comments posted under their video presentations in real-time.

We encourage viewers to post questions and comments using their WVU MIX account. Audience members can log into YouTube using their MIX account by using their @mix.wvu.edu email address.

*April 58 – May 17*

The symposium will continue asynchronously through May 18. Presenters will be encouraged to keep an eye on the comments following their presentation video, but we cannot guarantee responses to questions or comments made after 4PM on April 24.

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**Presentation 1**

COVID-19 Social Problems in Contemporary America

**Nicholas Miller**  
*Sociology*

**ABSTRACT**

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the world in a variety of ways. Our society and the world have placed significant focus on the number of positive cases, hospitalizations, deaths, and number of individuals vaccinated. This data does not adequately encompass the ways in which the pandemic has impacted individuals of varying class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality differently. Many of the factors that have affected people need examination through a sociological lens. A variety of social problems related to inequality have been created and/or exacerbated by COVID-19. There are many social determinants of health that contribute to an individual's ability to respond to the pandemic. This research aims to identify the ways in which an individual's socioeconomic status, sector of work, access to healthcare, and educational level has resulted in differing experiences regarding COVID-19.

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**Presentation 2**

Plea Bargaining in the Criminal Justice System

**Noah Adams**  
*Criminology*

**ABSTRACT**

This poster presentation is about the mechanism Plea Bargaining and how it is instilled in our society. Plea bargains have both positive and negative effects just like anything else in society. There are a number of advantages such as the certainty for conviction, it is a good negotiating tool in pre-trial scenarios, and plea bargains free up resources for local communities. A few disadvantages of the plea bargain process are that federal level imprisonment around the U.S. is booming, pleading eliminates the right to have a trial by jury, it eliminates the chance for an appeal and it leaves discretion completely to the judge and prosecution, which creates room for corruption.

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**Presentation 3**

Police Discretion and Maintaining Order

**Taylor Beasley**  
*Criminology*

**ABSTRACT**

This research focuses on police use of discretion and the way it contributes to maintaining order in society. I will be discussing the process of discretion itself, the consequences and disorder that can occur from a lack of discretion, the ways this disorder is affected by higher versus lower levels of police discretion, and the conditions necessary for effective use of discretion.

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**Presentation 4**

CORRECTIONS: Rehabilitation, Recidivism, Reform and Everything in Between

**Drew Dale**  
*Criminology*

**ABSTRACT**

In my poster and paper, I will be diving into the ideology of corrections and what exactly these facilities do in order to provide their inmates with means of rehabilitation and reform and preventing them from reoffending. Moving along with this, I will be providing statistics of information regarding this and recidivism, focusing on why inmates may reoffend after being released. Focusing in on why this occurs, and also how exactly correctional facilities can better their systems in aiding and assisting their inmates with proper means of rehabilitation, rather than straying away from the actual purpose of reforming them upon their release or even just in general. All in all, my main focus for this paper and poster is explain and introduce the history and purposes of corrections and correctional facilities, along with how they can and should use their systems to benefit the outcomes and futures of their inmates, and also what everything within corrections entails.



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**Presentation 5**

Overcrowding in Prisons

**Jeffrey DiGuiseppe**  
*Criminology*

**ABSTRACT**

Poor conditions in prisons are an extreme problem. Overcrowding causes many of these poor conditions. In the United States in 1980 there were 24,640 incarcerated inmates in federal prisons. It has rose tremendously to 155,562 incarcerated inmates in 2020. In 2018, from the Bureau of Justice statistics, the design capacity in a prison was for 12,412 inmates. The operational Capacity, however, was much higher at 22,231 inmates. Prisons are built for a certain number of inmates but when it exceeds that it is considered crowded. With this being a problem that you see in the United States, it is much more common around the world. Almost 70 percent of prisons are overcrowded around the world. Being overcrowded, means closer living conditions. A study of the Texas state prison system shows that due to the current COVID-19 pandemic the inmates there have four times more of a chance contracting the virus than the general public due to the close living conditions.

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**Presentation 6**

How the Insanity Plea Shapes Criminal Prosecution

**Kailey Fenning**  
*Criminology*

**ABSTRACT**

The insanity defense is one of the most widely studied tool in the criminal justice system. From its history to its current form, the use and implication of its defense have tested how the court responds to this plea. In this paper, I will be examining all of the processes of this plea, ranging from the legal tests used to the psychological aspects, and argue how this plea is overused and only sets a defendant up for a guilty plea. Using case studies and psychiatric reviews, I have gathered enough data to prove that there needs to be reform in how the courts decide on these cases because of its use to shape guilty prosecutions.

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**Presentation 7**

Community Policing in America

**Cody Fiscus**

*Criminology*

**ABSTRACT**

Community policing is a key aspect to any police department, in fact it is essential and necessary for police to engage in their communities in a positive light, as to minimize the disassociation that a department can have with its community and vice versa. A community needs to and must be able to entrust its local police, many communities in rural and small towns across America do, however the same cannot be said for larger and urban environments such as cities. This paper will examine the crux of community policing, outreach programs, partnering with local businesses, shared problem solving, etc. Police must interact with communities in order to upkeep the relationship, communication is key. The standard of community policing must be the same throughout the country. Communities must hold police accountable as well as police must hold themselves accountable. Police should undergo more training for things such as mental health, communication, and de-escalation tactics, Mechanisms such as coupling and default to truth theory present in Gladwell's "Talking to Strangers". Mechanisms such Police accountability and oversight is important as ever in the current state of policing.

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**Presentation 8**

Sexual Assault Cases in the Criminal Justice System

**Kassidee Forinash**  
*Criminology*

**ABSTRACT**

Sexual assault cases are highly underreported in the criminal justice system. How can we improve the rates of reporting? Could there be any way that the criminal justice system, police, and investigators can make the process more \*soft for the victim to feel more comfortable, more safe? How can we improve victim-blaming in society and in the CJ system?

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**Presentation 9**

Types of Emotional Testing for Police Recruits

**Morgan Fox**  
*Criminology*

**ABSTRACT**

Discrimination is something we are familiar with in the 21st century. As a mechanism of the criminal justice system, discrimination can be detrimental to any aspect of our lives. Whether we are directly affected or not, this mechanism can cause for many problems and alterations to our expectations. One expectation we should not have to stretch is that actors of the criminal justice system will protect us at all costs. This expectation is carried out through formal mechanisms such as police officers. However, because of the current social climate we have all lost some faith in this system. I am researching how the training and testing of officers is done because of the large increase in discrimination and misuse of discretion that has been happening. Because of these cases the public has been debating the allocation of funds that our officers receive. Where do I think these resources should go? They should be put into the mental and emotional testing done on police recruits. Testing our police recruits to the fullest extent before hiring them is one of the best ways to ensure they will perform to the best and most responsible of their abilities. In this paper I will discuss the current process of police recruitment testing, possible changes to be made, and why I believe this is crucial to fixing the issue of discrimination in America.

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**Presentation 10**

Mass Incarceration Causes Inequality

**Frederick Mantsch**  
*Criminology*

**ABSTRACT**

When thinking about what to write my term paper on I thought how something that really interest me and this is mass incarceration we have here in the United States. Not only does mass incarceration cause different inequalities such as economic, social, and racial inequality, but with mass incarceration we have way to many people being incarcerated. Not only does it cause all this, but mechanisms such as default to the truth play into the problem of people that have been incarceration. With being incarcerated it makes it very difficult for people to find jobs which puts them into a social inequality group because they are labeled as a felon and that also goes into economic inequality because they are not able to get a good paying job because they are labeled as a felon.

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**Presentation 11**

Plea Bargaining and Race in the Criminal Justice System

**Briason Mays**  
*Criminology*

**ABSTRACT**

Why is it fair that most times, bigger crime figures sometimes get off easier than smaller ones? And why do minorities almost never get the same leniency that white males do? These are all questions I intend to answer in my paper. In conducting my research on the criminal justice system, I have concluded that plea bargaining, like most processes, is not atomic in its decision making. I have made this decision because of the evident statistics and blatant prejudice that runs rampant in the criminal justice system. Statistics like African American males are given pleas in almost half of the minority involved defendants, compared to whites (Kellough, G., & Wortley, S. 2002). This mass sentencing leads to mass incarceration, a problem that has cost the U.S. millions of dollars, not to mention not proved to be an effective method of detainment.

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**Presentation 12**

Manipulative Interrogation in U.S. Criminal Justice System

**Kadyrose Newman**  
*Criminology*

**ABSTRACT**

I am interested in the ways in which false confessions are produced through manipulative interrogation tactics. In the criminal justice system, there is nothing more valuable than a confession. Civilians rely on laws such as Miranda and the integrity of the police to prevent maltreatment, and yet, it still occurs. Twenty-five percent of overturned wrongful convictions involve a false confession, and the Reid Technique can be found at partial blame. (California Innocence Project, 2019). This psychologically manipulative version of third-degree tactics has trained the majority of criminal justice personnel in the United States on the intricacies of interrogation. This technique underwent severe scrutiny for its ability to generate false confessions and has been subjected to improvement since this discovery. In this project, I will examine how manipulative interrogation tactics, such as the Reid Technique, is a process that engenders false confessions in relationship to its reformed model.



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**Presentation 13**

The Fifth Amendment and the Right to Remain Silent

**Jared Rapoport**  
*Criminology*

**ABSTRACT**

The fifth amendment and its right to remain silent is a deeply flawed part of the constitution in the U.S. criminal justice system. The right to remain silent is both a blessing and a curse and often times the fate of the user is determined by several factors. These factors include race, attitudes, motives, and the court system. There are many supreme court cases that have involved the right to remain silent, to name a few; *Bram v. United States*, *Salinas v. Texas*, *Malloy v. Hogan*, and *Spevack v. Klein*. In some cases, the Supreme Court held firm in their decisions of earlier court cases, while in others they paved a way to a new future of fifth amendment interpretation. My paper is all about how the fifth amendment and its right to remain silent protects and harms the accused. It is a very important constitution and its consequences are involved pre-arrest, post-arrest, pre-trial and during a trial. The fifth amendment is interpreted differently by certain circuit courts, state laws, and judges which is why it is such a blessing and a curse. New Jersey law does not require suspects to invoke their right to silence clearly and in the 1st, 6th, 7th, and 10th circuit courts, substantive use of pre-arrest silence is prohibited. Lastly, with a conservative shift in fifth amendment interpretation, staying mute when questioned is now evidence of supposed guilt.

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**Presentation 14**

Mental Health and Mental Illness as Mechanisms in the Criminal Justice System

**Samantha Sharp**  
*Criminology*

**ABSTRACT**

The death penalty is a product of unfulfilled justice and punishment. In this paper, I will examine death sentences carried out on mentally ill defendants to demonstrate that mental health and mental illness as a mechanism in the Criminal Justice System. Why do courts sometimes disregard the mental health of a defendant? Why don't the courts always take the mental health of the defendant into account during sentencing? Should people with a mental illness be sentenced to death? We see evidence of this when we examine different cases in which the courts have disregarded Mens Rea, and mentally ill defendants have been executed. According to the doctrine of Mens Rea, mental health and mental illness should shape criminal processing. The importance of addressing this issue is also discussed.

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**Presentation 15**

The CSI Effect and How it Has Affected the Administration of Justice:  
Jury Expectations

**Fiona Taylor**  
*Criminology*

**ABSTRACT**

An unbiased jury is imperative to every court case; civil, criminal, or otherwise. Due to the mass influence of police dramas and hospital soap operas, the public perception of how forensic science works is different than reality. These police procedurals distort what actually happens within a criminal investigation and case disposition. This leads to jurors having unrealistic expectations within the courtroom. These expectations lead to outcomes that can be difficult to overcome within the criminal justice system. One of the mechanisms that has been disrupted by the CSI Effect is the proper administration of justice. The perception of the jury can affect how well the prosecution and the defense deliver their arguments. It also affects how well the judge can do their job and administer justice appropriately. By gathering literary evidence, one can understand how prominent the bias is within the courtroom, and how it can affect the courtroom process. This is also not a problem that is strictly U.S. based, international studies show their difficulty with the CSI Effect on their jurors. The CSI effect has caused immense damage to the administration of justice, as it is now impossible to have an unbiased jury.

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**Presentation 16**

The Race on Death Row

**Malik Thornton**  
*Criminology*

**ABSTRACT**

I am interested in the racial imbalance that occurs within the U.S. Criminal Justice system regarding the death penalty. The criminal justice system is not race neutral as race mediates the Criminal Justice process at every phase. Data on capital punishment really helps make this visible, as we constantly notice this when we examine statistics and rates of punishment by race. Particularly, African American's have the highest rates of victimization throughout the prisons and being sentenced to death. In this paper, I will focus and discuss the racial imbalance that appears in our Criminal Justice system for the death penalty as a mechanism.

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**Presentation 17**

Policing methods effects on the community

**Christopher Wolfe**  
*Criminology*

**ABSTRACT**

This study has the potential to provide information and statistics to how police using policing methods they learned in training, to patrol the community but also show how their methods affect the community. This study provides information about a particular policing method called force. There are five steps of force and they are used by the police to enforce the laws of the community. In this study, I will use a case study method to show examples of past cases to show how force affects the community. In this study I will demonstrate how using force has a mechanism that affects the community positively and negatively.

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**Presentation 18**

The Peculiar Positioning of African American Identity:  
A Comprehensive Examination of Identity and Ancestry

**Amiri Bartley**  
*Anthropology*

**ABSTRACT**

This paper examines how African Americans exemplify concepts of double consciousness, liminality, and racial construction while taking ancestry DNA tests along with the transformative effects those tests have on the formation of identity amongst African Americans. It includes the results of extensive interviews with celebrity African Americans guests, who have taken DNA tests, from the show Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates, Jr. By utilizing a data-driven coding method, the initial visual and verbal responses of the guests were analyzed and then grouped by the emerging themes that began to present themselves within the data. The research shows that the African Americans guests conclude these segments with various interpretations of self and identity. Some described experiencing fulfillment while others gained a sense of belonging. I revisit the aforementioned concepts, revealing the latent motivations African Americans have for taking such lengths to discover who they are.

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**Presentation 19**

Culture on the Line: Labor and Hegemony in Eastern Appalachia

**Adam Benjamin**  
*Anthropology*

**ABSTRACT**

In Moorefield, West Virginia, the Pilgrim's Pride plant has consolidated the existing poultry industry to a formidable, vertically integrated, industrial complex. Employing many foreign-born refugee workers alongside regional and local workers with little options, the plant has crafted a high degree of local hegemony. Asking how industry maintains hegemony in company towns, in this study I explored the ways in which Pilgrim's Pride has built this hegemony and the cracks that emerge from it. Using informant interviews, archival sources, direct observation, and Facebook data, I looked into the intricacies of the processes at work. Ultimately, I argue that this control was built through the socio-cultural hegemony on the outside of the factory, via the re-construction of race and industry consolidation, and labor discipline and de-skilling on the inside. While specific in case study, this is the story of an Appalachia very much in the 21st Century.

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**Presentation 20**

Exploring Lemur Memory: Examining Eulemur mongoz (mongoose lemurs) and Lemur catta's (ring-tailed lemurs) Memory Through a Novel Enrichment Item

**Talia Buchman**  
*Anthropology*

**ABSTRACT**

Millions of years divide strepsirrhine evolution from that of anatomically modern humans. Researchers' fascination with understanding humans and their closest nonhuman primate relatives, creates a lack of thorough research completed on the cognition of early primates, such as lemurs. This study sought to investigate the memory of three lemurs living in a zoo facility, two mongoose lemurs and one ring-tailed lemur, using a self-designed enrichment item. Enrichment items are included in zoo exhibits to add variation to the nonhuman animal's lives through stimulation of their senses and natural behaviors. My enrichment item targeted the lemurs' foraging behavior by covering a favored fruit with moveable discs. Four experiments were conducted between the lemurs and the novel enrichment item to determine if they 1) interacted with the device 2) were able to retrieve the concealed food and 3) remembered the item during subsequent interactions. Through an analysis of the four experiments, the lemurs demonstrated clear signs of short-term and long-term memory through their increased ease in retrieving the fruit from the device. These results support the conclusion that lemurs have working memory, which can be exercised and researched through enrichment activities in zoo facilities.



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**Presentation 21**

“You call this archaeology?” How popular misrepresentations may influence site discovery and preservation

**Daniel D. Dillon**  
*Anthropology*

**ABSTRACT**

From Indiana Jones to Tomb Raider, archaeologists have tended to be portrayed as adventurous and wild grave robbers that hunt for secret treasures and mysterious artifacts. These long-standing icons have undoubtedly influenced public perception and can impact how archaeology is thought of and, by extension, how sites are discovered or preserved. The aim of this research was to evaluate what archaeology is and is not, and to point out the connections between public perceptions and pop culture imagery. Survey methodology along with literature and media reviews were conducted to supplement information regarding misrepresentations, to aid with interpretations of how the practice is thought of, and to highlight how sites may be overlooked, or even destroyed, due to opinions about what archaeology is. The results indicate that the public continues to misunderstand the discipline and makes associations based on media consumption. Further research can build off of this and work to increase public knowledge of the field to correct such enduring problems. What is ultimately found is that no, Professor Henry Jones, this is not what we call archaeology.

## **Presentation 22**

### Exploring Identity and Connection Through Role-Playing Games

**Kylie Macchia**

*Anthropology*

#### **ABSTRACT**

The concept of “identity” is very dynamic as it is not a natural characteristic that is biologically decided — rather, it is something that is culturally constructed and defined. Though identity has been thoroughly analyzed in the contexts of race, gender, class, sexuality, etc., other lenses, such as games, have not been used as thoughtfully. This study aims to explore the relationship between role-playing games and the people who play them in order to understand how one’s identity is crafted using this medium and how RPGs impact their ability and motivation to form connections. Existing literature was examined in order to discern the current understanding of these topics and provide a framework for original research, and interview volunteers were given a set of questions to respond to verbally or in writing. Responses were analyzed to identify themes relating to identity, connection and bonding within groups, and initiative for playing RPGs. The results showed that most respondents found it easier and more enjoyable to role-play a character that had traits similar to their own personality but blown to more epic proportions, and that they mainly used RPGs for escapism and social connection. These results suggest that players enjoy RPGs that grant the opportunity to embody an extraordinary persona that resembles an idealized self. It is also demonstrated that these identities allow them to escape from reality while creating stories and making connections on their own terms.

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**Presentation 23**

When Did the View on Fur Switch from Status to Stigma?

**Abigail McCardel**  
*Anthropology*

**ABSTRACT**

Clothing made from animal fur has historically served as a status symbol in several cultures all over the world. As early as the 11th century, fur was no longer being worn for warmth and began to make its transition over to become a symbol of capital and social status amongst the wealthy. Fast forward to recent years, the use of fur is now considered excessive. Many alternatives are being offered and the animal activism groups work around the clock to provide information to the public regarding the horrible processes in the fur trade. This research aims to discover the exact timeframe that affected the view of fur in a fashion setting. After a significant historical literature review, I evaluated my research. The results showed that both animal activism and production costs are what untimely led to the downfall of fur fashion as we know it today.

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**Presentation 24**

Why Did Neanderthals Go Extinct?

**Haley Mullins**  
*Anthropology*

**ABSTRACT**

This poster seeks to understand how Neanderthals went extinct, mainly by examining their relationship with early homo sapiens, environmental factors and resource management, and if the use of the word “extinct” is a valid choice in this context. I'm answering this question via a critical lit review, where I have analyzed various academic articles and research papers from the 1980 into 2021. In order to illustrate the expansive range of theories and changing perspectives as development of new findings and genetic testing come into play. The evolving theories have shown that Neanderthals did not simply die out. A moderate population of Neanderthals interbreed with early humans, some migrated to much further corners of the globe where they lived out their days and solitude, and others disappeared due to changing climate and resource competition.

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**Presentation 25**

Color Coding Classification in Counterculture Communities

**Keen Owen**  
*Anthropology*

**ABSTRACT**

Fashion has been used to reflect the life of the person who wears them since the beginning of time, whether that be by showing distinctions of class and culture. One of the most historic ways of distinction between groups has been color. Groups, such as the Punks and members of the LGBTQ+ community, have been using color coding practices as a language with messages seen through the “flagging” of different colors. For the Punk Community, this coding is called Lace Laws and for the LGBTQ+ Community this coding is known as Hanky Code. The practice were quite popular during the 1970s and throughout the 80s and 90s but seem to have loss popularity in the past decades. The purpose of this study is to discuss whether or not these practices are “dead” through a series of interviews and an examination of social media forums focused on these debates.

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**Presentation 26**

Why aren't we all ultramarathoners?: Tying evolutionary data to modern cultural and social practices about endurance running

**Gretchen Pifer**  
*Anthropology*

**ABSTRACT**

Endurance Running (ER) is a practice shrouded in myth and misconception. Previous research has shown that the anatomy of the foot, breathing ratio, and skeletal system of humans all lend themselves to endurance running. This study aims to identify the reasons that most humans do not practice endurance running, despite their proven evolutionary running abilities. A critical literature review was conducted, along with a survey which was distributed to both runners and non-runners to investigate their beliefs and conceptions regarding distance running. The results of the literature review and survey showed that discrimination and lack of access due to class and race, the incompatibility of modern running gear with natural running anatomy, and strong misconceptions about the sport were the main factors preventing people from practicing it. Building off of this research, a concerted effort should be made to create more inclusive running communities, change running shoe designs to enhance the foot's natural haptic feedback and discredit the popularly misheld ideas regarding endurance running.

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**Presentation 27**

Forensic Anthropology in Contexts of Human Rights Violations and Mass Violence:  
An examination of the ethical, political, and methodological considerations

**Paige Schmitt**  
*Anthropology*

**ABSTRACT**

Forensic anthropology is most employed in localized criminal cases or investigations; however, it is also involved in the investigation of human rights violations and mass violence. The involvement of forensic anthropologists in international cases of human rights violations and mass violence has increased significantly in recent years; yet, there is no generalized guideline as to how these investigations differ from regular casework. Forensic anthropologists typically enter these contexts without any previous experience or notion of what specifically to be prepared for. Through a critical literature review, this study aims to establish what ethical, political, and methodological considerations forensic anthropologists must make and/or be aware of when working in these contexts. While no two investigations are ever going to be the same, the literature, case studies and review articles alike, established that there are some general consensuses and points that are reiterated repeatedly. How forensic anthropologists conduct work in contexts of human rights violations and mass violence is undeniably different from how work is conducted in regular casework.

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**Presentation 28**

The Physical Fit Analysis of Duct Tapes and its Relevance to Forensic Anthropology

**Paige Schmitt**  
*Anthropology*

**ABSTRACT**

Physical fit analysis is a common occurrence in the trace evidence discipline of forensic science. It can involve materials such as tapes, glass, plastics, textiles, and other polymers. A physical match can demonstrate that at one time two (or more) objects were one single object. This is important for reassociation and identification. While physical fit analyses play a prominent role, there is still a general lack of standardized procedures that are followed across different departments or laboratories. By developing and following a standard order of procedure for duct tape physical fit analysis and implementing it for various sample sets of different fracture mechanisms and material quality, we can demonstrate the validity and reliability of physical fit determinations. The basic principles of this type of analysis are also applicable in the field of forensic anthropology. This connection was explored through a critical literature review and it was concluded that physical fit analysis is a crucial aspect of skeletal analysis and can aid in the determination of a biological profile, minimum number of individuals, and allow for more complete trauma analysis and other metric analyses.



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**Presentation 29**

The Mobile Phone, changing our behaviors and socialization

**Keilee Smith**  
*Anthropology*

**ABSTRACT**

The main point of this research is to understand awareness of the object relationship between the mobile phone and how it affects our social behavior. My methods were conducted in two sets of personal interviews and a week duration in between each interview data set. The purpose was to recognize cognitive behavior change within the object relationship. The results concluded that the object relationship was relevant for socialization and changed individual behavior. Individuals are affected by how they use their phone and the day to day tasks the object demands. The point is to understand how the mobile phone changes our social behavior and the way we view ourselves in society.

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**Presentation 30**

Unequal Participation of Women in United States Politics

**Olivia Sokos**  
*Anthropology*

**ABSTRACT**

United States politics largely lack the participation of women. This lack of participation has been trending consistently downwards even though more and more women find themselves in professional careers. The purpose of this research project was to discover why it is that women do not participate at the same rates as men in politics but to do so within a cultural framework. I arrived at my conclusion through an extensive literature review and the conduction of four, in depth, semi-structured interviews. What I discovered is that most of the discrepancy can be attributed to gender roles that exist in the United States that are reinforced by the media. The media influences the way people view themselves as well as how they view other people. The media in the United States hyper masculinizes politics and portrays it indirectly as a place for men, and simultaneously hyper sexualizes women and drives down their self-confidence or desire to participate because of the criticism they face not based on their intellect but on their physical appearance.

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**Presentation 31**

How Distance Affects Funerary Culture and Values in 19th Century Virginia:  
A Comparison Study

**Fiona Taylor**  
*Anthropology*

**ABSTRACT**

I am studying the comparison of early 19th Century cemeteries, because I want to find out how the distance between Hamilton and Richmond affects the common cultural practices, so that I can help others understand the significance that distance had on the changes that were made between dated urban and rural cities. By using public resources and photography, I have comprised a data set that illustrates the similarities and differences between two comparison cemeteries. My research comes from the local cemetery in Hamilton, Virginia and the Shockoe Hill Cemetery in Richmond, Virginia. The iconography of the two cemeteries have common themes with a few exceptions; however, the epitaphs are different between the two, but each one has a similar theme within the respective cemeteries as well. In brief, the stone materials vary between the cemeteries, as well as the typology of headstones versus monuments. Both of the comparative cemeteries have a theme with the iconographies and the epitaphs but use different stone materials and shapes. In future, researching newspaper obituaries from the area should help to shed more insight on the familial and religious values of 1800s Virginia.



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