

2019 Belmont Undergraduate Research Symposium

Bell Core

Moderator: Virginia Christy Lamothe, Ph.D.

April 11, 2019, 3:30-4:30 p.m.
Massey, 210

3:30 – 4:00 pm

The Consequences of Social Media for Teenagers

Erin Eversole

Faculty Advisor: Virginia Christy Lamothe, Ph.D.

This paper explores the risks of social media exposure on teenagers. In the past twenty years the internet has drastically changed how people interact. The amount of time that youth are spending online is increasing, and this time is not completely composed of positive interactions. Excessive social media use can increase the likelihood of depression, body-image issues, and cyberbullying in teens. Social media platforms have created a new outlet for people to express themselves, but it has also created new opportunities for social comparison. Young students seek to conform and be accepted by others. The opinions of others matter a great deal when they are forming their ideas of their place in the world. Due to their developing maturity, teenagers are not always able to regulate their usage; social media is a potential threat that is constantly available and accessible. In today's society, the negative consequences of social media are a growing concern, and we are just beginning to see the effects.

This paper examines multiple studies and articles to support the argument that increased time on social media can have dangerous consequences. Audiences will be introduced to information about how the development of a personal identity can be impacted by the use of social media platforms. The goal of this paper was not to completely eradicate social media use in teenagers, but to encourage caution of unintended consequences that are becoming increasingly present.

4:00-4:30 pm

The Power of Belief

Maggie Youngs

Faculty Advisor: Virginia Christy Lamothe, Ph. D.

Believe: This word is commonly thrown around in everyday language. One might believe in love. One might believe the best of people. One might believe in God. In some ways, the word believe is used lightly, but the word itself holds much weight. We see the word on bumper stickers and billboards across the nation, but the problem is not that we don't believe. Instead, it is that we do not truly know what we believe. It is important to acknowledge what we believe so that we can further form and be formed by our beliefs. However, acknowledging our beliefs is difficult because it requires overcoming obstacles of fear and pride. People can know they are

encountering these obstacles when they openly dismiss truth even in the face of countering evidence. Furthermore, the perception and reality of our beliefs are often not aligned. We may claim to believe one thing, but our actions say differently. This arises a problem because beliefs are the driving force of our actions and ultimately our lives. Thus, after acknowledging one's current beliefs lies an opportunity to change them. Both psychologists such as James Williams and philosophers such as Plato, Lee McIntyre, and David Dark alike have studied the importance and impact of beliefs, acknowledging that they have the power to drive us to success or destruction. The questions of beliefs are ones that are hard to ask. Nonetheless, they are questions worth asking. What do you believe?