

2019 Belmont University Research Symposium

**Belmont Honors Program I:
Music, Cultural Theory, and Philosophy Research**

Moderator: Dr. Jonathan Thorndike

**April 11, 2019
3:30pm-5:00pm
MBC 209A**

3:30pm-3:45pm

The Successes of *Sesame Street* and Adaptations for the Future

Hillary Talken

Faculty Adviser: Dr. Lesley Mann

Sesame Street has been on the air for over fifty years with a mission of preparing children for elementary school. This paper gives a historical background to their successes, outlining their beginnings and the process behind creating such a successful program. The paper also applies Howard Gardner's *Theory of Multiple Intelligences* to *Sesame Street* programming, showing how the interdisciplinary nature of the program allows it to appeal to children across the board. It also provides an analysis of *Sesame Street's* accessibility, educational efficacy and prosocial development of its viewers. Using experimental findings across the fifty years of programming, the paper concludes that *Sesame Street* has effectively prepared children for elementary school. However, in order to have fifty more years of success, changes must be made. In the last chapter, the paper discusses possible adaptations Sesame Workshop could make in order to continue their successes. This includes expanding outreach to local libraries and fighting against the "binge-watching" culture.

3:45pm-4:00pm

The Relationship between Music, Youth Culture, and Political Activism during the 1960s in the United States

Rachel Kirsch

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Ken Spring

The 1960s stand out from the rest of the twentieth century as a vibrant decade full of color, music, and activism. People still look to the Sixties today as an example of music and young people uniting in order to bring about change in the world. But the Sixties required the cooperation between music, youth culture, and the socio-political environment in order to create the memorable decade. Each part both influenced and was influenced by every other part. Music helped young people create a common culture, while the socio-political climate gave young people issues to rally around. The folk and rock music genres were popularized due to the young people, and music increasingly held political themes as political tensions grew. And finally, the political activism that is associated with the Sixties today grew out of young people collectively deciding to express their political opinions, and act of political protest was changed by the

popularization of music festivals. Understanding how each of these parts interacted during the 1960s not only allows us to have a better grasp on the Sixties, but also allows us to have a fundamental understanding of these three elements that can then be applied to other genres of music, other social movements, and other decades.

4:00pm-4:15pm

Music, Mind, and Spirit: Music Therapy and Disorders of Consciousness

Miriam Turner

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Alejandra Ferrer

There exists extensive research which aims to pinpoint the most effective treatment for patients with disorders of consciousness (DOC) – clients in altered states of perception and expression. These studies, however, narrowly define success of treatment as achieving awake states and focus solely on returning the patient back to normal consciousness. This thesis seeks to formulate techniques for the use of music therapy with DOC populations, with the purpose of addressing patients’ spiritual and emotional self-consciousness. It addresses literature that explains how typical western medicine physically and cognitively treats DOC patients; underlines the lack of and the necessity for involving spiritual and emotional support during DOC treatment; and claims that music therapy is the means of doing so. Music therapy offers a tool for restoring the whole person, one that may influence even a DOC patient in a way that that no other stimulus can mirror. It is a resource to care for parts of the human being that are otherwise limited when in altered states of consciousness. The study provides clarity and comprehension to a rapidly-expanding field, with a population as specific and as vulnerable as those without consciousness. It also lends itself to assist in begetting a music therapy training, addressing the spiritual and emotional treatment of DOC patients.

4:15pm-4:30pm

Good Faith in the Age of Osteen

Tommy Kessler

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Mélanie Walton

Joel Osteen is a fixture in contemporary American Christianity because of the ways in which his doctrine helps alleviate many anxieties that Christians face. However, his doctrine ignores the ways in which Christians are responsible for their actions and the way in which Christians have an ethical imperative to respond to human ontological needs. By looking at contemporary existential thought, we can better understand why this omission in Osteen’s doctrine is harmful and why establishing a “good faith” Christian ethics is not only in-line with Jesus’ mission but also helps us authentically live out our Christian obligation in such a way that preserves our responsibility and the productive anxieties that coincide with it.

4:30pm-4:45pm

On ‘Selfing’— Existentialism as a Way of Life

Kevin Kozik

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Ronnie Littlejohn

To “Know thyself,” as the Delphic maxim commands, is to call one’s ‘self’ into question and the history of philosophy is rife with attempts to resolve—or to undermine—this perennial problem. I am—so, what now? What am ‘I’? How do ‘I’ know my-self? Already always in the midst of things, the existence I am experiencing precedes any locating of my-self in the world. In order to reveal the details of my existential condition, I must reflect upon the world and, in so doing, I begin intentionally creating my-self; after all, I cannot put on pause my being-in-the-world in order to sort out the details of my being-in-the-world. As the beliefs that have silently structured my world are revealed in this expanded, reflective awareness, ‘I’ am unveiled as the simultaneous product and producer of my worldview. I am, and ‘I’ am-not-yet. An existential project of self-creation lies before us all; if ‘I’ am to live in the world, then who am ‘I’ to be? Through the philosophies and biographies of Nietzsche, Sartre, and Wittgenstein, I investigate the relationship between worldview and way of life in search of understanding how one becomes one’s ‘self’.

2019 Belmont University Research Symposium

**Belmont Honors Program II LEAD Track:
Community Empowerment and Leadership**

Moderator: Professor Debora Finch

**April 11, 2019
5:30pm-7:15pm
MBC 209A**

5:30pm-5:45pm

Shining a Spotlight on Safe Havens Supporters

Allison Alonzo, AJ Gatrell, and Lucy Sweetall

Faculty Advisor: Professor Debora Finch

In 2018, The Washington Post published a story about a nationwide surge of deaths among homeless people, specifically the homeless population in Nashville, which was estimated to be 200,000 people. Safe Haven Family Shelter believes in more than providing a home, but empowering families to achieve self-sufficiency as well. Safe Haven is the only shelter-to-housing program in Middle Tennessee that accommodates whole families experiencing homelessness. Their biggest fundraising opportunity of the year is Dancing for Safe Haven where local Nashville “celebrities” pair up with professional dancers. Additionally, the event highlights the efforts put forward by the organization and brings recognition to the volunteerism of exceptional people in Nashville with the presentation of the Hero Award. This year, the Hero Award went to BlueSky Filmworks, the production house that produces Dancing with Safe Haven. To keep the award a surprise, a team of LEAD students from the Honors Program shot footage for the interviews used to present the award. This included interviewing the recipient’s spouses, Safe Haven staff members, and the recipients themselves while under the guise of a school project. This footage was also utilized to create brief promotional videos for the organization’s social media pages, emphasizing unique ways to provide one’s skills as a volunteer. Similarly, the LEAD team sought to use their individual skills gained through education at Belmont to help Safe Haven: promotion of the nonprofit’s incredible work and mission through the use of professional video production.

5:45pm-6:00pm

Book Bash: Empowering Young People to Pursue Lifelong Learning

Tiffany Cokkinias, Meredith Edwards, Alex Lachmandas

Faculty Advisor: Professor Debora Finch

One out of eight Nashville residents is unable to read. Furthermore, 34% of third and fourth grade students in Davidson County are not reading at their grade-level, making them four times more likely to drop out of high school. The Boys and Girls Clubs of Middle Tennessee are dedicated after-school youth facilities that promote education, leadership, and citizenship among its members. This organization has a variety of programs for their members promoting volunteer

opportunities, active lifestyles, and career development. However, many clubs lack a literacy program. Because of this, our LEAD team from the Honors Program partnered with the Andrew Jackson Boys and Girls Club to dedicate an event to promote reading among their members. To accomplish this, we enlisted the help of Book'em, a local nonprofit providing books to Nashville's youth. Volunteers were recruited from the Belmont community to read a variety of literature to small groups of elementary school students. By being active in the reading process through activities and group discussions, students will intentionally develop a passion for learning. In addition to small group reading, each child received a book of their choice to take home. This experience acted as a catalyst to inspire a lifelong pursuit of knowledge and love for reading among the students.

6:00pm-6:15pm

Highlighting the Community and Reach of Conexión Américas

Dylan Arndt, Reide Irwin, and Sarah Underwood

Professor Professor Debora Finch

In recent years, Nashville's Latino population has more than doubled as the city welcomes more and more migrants. For this sudden and increasing influx of people who have little to no resources to adjust to a new way of life, Conexión Américas has become an unparalleled source of guidance and help. Conexión Américas is a non-profit organization in Nashville, TN that focuses on helping with the social, economic, and civic integration of the Latino community within the city, while also ministering indiscriminately to the African and middle-eastern migrant populations. Through political advocacy, community outreach, ESL classes, Tennessee Migrant Education Program coordination and more, Conexión provided needed resources for over 8,000 families in 2017 and continues to expand its reach so as to ensure that no family is left behind. To further spread the mission of Conexión, a group of LEAD students from the Honors Program has conducted a series of interviews with the employees at Conexión. These interviews captured the work they do as an organization and provided Conexión Américas with documentary-style video content that will be used for the purpose of increasing their community outreach and creating an awareness of their mission via social media exposure. The videos will also be presented as onboarding material for new hires, shown at fundraising events, and will be featured on Conexión Américas' website. Using the skills developed through Belmont University's Honors program, the LEAD team worked together to meet a need of Conexión Américas that benefits the greater Nashville community.

6:15pm-6:30pm

Science and Self: How STEAM Relates to Everyday Life

Jordan Dunn, Claudia Lawhon, & Ben Weisel

Faculty Advisor: Professor Debora Finch

In the last decade, the importance of STEM education has grown considerably, as tech giants revolutionize industries and legacy companies strive to remain competitive. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects growth rates as high as 28.2 percent for mathematical science occupations between 2014 and 2024. However, according to a Kent State research study, 93 percent of Americans still agree that the Arts are vital to providing a well-rounded education to children. This has led to an integration of arts and sciences, or the movement toward STEAM education.

This ethic of holistic learning is at the heart of the Adventure Science Center's work throughout Nashville. To explore and demonstrate the intersection of science, arts, and daily life, a team of LEAD students from the Honors Program executed a project with the Adventure Science Center (ASC) to teach children about some of the scientific principles that apply to their personal lives and career goals. This was done through three workshops that incorporated athletics, aviation, and arts. From demonstrating principles of density using different sports balls in water to teaching aerodynamics with paper airplanes to connecting the arts through the way music's sound waves travel through matter, each LEAD team member utilized their expertise and experiences to construct a specialized curriculum. The culmination of interests and talents inspired the delivery of hands-on activities that made for a concrete connection between science and self that the children can carry on into their own career paths and the ASC can incorporate into future camps.

6:30pm-6:45pm

Family Literacy Day

Paul Grosser, Andrea Lindsey, and Callie Walters

Faculty Advisor: Professor Debora Finch

By the end of the third grade, children stop learning the basics of how to read and begin using their reading skills to master other subjects. Yet in Nashville, two out of every three children exit third grade off-track in literacy. 66% of fourth graders in Tennessee are below a proficient reading level, a statistic that will impact the rest of their lives. To help begin to bridge the literacy gap in elementary school children, a team of LEAD students from the Honors Program worked with Belmont University to host the annual Family Literacy Day. Family Literacy Day is a program intended to make literacy fun and accessible to children across the Metro-Nashville area. The LEAD team provided all coordination aspects of Family Literacy Day. These duties included communicating with Belmont University students to provide volunteers, games, refreshments, and marketing for the event, providing training for all volunteers, and developing a Family Literacy Day guide for future use in hosting the event. The team sought to use their leadership and advocacy skills developed over the course of the LEAD track to bring a new perspective to the event. In bringing innovation and a spirit of success to Family Literacy Day, the team provided valuable resources to the event and ensured that Nashville children will continue to gain the literacy skills necessary to succeed.

6:45pm-7:00pm

Songwriters, the Music Modernization Act, and Copyright Law Reform

Samantha Ross

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Barry Shrum, Esq.

From vinyl records to cassettes and from CDs to streaming, technology has continually disrupted the music industry business model for decades. As a wider selection of music becomes available to consumers for increasingly smaller payments, concerns inevitably arise regarding the lack of proper compensation to songwriters. A variety of problems within the existing music licensing structure called into question a severely outdated copyright law, leading to the recent passage of the Music Modernization Act (MMA) in October 2018, which sought to bring copyright law into the digital era. A sufficient reform should aim to make songwriting a viable profession for

songwriters, as they are the backbone of the industry. This paper explores the history of copyright law for songwriters, the advent of music streaming, the desperate need for reform, and various elements of the MMA in order to analyze whether or not the implementation of this legislation will benefit songwriters and what more beyond the law will need to be accomplished for songwriters to see a more sustainable future.

7:00pm-7:15pm

In Search of a City Called Heaven: The Worshipful Witness of the Spirituals

Randy Westergaard

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Darrell Gwaltney

Sociologist W.E.B. Du Bois called the black spirituals “the most beautiful expression of human experience born this side the seas.” The spirituals—created by Africans enslaved in the antebellum American South—form the finest and most unique body of American folk songs. Originating out of a community familiar with death and suffering, the spiritual tradition is one of lament, subversion, and ultimately, hope. Though they have long been sung in concert halls, and previously examined as a source of theological and cultural insight, these songs have by and large been neglected in the context of congregational worship, particularly by the evangelical church in America. In a time when systemic injustice runs rampant in the forms of poverty and racism, the evangelical church must be challenged to consider how to pursue a vision of justice in line with the Kingdom of God as outlined in Scripture. This paper argues that the evangelical church must adopt the spiritual tradition in its worship in order to form and realize this vision of justice. By examining the history and theological perspective of the spirituals, the paper will demonstrate how these songs inform evangelicals in critical blind spots in their worship, such as their lack of songs that lament and speak about justice. By developing a theory of worship as formational in function, the paper will suggest that singing and preaching the spirituals in church may aid evangelicals in loving the neighbor and pursuing justice in society.

2019 Belmont University Research Symposium

Belmont Honors Program III: Social Sciences Research Track

Moderator: Dr. Christie Kleinmann

**April 11, 2019
3:30pm-5:00pm
MBC 209B**

3:30pm-3:45pm

An Analysis of the Equitability of both Hard and Soft Affirmative Action Programs in Academia

Landon Wolford

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Christie Kleinmann, APR

What does diversity without equity look like? It looks a lot like our world, for which we can do better. In the last 50 years, universities have fallen under scrutiny for admissions practices that are either *too inclusive* or *too exclusive*. Cases, suits, and journals have documented the woes of dealing meaningfully with students in the majority, and in the minority. Supporting diversity initiatives in academia starts with seeing the whole student. Unfortunately, what many institutions fail to realize is that inclusivity and equitability doesn't stop at admissions. Students begin to take control of their education when they feel seen, heard, understood, and valued. The purpose of Affirmative Action (AA) is to make sure students are embraced fully by their institution and given a community that validates their individual experience(s). Designing an admissions program that supports students while staying true to institutional standards is not achieved overnight. This study seeks to investigate how institutions have utilized AA practices both in recruitment (Soft AA) and admissions (Hard AA) capacities. Analyzing the shift in these practices from the Civil Rights era to the most recent court cases allows us to measure how far we've come, but also how far we have to go. The value of education cannot be contained within a quota, nor can it be defined by one individual institution. Equity is putting the student first and making sure their needs are met from the top to the bottom.

3:45pm-4:00pm

Protest and Evolving Feminism

Lauren Barnhart

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Sabrina Sullenberger

The Women's March made a name for itself in 2017 as the feminist protest march of the generation, considered to be the largest single-day protest in U.S. history. The march and its organizers touted unity and intersectionality as its core values, and sought to create as well as demonstrate equality and unified dissent. As the feminist movement continues to gain momentum through the platform of the Women's March, we must ask the question: does the march truly demonstrate inclusive, intersectional feminism? This qualitative study utilizes

interviews with individuals of intersectional feminist identities to better understand the impact and experience of the march from the perspective of the diverse individuals involved. Through an analysis of the history of feminism and protest alongside the data collected in this study, we are able to gain a deeper understanding of intersectionality and inclusion in the “Women’s March Era” of feminism.

4:00pm-4:15pm

The Neuroscience of Dance as a Contemplative Practice

Chloe Garbe

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Lonnie Yandell

Contemplative practices have gained popularity in Western culture. They instill physical, spiritual, and even psychological benefits. Contemplative practices that involve movement, such as yoga and tai chi, visually parallel dancing. Dance is an important part of the human experience, and the patterned movements share some mechanisms related to contemplative practices. Researchers have identified five traits that are shared in dance and contemplative practices: modulation of attention and interoception, movement learning, emotional regulation, and metacognition. This review draws deeper parallels between dance and contemplative practices, using evidence from neuroscientific and psychological studies. I conclude that dance should be considered a movement-based contemplative practice, and dance research may lead to similar results as found in contemplative practices.

4:15pm-4:30pm

Effects of Inter-Element Spacing on Performance of Gradient Inverted Stack Subwoofer Arrays

Parker Anderson

Faculty Advisor: Scott Munsell

Throughout my undergraduate thesis research for the Honors Program at Belmont University, I have tried to expand on research started by Merlijn Van Veen on the real-world performance concerns that result from different cardioid array configurations. Most loudspeaker manufacturers create amplifier presets and configurations based on a three to four speaker "cluster" array that may or may not have adjusted timings to compensate for a shifted acoustic center as explained in AES paper 7992. Deploying speakers in larger clusters than recommended can result in less than ideal performance due to reduced diffraction between elements and increased acoustic center shift. The gradient inverted stack is an efficient and powerful directional subwoofer array when properly aligned but has been found to have reduced effectiveness as array size increases. The increased baffle size of stacked enclosures creates level differences on top of the reduced diffraction, especially at high sub frequencies. This paper and research seek to further define the real world consequences that come from large arrays used for indoor and outdoor sound reinforcement. I am currently still exploring the relationships between full size speakers in a semi-anechoic environment but have observed trends in small and mid scale testing that should continue with larger speakers.

4:30pm-4:45pm

Understanding Trade Barriers Through Cultural Theory

Sean Grossnickle

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Jeff Overby

Many attempts have been made over the last few decades to define culture, both qualitatively and quantitatively, but no method seems sufficient for helping people and businesses understand how culture can directly impact trade. This paper seeks to create a model for using cultural theory to assess how a country's culture can lead to the creation of trade barriers. Building off the metaphor of culture as an iceberg, this paper proposes the interweaving of two more variables, history and cultural interactions, in an attempt to explain not only what people believe and value, but why they do so, which can potentially be used to predict future trade policies. Two cases studies from France are used to develop the thesis. The first discusses how the French responded to foreign direct investment from Americans in the post-World War II period. It focuses specifically on the examples of Coca-Cola, GE, and Libaron and how each was influenced by French sentiments after the war and longer standing questions such as what it means to be French. Case two presents how the French have and continue to influence Europe's Common Agricultural Policy, as well as why they have such an attachment to small French farms. The paper concludes that there are a variety of factors that influence trade and suggests using this framework to create a quantitative model to help predict the success future trade policies.

4:45pm-5:00pm

Congregations in Gentrifying Neighborhoods of Nashville: Comparing Consumer versus Kingdom Models of Ministry

Koby Langner

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Andy Watts

The city of Nashville has experienced unprecedented growth in recent years. Some have estimated that 100 people move to the city every day. With growth, however, comes an often-awkward conversation about a conundrum known as "gentrification," a term that ignites controversy and confusion. Gentrification, simply stated, is the influx of capital into a previously disinvested community, drawing a migration of middle-income residents along with shops and businesses that represent middle-class culture and values. Its ill-effects are often cited as the conquest of previously existing culture, the loss of community for historic residents, and the displacement of vulnerable populations. Nashville's city boom has caused gentrification to occur in practically every major neighborhood from 12th South to Edgehill to Germantown. At the same time, Nashville is situated in the heart of the "Bible belt," where church congregations saturate the city increasingly more each day. The purpose of this study is to investigate the implication of church congregations in gentrifying neighborhoods, focusing on the experiences of ministry leaders in Nashville. The study conducts an investigation into gentrification theories and the role that congregations play in gentrifying neighborhoods. It contrasts the consequences of a consumer approach to ministry, based on George Ritzer's *McDonaldization of Society*, with a kingdom theology approach to ministry, based on the integration of interviews from Nashville pastors. The study provides a hopeful outlook on the potential for church congregations to leverage their presence in a way that is constructive and beneficial to all residents.