Research Project Title: Psychosocial effects of frequent social media use on adolescent males

Student Presenter: Traci Blue

Faculty Mentor: Amy Ferketich

Faculty Mentor Department: Public Health

Research Abstract: Intro

As the percentage of adolescents using social media continues to increase worldwide, it is important to understand its relation to psychosocial disorders. Many studies in the past have focused on females and social media use. This study evaluates the amount of time spent on social media by male adolescents and its association with symptoms of psychosocial disorders.

Methods

Adolescent males (n=1220, age 11-16 years) from one urban and nine rural Appalachian counties in Ohio, completed a self-administered baseline questionnaire. Youth reported how often they used social media and their last incident with feelings of depression, anxiety, loss of attention, and trouble sleeping. We categorized social media frequencies as use more than once a day vs. less frequently. We also dichotomized the psychosocial symptoms as occurring within the past year vs. not within the past year. Survey-weighted Chi-squared tests were used to test the association between social media use and reported disorders.

Results

The average age of the adolescents was 13.9 years, 68.2% were non-Hispanic white, and 16.2% were non-Hispanic black. Overall, within the participants, it was found that 33.1% use social media more than once/day, 36.5% felt depressed in past year, 55.4% had trouble sleeping, 56.1% felt anxious, and 59.8% had a hard time paying attention. Among adolescents who used social media more than once a day, 37.5% expressed depression symptoms (vs. 35.9% among less frequent users), 61.4% expressed anxiety (vs. 53.2% among less frequent users, p = 0.05), 61.6% expressed trouble sleeping (vs. 52.5% among less frequent users, p = 0.03), and 65.8% expressed trouble paying attention (vs. 57.1% among less frequent users, p = 0.03).

Conclusions

Adolescent males who used social media more than once a day were at a higher risk for anxiety, trouble sleeping, and trouble paying attention. This study contributes additional knowledge on the topic of social media's effects on male adolescents' mental health. In future studies, it may be beneficial to give a test that is more sensitive in evaluating such disorders, instead of having participants self-report a few common symptoms of a disorder.
Research Project Title: Prenatal substance exposure: family functioning, strengths, and needs

Student Presenter: Rebecca Bradley

Faculty Mentor: Linda Helm

Faculty Mentor Department: Social Work

Research Abstract: When a woman uses drugs or alcohol during pregnancy, the fetus is exposed to the substances in utero. This causes extended hospital stays for infants, risks of complications, and extra challenges for new mothers. According to the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare, an estimated 15% of infants are affected by prenatal alcohol or illicit drug exposure. Prenatal substance exposure complicates pregnancies and possibly the ability for a mother to parent her infant. This warrants a report to Child Protective Services to ensure the child’s safety. This study is an analysis of The National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) Child File from the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect at Cornell University. Data from the years 2002-2015 will be analyzed. The population of interest is families that have a child who has been prenatally exposed to substances. This population is identified using two variables, Drug Abuse Child marked yes, alongside of Child Age at Report marked less than one. The research question asks what risk contributors, disabilities, and referrals are significant with families with a drug dependent child under the age of one? Has there been a change in common risk contributors, disabilities, and referrals associated with these families over time? Risk contributors include history of maltreatment, inadequate housing, domestic violence, and substance use. Disabilities include mental illness, learning disability, physical disability, and visually or hearing impaired. These variables refer to any member of the family. What referrals are given to these families could include case management services, counseling services, employment services, housing services, and legal services. Father involvement and family support is also a variable of interest. An analysis of these variables will provide a well-rounded view of the functioning, strengths, and needs of these families. This information will be beneficial for Child Protective Service workers as well as Nurses and other professionals working in Neonatal Intensive Care Units where prenatal substance exposure is identified as well as identifying the social services that can be of help to families.
Research Project Title: Discrimination and depression in lesbian, gay, and bisexual adults: the role of emotion regulation

Student Presenter: Ashley Brancamp

Faculty Mentor: Michael Vasey

Faculty Mentor Department: Psychology

Research Abstract:
Background: Lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals consistently demonstrate higher rates of mental illness compared to heterosexual peers (Cochran, 2001). One explanation for this might involve experiences with discrimination (Bostwick et al., 2010). Indeed, Meyer’s (2003) minority stress theory proposes that other’s negative evaluations might induce poor psychological outcomes. The mechanisms behind this phenomenon are less clear. One possibility might involve their approaches to emotion regulation (ER), the processes by which individuals modulate how, when, and which emotions they experience (Gross, 1998). The present study examined the effect of discrimination on state-level ER in an LGB sample. We expected that individuals high in depressive symptoms would be more likely to use maladaptive ER strategies in response to a discriminatory stimulus, compared to those low in depressive symptoms.

Method: LGB adults (N=169) completed an online study in which they watched an affirming or discriminatory video and reflected on this experience in a writing task. Responses were coded for three ER strategies (rumination, worry, reappraisal). We ran regressions predicting state ER strategy use during the reflection task using depression symptoms (measured by the CES-D) and video (discriminatory, affirming).

Results: The model was a marginal predictor of state rumination ($F(2, 168) = 2.77, p =.066, R^2=.032$), and state reappraisal ($F(2, 167) = 2.71, p =.07, R^2=.020$), but it did not predict state worry ($F(2, 168) = 0.37, p =.70, R^2=.004$). Specifically, participants made on average 3.95% more ruminative statements and 2.52% more reappraisal statements in the discriminatory condition relative to the affirming condition. Depression scores were not significant predictors of state ER ($ps > .18$).

Conclusions: These findings suggest that LGB individuals utilize both adaptive and maladaptive ER strategies to cope with experiences of discrimination. Interestingly, we found that depression was unrelated to state ER use. Most research examining depression and ER has used trait measures, more research is needed to understand how state and trait ER strategy use converge. Prevention and intervention efforts with this population should focus on increasing the ratio of adaptive to maladaptive strategy use in discriminatory contexts, to reduce the immense mental health burden within the LGB community.
Research Project Title: Impact of sharing economy engagement on environmental efficiency of well-being scores of Clintonville and Olde Towne East residents in Columbus, Ohio

Student Presenter: Sophie Chang

Faculty Mentor: Jeremy Brooks

Faculty Mentor Department: School of Environment and Natural Resources

Research Abstract: The “sharing economy” describes collaborative forms of consumption that may improve efficiency and increase well-being by enhancing a sense of community. Despite expectations that the sharing economy can contribute to more sustainable forms of consumption, it is unclear whether engagement actually improves well-being and reduces environmental impact. To investigate whether the sharing economy has these intended effects, we used the environmental efficiency of well-being (EWEB). A high EWEB score is indicative of individuals who have high well-being and relatively low ecological footprint. Using a survey of 271 residents in two Columbus neighborhoods, we collected data on well-being, consumption, and behaviors that are components of the sharing economy. We calculated individual EWEB scores and fit linear regression models to examine whether engagement in the sharing economy is associated with a more sustainable lifestyle. Preliminary results suggest that, after taking into consideration age and income, individuals who participate in a larger number of sharing economy behaviors have significantly higher EWEB scores. In addition, car-sharing, car-pooling, childcare-sharing, gardening, borrowing library books, sharing books with family, and purchasing clothing from second-hand stores are all associated with higher EWEB scores. Results also suggest that higher EWEB scores are driven by increases in well-being that come from sharing rather than from a lower ecological footprint. Future research is needed to understand whether and how engagement in the sharing economy may also reduce environmental impacts and to examine whether the relationship between the sharing economy and EWEB is shaped by neighborhood-level socio-economic conditions in Columbus and beyond.
Research Project Title: Variables for predicting successful completion of a treatment program for juvenile males who have committed sex offenses

Student Presenter: Morgan Brenner

Faculty Mentor: Audrey Begun

Faculty Mentor Department: Department of Social Work

Research Abstract: According to the most recent data from the U.S. Department of Justice (2007), adolescents (all genders) perpetrate about 22% of all sex offenses and 15% of all rapes. The importance of rehabilitation in these formative years is significant, especially considering that about half of adults who committed sex offenses have disclosed that their first offenses were committed during adolescence (Fritz, 2003). The purpose of this research was to ask, “Which variables can best predict successful completion of a residential treatment program for juvenile males who have committed sex offenses?”

The data used in this study were collected at Hittle House, a residential treatment facility in Columbus specializing in programming for adolescent males who have been identified as being “sexually reactive.” Based on review of the literature, we included information from record review for all 94 discharged cases on the categorical variables of victim type (sibling, friend, or stranger), adoption/foster care history (yes or no), and levels of parental/guardian involvement (low, moderate, high), as well as the continuous variable of Juvenile Sex Offender Assessment Protocol (J-SOAP) scores. Logistic regression analysis for the J-SOAP scores predicted successful program completion versus other outcomes (p<.01) 67% of the time, where lower problem scores were associated with successful completion. Chi-square analysis was significant for successful outcome by parent involvement (p<.05), but not by victim type or adoption/foster care history; parent involvement was not significantly related to victim type but was related to adoption/foster care history (p<.05). Analysis of variance showed parental involvement was lowest when J-SOAP problem scores were high (p<.05) and J-SOAP scores were unrelated to victim type. With these results, this study offers insight for clinicians at Hittle House and other similar programs, as well as a starting point for future analyses.
Research Project Title: Utilizing a city brand to inform investment and economic development

Student Presenter: Maria de Caris

Faculty Mentor: Kyle Ezell

Faculty Mentor Department: City and Regional Planning

Research Abstract: This thesis will explore the attributes of a city brand, who the stakeholders are, and which city assets commonly influence a positive brand image. A case study will compare how Columbus’s brand positioning is set to meet target outcomes versus how another city is using their own brand positioning to reach specific outcomes (ex. tourism, firm attraction and retention, etc.). This comparison will help define strong versus weak brand identity. Success indicators in cities such as rising housing prices and population growth will be acknowledged as it correlates with positive or negative brand image. The purpose of this research is to prompt urban leaders to have a basic understanding of city brand strategy as an economic development tool. Exploring why cities undertake a branding process and what they hope to achieve from it is an important way to understanding the correlation between investment and outside perception.
Research Project Title: Community perceptions of toxic stress

Student Presenter: Caroline Buck

Faculty Mentor: Barbara Warren

Faculty Mentor Department: Nursing

Research Abstract: Introduction: Toxic stress involves life course exposure to adversity without adequate support or protective factors. This adversity begins in childhood and continues through adolescence and adulthood, and may occur in form of abuse, neglect, exposure to violence or prolonged economic hardship that results in protracted biological and psychological alterations in the lives of affected persons. These alterations have negative consequences for persons’ overall health, well-being, and positive life course progression. Research indicates that the presence of toxic stress may be more detrimental across the life course for persons from African American populations living in poor, stress-filled communities. The purpose of this study was to ascertain the perceptions of African American adults regarding stress and traumatic events occurring in their environment.

Methods: A phenomenological approach was used to gather information on African American participants’ interpretations of their lived experiences regarding stress and traumatic events within their lives. Participants aged 18-70 years were recruited from a near eastside community in Columbus, Ohio because this community has a large number of African American adults and experience a high incidence of stressful and traumatic events that occur. A business owner in the community was a gatekeeper who helped to recruit participants for the study. Participants were randomly split into two groups. Focus groups were conducted with participants by two advanced practice mental health nurses and two senior nursing students. A neighbor provided the location where the groups were conducted. Sessions were videotaped, transcribed, and analyzed for emerging themes.

Results: Themes emerged regarding participants’ health. These included the high amounts of violence and lack of resources in their community have led to constant high levels of stress and anxiety, concern about how this affected children as well as themselves, and providing help to children and adolescents to prevent harm.

Conclusion: Results from this phenomenological study supports literature that toxic stress can lead to poor overall health. Additional studies need to be conducted within similar communities in order to further understand the effect that toxic stress has on African Americans within community settings.
Research Project Title: Exploration of cultural discipline as a contributing factor to communal stress in African American adults in The Near East Side of Columbus, Ohio

Student Presenter: Morgan Ciehanski

Faculty Mentor: Elizabeth Fitzgerald

Faculty Mentor Department: Graduate Studies, Nursing

Research Abstract: Introduction/Background: Discipline of children varies, and is multifactorial in its intent and impact. Exposure to discipline begins in childhood and continues through adolescence and adulthood. Physical or verbal discipline may come from parents and family, the community, or society. A lack of discipline, as well as parental permissiveness, positively predicts developmental changes and deviant behaviors in children (Harris et al., 2017). Community stressors may include abuse, neglect, and exposure to violence or prolonged economic hardship that results in protracted biological and psychological alterations in individuals. These alterations may have negative consequences for overall health, well-being, and positive life course progression. Exposure to violence in communities can desensitize children and they can violent acts if parents do not aim to mitigate them (Tyler, 2013). The purpose of this study was to ascertain the perceptions of African American adults regarding stress and traumatic events occurring in their environment.

Methods: A phenomenological approach was used to gather information on African American participants’ interpretations of their lived experiences regarding stress and traumatic events within their lives. Participants aged 18-70 years were recruited from a near eastside community in Columbus, Ohio. A community leader and business owner in the community hosted space for the groups. Three focus groups were conducted and led by an advanced practice mental health nurse and two senior nursing students assisted. The focus groups were audiotaped, transcribed, and analyzed for emerging themes.

Results: Various themes emerged but my focus was the cyclic nature of violence in the community, a concern that parents were not able to effectively discipline their children, and a lack of communal discipline and support in the current environment that existed when the participants’ were growing up in the community.

Conclusions: Results from this phenomenological study support findings in the literature regarding a lack of discipline in children can lead to poor overall health of the community residents. Additional studies need to be conducted within similar communities.
Research Project Title: Social capital among those experiencing housing hardship

Student Presenter: Brooke Epstein

Faculty Mentor: Katie Maguire-Jack

Faculty Mentor Department: Social Work

Research Abstract: Housing hardship is a common trend experienced by many individuals across the United States. Housing hardship includes struggling to pay rent or mortgage bills, moving in with family and friends, living in a car, or living with government support through subsidized housing or vouchers. The instability that comes with housing hardships can be greatly impacted—both positively and negatively by social capital. Social capital is the networks that individuals build around themselves through their community and their peers to create their own support system. In this study, I examined the difference in social capital for individuals who are experiencing housing hardships compared to those who are not experiencing housing hardships. I also examined correlates of social capital for those with housing hardships. Using the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study, a longitudinal birth cohort study of approximately 5,000 families, I conducted a series of linear regressions to analyze these relationships. Among the individuals who participated in the study, 14.4% receive subsidized housing from the government but many more participants have other housing hardships. There is a shortage of information regarding social capital and how it can be utilized by individuals to better their current situations. This study will continue to push for more research in social capital, how it can come about, and the benefits or disadvantages it can have on some of the nation's most vulnerable individuals.
Research Project Title: Project SWEAT: a nutrition and physical activity assessment of USDA summer food service program sites in low-income urban zip codes

Student Presenter: Leah May

Faculty Mentor: Carolyn Gunther

Faculty Mentor Department: Human Sciences, Nutrition

Research Abstract: Background: Over 1/3 of U.S. children are overweight or obese. The summer months are a window of risk for unhealthy child weight gain. Unfortunately, little is known about the food and physical activity environments to which kids are exposed during the summer.

Objective: Project SWEAT is a prospective, observational study that aims to evaluate the multiple food and physical activity environments to which children are exposed during the summer. The objective of this sub-study of Project SWEAT was to examine the food/nutrition and physical activity[PA] environments away from the home “specifically, USDA Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sites.

Methods: Two Columbus City Schools located in neighboring low-income urban zip codes were recruited, including 43205, 43206, and 43207. The summer structured programming occurring at USDA SFSP sites in the surrounding neighborhoods of the selected schools was identified. Sites were assessed using the Project SWEAT Site Environmental Assessment Form.

Results: 20 USDA SFSP sites were identified. 70%(n=14) of sites were open USDA Summer Food Service Program feeding sites, and the other 30%(n=6) were closed feeding sites. 90%(n=18) of sites had accessible water fountains. 25%(n=5) and 40%(n=8) of sites had snack and beverage vending machines with 100%(n=5) of snack vending machines having mixed healthy and unhealthy options. 88%(n=7) of sites had beverage vending machines having mixed healthy and unhealthy options and 12%(n=1) having only unhealthy options. Indoor and outdoor PA environments were present at 75%(n=15) and 85%(n=17) of sites, respectively. Specifically, 35%(n=7), 5%(n=1), 60%(n=12), and 85%(n=17) had swimming pool, trampoline, playground equipment, and a basketball hoop, respectively. 70%(n=14) had screen time devices present, specifically children had access to 55%(n=11), 50%(n=10), and 15%(n=3) had televisions, computers, and video game consoles respectively. Planned sites activities were 90%(n=18), 95%(n=19), and 90%(n=18) sedentary, light PA, and moderate/vigorous PA, respectively.

Conclusions: Overall, the food and PA environments of the sites were favorable due to the availability of PA environments at most sites and the health of available snack and beverage sources which were mixed. Information from this study can be used to reform policy to ensure child accessibility to positive environments to promote health during the summer months.
Research Project Title: Can child support help mothers be self-sufficient?

Student Presenter: Brian McClure

Faculty Mentor: David Blau

Faculty Mentor Department: Economics

Research Abstract: Introduction:

I am studying a policy regarding child support pass-through and disregard and this policy change's effect on self-sufficiency outcomes for families receiving TANF. I will measure self-sufficiency with enrollment in other government programs, labor force participation, and the number of hours worked per week. Child support is an important source of income for single mothers, so consistent payments may be one pathway to reaching long-term self-sufficiency outside of government assistance.

Methods:

I utilize CPS March data and the CPS Child Support Supplement to analyze a 2008 policy change in seven states (New York, New Mexico, New Jersey, Virginia, Oregon, Washington, and Pennsylvania) using a difference in difference model with state and time fixed effects. This will provide evidence for whether self-sufficiency outcomes change in response to the policy change.

Results:

I have not yet run regressions on the data, but I expect there to be a causal effect of the policy change on lower enrollment in government programs, greater labor force participation, and more hours worked per week.

Conclusion:

From the expected results, we can conclude that an increase in pass through and disregard amounts are associated with a greater ability for a single mother who receives TANF to achieve self-sufficiency (enroll in less government programs, work more hours per week, have higher labor force participation).
Research Project Title: The influence of population density on the inputs and outputs of innovation

Student Presenter: Samuel Horen

Faculty Mentor: Roger Bailey

Faculty Mentor Department: Marketing and Logistics

Research Abstract: From a macro perspective, cities across the world are constantly competing to become “sticky places” by attracting and retaining the best available people and businesses. To remain competitive in this era of rapid technological change and development, city officials and planners have placed a large emphasis on creating innovative environments. This paper hypothesizes that cities with higher density are more successful in such attempts, and evaluates whether or not a relationship exists between population density and innovation. To examine this relationship, USPTO patent data from the years 2000-2015 and R&D spending data from the year 2013 are compared against the population density of 26 unique Combined Statistical Areas (CSAs) or Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs). Ultimately this study finds that both patent data and R&D data are weakly positively related to population density. When removing the San Jose-San Francisco-Oakland CSA, a highly innovative outlier, from the dataset the correlation becomes slightly stronger. Finally, this study indicates that population density by CSA may not be the most important population factor to consider when measuring innovation, as total population by CSA provided a stronger correlation to innovation.
Research Project Title: Dancing pathways to healing: Combatting social injustice through dance education

Student Presenter: Danielle Kfoury

Faculty Mentor: David Covey

Faculty Mentor Department: Dance

Research Abstract: Within the OSU Department of Dance, I have chosen to research dance pedagogy and community outreach, specifically working with a population of sexual violence survivors. Through a close partnership with OSU’s Office of Sexual Civility and Empowerment, I have explored the ways in which dance can be used as a means of healing for those who have experienced trauma. Additionally, I have investigated the ways in which dance as an art form can be embedded within communities to combat social injustices. The main component of my research involved teaching a weekly creative dance class to sexual assault survivors at OSU. Within my teaching and research, I aimed to question body autonomy and the ways in which one’s autonomy is lost and then re-gained. Upon teaching the classes, I crafted lesson plans with themes that related the students’ bodies to their lives and inner emotions. The themes I focused on included safety, taking up space, power, breath, initiation, and livelihood. Throughout my pedagogy, I have aimed to give the survivors a holistic experience of their humanity in which movement explorations involved their body, mind, and inner emotions, as these sensations often become separated after experiencing sexual trauma. My research also included involvement as a Sexual Civility and Empowerment Ambassador on campus, in which I became well versed on sexual consent education, sexual violence intervention techniques, and effectively engaging with survivors. My results have been multi-faceted, as I can evaluate my research from a pedagogical point of view, as well as from a community outreach and social engagement standpoint. Pedagogically, I have developed an incredible vocabulary for teaching dance from a trauma-informed perspective. I have observed my students move through class and transform their bodies move, whether it be across multiple classes or within the 1-hour period. This project is significant both in the field of dance as well as the overarching progress of justice within society and humanity. By creating an environment for survivors that is specifically centered around personal healing, I have empowered individuals and disrupted low levels of rape culture that are present in our society.
Research Project Title: Motivation in stereotyping in domestic violence cases

Student Presenter: Brooke Marston

Faculty Mentor: Steven Spencer

Faculty Mentor Department: Psychology

Research Abstract: The role of motivation in stereotyping has been studied extensively (Kunda & Spencer, 2003), but not in domestic violence situations. In this study, participants completed a threatening task known as cyberball and then shown a video in which they can hear a neighboring couple arguing through the wall. They then went through two separate trials where they were asked to pick between two racially ambiguous faces, based on which they believed to be closest to the male and females faces of the neighbors briefly shown in the video. We expect that when people are threatened they will be more likely to imagine that the violent male is Black.
Research Project Title: The role of state environmental justice actions on reducing environmental inequality from 1994 to 2004

Student Presenter: Grace Saalman

Faculty Mentor: Kerry Ard

Faculty Mentor Department: School of Environment and Natural Resources

Research Abstract: In 1994 President Bill Clinton signed Executive Order 12898 requiring state environmental protection agencies to consider how decisions differentially impacted poor and minority communities. Since this time, states have enacted a diverse set of actions to achieve environmental justice (EJ) in their states. Despite this on-going effort to minimize the racial and economic gaps in exposure, there is still evidence of disparities. For example from 1995 to 2004 national-level research indicates that African Americans were consistently exposed to twice the amount of toxic air pollutants as whites (Ard 2015). Moreover, African Americans of greater socioeconomic status were more exposed to toxins than whites of lower socioeconomic status (Ard 2015). The following paper breaks down these findings by state in order to determine if state-level variation in environmental inequality can be partly explained by state actions (laws, policies, efforts and movements) implemented to reduce environmental inequality. We use Hasting College of Law’s comprehensive survey of EJ Legislation enacted by states from 1994 to 2004 to evaluate if those states with more actions, and/or stronger actions are associated with smaller disparities between racial and socioeconomic groups over this decade. We found that states with the highest number of strong EJ actions do not necessarily have the greatest reductions in exposure inequality. Thus, there is evidence that some state environmental justice actions may not be effective.
Research Project Title: Selfish or selfless? How threatening diversity models affect interpersonal goals

Student Presenter: Ariana Munoz-Salgado

Faculty Mentor: Taylor Ballinger

Faculty Mentor Department: Psychology

Research Abstract: Introduction/Background: Previous research shows Whites are more threatened by diversity models emphasizing group differences (multiculturalism) where non-Whites are threatened by diversity models minimizing group differences (colorblindness; Plaut, Thomas, & Matt, 2009; Rattan & Ambady, 2013). While both diversity models seek to promote positive interracial relations, past studies have demonstrated the effects of a threatening diversity model (e.g., multiculturalism for Whites, colorblindness for non-Whites) on an individual’s emotions and cognitions. However, our research goes beyond by examining how it affects intergroup relations: the way individuals intend to relate to in-group and out-group members.

Hypothesis: We examine how a threatening diversity model affects individuals’ self-image goals (intentions to focus on themselves and how they appear to others) and compassionate goals (intentions to be caring toward others and form supportive relationships). We hypothesize that when non-Whites adopt the colorblind (vs multicultural) perspective, they experience social identity threat, adopting self-image goals and prioritizing their own needs and desires.

Methods: In a 2 (diversity model: colorblind or multicultural) x 2 (coworker race: ingroup or outgroup) factorial design, Black, Hispanic, and Latino/a participants (N=120) completed a survey ostensibly about workplace environments where they read a mission statement of a fictitious company. Within this mission statement, we manipulated whether the company had a colorblind or multicultural diversity model. Participants were then asked to imagine they were paired with a coworker that was the same race as them or White, and to report their self-image and compassionate goals toward that individual.

Analytical Strategy: A series of between-subject ANOVA’s, hierarchical linear regression, and moderation analyses will be used to analyze the results when data collection completes in late February.

Conclusions: This research is the first to examine how a threatening diversity model can affect non-Whites’ self-image and compassionate goals. We aim to provide evidence that the colorblind model produces negative feelings for non-Whites, encouraging self-image goals and a selfish mentality. By understanding how colorblind diversity models negatively impact non-Whites, making them feel isolated and disengaged, future work can focus on developing diversity models that promote positive interracial interactions between Whites and non-Whites.
Research Project Title: Echoes of discrimination: The lasting impact of redlining in Columbus

Student Presenter: Nick Spence

Faculty Mentor: Julie Field

Faculty Mentor Department: Anthropology

Research Abstract: Throughout the early 20th century the home loan process was dominated by the practice of Redlining. The drawing of artificial, arbitrary divisions through a city and then designating the homes in those areas only be owned by individuals of a certain ethnic or economic background. This process was done under the guise of ensuring that the loans would be "safe" for the banks but ultimately Redlining was in place to serve the prejudiced ideals of the day and ensure that newly minted "white" suburbs and schools would remain whites only. In this project I explored the degree to which Redlining practices are still visible in the city of Columbus by examining connections between the Redlining maps of Columbus and maps of food centers, health care centers, polling places, school districts, and modern day demographic data. I used the features available in arcGIS to cross reference the data sets with the original Redlining map that I digitized by hand for this project. I then compared the analysis results between each of the four grades on the Redlining map (A, B, C, and D). My results concluded that noticeable connections were found in the aspects of racial population density, school district boundaries, and food service locations with noticeable disparities between. The significance of the connections in these three areas warrant further investigation.
Research Project Title: Project SWEAT - Healthy Eating Active Living Mapping Attributes using Participatory Photographic Surveys (HEAL MAPPS): A qualitative approach to combating unhealthy weight gain in summer months in underserved school age children

Student Presenter: Amy Sharn

Faculty Mentor: Carolyn Gunther

Faculty Mentor Department: Human Sciences

Research Abstract: Introduction/Background: During the summer months, children from underserved homes are at risk for unhealthy weight gain. Little is known about the contributing food and physical activity environment factors. The objective of this study was to determine the environmental barriers and facilitators to healthy food and active living during summer break among children living in low-income, urban, neighborhoods.

Methods: Students in grades pre-k to 5th attending two Columbus City elementary schools located in low-income urban neighborhoods were invited to participate in the study. The Healthy Eating Active Living Mapping Attributes Participatory Photographic Surveys (HEAL MAPPS) protocol, which engages participants by using their smartphone-like device to identify facilitators and barriers to healthy living through images and mapping software, was utilized. HEAL MAPPS involves four contacts: 1) orientation to project and equipment training; 2) individual interview discussing images and routes taken; 3) focus group per school site discussing common experiences with neighbors/fellow MAPPers; and 4) local community stakeholder meeting to present images/findings and develop community action plan for each respective community.

Results: Nine families enrolled and mapped routes within their neighborhoods; five of these families participated in focus groups. Preliminary analysis of themes include: 1) poorly maintained walkways; 2) scarce accessibility to healthy, affordable foods; 3) multiple abandoned properties; and 4) unsafe activity near common neighborhood routes.

Conclusions: This information may be used by local- and state-level stakeholders to improve low-income Ohio neighborhood environments to promote healthy eating and active living during summer months.
Research Project Title: Institutional actors and state death penalty laws: an analysis of Nebraska and Washington

Student Presenter: Derek Whiddon

Faculty Mentor: Jack Wright

Faculty Mentor Department: Political Science

Research Abstract: My project analyzes changes in state death penalty laws since the Supreme Court’s 1972 Furman v. Georgia decision that struck down death penalty laws in the American states. My primary focus is on Nebraska and Washington, where voters used referenda to override decisions of the state legislatures. The Washington legislature decided in 1975 not to reinstate the death penalty after Furman, but voters in Washington passed a ballot initiative reinstating it. The Nebraska legislature voted in 2015 to abolish the state’s death penalty and then voted again to override the governor’s veto. However, Nebraska voters chose to repeal the statute and reinstate the death penalty in a November 2016 referendum. My research question is, “Why were some institutional actors-legislators, governors, or voters-more influential than others in determining death penalty laws in Nebraska and Washington?” My analysis draws from daily legislative journals, newspapers, recorded legislative votes, and county and district-level voting returns.
Research Project Title: Resource discrepancies for survivors of intimate partner violence: the effects of different policies and programs within Ohio counties

Student Presenter: Alyssa Wischmann

Faculty Mentor: Bridget Freisthler

Faculty Mentor Department: Social Work

Research Abstract: Introduction/Background: Intimate partner violence accounts for 15% of all violent crime with 33% of women and 25% of men who are survivors. Survivors shy from formal resources; 55% of male survivors and 49% of female survivors opt not to report. However, there is a lack of information on the impacts policies have on the availability of resources and programs offered to survivors throughout communities. The current political landscape of the U.S. is unprecedented with increasing dispute on globalism and multiculturalism within the country. This specific study seeks to depict the impacts policies at the state-level have on the availability of resources and services for IPV survivors and their communities.

Methods: A thirty-minute phone interview was administered with fifteen randomly selected shelter directors from across Ohio. A Geographic information systems (GIS) was used to determine if the resources provided in Ohio counties match the need and risk, as indicated through mapping. Additionally, demographics of each county was considered to see if there may be any link between racial, ethnic, or other minority groups and the amount of services provided and whether those populations utilize them at different rates from majority populations. Information collected through GIS and these phone interviews can be used to inform research and policy in Ohio and other states to ensure that legislation is positively assisting survivors and families of intimate partner violence.

Results: We see differences across the state with how policies are implemented, the resources available to domestic violence shelters, and populations who utilize the services.

Conclusion: One practice recommendation that may come from this study is for shelters to focus on outreach and collaboration with other community organizations that work with these populations. Although the Ohio state legislature has made efforts to expand its definition of domestic violence to be more inclusive, there is still progress to be made in policy such as including other populations who may need special protections (documentation status, LGBTQ, language, trafficked persons).
Research Project Title: Become, the holistic beauty shop

Student Presenter: Remaile Ferrell

Faculty Mentor: Susan Melsop

Faculty Mentor Department: Design

Research Abstract: Undergoing an arts initiative, the neighborhood of Franklinton is still a place most known for its crime and drug use. Although, most may only see the negative in downtrodden neighborhoods, I see beauty and opportunity. There has been an established sense of “community” among its residents due to long term relationships and diversity. Something as pure as this, no city should negate with gentrification. But instead, should embrace and celebrate through revitalization efforts. In addition to the challenges Franklinton already faces, results in gentrification can cause increased violence and crime, and mental health issues. In respect to demographics, approximately 61% of households in Franklinton are single mothers. With this, many families are living below the poverty level and have high mental health issues. My question is: Is there a way to combat the issues that Franklinton’s single mothers are already facing and with the new addition of gentrification? My project will target just that.

By using the psychological principles of Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Pyramid, of basic, physiological and self fulfillment needs. I will be able to help guide the single mothers into self-actualization, which will create self-celebration, leadership and self-acceptance. I have identified the gaps that Franklinton is messing within Maslow’s framework and have made informed decisions on what my programing should be to complete the the pyramid.

With this theory and also with the respect of my demographics, I have made a informed decision to appeal to my demographic through beauty. It has been proven that beauty (inside and out) has been one of the biggest notions that correlates to many women’s self issues and it can also correlate to helping the issues that Franklinton mothers are facing and will be facing. So by creating a Beauty Shop that, promotes inner and outer beauty, help women gain professional skills and create a stronger single mother community, I will be filling in that gap and promoting a stronger single mother community.

My overall project is to translate the theoretical framework of Maslow into a poetic experience though interior design, to empower the women in Franklinton.
Research Project Title: Moms makin' moves: an exploration of the needs of single mothers in Franklinton, Ohio

Student Presenter: Libby Riddell

Faculty Mentor: Susan Melsop

Faculty Mentor Department: Design

Research Abstract:

Franklinton is a neighborhood right on the outskirts of downtown Columbus. Here, one will find fun, artsy spaces like 400 West Rich, and Strongwater Food and Spirits, juxtaposed against vacant houses, and families who cannot afford to live in their homes much longer. While the area is an up and coming arts district, it is facing issues of extreme gentrification, infant mortality, and food insecurity. Single mothers make up approximately 64% of households in Franklinton. Two main questions drive the research for this project: Is there enough support for single mothers in Franklinton? And how can we support the rise of Franklinton without displacing the current residents? This leads to the exploration of an integrated, systems-thinking interior design proposal that addresses employment, community, and security needs for mothers in Franklinton. By researching social enterprises, micro-housing and innovative child care initiatives, this design asks the question, how can interior design create an intervention to solve these problems?

Primary research methodologies such as site visits and informal interviews led to continuous visits to Franklinton. This encouraged an analysis and understanding of the deeper needs of these residents, rather than just addressing surface level problems. These activities provided an understanding of the needs of this demographic of Franklinton and supported secondary research findings. For example, 81.8% of single mothers living in the Franklinton neighborhood are on food stamps, and 30% of single mothers seeking parenting help are homeless. By proposing a design that includes a bakery, child care, and transitional living units the Moms Makin’ Moves framework provides essential resources and support for these women. By employing single mothers, the bakery will subsidize living costs to mothers living upstairs, provide job training, sustainable wages, and flexible hours. A well designed environment will provide single mother families with community support, security, and the amenities needed to support their families. Overall, this project can support an aspect of community to Franklinton that can help break the cycle of struggling single mothers.
Research Project Title: Stemming the flow on opioid circulation

Student Presenter: Cecelia Glackin-Hunt

Faculty Mentor: Curtis Haugvedt

Faculty Mentor Department: FCOB Marketing & Logistics

Research Abstract: Opioid overdoses have been a leading cause of death in recent years. Overprescribing opiates leads many people to keep unused, or expired drugs in their cabinets, leaving them vulnerable for misuse. In an effort to mitigate drug abuse, efforts for proper, safe, and anonymous drug disposal have been made to educate the Summit County community through Drug Take Back Days and D.U.M.P boxes in high-traffic areas. Summit County suffers from a high rate of opioid overdoses, leaving a need for convenient and safe ways for the community to clean out their cabinets. Our research will deliver drug deactivation packets that will instruct targeted participants on proper use and disposal methods that are safe for the environment. The pouches will be free of charge, and mailed directly to houses, as well as, readily available in local high-traffic areas for convenience. With three different targeted audiences (urban, suburban, and rural), marketing campaigns will be developed with language that appeals to each population. To develop appropriate messages and techniques for each community, theory-based persuasion and compliance techniques developed with the guidance of Petty and Cacioppo’s Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion and Robert Cialdini’s principles of compliance will be used. Each marketing campaign will include a social media element, pouch instructions, and endorsements by local influential figures and partnerships to promote a grassroots ownership over the drug take back efforts. Data collection is ongoing and will be evaluated using marketing research and social and consumer psychology tools to gauge effectiveness. Conclusions will be presented at the Denman Forum, as well as, next steps and predictions to grow the program.
The opioid crisis has recently been a very common topic in the Columbus news, and the city government including Mayor Ginther and Attorney General Mike Dewine, are taking extraordinary measures to combat the crisis. Ohio has greatly been affected by the Opioid Crisis and the number of deaths from heroin overdoses continues to grow at an alarming rate. In Columbus, the areas with the highest mortality rates are synonymous with low income neighborhoods. The area of focus for this research is Franklinton. This research seeks to understand the community of Franklinton along with its needs, and potential. Many houses in Franklinton are vacant, and the drug activity is becoming a problem for the community businesses and safety of residents (Steve Levine, abc6). With the current investment in East Franklinton, the condition of the existing population of West Franklinton and the challenges it faces are being brought into light providing an opportune time for the support of this this community. The existing facilities are bleak and lack emotional placemaking due to the utilitarian and clinical design of them. Through case studies and precedent studies, and the combination of primary and secondary sources, this research is exploring interior designs ability to heal and rehabilitate. In the heart of Franklinton is Mount Carmel Hospital, which will soon be leaving. How will this impact the community? Would an adaptive reuse to one of the vacant properties in Franklinton, designed through evidence based research create a positive disruption of the status quo? How can an interior design encourage both community and unity amongst those in Franklinton that are trying to overcome their dependency on opioids? Answering these questions will help to develop an interior space to promote the congregation of addicts in a safe place, which offers physical and emotional services to improve the wellbeing of those individuals, while striving towards a common goal of a living a sober life.
Research Project Title: The Responsibility to Protect: UNSC’s Restrained Attitude Towards the Rohingya Refugee Crisis

Student Presenter: Xuan Yang

Faculty Mentor: Erin Lin

Faculty Mentor Department: Political Science

Research Abstract: The Rohingya refugee crisis is one of the biggest human rights violation cases in recent years; more than half a million people have been forced to flee from Myanmar since 2017, and the number of refugees fleeing to the neighboring countries is still increasing. In other similar cases, such as Kosovo Muslims, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has issued resolutions, and even used military action. However, in the Rohingya refugee crisis case, even though there has been short-term humanitarian aid from the international community, UNSC has done nothing. The world wonders why there is no UNSC action towards Rohingya refugee crisis. In this paper, I will show how complicated it is to get UNSC action in this case, I would like to look two levels: 1) How UNSC define the Rohingya crisis by collecting data of framing language used in UNSC official statement and reports, and in comparison to other UN agencies, mainstream media and INGOs’ related documents; 2) How great power clashed within permanent members of UNSC, especially look at China, Russia and United States. The results show us the the simple definition of the Rohingya refugee crisis by UNSC and lack of cooperation among great powers are the main reasons why there has been no further actions by UNSC towards the Rohingya refugee crisis.
Research Project Title: Application of the public health exposome framework to vulnerable southern Gateway communities in Columbus, Ohio

Student Presenter: Jahara Wakeel

Faculty Mentor: Darryl Hood

Faculty Mentor Department: Neuroscience

Research Abstract: ABSTRACT

A public participatory geographical information systems (PPGIS) demographic, environmental, socioeconomic, health status portal was refined for the Milo Grogan community in Columbus, OH. We hypothesized that noise pollution is occurring through the Republic Waste Transfer Station located in the middle of the community. Aims were developed that will allow us to test this hypothesis. Aim 1 will focus on establishing partnerships between academia, state agencies and communities to assist in the conduct of a hazard assessment which came after the neighborhood association developed a community principle/collective efficacy. Results of the hazard assessment will be conveyed to residents via an enhanced PPGIS portal.

METHOD

Refinement of PPGIS Community Mapping Tools

The refinement and customization of our PPGIS portal by the Division of Environmental Health Sciences, College of Public Health will continue using MapplerX [49] This will occur Will as previously described. Like MapplerX, we will link EJSCREEN (from USEPA) to Milo Grogan environmental factor and variables as was done for Southern Gateway communities in Columbus, OH. This will allow residents of Milo Grogan to access a variety of data relevant to their plight. Due to the fact that the EJSCREEN maps can provide data at the local level, they serve to provide the much-needed attention to vulnerable communities that may be in need of further scientific review, analysis or policy changes [50,51].

RESULTS

Refinement of our customized PPGIS portal www.mappler.info/ohio for residents of the Milo Grogan community will be used to;

1) post ongoing environmental related issues;
2) administer an environmental exposure survey
3) assess impacts on resiliency
4) assess indicators of health-related well being; and
5) assist in the design and delivery of an environmental health literacy curriculum to Milo Grogan residents

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Research Project Title: Blackened tradition: A performance study of black bodies and classical music genres

Student Presenter: Cyrah Ward

Faculty Mentor: Daneil Roberts

Faculty Mentor Department: Dance

Research Abstract: Within the world of dance, traditional balletic technique is seen as prized currency: big stage ballets with classical music are the most recognized form of concert stage dance. Through my research, I am challenging the idea that classical music is best paired with Eurocentric bodies of sameness. I am interested in how modern/contemporary movement on a black body paired with classical music will change not only the stereotypes associated with classical music but also the choreographic/artistic possibilities of African-American performers.

My artistic process consists of a self-exploration through movement improvisation to different genres of music. I documented my own exploratory process in conjunction with my dancers in order to track our movement tendencies, create a movement bank to draw from, as well as observe growth within our improvisational studies. I researched various Baroque artists from Domenic Scarlatti to Johann Bach. Additionally, I studied the history of blacks in concert dance by reading Brenda Dixon Gottschild's 'Digging the Africanist Aesthetic'. In the midst of my research I attended the International Association of Blacks in dance and participated in a workshop facilitated by Urban Bush Women professional dance company in Brooklyn, New York. Urban Bush Women is a company that uses dance as a platform to address current political issues. Within their workshop I researched black radicals within history as well as discovered ways to further my solo improvisational practice.

My research challenges the physical aesthetic expectations associated with concert stage performances. The three solos I have crafted break the stereotypes of what blacks in dance are capable of, through a presentation of black women as equally capable bodies, in a very unique rhythmic artistic light. I am really looking to address the political barriers within dance by presenting more than just the beauty of black bodies; rather, the idea that classical music genres should be colorless in their ability to be paired with performers with many racial ethnicities without it being a visual taboo.
Research Project Title: Remembering political events together: experimental evidence from the collaborative remembering paradigm

Student Presenter: Ryan Moore

Faculty Mentor: Jason Coronel

Faculty Mentor Department: Communication

Research Abstract: People often remember facts and events related to politics with the help of others. Surprisingly, despite the prevalence of collaborative remembering in political life, existing research has primarily examined how people remember political facts without the aid of others. In the research reported here, we use the collaborative remembering paradigm from psychology to examine, for the first time, the effects of collaboration on the retrieval of political information from memory. We do this in the context of two types of political information: 1) issue positions of political candidates and 2) numerical facts relevant to public policies (e.g., immigration statistics). We find that collaborative groups were more likely to remember accurate political information when compared to individuals remembering alone, but these gains from collaboration were unlikely to stay with individuals when they went back to remembering alone. Our study highlights attention to a prevalent resource to which individuals often have access to when they attempt to retrieve political information from memory - other individuals.
Research Project Title: Role model effect and girls of color- Building the next generation of leaders

Student Presenter: Allison Susor

Faculty Mentor: Wendy Smooth

Faculty Mentor Department: Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies

Research Abstract: In this research project, I examine the significance of diversity in role models for girls of color. This research looks at role models for girls of color. The phrase girls of color refers to any girl who identifies racially beyond the category of white. Existing research chronicling young girls’ experiences focuses largely on girls who are white, middle class, and suburban. This is not always explicitly mentioned, but a lack of intersectionality in the data about young girls and role model behaviors suggest that all girls share similar experiences and share similar reactions to role models regardless of race and gender. In my research I explore the messages girls of color receive regarding role models. I argue that the presence of role models that align closely with girls’ own identities matters for creating possibilities for leadership in their own lives. “You can’t be what you can’t see” is a common phrase used when talking about role models and young girls. Several after school programs push this narrative relating solely to gender, but I argue that it has implications for race as well. In working with Dr. Wendy Smooth on her Girls of Color as Social Change Agents leadership project, I am able to draw upon data from focus groups with girls of color ages 8-14 years of age from across the city of Columbus. I utilize the words of girls of color to build an understanding of their attitudes on role models in developing their leadership behaviors. Focusing on the next generation of leaders has always been a priority, but I intend to find ways to make it so that young women of color will have those same leadership foundations that set them up for a successful future.
Research Project Title: Tobacco advertising and ID-checking based on store type in Franklin County, Ohio

Student Presenter: Nirupama Muralidharan

Faculty Mentor: Megan Roberts

Faculty Mentor Department: Health Behavior and Health Promotion, College of Public Health

Research Abstract: Background

Around 90% of adults start using tobacco before they turn 18 years old. Convenience stores have the highest rates of tobacco advertising and selling tobacco to minors when compared to other tobacco retailers (supermarkets, drugstores, etc.). Prior to the widespread implementation of Tobacco 21, a policy which increases the legal purchasing age of tobacco products from 18 to 21, it is important to establish a baseline for ID checks and tobacco advertising in Franklin County.

Methods

During summer 2017, undergraduate fieldworkers (aged 20-21) visited a random sample of 125 tobacco retailers across Franklin County, Ohio. Stores were selected through proportional sampling, stratified by location in the county. Fieldworkers collected data on store features including store type (e.g., convenience store, mass merchandiser) and external tobacco advertising (measured as overall impressions such as discreet, moderate, etc.). At the end of each visit, one 21-year-old attempted to purchase a pack of cigarettes and recorded whether they were asked for identification (ID; federal law requires ID checks for anyone who looks under age 27). ANOVA and Chi-square tests analyzed the relationships between store type and (1) tobacco advertising and (2) ID checks.

Results

Overall, 68% of stores were categorized as convenience stores/tobacco shops, 16.8% as grocery stores/mass merchandisers, 9.6% as hookah/vape shops, and 5.6% as other. Most (60.8%) of these stores had some external advertising for tobacco products, and advertising was greatest among convenience stores/tobacco shops (p<.001). Among the stores where cigarettes were purchased, 60.7% did not conduct an ID check. ID checks did not occur at 65.5% of the convenience stores/tobacco shops nor at 40.0% of the grocery stores/mass merchandisers (p=0.04).

Conclusions

Grocery stores and mass merchandisers are more likely than convenience stores and tobacco shops to check the IDs of young people attempting to purchase tobacco. To ensure Tobacco 21 legislation is effective, it will be important for stakeholders to invest more resources into policy enforcement. Furthermore, training and outreach to convenience store and tobacco shop employees will be critical to the policy’s success.
Research Project Title: The racialized juvenile justice system: a governmentality analysis of youth incarceration and resistance in Ohio

Student Presenter: Madeline Marshall

Faculty Mentor: Nancy Ettlinger

Faculty Mentor Department: Geography

Research Abstract: This project examines an aspect of the "hot button issue" of mass incarceration that is often overlooked in academic works: youth incarceration, specifically in Ohio. There is little scholarship on youth incarceration, and the focus of that work lacks attention to race, which is crucial to understanding the unequal incarceration of youth of color and larger mentalities involved. Further, analyses tend to focus on large scale theories, to the exclusion of individual experience and action. This project will examine the racialization of youth incarceration and identify productive methods by which the problems of dehumanization of incarcerated youth, unfair treatment/protocol in courts, and unequal resource allocation can be resolved.

Method:

In addition to a critical review of scholarly literature, I interviewed members of two different organizations, Ohio's Juvenile Justice Coalition (JJC) and OSU's BuckeyeREACH, dedicated to resolving problems of youth incarceration. My aim was to discover the ways in which these organizations strategized to target specific, problematic practices of youth incarceration. I received approval from the IRB.

Results:

I found that BuckeyeREACH focused on individuals already trapped in the cycle of youth incarceration and how to "break them out" through education and art, whereas JJC was able to interact with the judicial system in Ohio by using new data collection to counter the problematic nature of the data currently being collected by the state of Ohio. BuckeyeREACH used strategies to humanize the youth already incarcerated to themselves and others, focusing on education on social issues and using art as a way to re-access and share emotions that were often stifled. JJC, however, noticed that the judicial system's budget and practices were extremely reliant on data for their underlying reasoning, and sought to alter the amount and types of data being collected in order to tell a more complete story of youth incarceration in Ohio. These interviews paired with a critical review of scholarly literature, which allowed for further understanding of the use of art as resistance (against, for instance, hypermasculinity) and multi-scalar analysis allowed for realization of the effectiveness and reasons behind JJC and BuckeyeREACH's actions.

Conclusion:
Although members of both groups shared concerns that their successes with individual youths were “small” victories, both nonetheless effectively identified and acted on specific aspects of the larger problem of racialized youth incarceration. Both projects sought, among other things, to rehumanize youth of color in the eyes of both themselves and others so as to create paths for victories against racialized youth incarceration. BuckeyeREACH evidenced that even individual success stories can be a part of breaking a larger stigma, and JJC showed just how powerful changing of data and language can be to altering larger understandings of specific populations.
Research Project Title: You are playing with people's lives - how city-building videogames represent the public

Student Presenter: William Plumley

Faculty Mentor: Tijs van Maasakkers

Faculty Mentor Department: City & Regional Planning

Research Abstract: This project explores how city-building videogames represent the public across four different themes: visual presentation, biography and demography, their need for and use of the city’s amenities and services, and how the people can express their approval and dissent. City-building videogames, having drawn inspiration from urban planning, are quickly becoming a part of the planning profession itself. University instructors build lessons around playtime, and cities are using these games as practical tools for visualization and public engagement. The genre is not without critics, though, and many call out how these games portray their cities’ inhabitants as a persistent problem. By looking at a broader sample of games than typically seen in published literature, this project aims to present a more complete picture of how the genre approaches this frequent concern. To accomplish this, the four games—Cities: Skylines, SimCity, Tropico 5, and Urban Empire—are evaluated in the four themes according to a rubric which clearly expands upon each one. This model focuses on variables, systems, and mechanics that are explicitly present or missing in the game, in order to collect relatively objective data in what can be a subjective experience. The analysis of the four games takes the form of cross-comparison according to the rubric, incorporating principles and literature from planning and related fields where appropriate, and the discussion following focuses on how these findings can be applied to planning instructors and game designers.