In June 1997, the Board of Higher Education established a free-standing honors college of distinction at the University of Massachusetts Amherst called Commonwealth College. This organization has since approved Commonwealth Honors Programs at 24 public higher education institutions including community colleges, state colleges and all UMass institutions. As an accredited Commonwealth Honors Program institution, each semester Massasoit Community College's honors students produce semester-long honors papers and projects. This booklet reprints the essays written by the recipients of the Fall 2020 Honor Garden Scholarship. This booklet also represents a portion of honors students' research in abstract format and produced in various academic disciplines under the tutelage of students' respective faculty sponsors.
HONORS ABSTRACTS

Each of the abstracts in this collection describes an individual research project of students enrolled in Honors courses. These Honors courses include Seminar in Ethics and individual Honors Directed Studies.

Student abstracts are the original work of the student and based on personal study and research.
Effects of Social Media on Teenagers

The use of social media platforms among teenagers has become increasingly popular. Over 90 percent of teenagers use social media, and approximately 75 percent have at least one active social media profile by age 17. These platforms are playing a vital role in entertaining and educating teenagers. Social media helps teenagers make new friends and also keeps them in touch with existing friends. People who oppose the growth of social media question if the platforms are creating positive impacts on teenagers or promoting negative ones. Some argue that social media causes mental health illnesses and other harmful issues such as cyberbullying. Critics also argue that social media platforms increase the rates of sexual harassment and sexual assault. Researchers find that people in developed countries such as the United States spend more time on social media platforms compared to people in developing countries. Additionally, people question if some social media platforms are more damaging than others. However, despite negative consequences of social media, it should still remain a part of one’s life, but access should be delayed until eighteen years old. This project explores current research on the pros and cons of social media to better understand why teenagers should wait until they are eighteen before having access to social media.
Effectiveness of the internet: Political activism

The use of the internet for activism is becoming increasingly popular, and youths are at the forefront of using social media's numerous advantages to fight for causes that are important. From Black Lives Matter to Bring Back Our Girls, social media is playing a great role in activism all around the world. Beginning with the use of email to protest in 1990, the internet has not only become the most popular means of activism, but it has also strengthened the traditional ways people fight for causes. Social media is effective for various reasons; the most vital reason is it has broken the barriers of communications that are present in traditional ways of protesting. Within minutes, people all over the world can connect and create awareness about a specific event. One of the biggest protests about immigration policies in the early 2000s in California was organized on Facebook. By the late 2000s, Facebook had also gained popularity and allowed people another social media outlet for activism. Twitter and Instagram were introduced and gained popularity in the early 2010s. By the mid-2010s, hashtags were introduced, and hashtag culture has played a dominant role in online activism. Social media is, however, not without its fault. People who oppose the growing popularity of social media have highlighted the spread of misinformation and questioned its effectiveness. It is evident that social media will continue to be the most popular platform for activism for present and future generations. This project explores the history of internet activism to better understand how the internet has become the most important platform for activism and how social media companies like Facebook and Twitter have to recognize the magnitude of their responsibility to proactively prevent threats on their platforms and also discuss options while offering suggestions for improving how to do so.
Privatization of Prisons: Possession of Humans

How did private prisons become profitable? Privatization of prisons and the captivity of human beings has grown into a massive business where those who profit view these prisons as real estate investments and political gain. The private prison sector profits by dehumanizing people of their dignity through integrating cheap labor and forcible prison terms, only to feed the pockets of investors, politicians, and private prison owners. The privatization of government agencies has been a method to save money, quality, and be more efficient. The government must keep a consistent rate of 90% capacity in private prisons to avoid using tax-payers dollars to pay for any percentage of prisoners lower than agreed in the contract. Additionally, the government must meet the guidelines and standards of contracts for the private prison industries to profit. With the support of online database research, this paper examines and discusses the start of private prisons under the Ronald Reagan administration in 1983, the corporations that built private prisons, and explores local state governments’ involvement in contributing to the success of the private prison sector.
Human Trafficking

Human trafficking (or modern slavery) is known as the abuse, and rough transportation of people without their consent. It evolved in the United States with the Atlantic slave trade, and it continues today. Human trafficking leaves its victims traumatized, sick, and sometimes dead. The United States and governments around the world and other associations have worked thoroughly to bring an end to this matter, but human trafficking continues. Associations and government officials continue their fight to end human trafficking, but it has not stopped. Through researching on the Massasoit Library databases, this paper discusses the beginnings of human trafficking, the current state of human trafficking, legal practices in place to decrease it, and contributes ideas to the current strategies in place to stop human smuggling.
Online Education for Elementary Students

Online education for elementary students became a popular topic of discussion when school departments across the country decided to close in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Beneficially, online learning opens students’ minds to research opportunities that teachers alone cannot provide. However, online learning has made socialization among elementary students difficult, which is important for their social development. Through qualitative and quantitative research, this paper explores and examines how online learning has hindered elementary students’ abilities to gain new knowledge, its drastic effects on elementary students, and contributes reasonable and logical ideas to the ongoing conversation about how to improve the learning experience for all online elementary school students. More specifically, implementing the “Miss Beals Act of 2021,” would require proper training for elementary teachers regarding educating students online through better supervision, communication, and knowledge.
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Brook Farm: A Melting Pot of Individualism

In the early nineteenth century, George Ripley, a prominent figure of the Transcendentalist Movement, established a utopian community in Roxbury, Massachusetts. This project was known as the Brook Farm Institute of Agriculture and Education. Its mission was to grant the individual the ability to pursue their freedom of thought without the constraints and pressures of the greater society. Using primary sources and other articles published in academic journals that document the transgressions at Brook Farm, this paper identifies the factors which influenced the creation of the community in 1841 and the circumstances which led to its disbandment in 1847. Brook Farm represents Ripley’s paradoxical interpretation of the transcendentalist ideology, which resulted from its integration of individualism within a communal setting. However, its ultimate demise resulted from an attempt to address issues of labor and financial instability that arose in the community, Brook Farm reorganized and embraced the socialist philosophy of Fourierism in 1844. This transformed the project into the Brook Farm Phalanx. The amalgamation of Fourierism, on top of the foundation of Transcendentalism, created a contradictory and unstable environment which contributed to the community’s collapse.
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Book Censorship in Public Institutions: A Breach of Intellectual Freedom  

In the United States, an individual’s intellectual freedom is protected under the First Amendment of the Constitution. However, the practice of book censorship violates these rights to freedom because it silences opposing viewpoints and controls the content of available books. Using data accumulated by the American Library Association over the past twenty years and other research articles that document the numerous cases of banned books, this paper identifies and addresses the threat that the censorship of written publications has towards adolescents. By suppressing the information available to young adults in public schools and libraries, book censorship cripples intellectual development and hampers the learning of essential skills, such as critical thinking. When diverse subjects or controversial texts are targeted and removed, the reader is denied the ability to view alternative perspectives and form educated conclusions. The ethical dilemma of book censorship in public institutions is built around societal bias and a conflict of interests, where the removal of a book represents the promotion of one belief over the condemnation of another, which is a direct infringement on the rights of intellectual freedom.
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Elizabeth Keckley and Maya Angelou: Persevering Women  

Elizabeth Keckley was born into slavery in 1818. She spent the first three decades of her life as a slave and went on to become a modiste for First Lady Mary Todd Lincoln. Poet Dr. Maya Angelou was born in 1928 and was a young child at the height of the Great Depression. Both women went on to write and specifically shared their experiences of being Black women in America. A close reading of Keckley’s book, Behind the Scenes or, Thirty Years a Slave and Four Years in the White House, and one of Angelou’s poem, Still I Rise, reveals both women facing similar obstacles and both writing about similar themes such as perseverance, empathy, and the white washing of history. Both Keckley and Angelou’s works serve as accounts of their experiences as Black women which are often hidden. This paper utilizes scholarly articles to compare and contrast both Keckley and Angelou’s writing styles as they share their experiences that took place more than one hundred years apart from one another.
Supreme Court Vacancies During an Election Year

The death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg left a vacancy on the United States Supreme Court just six weeks before the 2020 Presidential election. Ginsburg’s granddaughter shared one of the last moments they had together and what she said to her: “My most fervent wish is that I will not be replaced until a new president is installed” (Nichols). Immediately after her death, a political frenzy ensued. President Donald Trump immediately began looking to fill her seat, while many Democrats were angered because of how Republicans handled a 2016 vacancy which was also a Presidential election year. As a result, the issue became partisan rather than looking at what is best for the country as a whole. Justice Ginsburg told Americans she could not imagine what the country would be—with Donald Trump as our president. For the country, it could be four years. For the court, it could be— [something she did not] want to contemplate...” (Nichols). The Supreme Court, part of the Judicial Branch, is one of the three branches of the U.S. government. If working as designed, the Supreme Court should operate with impartiality, and put “integrity, the U.S. Constitution, and the rule of law above partisan interests” (Flynn). This paper will seek to explore the ethics regarding how our country should proceed with a filling vacancy on the Supreme Court. Because there is no set law, we can only look at precedent and the short- and long-term consequences that accompany it. The United States of America is not the same as it was when our forefathers drafted the Constitution and the Supreme Court decisions should reflect this difference.
The Hidden History of the Congo Free State: The Case for Remembering Leopold II’s Absolutism

In the late nineteenth century, as part of a broad mass colonization of Africa by European powers, Belgian King Leopold II carved out a region in the Congo which served as his own personal fiefdom. The Congo Free State, as it was called, became a primary producer of rubber, hardwoods, and ivory using indigenous Congolese people as coerced or slave laborers. Kept generally hidden from the foreign press, protestant missionaries, and humanitarian groups, Leopold II oversaw the extraction of resources for his personal profit and for the profit of a small selection of private European corporations. It became the largest “private estate” ever acquired by a single individual, and within its borders brutal working conditions, starvation, and mass violence organized by Leopold’s private army led to the deaths of over ten million Congolese people, an estimated half of the population within 23 years. Once the atrocities in the Congo were discovered and made public—“the first international atrocity in the age of the telegraph,” according to the historian Adam Hochschild—the Belgian Parliament forced Leopold to turn over his ownership of the region in 1908. However, his colonial efforts led to a prolonged depopulation of the Congo in the following decades. He died in 1909, without fanfare and with his private wealth set to pass to his children. Today, over 110 years after his death, much of the region’s instability can be tied directly to Leopold’s extractive colonization, and yet he is rarely mentioned alongside other now-infamous figures with similar histories of violence. Through an examination of the Congo Free State and the exploitative colonization of Central Africa, this paper presents the case for Leopold II’s inclusion in the pantheon of singular historical figures responsible for mass death and all its social, economic, and political legacies of the present.
Invisibility Is Not a Superpower: An Analysis of the Harmful Effects of Isolation on Adolescents Mental Health

Adolescence is a critical period of development that includes cognitive, physical, behavioral, and emotional-social transformations. Using various case studies, adolescent psychology journals, and scholarly articles, this research seeks to communicate the harmful effects of isolation on an adolescent’s mental health during this period of rapid development. Adolescents that are considered to be socially isolated are those who report lacking meaningful peer relationships. This negative perception of one’s relationships is detrimental, as adolescents rely more heavily on their relationships with peers. Adolescents who are socially isolated are at an increased risk for developing psychologic disorders such as anxiety and depression, suicidal ideation, and low self-esteem. Protective factors in an adolescent’s life such as positive family connectedness, school connectedness, and academic success can combat against social isolation that results from poor peer relationships. The research conducted in this paper stresses not only the importance of an adolescent’s perception of their relationships, but also the damaging effects of isolation on an adolescence’s mental health that impact development into adulthood.
Monkey See, Monkey Do: An Ethical Analysis of Gender Roles in Advertising to Children

In an era that encourages gender inclusivity advertisers appear to be out of step with this societal progression. Using a combination of various case studies and child psychology and gender studies journals, this research serves to bring awareness to the harmful binary gender roles perpetuated in advertisements geared toward children. Many advertisements geared toward girls seek to groom submissive, domesticated adult women, while the advertisements geared toward boys encourage not only creativity and critical thinking, but also perpetuate toxic masculinity. The research conducted in this paper corroborates the vitality of dismantling the binary gender roles imposed on the impressionable minds of adolescents viewing advertisements. These harsh dichotomous gender lines could be rewritten if advertisers propose more gender neutral, and therefore gender inclusive advertising for their products.
The Death Penalty

Over the years, it has become clear that the Death Penalty is cruel and unusual punishment. No human being, no matter how wrong he or she is, deserves a punishment of this gravity. The problem with the Death Penalty is that it is equivalent to paying evil for evil. The only positivity that emanates from the Death Penalty is the laws and statutes that govern its implementation. For example, in the state of Texas, if an individual intentionally commits murder of an individual under the age of six years, the individual is subject to punishment by death. This is a very specific situation, whereas in Massachusetts, statutes concerning the Death Penalty are a violation against the state constitution; therefore, there will be no execution, even though the Death Penalty sentence is given. The main problem with the Death Penalty lies with the fact that mere men are charged with its execution. No one knows what truly goes on in another person’s mind, and the true intentions of another person. Therefore, the notion that another person can determine the course of someone else’s life is preposterous. In fact, the Death Penalty managed to decline last year, dramatically nationally, by analyzing verifiable historical analysis from the 1970’s to 2020. This shows that in as much as there are compassionate people out there, there are also people who seek justice. Instead of the state executing people for killing people, the guilty should be allowed to live their whole lives to think and reflect on their actions. This project seeks to explore the moral dilemma of the Death Penalty and the complicated circumstances surrounding and involved in a Death Penalty conviction.
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The True Face of Marriage

Marriage is the union between two people in which they commit to love, respect, and care for each other until death. During the early 20th century, marriage was based on the interests of men. Authorities did not care about the well-being of women, their safety, or their happiness. This mindset contributed to gender inequality, with women being victims and targets of abuse. Matrimony made women feel miserable, inferior, and unfortunate. Subsequently, women began to revolt against their situation, contributing to the rise of the women's suffrage movement, fighting for their rights and gender equality. Thus, in 1920, the 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States gave women the right to vote. Using research from the Massasoit databases, this paper performs close readings of author Kate Chopin's short story “Story of an Hour” and author Susan Glaspell's one-act play “Trifles,” and explores and discusses the concerns and opinions about identity, isolation, and joyless marriage during the early 20th century.
Vaccine: The Power of Immunization

The vaccine is a powerful weapon, and since its development in the 18th century, it has drastically reduced many diseases such as smallpox and polio throughout the world. The vaccine’s function is to stimulate the immune system to produce antibodies to protect the body against the invasion of viruses and bacteria. Vaccine production requires the use of weakened, inactivated, or attenuated microorganisms. As a result, when a person receives the vaccine, the immune system acts directly on the microorganism to prevent the disease’s development. Thus, vaccines are considered an effective and safe substance for protecting against infectious diseases. Despite the evidence that vaccines are safe, many people are anti-vax and have doubts about vaccine benefits. The anti-vaxxer does not believe in the potential effectiveness of vaccines and claims that it can harm people’s health with low immune systems, cancer, and severe allergies. In the same way, the anti-vaxxer movement points out that vaccines cause autism in children. However, the CDC states that there is no connection between vaccinations and developing autism. Therefore, it is essential to emphasize that doubts about vaccines are due to the lack of information about its advantages and the consequences of not being vaccinated. In the meantime, the world is experiencing a threatening situation where the creation of a vaccine is required to fight the current life-threatening Coronavirus disease. Thus, it is crucial to educate people to understand the need for vaccination. This paper will discuss the ethical dilemmas of vaccines, its discovery and success over time, the anti-vaxxer movement, and why people should be vaccinated.
Transgender Athletes in Competitive Sports

Societal evolution and continuously increasing acceptance of the non-binary gender spectrum has brought significant awareness to the inequalities of traditional sex-segregated sports policies. Over the past ninety years, transgender and intersex athletes have struggled to find where they belong within this dichotomy and instead have been victims of discrimination and public humiliation. Subsequently, governing officials have failed to secure policies that balance the inclusion, competitive equity, and safety for athletes of all participating genders. Utilizing a collection of database research, this paper will explore the real-life experiences of gender diverse athletes throughout history and the impacts their stories have had on progressing gender policies as well as the unsubstantial research and invalid stereotypes that continue to prolong the implementation of an equitable solution.
A Survey of the Various Algorithms Used in Games and Their Relative Efficiencies

The success of video games as a market has attracted a number of software engineers and designers to help build and implement algorithms to run them. These professionals help to bring about innovations in coding that play a large part in how successful a game might become, to the point that a game might live or die based on how efficiently and bug-free it runs. This paper will perform a survey of the different algorithms used in games and game engines, from physics calculations and detections to artificial intelligence decision making, and study how they compare to each other in terms of performance and versatility. This comparison will be based on measuring these algorithms’ run times, correctness, and efficiency against each other.
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Treatment, Innovation, and the Ownership of Ideas: The Ethics of Pharmaceutical Patents

The current intellectual property law concerning medicine is ostensibly written as an attempt to balance keeping medicine affordable and keeping the development of new medicine profitable. By providing pharmaceutical companies with a limited window in which they have complete control over their new drug, the law incentivizes drug producers to develop new medicines, while also ensuring once the window is over the drug becomes more readily available to the people who need it. However, through lack of regulatory oversight, these companies are able to treat their products and patients in ways past what the letter of the law would imply is acceptable. This paper will examine several real world examples of how medical intellectual property law affects the drug market, and how pharmaceutical lobbyists and corporations circumvent laws meant to keep medicine affordable for the people who need it.
Religion and LGBTQIA+ Rights: Moving Forward

Although the Stonewall Riots became the catalyst for radical change in national and social spaces, exploring the history of the LGBTQIA+ rights movements revealed many of today’s forms of discrimination and persecution experienced by this marginalized group, resulting from archaic religious belief systems. Religious leaders within their faith-based organizations publicly used their power of authority and influence on social and political platforms. FBOs used public venues to voice their ideology and opinions on homosexuality, non-conforming from FBOs’ hetero-normal values and religious teachings. As shifts of views began to change by followers of religious sects favored greater rights and protections, religious leaders continued to push towards the opposite. Religions like Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, and Hinduism continued to shift towards the inclusion of the LGBTQIA+ community. Religion became one of the nexuses towards a change in their perceptions of LGBTQIA+ peoples within their communities. In the US alone, cooperative research data suggested that at least eight out of twelve religious sects had a seventy-percent acceptance rate of the gay community, showing a softer inclusivity approach. This paper provides a comparative analysis of influential religious leaders and FBOs have historically placed and a futuristic proposal in effectively changing the level of perceptions, stigma, and stereotypical non-inclusion that citizenry has established within the LGBTQIA+ community.
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**South Korea and The Conscientious Objector**

The ratified Constitution of the Republic of Korea on July 17th, 1948, it states, “Article 19: All citizens shall enjoy freedom of conscience. Article 20: (1) All citizens shall enjoy freedom of religion. (2) No state religion shall be recognized, and church and state shall be separated.” This is a clear message saying that all South Korean citizens should enjoy the freedoms of following their religion, etc. It allows citizens to make decisions based on their conscience. However, this is untrue in South Korea, as hundreds of thousands over the years have been sent to prison for their beliefs. In fact, all male citizens are required to serve approximately a year and a half in the South Korean Military. Though some religions are pacifistic in nature, those who follow pacifist religions should not have to join an aggressive group like the military. Many in South Korea claim that their religion forbids them from serving, but instead of looking for alternative options for these individuals, the South Korean government imprisons them. To many, this contradictory logic seems unfair to those in these religions, as the South Korean constitution clearly states that they should have the freedom not to be forced into service. This project seeks to explore the ethical dilemma of the growing movement of Conscientious Objectors in South Korea and their opposition, whether or not it is a constitutional freedom of the people (during a conflict) to not be forced into military service, and who qualifies as a Conscientious Objector, and how to determine/identify a person truly held back by their conscience.
U.S. Involvement in the Middle East: A Modern and Historical Ethical Injustice

Over the last several decades, the United States has become much more involved in the affairs of the Middle East and, through means of force or coercion, attempted to orchestrate said affairs in a direction advantageous to American interests. By means of sanction, undercover funding, and outright military conflict, the United States has interfered with local governments and inadvertently aided in the creation of some of the region’s current issues of terrorism, ethnic conflict, and general political dysfunction. This paper examines the historical and recent foundations of how Western nations developed colonial and economic interests in the region, why the Middle East has recently become such an important area for American power projection, and how the historical wrongs inflicted upon the region can be remedied without sacrificing national security interests.
You're Canceled: Exploring the Ethical Ramifications of Cancel Culture

While social media is typically used for fun, a newer use has emerged in recent years: cancel culture. The cancel culture movement started growing in popularity in the late 2010’s. Essentially, cancel culture refers to a collective group shaming or “canceling” of public figures online. Although some liken it to a totalitarian control effort, cancel culture has been a driving force behind exposing abusers, sexual predators, and generally holding people accountable for their actions. In some cases, a trending topic on Twitter is all it takes to end a person’s career. This begs the question, do we have the right to cancel someone, just because we can? Through research on the Massasoit Library Databases, this paper explores and examines the historical and contemporary impacts of cancel culture and proposes solutions to this long term problem.
Climate Change: The Man-Made Environmental Disaster

Climate Change is a rising topic among scientists and among peers. In the past, fossil fuel lobbyists have broadcasted misinformation about climate change, which incentivized lawmakers to develop policies that benefitted the fossil fuel industry at the expense of the environment. Yet, the burning of fossil fuels is known to be the highest contributor to Climate Change. As a result, this caused a massive climate denial movement, hurting the progress of green technologies and laws. This paper will explain (with significant details) what humans have done to change the environment on Earth. With the support of research into scientific studies on carbon emissions, ocean acidity, global temperatures, and microplastics, this paper explores and considers the human drive for fossil fuels, single-use plastics, how these hungers cause significant damage to the environment, and suggests a positive alternative that contributes to the ongoing movement in decreasing the negative effects of Climate Change.
The Ethics of Modern Cybernetic Technologies

What qualifies as an ethical step in the evolution of mankind? This is a question the modern generation is faced with, as new cybernetic technologies are being developed at unprecedented rates. These technologies, such as the Neuralink Brain-Computer Interface, make promises such as the advanced integration of bionics into the medical field, communication between the user and the machine without the need of a third-party, and even theoretical artificial immortality by digitalizing the mind. With Neuralink recently receiving approval for human testing, people everywhere will soon see how far the field of cybernetics has come since Norbert Wiener originally defined it in 1948. This paper examines the political, social, and religious concerns regarding the rapid advancement of modern cybernetic technology, the technology itself, and the current leaders in the field through the use of historical analysis of First-Order and Second-Order Cybernetics, cybernetics in science fiction, the attitudes of the transhumanist movement, and general reactions to the progression of technologies such as Neuralink.
Tobacco Industry Manipulation: Is Vaping the Better Alternative to Smoking?

Cigarettes have been in question ever since the 1960s. Health experts exposed tobacco companies because of medical evidence suggesting that cigarettes were causing cancer and other illnesses. Health professionals acknowledged many illnesses and early death could be avoided when people quit smoking. In response, cigarette companies began to advertise their products as healthful and even featured healthy fun-loving people in their advertisements. Applying a collection of database research, this paper explores the history of smoking and how many youths of today are becoming physically engaged with vaping. Presently, teens view vaping as a healthier alternative to smoking because they feel there will be no long-term consequences on their health. Youths are in need of additional education within the school systems about the biological and harmful effects of nicotine on the still-developing brains of young people.
The Significance of Human Nudity in Figurative Art

Figurative representation is an artistic form that references and gains inspiration from the human figure. Nudity has been part of art ever since humans began creating it, which is as far back as 25,000 BP. The history of nudity in figurative art has caused controversy and reason to argue over what is morally or ethically responsible artwork. The entire world has long oversexualized nudity, which has not allowed room for true appreciation of the beauty behind the engineering, complexity, and significance of the human body. The sensitivity surrounding nudity makes it powerful in shaping the way people view and understand other individuals, their creativity, and their values. In artwork, this allows for mutual vulnerability between artists and their viewers. Each and every one of us was born naked, but because of some very complex social issues, our relationships with our bodies and to the bodies of other people have become distorted. It is important to connect with ourselves; it would be a shame to ignore the natural beauty that is under the clothing we all wear. There should be continued conversation about nudity in art because it is important to distinguish artwork that is made simply to offend or insult others from artwork that respectfully challenges traditions. This type of creativity is needed to push the envelope within the artistic world. This paper will explore the important question of whether or not the inclusion of nudity in art has true and genuine societal value by dissecting the purposes and meanings behind the creations of several pieces of artwork from present day to over tens of thousands of years ago.
America, along with the rest of the world, has long struggled with agreeing on politics, both outside and within the medical profession. The morality and ethicality of the medical profession is an extremely important part of society to continuously discuss because it directly affects the outcome of life and death. The Hippocratic Oath, a moral and ethical guide for practicing medical doctors, was written and put in place in the 5th century. At first, many Greek and Roman physicians did not faithfully follow this oath, but this changed over time. Euthanasia, the act of assisting in killing someone who is extremely ill to relieve them of extreme suffering, is supposed to give the patient control over their death, along with a certain level of dignity that they would not have gotten otherwise. In general, suicide is a very personal subject for the majority of the population. However, physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia serve a very specific purpose in allowing the ill, like patients in an irreversible coma, to end their lives peacefully. From the power Christianity had in the beginning of the 12th Century, to the infamous, Dr. Haiselden, and his 1917 film on physician-assisted suicide of deformed newborns, to the countless changes in legislature, this paper will explore the journey of the historically controversial topic of physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia.
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Corporal Punishment: African Children and Africans in the USA  

Corporal punishment is defined as inflicting pain to redirect an undesired behavior. Over time, parents and teachers have struggled with implications involving corporal punishment and how children should be protected and loved. The objective of this research is to examine discipline practices and its effects on children in Africa, America, and the world. Despite its problems, the picture or image of the family as a sanctuary from the pressures and stresses of the outside world is one most humans hold dear. Centuries old methods of disciplining children are gradually being outlawed in the US and parts of the European Union. However, Africa, Britain, and some US states still use corporal punishment. Using books and journals from the Massasoit library databases, this paper presents qualitative research approaches through exploring the past and current methods of corporal punishment, seeks to better understand the approaches both parents and schools employ in handling students’ misbehaviors, and suggests alternate methods of discipline to positively influence misbehaving children.
Throughout our lives, music plays a huge role in our moods, self-expression, and memories. For my Honors Project I have decided to write a play exploring our relationship to different types of music and how it is interwoven with our values and innermost desires. The songs we like can be the most genuine indicators of how we feel. In a series of three vignettes, I will tell stories inspired by three different songs, each informed by interviews I held with friends and family members about memories they associate with different pieces of music. The story will begin at a record stand on a street corner, and will follow flashbacks of each customer, that they are reminded of because of the album they picked. I have now learned first-hand about the artistic process of theatre making, from outlining, to writing, to editing, and casting. Using resources about playwriting and dramatic structure from class, I seek to build a play that is substantial in its own right and follows some of the rules we learned about what makes a play interesting and well written.
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The Ethics of Standardized Testing

Standardized testing seemingly determines the fate of many college students today. These practices have been assets to the college board since the last century. We would assume SAT and ACT would be scored fairly for everyone—whether you are White, African American, Latino or part of any other minority group. (Also, whether you are in a low, middle, or high class.) Unfortunately, this is not the case. As standardized testing grew in popularity, discrimination against ethnicities and students who have lower incomes increased. Using research from Massasoit’s Library Databases, this paper attempts to answer the following questions: Why is it difficult to give those students the score they earned fairly? Why is it difficult to help schools and students in need to succeed? Why are SATs and ACTs being promoted as step forward for colleges when the opposite result occurs for students of color and low incomes?
The Commonwealth Honors Program invests in teaching students leadership skills as well as critical thinking skills suited for implementation across all professional endeavors.

Rachel M. Williams

COMMONWEALTH HONORS PROGRAM
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