RECENT SENIOR PROJECTS

American Studies Senior Capstones
Class of 2013

Amy Bean
Senior Special Project
Technology’s Evolving Role in History and Social Studies Education at Malden High School
Advisors: Steve Cohen & Phil Gay
This study of technology in the social studies classroom at Malden High School examines teacher preparation, collaboration, student involvement, and new methods and approaches to learning.

Jessie Belfer
Senior Honors Thesis
(Anti)Racist: A Critical Evaluation of Web-Based Anti-Racist Curricula
Advisors: Jean Wu & Thomas Chen
Using critical theory, and Kevin Kumashiro’s theory of Anti-Oppressive education, this thesis studies the promises and pitfalls of Anti-Racist education, examining the case study of Facing History and Ourselves, an organization that develops web-based “anti-racist” curricula.

Austin Bening
Senior Special Project
Remixing College
Advisors: Ronna Johnson & Howard Woolf
This project presents the paradox of college identity in two video remixes that pull clips from many mainstream college movies and commercials. An accompanying paper draws upon Vertov’s cinematic theories and Manovich’s ideals of visual style to elaborate remix montage and juxtaposition as a means to pit both implicit and explicit messages of collective imagination against one another.

Amsie Hecht
Senior Special Project
Enhancing and Expanding the College Food Rescue Movement: Critiques of Current Practices and Recommendations for Future Development
Advisors: Edith Balbach and Cora Roelofs
This paper takes a critical first look at the college food rescue movement, weighing the strengths and weaknesses of student-operated food rescue programs through a close examination of two different models of college food rescue – that of the Food Rescue Network and that of Tufts University.
Josephine Herman
Senior Honors Thesis
*Drawing Lines: El Pasoan Identity, Perception and Place in the Context of the Mexican Drug War*
Advisors: Edith Balbach & Steve Cohen
In the aftermath of thousands of murders related to clashes between drug cartels and Mexican state forces at the U.S.-Mexican border cities of El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, this thesis examines three social changes: a) anxiety among Chicano El Pasoans as their ability to live their Mexican heritage becomes restricted, b) change in migration patterns from border crossers to people who stay in one country, and c) increased awareness of the external gaze of Texas and the United States on El Paso.

Catherine Heyward
Senior Special Project
*Deepening the Pockets of America’s Richest Retailer: How the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act Subsidizes Walmart and Why It Matters for All Americans*
Advisors: Christina Sharpe & Cora Roelofs
While the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act may address inequitable access to often unaffordable healthcare, by expanding government programs and financial assistance to states and exchanges, it shifts the burden of healthcare costs for low-wage part-time employees onto taxpayer funded healthcare instead of maintaining employer responsibilities. This study examines the contradiction by which large corporations such as Walmart are unexpectedly benefiting.

Emily Higgins
Senior Honors Thesis
*Teaching Fairness: A Critical Race Ethnography and Analysis of Anti-Bias Education at the Eliot-Pearson Children’s School*
Advisors: Steve Cohen & Debbie LeeKeenan
This study illustrates and analyzes the implementation of Anti-Bias Education in the First and Second Grade classrooms at the Eliot-Pearson Children’s School from a Critical Race perspective.

Brionna Jimerson
Senior Special Project
*Never Let Anyone Know Your Process: Visions of Self, Love, Whiteness, and the Campus Newspaper as an Institution of Power and Instrument of Resistance at Tufts*
Advisors: Christina Sharpe & Karen Gould
The project is comprised of several pieces of visual art, 9 columns written and themed in *The Tufts Daily*, and a written component, engaging with questions of victimization, whiteness as property, and audience—through visual art and the written word—to provide a tangible and unavoidable link between the student’s
experiences at The Tufts Daily, and the function of campus media in upholding anti-black, macro-aggressive tensions.

**Sofia Leal**

Senior Special Project

*Challenging and Internalizing Stereotypes: Images and Themes of Gang Culture and Masculinity in Chicano Film*

Advisors: Adriana Zavala & Noe Montez

This senior special project examines how the Chicano directors of Luis Valdez’s *Zoot Suit* and Edward James Olmos’s *American Me*, challenge and internalize Hollywood’s stereotypes of masculinity and Chicano identity in gang-themed films.

**Natasha Link**

Senior Honors Thesis

*“The Academic, The Social, and The Relationable”: Upward Bound’s Multifaceted Approach to Expanding College Access*

Advisors: Steve Cohen & Linda Beardsley

Drawing on 21 in-depth interviews and qualitative research, this thesis is a case study of Upward Bound, a federal program that dates back to the 1960s and seeks to expand college access to low-income youth.

**Alex Lis-Perlis**

Senior Honors Thesis

*“Well, they reacted...differently”: Teachers of Color and Race-conscious PD Programs*

Advisors: Steve Cohen & Freeden Ouer

In a case study of a school that initiated race-focused professional development, this senior interviewed teachers about the relationship between race and achievement and assessed the uses of such programs for the goal of racial equity in schools.

**Lura Long**

Senior Honors Thesis

*Violent Triggers: Stop and Frisk, Terror and Tendencies Toward Violence*

Advisors: Jean Wu & Thomas Chen

This thesis is a study of Stop and Frisk, a program in which Black and Latino residents account for 52.7% of the New York City population yet make up 86.9% of the individuals stopped by police, analyzing social media, videos, reports, victim testimonies, and campaigns to document current practices of Stop and Frisk.

**Daniel Markowitz**

Senior Honors Thesis

*A Qualitative Study of Student Health Insurance Policy Change: The Future of the Student Health Insurance Market*

Advisors: Edith Balbach & Amy Lischko

This thesis studies the student health insurance market by means of interviews and insurance market data and literature, exploring methods including primary care, on-
site health centers, education, risk pooling, self-insurance, and self-insured consortia.

**Zoe Marmer**  
Senior Special Project  
**Directing Yellowman: Acknowledging the Knife and Healing the Wound**  
Advisors: Monica Ndounou & Thomas Chen  
This senior project studies racial narratives in performance, and chronicles the experience of directing the Pulitzer Prize nominated play, *Yellowman*, by Dael Orlandersmith.

**Lexi Sasanow**  
Senior Honors Thesis  
**The Black Question, the Jewish Question, and the Question of Survival: 1967 and the Rupture in the Black-Jewish Leftist Coalition in the United States**  
Advisors: Christina Sharpe & Joseph Litvak  
Many forces shaped, bent and tore the relationship between Black and Jewish people over the first half of the 20th century, including World War II, the creation of the state of Israel and the Civil Rights Movement. This thesis examines the historical and social reasons that 1967 was a singular moment of rupture in this coalition.

**Erica Satin-Hernandez**  
Senior Honors Thesis  
**Multicrit: A Critical Race Theory Framework for Understanding Multiraciality in the United States**  
Advisors: Sabina Vaught & David Harris  
This paper employs the concepts from Critical Race Theory to analyze race-based annulment cases that exemplify how the law constructs and litigates multiraciality as an identity harnessed for white gain and upholding white supremacy.

**Kimberly Situ**  
Senior Honors Thesis  
**A Counternarrative: A Working Class Asian American Student’s Struggle and Survival**  
Advisors: Jean Wu & Thomas Chen  
The 1965 Immigration Act led to an increase in the immigration of professional and well-educated Asian immigrants, which contrasted with the largely unskilled and uneducated laborers that had immigrated to the United States a century earlier. The visibility of this professional class altered the representations of Asian Americans as both perpetual foreigner and model minority. This thesis argues that these images silence working-class Asian American students and that Asian American Studies provides a space for these students to become visible, process the effects of dominant images, and recognize their own cultural wealth.

**Danny Solow**  
Senior Honors Thesis
Problematizing White Laughter: Performing Race in Stand-Up Comedy
Advisors: Christina Sharpe & Jean Wu
This thesis explores how different contemporary comedians (Dave Chappelle, Louis C.K., Daniel Tosh, and Margaret Cho) press the limits of mainstream discourse surrounding race, and how white audiences respond to criticisms of whiteness.

Amy Straus
Senior Honors Thesis
How Mental Health is Conceptualized and Understood at Tufts University
Advisors: Linda Sprague-Martinez & Heather Curtis
This thesis employs qualitative research methods to examine Tufts students’ and employees’ perceptions of mental health, as well as their awareness of available resources.