



*The
Evolutionary
Ingenuity
of*
LOVE

**Gulf Coast Intercollegiate Consortium
Academic Symposium 2019**

FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 2019 • 9 A.M. - 4 P.M. • LRC 131



WELCOME

Professor Dalel Serda

GCIC Academic Symposium Chair

Professor Dalel Serda works to offer students opportunities to engage in inquiry-driven undergraduate research that contributes to ongoing, cross-disciplinary conversations. She is a proponent of helping students gain habits of mind that foster self-regulation both inside and outside the college classroom. She hopes providing students a platform like today's symposium will help them gain the authority and knowhow necessary to pursue long-term learning and civic engagement.

Dr. Shinya Wakao

GCIC Academic Symposium Co-Chair

Dr. Wakao's research interests are political economy and voting behavior. His recent working papers cover voting behavior among Hispanic voters, campaign contributions and gerrymandering. In his course, Dr. Wakao introduces a variety of data and academic research in order to teach students how politics are related to every student's life as well as the importance of analyzing political phenomena objectively.

to College of the Mainland's seventh Gulf Coast Intercollegiate Consortium Academic Symposium 2019!

Students from a creative writing class and the politically-charged atmosphere of recent days drove us to ask the question about love. The theme for this year's symposium thus became, "The Evolutionary Ingenuity of Love." Though we may want to lay claim to it, scientists and psychologists argue love is definitely not only a human invention--arguably, animals use love as a mechanism supporting their offspring's survival. Researchers tell us love is a function resulting from complex brains. Human brains are masterfully complex; as a result, our versions of love can often be complicated and multi-faceted. Love is a mysterious notion. It both propels and stalls us individually and as a race. This theme asks us to probe love as a subject of inquiry and inspiration.

This year's theme is broad and lends itself to cross-disciplinary examination, which is the driving force of our academic symposium. Today's student scholar presenters promise to surprise us with their take on the theme. We invite you to peruse the presentation schedule and choose sessions that best suit your interests; when in sessions, we ask you engage actively with student presenters during Q&A. The aim is for them to grow as scholars during this experience and for their work to enrich the day's conversation concerning the theme.

Our hope for this symposium is that it serves multiple goals including enhancing students' communication skills, facilitating networking across the disciplines and colleges and helping students build self-confidence and feel ownership of their work.

Enjoy yourself and thank you for supporting student scholarship.

Sincerely,

Professors Dalel Serda and Shinya Wakao
GCIC Academic Symposium Co-Chairs

9:00am - 9:25am	Overview of Day's Events: Professors Dalel Serda and Shinya Wakao, GCIC Academic Symposium Co-Chairs	LRC 131
9:30am - 10:30am	Session 1A: Debaters' Roundtable "True Love Requires Discussion" Fibiola Alonso, Adrian Caraves, Alejandra Flores, Martez Jones, COM Advisor: Joni Delgado	LRC 213
9:30am - 10:30am	Session 1B: Evolution of Relationships "The Photographic Narrative of Relationships" Faith Wisner, COM Advisor: Kristy Peet "Jane Austen Shaped the Modern Romantic: Love as an Ideal" George Gonzales, COM Advisor: Dalel Serda "You Used to Call Me on My Cell Phone: Perception Through the Stages of a Relationship" Autumn Dilissio, Samantha Wylie, COM Advisor: Douglas Alvarez	LRC 255
9:30am - 10:30am	Session 1C: Expressions of Love "Texas DREAM Act" Rosecel Robles, COM Advisor: Shinya Wakao "Expression of Love: Gender" Mia Brown, COM Advisor: Dalel Serda "The Urgency of Expressing Parental, Familial, and Unconditional Love During Childhood" Fatimah Beydoun, COM Advisor: Dalel Serda	LRC 257
9:30am - 10:30am	Session 1D: Students' Roundtable "Love Thy Neighbor: Our Personal and Social Responsibility to Our Local Community" Brittany Gale, Michelle Navarro, Jenny Nowalk, COM Advisors: Dalel Serda, Madeline Jones	LRC 212B
10:40am - 11:40am	Session 2A: Students' Roundtable "Love and Desire in the Age of the Smartphone" Gabriela Johnson-Correia, Bree Mejia, Matthew Melvin, Gerrit Smith, Jaden Vuittonet, Alex Wrightington, COM Advisor: James Francis	LRC 213

10:40am - 11:40am	<p>Session 2B: Queering Gender “Just a Phase” Landon Spoth, COM Advisor: Dalel Serda “Male Gender Identity in The Boy Kings of Texas” Christofer Morales, Lee College Advisor: Georgeann Ward “How Queer Identification Affects Educational Outcomes” Jillian LeMaire, COM Advisor: Dalel Serda</p>	LRC 255
10:40am - 11:40am	<p>Session 2C: Love Through Time and Place “‘Girl’: the Embedding of ‘Place’” Nadege St. Marie Lee College Advisor: Georgeann Ward “Love: Abstract or Concrete?” Brenda Hagans Ratliff, Shadow Creek High School/Alvin College Advisor: Stacey Burleson “There is a Unity Everywhere: William Bulter Yeats’ ‘The Lake Isle of Innisfree’ and Dobrin’s Cycle of Identity” Ryan Lara, Lee College Advisors: Jerry Hamby, Georgeann Ward</p>	LRC 257
11:50am - 12:40pm	<p>Lunch & Speaker: Dr. Jennifer Bieszke, Professor of Biology, COM “My Love-Hate Relationship with NOP-1, the Evolutionary Link in Rhodospin Photobiology Between Prokaryotes and Eukaryotes”</p>	LRC 131
12:50pm - 1:50pm	<p>Session 3A: Storying Spirituality “Unplanned Surrender: Exploring the Sacred Encounter in Raymond Carver’s ‘Cathedral’” Jennifer Fonck, Lee College Advisor: Georgeann Ward “The Importance of Charity: The Greatest Form of Love” Isis Rendon, COM Advisor: Dalel Serda “Love and Literature” Cecilia Rojas, COM Advisor: Joni Delgado</p>	LRC 213
12:50pm - 1:50pm	<p>Session 3B: Love and Education “Two-Year College Advocates” Adrian Caraves, Alexandria Martinez, Solomon Roady, COM Advisor: Carl Taylor “How the Love Built Between Adults and Children Affects Student Success” Rebecca Kirkpatrick, COM Advisor: Robert Castro “Passion’s Influence on Academic Performance” April Carrisalez, COM Advisor: Dalel Serda</p>	LRC 255
12:50pm - 1:50pm	<p>Session 3C: Self in Society “The Tool of Religion in Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood” Noe Sanchez, Lee College Advisors: Jerald Hamby, Georgeann Ward “Courts and Social Movements” Rosecel Robles, COM Advisor: D. B. Steffenauer “Love and Politics: How Political Party Affiliation Changes and Takes Shape over Time” Zane Stewart, COM Advisor: Dalel Serda</p>	LRC 257
2:00pm - 3:00pm	<p>Session 4A: Creative Writers’ Reading “Writing and Rewriting Love: Exploring Boundaries, Parameters, and Definitions” A selection of students from this semester’s Creative Writing class at COM will be featured at this reading. Advisor: Brian Anderson</p>	LRC 213
2:00pm - 3:00pm	<p>Session 4B: Biophilia “The New Infinity: Human Experience Put in Perspective” Madeline Rosa, University of Houston-Clear Lake Advisor: Kristy Peet “Awareness for Living” Rosecel Robles, COM Advisor: Stacey Burleson</p>	LRC 255
3:10pm - 3:50pm	<p>Keynote Talk and Q & A: Introduction, Sheena Abernathy Dr. Diane Neudorf, Professor of Biology, Sam Houston State University “The Secret Lives of Birds: Female Tactics for Extra-Pair Mating in the Hooded Warbler”</p>	LRC 131
3:50pm - 4:00pm	<p>Awards and Wrap-Up</p>	LRC 131

STUDENT PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS

In order of scheduled presentation; please see presentation schedule. Abstracts are printed as submitted to protect student intellectual property.

Session 1A: Debaters' Roundtable

"True Love Requires Discussion"

Fibiola Alonso, Adrian Caraves, Alejandra Flores, Martez Jones, COM

NOTE: This session is non-juried.

Session 1B: Faith Wisner, COM:

"The Photographic Narrative of Relationships"

Throughout the history of photography, it is no surprise that photographers take pictures of their partners. I've focused my research on three specific photographers: Alfred Stieglitz, Harry Callahan, and Nan Goldin. In 1918, Stieglitz invited painter Georgia O'Keeffe to his quiet studio in New York and within a month, Stieglitz began taking nude photographs of O'Keeffe when his wife, Emmy, was away thus beginning the relationship between Stieglitz and O'Keeffe which would last 22 years until his death in 1946. Starting in 1947, Harry Callahan began taking photographs of his wife Eleanor. She was a very essential part of his practice and was his prime subject for about fifteen years. Within Nan Goldin's most notable series "The Ballad of Sexual Dependency," she photographed herself and her partner at the time, Bryan. She showed their relationship in a very different way than Stieglitz and Callahan did.

Following in their footsteps, I've created a body of work that demonstrates the many different aspects of modern relationships. I asked couples to take photographs of their partner based on how they personally saw them. I purposefully didn't influence or help these couples so I could get a genuine and raw point of view out of their photographs.

Session 1B: George Gonzales, COM:

"Jane Austen Shaped the Modern Romantic: Love as an Ideal"

Rather than conforming to the standards of love prevalent in her day, Jane Austen's central characters challenged them. Her characters married for intimacy and partnership instead of the privileging economic and social transactions common to the concept of marriage in 18th century England. Psychologist Daniel J Krueger finds that gentry girls were isolated until their social debut at age 16, while men were only considered marriageable on what they would be able to provide. Jane Austen challenges these general norms in characters such as *Pride and Prejudice's* Elizabeth Bennet and *Emma's* Emma Woodhouse. Both heroines challenge the prevalent perception of woman of their day, because both are independent and suggests ways of living independent of marriage, thus marriage was no longer financially or socially necessary, but an option. Through her characters, Jane Austen offers us a new hyper-idealized form of love. With this ideal love, she offers us a new version of romance: one in which there was no need to compromise or conform; one in which sovereign individuals join as equals and as partners. It's this that appeals to readers, as they see themselves in the characters. Austen's version of love is built on a foundation of equality. This is what makes Austen a "modern" woman and what renders her work timelessly popular.

Session 1B: Autumn Dilissio, Samantha Wylie, COM

"You Used to Call Me on My Cell Phone: Perception Through the Stages of a Relationship"

Your cell phone is probably in your hand right now. Bing! It's a text! Who is it from? Does it contain emojis? If so, what do they really mean? Even though emojis are a new form of communication that help break language barriers, emojis are creating language barriers because the sender may interpret the emojis being sent one way when the receiver may perceive them to have a totally different meaning. Texts can be easily misinterpreted simply because there is no vocal recognition, face to face expressions, or

nonverbal communication cues that we unconsciously pick up on in our day to day conversations with others. Even though emojis help add facial expressions and make text conversations flow better, they can stunt the conversation if they are used wrong. It also breaks smartphone platforms because some of Apple's emojis do not look the same as Android emojis, so you may have sent a laughing face, and it may appear as a crying face on the receivers' phone. The lack of emojis in text messages may send different signals, same with adding too many or not enough emojis. All of these examples can be experienced every day and can happen more frequently when you have a significant other that you are messaging. Throughout relationships you can see how emojis show the progression of the relationship and how sexual emoji usage becomes more prevalent as couples evolve.

Session 1C: Roscel Robles, COM

"Texas DREAM Act"

According to the Migration Policy Institute in the U.S Census Bureau, there are about 1.6 million undocumented immigrants in Texas. Although some media emphasize the negative aspect of undocumented immigrants, previous study shows otherwise. According to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, undocumented immigrant's financial contribution on Texas economy, in the year 2014 alone, is about 11.7 billion dollars.

This presentation focuses on The Texas State Dream Act (Texas DREAM ACT, HB1403 in 2001). The Texas DREAM ACT is the first step for young undocumented immigrants. In this presentation, there will be an explanation as to what the Texas DREAM ACT is and the effect of the law to the state. Should we create and pass more laws to further help the Dreamers? An outcome of qualitative research regarding the Texas DREAM ACT will be presented. Interviews were conducted with both US citizens and undocumented immigrants regarding their attitude toward the Texas DREAM ACT. How are community colleges supporting Dreamers? This research will help understand the reality about the controversial subject from objective and subjective perspectives.

Session 1C: Mia Brown, COM

"Expression of Love: Gender"

Love is a broad topic and can be dissected into, I will cut into love through the lens of gender. There are differences between how the genders express their love which are worth looking into. Stereotypically, females express the emotion of love by being vocal about their feelings. Although females are not direct about the feelings that arise, females typically share their feelings with friends (Tannen, 357). Unlike females, males tend to express their love through showing off through competing or challenging instead of using dialogue to express these emotions (Tannen, 357). Of course, these are stereotypes, and not everyone fits them, especially now. We are a more fluid society, and we are not limiting ourselves. Children now are being raised in a more open-minded environment which can alter the way children of either genders express love. My argument will be built on a combination of primary and secondary research. My primary research will consist of observing children, adolescents, and adults from films, documentaries, and videos to establish the differences between stereotypical expressions of love and individualized expressions of love. The results will be applied to my secondary research which looks at the different brain types that females and males stereotypically

fit (Baron-Cohen). The results will shed light on whether or not the stereotypes genders have been brought up knowing have influenced the way females and males express love.

Session 1C: Fatimah Beydoun, COM

"The Urgency of Expressing Parental, Familial, and Unconditional Love During Childhood"

In this year's GCIC Academic Symposium the theme mainly relates to the peculiar notion of love. It's peculiar because often giving love a concrete form is difficult. It is an element that many of us toy with and this year I am curious about love at the arguably most crucial state it's needed which is at childhood.

Many children within Eastern culture grow up with a lack of verbal or physical expression of love. As a middle eastern myself I can attest to this, and after understanding why this dynamic is present, we should work to change it. Displaying affection, and more importantly, love has positive effects for a household, the child, and the future of the child. In order to have a conceivable understanding of the significance explicit portrayal of love holds, forms of qualitative primary research and secondary research will be conducted.

I've recently had the honor of working with young kids and after some observation, it's known that a major factor that contributes to a child's social behavior is their home life. Parental, familial, and unconditional love are major parts of that home life, and when those elements are understood, cultivated, and nurtured, they can be the key to a person's flourishing. Exercising the aforementioned elements helps give children a recognizable idea of what love is which can help them later unveil the mystery love is surrounded in.

Session 1D: Students' Roundtable

"Love Thy Neighbor: Our Personal and Social Responsibility to Our Local Community"

Brittany Gale, Michelle Navarro, Jenny Nowalk, COM

Moderated by Madeline Jones

NOTE: This session is non-juried.

Session 2A: Students' Roundtable

"Love and Desire in the Age of the Smartphone"

Gabriela Johnson-Correia, Bree Mejia, Matthew Melvin, Gerrit Smith, Jaden Vuittonet, Alex Wrightington, COM

Moderated by Professor James Francis

NOTE: This session is non-juried.

Session 2B: Landon Spoth, COM

"Just a Phase"

Society is always evolving and changing, especially within the United States. Society's perception of what is moral and good has greatly shifted for the better. The 1970s saw some of the biggest civil rights movements come about in the United States, and these movements would continue strongly into the 1980s and 1990s. In 1993, Nick Cardello, a freelance photographer from Tampa, took a picture with his fiancé at a civil rights march in Washington D.C. 24 years later, Nick would recreate that picture he took of him with his husband at the March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay, and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation, at the same Equal Rights March in 2017. When he shared the photos, they took the internet by storm. He shared the photos for several reasons; the biggest reason being he wants younger LGBT generations to have positive role models, and to show others that it is not "just a phase." (Cardello)

In sharing his photos Nick Cardello is helping to normalize LGBT relationships today. Despite the movement starting almost 50 years ago, LGBT rights are always being debated and changed. Even today the idea that someone is less than because of how they love is not an uncommon thought. Love that doesn't conform to heteronormative society has survived for generations despite countless efforts to erase it. The efforts of people like Nick Cardello have shown that there is hope that the world can change, even if that change is slow. In a world so hostile, homosexuality has had to evolve to survive, and it has survived well. In my creative piece I will highlight the bravery and ingenuity of people like Nick and his husband. I will highlight how their love and the love of others has survived all these years.

Session 2B: Christofer Morales, Lee College

"Male Gender Identity in The Boy Kings of Texas"

Early childhood defines many people's identities in ways not observed at first glance. Domingo Martinez's *The Boy Kings of Texas* provides a unique insight of his own early life and how his childhood molded who he was. Particularly chapter five titled "Vulgaria" offers a troubled account of his school days and how he changed his behavior in order to feel loved by his peers. William Pollack's *Real Boys: Rescuing our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood* lets us further analyze Martinez's childhood issues as male identity issues brought out by what he describes as the male gender code. Martinez's experiences shed light on the consequences prevalent in young men who utilize male gender code unknowingly damaging their behavior and relationships. In this presentation, I will analyze Martinez's text using Pollack's ideas to show gender code stunts the love boys feel toward themselves and others.

Session 2B: Jillian LeMaire, COM

"How Queer Identification Affects Educational Outcomes"

According the American Psychological Association, many stigmas are still associated with LGBT+ individuals, and much of this is due to a lack of understanding that breeds prejudice and discrimination (Lowenthal). The effects of the multitude of stigmas bleed into the educational outcomes of LGBT+ students. For example, according to an essay written by educators Dr. Elena Sandoval-Lucero, Dr. Johanna B. Maes, and Ms. Libby Klingsmith, students who felt like they received support from both staff and faculty felt more connected to their college. Additionally, said students saw an increase in campus participation when they felt more comfortable with faculty and staff (530). Through an online survey, I will determine how comfortable College of the Mainland's staff and students are with publicly expressing their sexual identity. In the presentation, I will discuss not only what constitutes a quality education, but also how whom a person loves affects their access to a quality education and the effect that this has on our community.

Session 2C: Nadege St. Marie, Lee College

"'Girl': the Embedding of 'Place'"

The ways that people express love are often shaped by the places they inhabit. To provide clarity, Sidney Dobrin, in "Writing Takes Place," explores how ecompostion is used as a line of inquiry that seeks to understand how the environment impacts identity, perception, and communication. In his essay, Dobrin sheds light on how various factors contribute to identity which is reflected in Jamaica Kincaid's work "Girl," that shows how a mother dispenses advice, an expression of love, to her young daughter. In this example, Kincaid's story shows how a young girl's environment, presumably an island in the Caribbean because of the distinct vocabularies used, influences who is becoming. The mother gives advice to her daughter because of the genuine affection and responsibility she shoulders as a mother. In addition, the mother's advice appears to

help her daughter navigate patriarchal submission based on what she has experienced. Therefore, she tries to teach her daughter how to be an “ideal” woman in that society. This presentation will include original textual analysis and research to show how “Girl” illustrates the relationships among individuals, the places they inhabit and the way they express love.

Session 2C: Brenda Hagans Ratliff, Shadow Creek High School/Alvin Community College
“Love: Abstract or Concrete?”

Love has been the theme of many stories, plays, poems and ballads from the beginning of time. It is an emotion that drives mankind to extreme acts of kindness or violence. It is, indeed, a strong motivator. Love is also an emotion that is greatly misunderstood. Love is thought to be either abstract or concrete when actually, it is both. Love is not only a passive emotion that evokes a warm, fuzzy feeling, but it is an emotion that compels one to act on behalf of another.

Love is selfless. Love is kind. Love is passionate. Love is all-consuming. Love is sweet. Love is loyalty. Love is action. Love does not allow a person to look the other way while observing his neighbor’s house on fire. Love compels him to do whatever he can to rescue his neighbor from the burning flames, even at the risk of his own life. No matter how good a man thinks himself to be, if he is not moved to rescue his fellowman, that man is without love.

My essay, “When Good Men Do Nothing,” analyzes Elie Wiesel’s speech, “The Perils of Indifference” as it contrasts the emotions of love, hate and indifference and the effect of each on humankind.

Session 2C: Ryan Lara, Lee College
“There is a Unity Everywhere: William Bulter Yeats’ ‘The Lake Isle of Innisfree’ and Dobrin’s Cycle of Identity”

Similar to America’s Harlem Renaissance, a movement known as the Irish Literary Revival occurred to restore Ireland’s identity and culture to its former glory. Due to historical events such as the Irish Potato Famine, Irish men and women assimilated to the industrious lifestyles of America and the United Kingdom and wore their heritage thin throughout generations. Of all the contributions to the revival, William Butler Yeats’ poem “The Lake Isle of Innisfree” is best acclaimed for representing the cultural authenticity of Ireland. This transfer of Irish identity from a poet who grew up in his culturally-rich country to his poem to once again help define his home is what Sidney Dobrin describes in “Writing Takes Place” as ecomposition. He defines this term as “a study of relationships: between individual writers and their surrounding environments, between writers and texts, between texts and culture ... and between language in the world” (Dobrin 12). This presentation will explore the relationships of identity between person, text, and environment evident in “The Lake Isle of Innisfree” by exploring its connections to Irish heritage and religion, as well as the significance of the uninhabited outdoors to Irish culture. By doing so, this presentation will prove that there is a cycle of identity that is constantly fluctuating to give definition to people, place, and writing.

Session 3A: Jennifer Fonck, Lee College
“Unplanned Surrender: Exploring the Sacred Encounter in Raymond Carver’s ‘Cathedral’”

Raymond Carver’s “Cathedral” tells the story of a self-centered man who falls into a pattern of closing himself off and refusing to be vulnerable with anyone, including his wife. However, Carver’s narrator forms an unexpected bond with his wife’s blind friend, Robert. The narrator believes that he is guiding Robert to a discovery by using his sight, a sense that Robert cannot understand. In reality, Robert is guiding the narrator through an experience he cannot physically perceive. Through their

connection, the narrator sheds his social restraint and opens himself up to a sacred experience, unlike anything he has ever known. In his book *Landscapes of the Sacred: Geography and Narrative in American Spirituality*, Belden C. Lane defines a sacred encounter as a connection with “the Other.” In this presentation, using Lane’s book along with original research, I will show that “Cathedral” illustrates the necessity for people to cast off their egocentric tendencies and connect with one another in order to experience the sacred.

Session 3A: Isis Rendon, COM
“The Importance of Charity: The Greatest Form of Love”

Love has been a topic of interest for thousands of years, being the subject of music, poetry, movies and novels. Yet there are many forms of love. In 1960, writer C.S. Lewis wrote about four types of love that humans experience, while exalting Agape or Charity, as the greatest form of love. Christian belief has Charity as one the major virtues, which can be found expressed multiple times within the Bible. Charity is an act of selfless giving and as Dr. Robert Necek writes, “charity is also called a gracious love, because it is able to restore man to himself” (pg. 88). Researchers Jonathan Berman and Deborah Small write that “prosocial behavior has been shown to increase happiness sometimes even more so than self-interested behavior” (pg. 3). Charity is present in many forms in our everyday lives, not just through monetary giving, which is, in actuality, the least form of Charity. Selfishness, an aspect of human nature we strive to overcome, acts as a barrier to Charity, which is a love freely given to those who cannot repay it, and which will never cease to be a need for society. Thus, this project explores what Charity is through a Christian perspective and whether Charity is relevant presently and within a secular society. This project delves into the questions of why Charity is important, whether it is possible to truly love without Charity and where Charity is found. Ultimately concluding that Charity benefits the individual person, giving them joy and fulfillment. And that Charity, a love in action, is a need, not just for Christians, but for all of society because, as the greatest form of love, it exalts all the other loves, aiding all who are in need in the world.

Session 3A: Cecilia Rojas, COM
“Love and Literature”

Love has a million interpretations. No one interpretation is the same, or even correct. Love is limitless and unquantifiable. It cannot be broken down by science and reasoning because love is an unreasonable occurrence. Much like love, literature, more specifically poetry, can have a different interpretation to each individual person who reads it. For millennia literature has been used to express one’s love for someone or something. Throughout history people have been able to write out their deepest and truest feelings if nothing else. Every religion and faith have some form of deity of love. The Bible, for instance, the most popular book in the world is often referred to as the greatest love story ever told. The ancient Greeks wrote sonnets to their love for their countries, partners, even their surroundings. King David in the bible wrote hundreds of poems and songs that were meant to show his love for his God. Love is an expression of your inner self, just like poetry. Therefore, the most popular theme for songs is love. Love is not limited to romantic but instead it can be familial, platonic, or even self-love, a topic all too often forgotten. Love is a billion things packed into four letters.

Session 3B: Adrian Caraves, Alexandria Martinez, Solomon Roady, COM
“Two-Year College Advocates”

The main objective of our Phi Theta Kappa College Project was to properly inform as many high school students about almost anything

and everything two-year colleges offer, demonstrating how a two-year college is a viable option for a postsecondary education which leads to a better quality of life. After researching and understanding the importance of furthering education beyond high school, we created a 30-minute, 30-slide interactive PowerPoint presentation. Said presentation begins with an icebreaker where we ask every student in the room about their career aspirations and then we present on how a two-year college can assist them in reaching their goals. Through the PowerPoint, we share what a two-year college is, what the average requirements are to attend, and then go in-depth into benefits such as cost of tuition, personalized attention, and several opportunities to grow intellectually and socially. Furthermore, we discuss disclaimers and stigmas as well as share our own stories of what a two-year college is like and how to be successful. Lastly, we open the floor to any and all questions students have because our intentions are focused on answering those questions. Our College Project team was able to share our informative campaign at local high schools such as Dickinson High School, Hitchcock High School, Odyssey Academy, and Texas City High School. Ultimately, how our project ties into love is by advocating for the two-year institutions such as College of the Mainland that we are grateful to be a part of and wanting to share our passion and experience with other people. Love comes in a variety of forms and one of said forms is being passionate about a subject. Our subject is two-year colleges and through our session at the GCIC Academic Symposium, we plan on explaining why and where our passion comes from.

Session 3B: Rebecca Kirkpatrick, COM

"How the Love Built Between Adults and Children Affects Student Success"

The importance of this research is to demonstrate the significance of building strong relationships with students that would lead to student success, the measure how prepared a student is to accomplish goals, whether present or future, or social, emotional, or cognitive. The research intends to show that fulfilling the need for Love and Belonging in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, a psychological theory proposed by Abraham Maslow conveying that humans are motivated to attain certain needs and some needs take higher priority than others, will lead to more student success. The research will use various one-to-one teaching strategies, including talking to children at their level, using a pleasant voice, providing physical contact as needed, following the child's lead, aiding the child in understanding the expectations of the classroom, encouraging the child as he or she overcomes obstacles or reaches milestones, and recognizing the child's accomplishments, to develop the strong relationships that would lead to student success. The research will compare the one-to-one correspondences classroom assessments with students taught using whole group learning to show the difference in school success. Overall, this research will show that building relationships is a significant teaching strategy in early childhood education.

Session 3B: April Carrisalez, COM

"Passion's Influence on Academic Performance"

Passion's Influence on Academic Performance Passion is the very essence of love. Love and passion can go beyond the realm within that between humans and extends towards the way we feel towards other matters. Passion chooses our course in life more often than not; therefore, it is truly an important aspect of each area of our lives and often is a deciding factor in how our future will look. What will my career be? What will I pursue? This study focuses on that passion and its influence on academic performance through the use of a hybrid

of interviews and case studies. It faces the questions of which "forms" of passion can positively affect students' grades, which negatively do so, and whether or not schools are effectively helping students build their passion. Out of the six people placed in the top 17% of their class at Dickinson High School that I interviewed, a case study was done on two: the valedictorian and a student ranked in the top 11% of his class. The case study highlights the differences between the use of time, grades throughout high school, and passion. Additionally, the research emphasizes that students at the top of their classes don't have time for much else besides homework-- let alone time to build their passion, but is the school helping them foster their passion within school hours? Upon analysis, it will be determined how much of the student population within the top percentage of their class have a passion and how many hours they dedicate to it, as well as whether they have opportunities in school for growth and if the school system has done enough to enable their passion rather than stifle it.

Session 3C: Noe Sanchez, Lee College

"The Tool of Religion in Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood"

Religion is commonly known as a path of hope and prosperity for the people, but what if it could be used as a tool for manipulation? In Marjane Satrapi's graphic memoir *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood*, readers learn of the author's struggle of growing up in Iran during the Islamic Revolution and the Iran-Iraq war. Satrapi witnessed the vast changes of her country and informs readers on how religion played a heavy role in her government and daily life. The Manifesto of the Communist Party, by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, helps deepen the understanding of Satrapi's work. It is a critique of capitalism and explanation of the communism ideals. Marx and Engels share their reasons for believing in communism and the role that classes play in a capitalistic society. Additionally, it mentions how religion is used against the lower class to keep them oppressed. In this presentation, one will learn how Satrapi's memoir helps expose religion as a tool that the government can use to manipulate citizens and to degrade women.

Session 3C: Rosecel Robles, COM

"Courts and Social Movements"

Social movement is one of the principle social forms through which an organized group of individuals give voice to concerns about the rights and well-being of the people. History shows the importance of the voice of the people to implement reforms. In this presentation, the meaning of social movement as well as the significance of social movements will be presented. There are many alternatives for a social movement issue to be brought up for success through the means of the court, public opinion, or party systems. The presentation focuses on the possibilities of success through the court. There are winning and losing sides in every battle especially in the court. An example will be the *Obergefell v. Hodges*, a landmark case for LGBTQ community. In this case, the LGBTQ community, a kind of social movement, won. Meanwhile, the social movement opposing the case lost. This presentation will revolve around the importance of judicial activism through the courts for those who are involved in social movements. The court could either help or damage the issue at hand by the social movement. The court is a smart path to take as far as the issue within social movements. Even though the government could use the courts against the movement itself, there is always the possibility of success. "Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," (United States Declaration of Independence) embodies this struggle.

Session 3C: Zane Stewart, COM

"Love and Politics: How Political Party Affiliation Changes and Takes Shape over Time"

My project's goal is to associate and locate a timeline that exists involving

how someone chooses to associate politically and how certain events and life experiences may factor into determining future political ideological belief. I hypothesize that factors such as family development, as well as unique politically-related personal experiences tend to shape and alter the mindsets of individuals and that these events have a similar effect that either reinforce the past current ideological affiliation or cause a drastic shift in which political affiliation flips to a completely different spectrum than the previous ideology. To test this hypothesis, I'm using the qualitative method by recording interviews over what are statistically considered average and non-average Democrats and Republicans using exit poll data from Edison Research and Pew Research Center. Statistically average participants therefore would be in the higher percentile of factors such as ethnicity, gender, and age when considering party and the opposite would be true when choosing participants who match fewer to none of the previous variables. In total, 8-12 participants all over 30 years who will be used by categorizing them into four distinct groups: Group 1 is average Democrats, Group 2 is non-average Democrats, Group 3 is average Republicans, and Group 4 is non-average Republicans. My project relates to the theme of love by looking at what people consider to be important politically to themselves which ultimately reveals deeply personal traits and belief systems that range across a wide margin than can change over time. Politics is what I believe to be the activities that set principles, that establish order, and maintain balance to members of a group and nothing can do this stronger than with love and the belief that it can make a positive difference in the world.

Session 4A: Creative Writers' Reading

"Writing and Rewriting Love: Exploring Boundaries, Parameters, and Definitions"

A selection of students from this semester's Creative Writing class at COM will be featured at this reading.

Moderated by Professor Brian Anderson

NOTE: This session is non-juried.

Session 4B: Madeline Rosa, University of Houston-Clear Lake

"The New Infinity: Human Experience Put in Perspective"

The infinity sign exhibits an everlasting continuum. To explore this idea, I have created an exhibition of photographs that reconstruct the infinity sign to include three bends, instead of two, which represent known, unknown and new known. Although individual situations differ, I believe these three loops signify the way in which one experiences life. In order to encompass such a broad ideology, I have chosen to base the images on the feelings that occur in each phase. I have found this inevitable and continuous relationship between human beings and change. By utilizing the symbol delta, I plan to demonstrate change as a tool for eternal momentum. My goal is to present this idea that individuals and society traverse the new infinity sign throughout their human experience. I hope to convey my ideas of personal as well as societal progression to the viewers of the exhibition. The viewers' experience plays a vital role in my work, so special consideration has been given to the layout of exhibition. Since the sign is never-ending, the objective is that an individual will connect with one bend more than the others due to their personal internalization and current life state.

Session 4B: Rosecel Robles, COM

"Awareness for Living"

Socrates's quote, "the unexamined life is not worth living" asserts a life unexamined is no life at all. It would be like driving with no sense of direction. Everything that was created was created with a purpose and we are no exception. Each life is meant to be lived fully. In order to do so, reflecting on one's self is crucial. We have the ability to reason as

human beings, so we should utilize this ability. It is of importance to understand why we are how we are. Are you happy with the way you are? What is it that you live for? Is your life now the way you ought it to be? Viktor Frankl's experience will be used to support the philosophical view being presented. As Viktor Frankl states in his book *Man's Search for Meaning*, "Those who have a 'why' to live, can bear almost any 'how'." Frankl's life is a famous example of a life well lived. Not only did he find his purpose, but also used his knowledge and experiences to help others figure out their own purposes. In this presentation, validity of Socrates's quote is proved along with some scientific background of consciousness; however, the presentation will mainly focus on the philosophical view rather than scientific. Furthermore, theories on free will are used to strengthen the philosophical view being presented. Surveys were also conducted to enhance the research behind these ideas; the survey conducted is a mean to obtain a large variety of unbiased opinion. The survey's intention is to prove a strong correlation between people who reflect on their actions are significantly happier and feel their lives have been lived fully as opposed to people who don't know or question their purpose in life.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER AND ABSTRACT

Dr. Diane Neudorf

Keynote Speaker

Diane Neudorf is a professor of biology at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, TX. She has studied bird behavior for 30 years. She obtained her Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in Zoology at the University of Manitoba in Canada where she became interested in bird behavior, specifically reproductive strategies and parental investment. She



obtained her doctorate from York University where she studied female control of extra-pair mating in the Hooded Warbler. She has directed over a dozen Master of Science student research projects and many undergraduate projects in songbird behavior and conservation. Currently her research involves how bird behavior is impacted in urban environments using the Carolina Wren as a model species.

Abstract

"The secret lives of birds: female tactics for extra-pair mating in the Hooded Warbler"

Most people think birds are monogamous and mate for life. That is only partly true. Although 90 percent of bird species are socially monogamous, we know through genetic studies that many bird species are not sexually monogamous but instead cheat on their mates. I studied female extra-pair mating tactics in the socially monogamous Hooded Warbler (*Wilsonia citrina*) to understand how and why female birds may cheat on their mates. Female Hooded Warblers give conspicuous vocalizations through the nesting period that partially function to advertise their fertility. In addition, through radio tracking I discovered females left their territories regularly when they were fertile, providing opportunities to engage in extra-pair mating. Female birds may cheat to ensure their eggs are fertilized or to gain genetic and direct benefits for their offspring. There is a large range of variation both within and between avian species in their participation in extra-pair mating strategies. Why some species rarely use this strategy and others use it regularly remains to be determined. I will conclude by discussing hypotheses proposed to explain this variation and touch on ideas regarding mate attachment in birds.

COM ADMINISTRATION



Jennifer Bieszke
Lunch Speaker

Jennifer Bieszke was born and raised in Michigan. She attended Delta Community College and later Oakland University where she earned a Bachelor's degree in Biochemistry. She then transferred to the University of Texas-Health Science Center in Houston to complete her doctorate degree in Microbiology and

Molecular Genetics where she studied the effect of green light on the development and reproduction of the fungus *Neurospora crassa*. She developed her love of teaching in graduate school and taught at DeVry University for nine years until she became a full-time faculty member at College of the Mainland in 2013. In addition to teaching at COM, Dr. Bieszke has been active in promoting the STEM fields to seventh and eighth-grade girls at the annual STEM conference held at COM for the past four years. When she isn't working at COM, Jennifer loves to spend time with her husband, Steve, and their daughter, Rose.

ABSTRACT

"My love-hate relationship with NOP-1, the evolutionary link in rhodopsin photobiology between prokaryotes and eukaryotes."

Reception of light in the world of prokaryotes, single-celled organisms without a nucleus, has always been achieved in part from using a specific type of rhodopsin photoreceptor to help with energy production or cell-signaling. Another type of rhodopsin photoreceptor is used by eukaryotes, multi-cellular organisms with a nucleus (humans), for the purpose of perceiving dim light by rod cells in the eye. There was no evolutionary link between these two photoreceptors until the discovery of a light receptor, NOP-1, identical to prokaryotic rhodopsins, in the fungus (a eukaryote) *Neurospora crassa*. As part of my graduate work, I was excited and thrilled to use recombinant DNA technology to show that this photoreceptor in a eukaryotic organism functioned similarly to the prokaryotic rhodopsins. I hate that after six years of research, the role of NOP-1 in the fungus *Neurospora crassa* is not well understood, but it seems it may have a minor role in reproduction. In this presentation, the evolutionary significance of this discovery will be discussed and how this discovery back in 1999 has impacted the current research in the field of light reception (photobiology) in both prokaryotes and eukaryotes.



Dr. Warren Nichols
COM President

Warren Nichols began his tenure as president of College of the Mainland in February 2017. He has since been working with the Board of Trustees, faculty and staff to develop processes and strategies to keep the college's focus on student success and providing a qualified workforce.

Prior to COM, he had stints as vice chancellor of community colleges for the Tennessee Board of Regents which supported 13 Tennessee public community colleges, president of Volunteer State Community College in Gallatin, Tennessee, and vice president of academic affairs at Darton College in Albany, Georgia.

A native of Fort Worth, Nichols began his career as a police officer in Arlington, Texas, before transitioning to higher education. Nichols earned a doctorate in higher education administration from the University of Houston. He received his master and bachelor degrees from the University of Texas at Arlington and began his journey in higher education at Tarrant County Junior College in Hurst, Texas.

Already making an impact in the community, the Texas City-La Marque Chamber of Commerce honored Nichols with the Rising Star award in January 2018. The award recognizes an emerging leader whose record reflects ongoing and exceptional growth and contributions to the profession.



Dr. James R. Templer
Interim Vice President for Instruction

Dr. James R. Templer lives in League City, Texas, with his wife, Lisa. He was a college professor of art for 23 years and vice president of instruction for 11 years. He retired from College of the Mainland in August 2010.

Templer was asked to return to COM as interim vice president of instruction in September 2016 and is currently serving in that role.

Templer holds a bachelor's and master's of fine arts in painting from East Texas State University. He earned his doctorate in the medical humanities, arts and visual studies from The University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston.



Dr. Vicki Stanfield
Vice President for Student Services

Dr. Vicki Stanfield has served in administrative positions in academic and student affairs to improve student success by working with faculty, instructional and student service leaders to create new programs and practices. At COM, Vicki serves as vice president for student services, providing leadership

over admissions and records, recruitment, testing services, financial aid, advising and counseling, TRiO, Title V – HSI grant and student life. She also serves as co-chair of the Student Success Council. Vicki holds an Associate of Art from Lone Star College-North Harris and a Bachelor of Arts in Teaching in English—Summa Cum Laude, Master of Education in counselor education and doctorate in educational leadership from Sam Houston State University.



Dr. Clen Burton
Vice President for Fiscal Affairs

Clen Burton is the father of Clay and Shelby, boy and girl twins. He is married to the former Michelle Barkate and is a native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

He currently serves as the COM vice president of fiscal affairs and as an adjunct accounting instructor. From 2004 to 2012,

he served as the vice chancellor of finance and administration for River Parishes Community College. Previously he worked in health care, public accounting and the construction industry.

He has a doctorate in human resource education, a master’s degree in accounting and a bachelor’s degree in speech communication from Louisiana State University. Later in life, he earned an associate degree in computer information systems from Bossier Parish Community College. He is a certified public accountant.

A member of the Dickinson Rotary Club, he has an unhealthy passion for LSU football and officiated high school football for seven seasons.



Dr. Steven L. Sewell
Dean of Academic Programs

Dr. Steven L. Sewell serves as dean of academic programs at COM, having formerly served as chair of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Department and as a professor of history. Steve served as director of instructional assessment and co-chair of COM’s Institutional

Effectiveness Council. Steve earned his Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts and doctorate in history from Oklahoma State University. He has published extensively on the history of labor in the Oklahoma coal mining industry. He recently published a chapter entitled, “The Spatial Diffusion of Beer from its Sumerian Origins to Today” in *The Geography of Beer* (2014). Steve taught at Oklahoma Panhandle State University, Medgar Evers College of the City University of New York and Texas Tech University.



Dr. Carla Boone
Dean of Workforce & Continuing Education

Dr. Carla Boone is the COM dean for workforce and continuing education. Carla is a COM graduate and has worked in a number of positions at COM since 1986. Carla received a Bachelor of Science in health care administration from University of Texas Medical Branch Galveston, an

Master of Science in instructional technology from University of Houston Clear Lake and a doctorate in community college administration from Texas Tech University.



Dr. Kris Kimbark
Dean of Students

Dr. Kris Kimbark has over 15 years in higher education administration as well as over 15 years as a health care administrator in brain injury rehabilitation. She has served COM in many capacities, including director of student support services, associate vice president of student services and most recently as dean of students. She

has a doctorate in educational leadership with an emphasis in higher education. She has been published in the *Community College Research Center* journal on the topic of student success in community colleges. Dr. Kimbark also was honored by PTK in 2015 with the Hallmark Award. She is passionate about helping students succeed in their educational endeavors, especially disadvantaged students.

She acquired a Bachelor of Arts degree from Southeastern Oklahoma State University and her master’s degree at the University of Michigan followed by her doctorate in education at the University of Houston-Clear Lake.

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Present and past College of the Mainland's student hosts for helping run the technical aspects of this event. Thank you to University of Texas at Austin student/COM alumna Greta Silvertooth; University of Houston student/COM alumna Kaci Maris; and especially COM students Bea Gallardo, Alex Hallberg and Remi Reese.

College of the Mainland's staff and faculty who served as our judges and moderators, to Brian Anderson, Robert Castro, Diana North, Ryan Smith, Stacey Burlison, Kristy Peet, Kirk McVay, Jason Abshire, Gilchrist White, Lalanya Maldonado, Luis Sabido, Candice Ratley and Madeline Jones for volunteering your time and talents.

All professors who served as student presenter advisors.

Dr. Diane Neudorf for serving as our keynote and Dr. Jennifer Bieszke for serving as our lunch speaker.

Gulf Coast Intercollegiate Consortium for your indispensable financial sponsorship!

Our administration for your support.

Marketing, Facilities, and Technology departments; and Cindy Cobb and to the Humanities Department, and a special thank you to Lauren Harper for helping with logistics.

The Board of Trustees for being valuable advocates for College of the Mainland. Events such as these would not be possible without your support.

Sincerely,

Professors Dalel Serda and Shinya Wakao
GCIC Academic Symposium Co-Chairs

G.C.I.C.
GULF COAST INTERCOLLEGIATE CONSORTIUM



1200 Amburn Rd., Texas City, TX 77591
www.com.edu