Undergraduate and Ronald E. McNair Research Conference
Portland State University

Presentation Schedule and Abstracts

Thursday, May 29, 2008
Smith Memorial Student Union, Rooms 294, 296, 298

8:00 am – 8:45 am
Registration and Refreshments

Opening Remarks, Dr. Shawn Smallman
Vice Provost for Instruction and Dean of Undergraduate Studies

Program Overview
SMSU 294

9:00 am – 10:00 am
Investigating Groups, Identities, Norms, and Interactions

Session 1-A, SMSU 294
Moderator: Jen Moore

Lee Ann Wyckoff, McNair Scholar
"Bike Messengers in Portland, Oregon: A Microcosm of Mainstream Bike Culture"

This paper looks at how several bicycling subcultures are situated within mainstream bicycle culture, and the deviant status many cyclists claim in Portland, Oregon. The paper is intended to be an ethnographic study of bike messengers in Portland, Oregon, but the content emphasizes the diversity and complexity of Portland's bike cultures. My research comprised more of content analysis than observation of or participation in bike messenger culture, but I limited the focus of my paper to my original topic, instead of allowing my data to redirect my thesis as I should have. I would like to talk about the difficulties I had in practicing participant observation, and the role reflexivity in qualitative research plays, allowing for flexibility in the focus of research as one collects data.

Jennifer Maynard, McNair Scholar
"Being Native across Borders and Coping Styles of Women within Encompassing Identities: Trauma and Resiliency"

My research explores trauma and resiliency within the Native American and 1st Nations' peoples, analyzing coping mechanisms for individuals who have experienced sexual assault. I look at triangulation factors within individual experiences, then analyze this information and compare results across Native American (Portland, OR.), 1st Nation (Kaska-Slavey Canada) and participants at NARA and/or the PSU Native American Student and Community Center. I am using survey and one-on-one interviews, culminating in an empirically-based quantitative research study. I am reviewing literature to better prepare myself for specific data collection in order to pass the Human Subjects Research Review. I use systems theory to approach trauma and resiliency. I am taking the Bowen family systems theory and double ABC=X in combination to explore a multigenerational transmission process of resiliency and trauma. It is my hope to discover cultural and individual tools for coping that will provide healing frameworks that are accepted as culturally sensitive models.

Julie Mertes, McNair Scholar
"Use of Phenomenology in Studying the Experience of Returning Women Students"

This paper explores the benefits of using Phenomenology as a research method that aids in understanding the experiences of returning women students. Through the use of personal interviews, this type of study is critical to glean information that is not typically found in traditional quantitative and qualitative methods. Phenomenological research offers a qualitative view that is not necessarily measurable, yet provides humanistic perspective and insight into the depth of human value and experience.

Chelsea Wynter
"Activism as a Gang"

The stereotype image of a gang primarily extends to violence and drugs as mainstream activity of its members, when in fact; a gang is a complex hierarchy, and its group dynamics correspond to a form of activism. It is through symbolic interaction between gang members and the community that their engagement becomes political, as the messages they send through gender, societal roles and their actions become a disruption to the norms of society. This paper focuses on the reasons behind their existence, and how they are an organized, cohesive group that is responding to their environment as means for activism.

9:00 am – 10:00 am

SE Neighborhoods Community Asset Mapping

Session 1-B, SMSU 296
Moderator: To Be Announced

Ashley Wilkins, Ryan Parker, and Ross Lesko
"SE Neighborhoods Community Asset Mapping"

This panel of three community development students will present the progress of an ongoing research project concerning organizational asset mapping in the SE neighborhoods of Portland. Asset mapping is a useful tool for inventorying activities and strengths of the community and it reveals what a community has to offer. We are currently engaged in acquiring data about the assets of current organizations and institutions in these SE neighborhoods through the distribution of questionnaires. We are examining the social and physical assets discovered and compiling our findings into a document that will be of future benefit and use to the area. We would like this panel to be an opportunity to not only present the work we are doing but to have a time for dialog concerning asset mapping and its potential problems, benefits, and applications.

9:00 am – 10:00 am

Blood, Sweat and Tears: Exploring Health Issues among Different Populations

Session 1-C, SMSU 298
Moderator: Donna Harris

Gloria Diaz, McNair Scholar
"Looking For the Connections between Acculturation and Health for Latinos in the United States"

Does a connection between acculturation and health exist for Latino immigrants in the United States? In this presentation, I will discuss the current health status of the Latino community and why it is important to discover if acculturation has an effect on its health. What does acculturation mean exactly? What are the various means researchers use in defining acculturation in their studies? What has been discovered so far about acculturation's connections to the health of the Latino community? These questions will be answered by referencing current studies on this topic.

Christopher M. Torres, McNair Scholar
"Epidemiological survey of sport-related injuries in Oregon high school"

Anecdotal evidence suggests that many student-athletes, both male and female, in Oregon high schools are injuring themselves during sport practice and competition at an alarming rate. Several peer-reviewed longitudinal studies have measured incidences of injury in particular sports over a competitive season, but most do not include suggestions for policy change. The intent of this study is to analyze the incidence and prevalence of high school male and female student-athlete injuries during practice and competition, and the correlation of having or not having an athletic trainer on staff, with the intent to lobby for continued support and resources for high schools and equal access to qualified sport medicine staff.

Nick Shields
"What about Diabetes?"

Using current research, this presentation identifies common misconceptions with both Type I and Type II diabetes. The main focus will be on Type I diabetes, including the normal symptoms, a real-life example of childhood onset of Type I diabetes, the impact this can have on someone's life, and a day in the life of a Type I diabetic. I will be proposing increased funding for organizations working towards a cure for Type I diabetes, such as the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

Yolanda M. Paris, McNair Scholar
"Root Causes; Identifying Health Disparities amongst African Americans"

African Americans are the second largest minority group in the US. Their estimated population makes up almost 13.4 percent of the total U.S. population, which is around 39.2 million according to the Census Bureau. The African American Community is faced with an alarming rate of acute and chronic diseases. Nationally more than 290,000 African Americans die from chronic diseases each year. The intent of this article is to broaden the understanding of health disparities and to not limit them into a definition of behavioral factors. The need to examine the relationship between the social and the political parameters of the U.S. system is relevant and warranted due to the effect they may have on health among African Americans.

10:15 am – 11:15 am

Art, Love, and Life: A Multi-media Look at Cultural Intersections

Session 2-A, SMSU 294
Moderator: **Jeffer Daykin**

John Ahlbrecht
"Anime and Japan's Soft Power: How Japan Found a Way to Invade a Dominant Nation"

America's growing obsession with Japanese popular culture is so ubiquitous that instances in which Japanese culture is regarded as superior has become commonplace. Historically, America and Japan have had military, economic and political power struggles with America always showing dominance, yet Japan has somehow managed to purge the walls of Hollywood. This paper summarizes these struggles as a dominate/subordinate relationship. Then by examining signs of Japanese influence in films such as "Star Wars" which acted as a springboard for Japanese animation in the US, we see that this "anime" has become Japan's real "soft power" and America's new mania.

Julie Nakama, McNair Scholar
"Changing Clothes in a Changing World: Nostalgia, Time and Memory in Wong Kar-Wai's *In the Mood for Love"*

Wong Kar-Wai's film *In the Mood for Love* deals with themes of memory, nostalgia, impossible love and personal identity. I would like to discuss the film specifically in relation to how Wong creates images which serve less to forward the narrative than to create a visual web of information. I will show one or two clips from the film and discuss Wong's use of clothing to establish the passage of time and his use of landscape to signify personal isolation. Lastly, I will discuss the idea of the visual web in connection to Wong's film.

Murna Majam
"African Story: The heavy historical colonial footprint on African cinema"

There is no denying the power of visual communication, specifically in regards to the art form of film media. Across borders the enduring art form of cinema has been used to channel human expression and experiences. However, rarely has this medium been used to embrace and tell the story of the African struggle. When it has, it has been from the perspective of Euro-western institutions. By scrutinizing the pressures of conformity in narrativization and representation facing African cinema, this research paper will attempt to tackle the dilemma of who will define Africa?

Cassandra Bates
"The American from China: The Chronicles of Yung Wing and the First One Hundred"

Yung Wing graduated from Yale in 1854, making him the first Chinese to graduate from an American university and possibly the first Asian to graduate from any US institution. When he returned to China after nearly ten years abroad, he convinced the conservative government to send a group of young students to the United States in order to receive a similar education. Despite their recall before the program completed, these boys had received the knowledge that would later help them build modern China. This talk will cover Yung Wing's biography, his students' contribution to the transformation of China, a general history of the time period, and the value of cultural exchange.

10:15 am – 11:15 am

As the World Turns: A Look at the Global Environment

Session 2-B, SMSU 296
Moderator: Steve Van Eck

Scott A. Smith
"Water Quality and the Willamette River"

More than 70% of Oregonians live within 20 miles of the Willamette River, which is the third most polluted river in the United States. Water quality is affected by a range of natural and anthropogenic factors, including industry, agriculture, urbanized spaces, forestry, and mining. We examine how changes in land use affect water quality positively or negatively at the watershed scale and the riparian scale. Water quality data from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality within the Willamette River Basin are compiled, and weighed against two land cover Geographic Information System (GIS) datasets from the same area from 1990 and again in 2001. GIS is used to determine which sub-watersheds have undergone changes in land use, and water quality data are analyzed to determine which water quality parameters have been changed.

Laurel Himes-Ferris
"Mysterious Poison: Arsenic in the Ganges Delta"

In 1983, arsenic contamination was first reported in tube wells across the Ganges Delta Basin. Now known as the largest mass poisoning in human history, the wells had been constructed by the Government of Bangladesh and various NGOs to provide an alternative to bacteria-contaminated drinking water. In the past 25 years, no consensus has been reached regarding the cause of the poisoning. Two main hypotheses exist: an iron-reduction process which released inorganic arsenic into the water, or seasonal inorganic arsenic pyrite leaching. The environmental health implications of each theory are discussed in this paper.

Young Jung
"One of the solutions to improve global warming is hybrid cars"

One of the biggest problems in the world is global warming. Factors such as burning fossil fuels (coal, oil, and natural gas), human waste (garbage), and using a lot of electrical appliances (TV, hair dryer, microwave, air conditioner, video games, and dish washer) affect global warming. We need to solve this problem, and my presentation is about one of the solutions. There are many solutions, but I want to talk about using hybrid cars for cutting down global warming. Hybrid cars cost over $ 22,000, and there are many hybrid cars by many car brands. If we drive hybrid cars, we will burn less gasoline, because they have the best gas mileage. Hybrid cars will help reduce global warming.

Kristy Hauver, McNair Scholar
"Shocking finds in meteorites"

Meteorites provide a detailed, but coded look into the conditions of the solar nebula. It is the job of the meteoriticist to separate the meteorites from the "meteo-wrongs", and decipher the hidden data. The process begins by accurately determining what type of meteorite is being analyzed, which leads to a certain set of data that can be collected from it. Incorrectly identifying the meteorite type can lead to very misleading conclusions about its history and journey through space.

10:15 am – 11:15 am

From Student to Researcher: A Round Table Discussion

Session 2-C, SMSU 298
Moderator: Dr. Jana Meinhold and Dr. Ben Anderson-Nathe

Shannon Turner and Amy Crossman
"From Student to Researcher: A Round Table Discussion"

This project sheds light on how the realities of foster care have affected youth, adults, and caseworkers and how their experiences can inspire social responsibility. This presentation highlights undergraduate students' experiences of research, focusing on navigating the research process, including proposal and grant writing, Institutional Review Board approval, and preliminary data collection. Finally, the presentation identifies students' newfound knowledge of the collaborative and strategic planning needed to ensure the effectiveness of a research project's contribution to the lives of youth, adults, and caseworkers navigating the system of foster care.

11:15 am – 12:00 pm

Conference Luncheon

SMSU 294

12:00 noon – 12: 30 pm

Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program at Portland State University Information Session

SMSU 294

12:45 pm – 2:00 pm

Destiny, Fate, Ritual and Tragedy between the Lines: Research in Literature and History

Session 3-A, SMSU 294
Moderator: Holly Hernandez

Heather McCambly, McNair Scholar
"Picasso's *Guernica:* A Matter of Intention"

This paper considers Pablo Picasso's *Guernica*, a mural commissioned for the Spanish Pavilion at the 1937 World's Fair, named after the small Basque town obliterated by the Nazis in World War II. Many meanings, intentions, and metaphors have been attached to this painting and the figures within it. Despite the variation of scholarly analyses, there is a constant sense among scholars and connoisseurs, that somehow within this chaotic image Picasso managed to create a passionate and lasting statement on war, tragedy, and the nature of human suffering. I will attempt to shed further light on Picasso's intentions in this work by presenting not only various scholarly interpretations, but also the opinions of Picasso himself to reveal how this image has maintained such a lasting power and influence.

Mandy Barberree, McNair Scholar
"The Hope in Estel: a look at a facet of complexity in structure in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*"

This paper explores the structure of emotional tension in a wider story arch than the more often recognized balance of heavy and light emotions within Tolkien's text in individual chapters and books.. It is a redefining and splitting of "what is meant to be" into the two different categories, *fate* as set future that happens without foreknowledge, and *destiny* as one that happens with knowledge. This difference in a predetermined future affects how much fear and anxiety we feel towards the "unavoidable end," and Tolkien works this with great craft.

Amy Sherwood, McNair Scholar
"Chronology and Spatial Boundaries of Iron Age Polities in Ireland"

As a background for my research into the Iron Age roots of traditional Irish folklore, this presentation outlines the chronology of the Irish Iron Age and covers what is known about the size and boundaries of Ireland's *cóicedaig*, the five historical provinces. Scholars in various disciplines, including historians, linguists, and archaeologists, have individually endeavored to reconstruct a timeline of the Irish Iron Age. The early Irish texts provide us only with a mythical pseudo-history of the *cóicedaig* that cannot be assumed to be an accurate chronology of events, but instead reflect an elaborate oral history. However, by assembling lines of evidence from each of these data sources, we can create a clearer picture of the Irish Iron Age polities as a prelude to identifying the roots of traditional Irish folklore in the Iron Age.

12:45 pm – 2:00 pm

Conflicts, Policies, and Politics: Issues Surrounding Social Change

Session 3-B, SMSU 296
Moderator: Tina Burdsall

Natasha Grozina
"School Prayer in an Adversarial Legal System"

One of the key areas where the US legal system has played an active and pivotal role is the issue of school prayer. This work presents an analysis of the decisions that were made by the Supreme Court regarding school prayer, for the purpose of showing that their outcomes have caused backlash, an adversarial legal system where the Supreme Court plays the role of the ultimate authority in the decisions regarding school prayer, as well as how the US system is an effective legal framework for social change.

Anne Slote
"Arab-Israel Conflict"

The Palestine-Israel conflict has become a permanent fixture in the media all over the world. However, just like most things, what actually lies beneath the surface bears little resemblance to what it's presumed to be. The news tells us almost nothing except for reporting death tolls, and the classrooms of American high schools lack discussion on the topic. This fight between the Palestinians and the Israelis is not a sporting event where people pick a side, even though most of the world has. It is a political argument where people are losing lives and, just like any other conflict, there are two sides to every story.

Sascha Krader
"Pipeline: An Exploration of Post-Soviet Geopoliticking"

Eurasia is becoming a quiet battlefield as Russia and the West grapple for control of Central Asian oil and Russian natural gas. The West accuses Russia of using its vast network of gas pipelines to coerce, reward, and punish its neighbors; Russia accuses the West of imperial adventuring in its quest to acquire Caspian oil. This paper examines Russia's political uses of its gas giant, Gazprom. It also discusses the creation and impact of West-centric oil pipelines, including the newly opened Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan line and the proposed Nabucco and Trans-Balkan lines.

Kristian Hochreiter, McNair Scholar
"The Morphology of Street Names, and the Collision of Competing Senses of Place"

The controversy over the attempt to rename Interstate Ave "Cesar E.Chavez Blvd" in Portland, OR in 2007 illustrates issues of cultural conflict, contestation, and negotiation between social and ethnic groups. In part, this is because of the symbolic value and importance of the built-environment in terms of signifying the representation of group- and place- identities, history, and collective memory. This preliminary research includes a discourse analysis of online blog replies regarding this issue. Furthermore, I have reviewed and analyzed the Nov.15 2007 Portland, Oregon city council meeting (item #: 1362) to explore this topic.

12:45 pm – 2:00 pm

Science and Math Today: Research from the Portland State University Labs

Session 3-C, SMSU 298
Moderator: Chunfei Li

Matthew Gorby

"Molecular fluorescence in a planar microcavity of negative refractive materials"

Negative refractive materials (NRM) refer to those dielectric media which have both the electric permittivity and magnetic permeability being negative. The fluorescence characteristics of a molecular dipole will be modified in a non-trivial way when the dipole emits in the vicinity of these "meta-materials". The decay rate of a dipole in the vicinity of NRM has been studied for materials of different geometries including a spherical surface, spherical cavity, and a planar boundary. We have chosen to focus on the geometry of a planar cavity in which the dipole has been embedded. The planar cavity offers easier experimental possibilities, especially the flexibility of varying the size of the cavity. The method used to formulate the theory allows for the walls of the cavity to both be NRM, both be traditional materials, or one be NRM and the other traditional. Limiting cases will be used to reproduce previous results for a planar boundary of both traditional and meta materials. Established results will be reproduced for a planar cavity of traditional material, and new results will be obtained for NRM/NRM and NRM/Traditional cavities using our formulation. Detailed discussion of the results and the numerical methods used to obtain them will be presented.

Rebecca Schaller

"Fabrication and Testing of Carbon Nanotube Field Effect Transistors (CNT-FETs)"

CNTs are extremely important to the construction of next-generation FETs because of their low resistance and small scale. However, the interface between the metal electrodes and the CNT creates high overall contact resistance. In this experiment, we fabricated CNT-FETs using a magnetron sputter coater, photo lithography, and dielectrophoresis. CNTs were then grown using a chemical vapor deposition process. Various electrode materials were used to create hetero and homo-metallic contacts. Device characterization was performed through current and voltage testing under various atmospheric conditions.

Tri Nguyen

"Reduction of CNTFET Contact Resistance through Electrode Material Selection"

Field effect transistors with a carbon nanotube (CNTFETs) as the conduction channel promise further performance enhancements and are adaptable to current Si technologies. However, several challenges to their industrial fabrication remain. Among them are high resistance between the CNTs and the electrodes which lead to increased power consumption. Schottky barriers at the interface are assumed to control the device behavior. The height of these barriers can be modulated by the work function Φ (WF) of the electrode material. The impact of metals with WFs that vary from the WF of a single-wall CNT was studied in a statistically significant device population.

Jeremiah Zimmerman

"Sub-Micron velocity measurements near a moving contact line"

The displacement of one fluid by an immiscible second fluid (i.e. dynamic wetting), governs many natural and technological processes. Despite extensive studies, understanding and modeling the displacement process remains one of the outstanding problems in fluid mechanics. In this work, we explore the physics of the moving contact line (the idealized line of intersection between two fluids and a solid) with micron resolution particle image velocimetry (□PIV). μPIV enables sub-micron two-dimensional velocity measurements near the moving contact line. Exceeding previous work by nearly two orders of magnitude, this unprecedented resolution may elucidate the fundamental mechanisms that govern contact line motion.

2:15 pm – 3:15 pm

Understanding Biomedical Micro devices, Nanotechnology, Disease and Sleep

Session 4-A, SMSU 294
Moderator: Juliana Ee

SuGeun Chae and Shalini Prasad
"Simulation of fluid solutions with magnetic microbeads for biosensors"

The goal of the project is to simulate the behavior of the fluid solution with magnetic microbeads in a microfluidic device on biosensors. The application of this simulation is diagnosing a disease by labeling the target disease protein with the magnetic microbeads on the biosensor. We intend to incorporate a microfluidics device in order to optimize the biochip funtionalization and washing steps and to ensure precise, localized fluid placement onto the functional area of the device. The microfluidic device is a rectangular-parallelepiped-shaped, with an inlet and outlet for the deposit and removal of solutions during trials. The result of simulation will verify the optimized and reproducible protocol of the experiment and may use for a reference of redesigning and modifying the microfluidic device.

Eric Casler
"Developing a protocol for the functionalization of a lab-on-a-chip device"

The objective is to develop a protocol for the functionalization of a "lab-on-a-chip" device used in the early diagnosis of pancreatic cancer with ferromagnetic resonance (FMR). Magnetic micro-bead labels, functionalized for target proteins and immobilized through antigen-antibody reactions, are detected on the surface of a microwave circuit. FMR offers distinctive advantages over conventional immunoassay techniques; it requires a small sample volume, is non-invasive, cost effective, and easy to implement. Additionally, the antigen and antibody complex retains its native properties.

Richard Bruno
"Deciphering Our Cryptic Sleep"

The mysteries of sleep have continued to intrigue and proliferate scientific inquiry. Its purpose remains vital, yet what functions does it serve? Measurements of brain activity via electroencephalogram (EEG) and functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) have elucidated the correlates of dreaming and memory consolidation, while recent advances in genetics have isolated light-induced, molecular clock proteins involved in the regulation of biological processes. Continued investigation of gene knock-out mice and human sleep disorders will further tease out the pathways of circadian and ultradian rhythms. Implications reach as broadly as improvements in creativity and memorization, to specifically targeted chronotherapy for cancer.

2:15 pm – 3:00 pm

Frontiers of Discovery: Research in Biology and Chemistry

Session 4-B, SMSU 296
Moderator: Nancy Koroloff

Kelly Marvin, McNair Scholar
"Investigation of Cofactor Specificity in Biological Nitrile Reduction"

The QueF enzyme family catalyzes the conversion of a nitrile to an amine. This is unprecedented enzymatic activity, and the possibility of engineering a variant capable of performing industrially important reductions warrants further investigation. QueF is able to bind NADPH, yet cannot bind NADH. NADPH is more costly, and may limit applications of QueF. Several amino acid residues within the active site are hypothesized to play a role in cofactor binding. To assess this, QueF will be mutated at its active site and assayed for interaction with NADH, and presumably further insight regarding QueF's cofactor binding abilities will be obtained.

Anna Coleman-Hulbert
"Mitochondrial DNA polymorphisms and natural variation in aging-related phenotypes among *Caenorhabditis briggsae* isolates"

The leading hypothesis to explain organismal senescence—the "free radical hypothesis"—states that physical deterioration is caused by reactive oxygen species, the primary source of which is leakage from the mitochondrial electron transport chain (ETC). Several natural isolates of the soil nematode, *Caenorhabditis briggsae*, are known to harbor

variable numbers of mitochondrial genomes containing a nonfunctional copy of a gene that normally encodes an important component of the ETC. As a step toward developing a natural model to study the genetics of aging, we will correlate the rate of aging with the frequency of deletion-bearing mitochondrial genomes in these isolates.

Jeremiah Knapp

"Natural variation in fitness, lifespan and oxidative stress resistance in *C. briggsae* isolates"

Aging is a complex process characterized by degenerative changes in tissue organization and function, which translate into age-related reductions in fecundity and survival. A leading hypothesis to explain the ubiquity of aging is the "free radical hypothesis", which holds that physical deterioration results from accumulated cellular and genetic damage caused by reactive oxygen species that leak from mitochondria. As a step toward developing a natural model to study the role of mitochondrial dysfunction in lifespan determination and aging, we have assessed natural variation in offspring production, lifespan, and oxidative stress resistance among geographically divergent populations of the nematode *Caenorhabditis briggsae.*

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The Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program at Portland State University works with students who want to pursue PhDs. It introduces juniors and seniors who are first-generation and low-income or members of under-represented groups to academic research and to effective strategies for getting into and graduating from PhD programs.

The McNair Scholars Program has academic-year activities and a full-time summer research internship. Scholars take academic and skills-building seminars and workshops during the year, and each scholar works closely with a faculty mentor on original research in the summer. Scholars present their research findings at the McNair Summer Symposium and at other conferences, and are encouraged to publish their papers in the McNair Journal and other scholarly publications.

The Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program was established in 1986 by the U.S. Department of Education and named in honor of Challenger Space Shuttle astronaut Dr. Ronald E. McNair.

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Visit www.mcnair-program.pdx.edu, for an electronic version of the conference agenda and presentation abstracts.