



UNIVERSITY OF  
NOTRE DAME

ARTS AND LETTERS



# 2019

## SENIOR THESIS PROJECTS

Study everything. Do anything.<sup>SM</sup>

**Anne Marie Bonds**

- Majors: International Economics (German) and Political Science
- Advisers: Taryn Dinkelman and Forrest Spence

***State Immigrant Assimilation Programs in Germany***

I examined the impact of state-specific immigrant assimilation laws in Germany. While Germany implemented federal integration laws in 2005, three German states, Baden-Württemberg, North Rhine Westphalia, and Berlin, implemented specific assimilation programs to target the needs of their immigrants. I studied the impact of these programs on immigrant poverty rate compared to states without these programs. With the Syrian refugee crisis beginning in 2015, immigrant assimilation has been a controversial yet important topic. Germany needs to find a way to include the massive influx of immigrants into its labor market, and I believe immigrant integration programs are crucial to bettering the economy in light of a migrant crisis.



### Hye Sim Chung

- Majors: German and Psychology
- Minor: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Adviser: Tobias Boes

## *A Comparison Between Teaching Materials for Brecht's Mother Courage and the Playwright's Original Intentions*

Bertolt Brecht was a German playwright best known for his use of epic theater and alienation effect. His body of work continues to be taught to German students, but how are Brecht's original messages and intentions conveyed to these next generations? My thesis examines teaching materials on *Mother Courage* to answer this question. Brecht's *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* was the first German work I read from start to finish in German. After being introduced to his ideas, I was fascinated by the kind of theater Brecht implemented and by what he wanted to teach.



## **Matthew Marsland**

- Majors: Political Science and Russian
- Adviser: Patrick Deneen

### ***The Illiberal Roots of the American Political Tradition***

My thesis uncovers the illiberal roots of the American political tradition and reveals the origins of a flawed understanding of the United States as a "proposition nation." The idea of America as a proposition nation has always been suspect to me. The purpose of my thesis was to examine the true political character of the American founding and to establish whether this nation was conceived by its founders to be the application of liberal political theory, or if their project was a deliberation on the optimal government of a particular nation.

**Tristan McGrath**

- Major: Psychology
- Supplementary Major: Russian
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Adviser: Daniel Lapsley

***Key Problems Facing the Current Minimal Counterintuitiveness Paradigm***

Minimal Counterintuitiveness (MCI) theory suggests that religious and cultural objects and phenomena — e.g., ghosts and spirits — are transmitted based upon counterintuitiveness, which is simply violating our natural human expectations about how things should behave. However, recent studies have suggested that this is not entirely true. My research focuses on exploring these recent challenges to the MCI paradigm. I have always been interested in religious psychology, and MCI theory offers an interesting perspective on the anthropological roots of many religious ideas. If this theory has a solid basis in cognitive psychology, I think the theory has the potential to answer many questions about how and why religious ideas are formed and transmitted. Thus, I wanted to assist in exploring and challenging this intriguing theory.



**Stephen  
Meisenbacher**

- Majors: German and Computer Science
- Adviser: Mark Roche

***The Power and Limitations of Computational Methods in the Detection of Irony in German Literature***

My thesis attempts to answer the question of how effectively the latest methods in the field of natural language processing can be used to aid in the detection of irony, particularly in German literature and poetry. As irony is traditionally held as one of the more complex literary elements, this project can be a valuable first step toward helping language learners gain a deeper understanding of the beauty and intricacy of foreign language works. This topic combines my passions for computer science and the German language and harmonizes my education so far in both disciplines. While studying German at Notre Dame, I noticed that irony is an often used, yet hard to master, technique in the German literary tradition. The challenge then arose to see how computer science could help improve the learning process.

**Logan Wishart**

- Major: Theology
- Supplementary Major: German
- Minor: Poverty Studies
- Balfour-Hesburgh Scholar
- CUSE Sorin Scholar
- Adviser: John Cavadini

***The Veil of Paternity: Meditations on St. Joseph and St. Louis Martin***

My thesis is a meditation on St. Joseph, virginal father of Jesus, and St. Louis Martin, the father of St. Therese of Lisieux. It is an effort to amplify discourse on these two saints, to exhort men to father sainthood, to characterize a distinctly paternal spirituality I call "Joseph's Way," to invite readers to spiritual friendship with St. Joseph, and to show that the father saint acts as veil between child and the world. I realized that the Lord is calling me to marriage and, thus, to fatherhood. Moreover, I realized the Church needs father saints, especially now. I sought a role model who could show me that, by grace, a man can imitate Christ even in the mundane activity of family life. The Lord blessed me with two — St. Joseph and St. Louis Martin.

**Kelvin Wu**

- Majors: Music (Piano Performance) and German
- Adviser: John Blacklow

***Piano Recital***

In my piano recital, I presented a program from four style epochs — Baroque, Classic, Romantic, and Impressionistic — that showcases the cultural, stylistic, and technical richness of piano as an instrument. Because of my special affinity to German cultural history, my program had a heavy emphasis on the German repertoire, with works by Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms. The piece by Debussy marked my new interest in French music and culture. The recital featured music works that I intensively engaged with during the past year, while presenting a wide range of technical approaches to piano playing.