Language Vitality in California Schools
Sarah Cramer
ABSTRACT: With the passage of Proposition 227 in 1998, California voters sought to limit bilingual classroom instruction despite the increasing number of Spanish-speaking students in the region, and the availability of multilingual policy models successfully employed in other countries. This study evaluates Spanish and English language vitality in this new school setting. Through a survey of perceptions of language attitudes and use of fort fifth and sixth grade Southern California students in two distinct school types (schools mostly Spanish-speaking students and schools with mostly English-speaking students), the study tests social psychological theories about vitality, identity, and collective and personal self-esteem in this monolingual learning environment, and attempts to formulate a subjective vitality scale applicable to youth. The results indicate that both first language groups perceive English language vitality as higher than Spanish vitality. Despite this report of low Spanish vitality, first language Spanish speakers identify with and have high collective self-esteem for both language groups.

Patterns of Internet Use and their Impact on Social Capital
Valerie Elliot
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ABSTRACT: During the last decade, the Internet has grown rapidly as a venue of communication as well as a source of information. Concurrent with the growth of the Internet and other media technologies, there has been a significant decline in the level of civic engagement and social participation, also known as “social capital” (Putnam, 1995). The continual and emergence of more users, and the constant increase in the forms of usage have sparked interest in and raised concerns about the Internet’s effect on social capital. Putnam (1995) defines social capital as the social connections, facilitating networks, norms, and trust within a society, and thus is an important resource to the democratic process. Concerns arise from the fact that social capital may be undermined by people’s use of mass media, including the Internet, in lieu of actual participation in neighborhood and community events (Putnam, 1995). For this reason, people’s motives for and modes of using the Internet are important issues in trying to understand the decline of social capital. While studies have been conducted regarding the Internet’s impact on social capital (e.g., Pruijt, 2002; Shah, Kwak, & Holbert, 2001a; Wellman 2001), findings are mixed and so the question of whether the Internet is positively or negatively related to social capital remains unanswered.

The Obnoxious Boss: Communication and Gender Stereotypes in the Workplace
Melissa Igi
Faculty Advisor: Andrew Flanagan

Web-Based Collaborative Systems in the Working World
Gregory R. Isetta
Faculty Advisor: Cynthia Stohl
ABSTRACT: With the emergence of new communication technologies, groups of workers separated by time and space are no afforded the opportunity to collaborate with one another. These new technologies enable teams of workers to communicate and work together in ways that
were previously impossible. However, with these innovations come many questions concerning the effects and capabilities of collaborative technologies. To better understand the concept of collaboration and the technologies developed to meet the needs of collaborative work groups with a complex, decentralized environment it is important to take an in depth look in context at specific work groups using specific collaborative technologies. A collaborative technology that has grown in importance during recent years is the Web-based collaborative systems (WBCS). Participants in this study are the globally dispersed public relations representatives of a major software company who have access to a well-developed WBCS. This study evaluates the relationships between the basic purpose, functions, and feature of a collaborative technology, member usage, and organizational goals.

21st Century Gemeinschaft Communicative Practices of Intentional Communities
Mary K. Marshall
Faculty Advisor: Laura Jansma
ABSTRACT: This study focuses on the communicative practices of those who choose to live together in order to achieve Gemeinschaft, a sense of community or fellowship, through the creation of “intentional communities.” Kanter, in her foundational body of research from the 1970’s, concluded that making intentional community values and ideas explicit contributes to “survival.” Bormann’s symbolic convergence theory explains how shared values and ideals create shared rhetorical visions within small groups. By expanding Bormann’s application to the intentional community we identify whether and how communities’ share intentions become rhetorical visions by being enacted through everyday routines and communicative practices. We visited 3 intentional communities and video taped a) focus groups discussions about their community values, beliefs and practices, b) the communities’ common grounds. Our analysis extended Bormann’s interpretive method by categorizing the communicative data to identify the rhetorical visions for these three communities. The RV’s of all three communities fit cleanly into one of Bormann’s three analogues and explicitly communicate their visions through daily routines and communicative practices. Thus, they appear to satisfy Kanter’s criteria for survival.

Framing the Flag: The Effect of Patriotic Symbols in Television News
Serene Moussa
Faculty Advisor: Michael Stohl
ABSTRACT: Virtually none of the previous research on framing has sought to determine the power of symbols and graphics sometimes used in television news. Using the concepts of framing, agenda setting and previous research on political attitude formation, it was hypothesized that the presence of patriotic symbols in a television new broadcast would trigger patriotic schemas, resulting in an information bias. Based on pretest data, subjects were stratified into groups based on their attitudes and ideologies, and then randomly placed into the conditions in a 2(symbols vs. control) x 2(domestic vs. international) x 2(inflammatory vs. non-inflammatory) subject design, a total of eight possibly manipulations.

A mock newscast was created to reflect these conditions for each story. Post-test data was analyzed to determine differences between groups who received the symbols manipulation versus the control for these dependent variable: 1) evaluation of the issue, 2) evaluation of government’s handling of the issue, and 3) evaluation of the current administration. No support was found for the hypotheses; the presence of patriotic symbols in a newscast did not prove to be significant.
Recovering from Negative Publicity: The Effects of Corporate Sponsorship
Alison Rouse
ABSTRACT: One tactic for improving a company’s image is through corporate sponsorship. However, little research has been done to show whether corporate sponsorship would help or hinder a company whose image has already declined due to negative publicity. The following research study poses several hypotheses to fill this research gap. 204 undergraduate students were surveyed and randomly assigned into six conditions and give two survey instruments, one measuring brand loyalty and the other measuring corporate image. The company used in this study was Nike. The results indicated that persons with already positive attitudes toward the company will react counter-attitudinally towards a negative attack on that company. In addition, the results indicated that sponsorship alone cannot affect one’s perception of a company and consequently cannot significantly change a company’s corporate public image. Also, the results found that the type of event sponsored, whether a charity or sporting event, did not matter in that one was not significantly better at increasing corporate image than the other.

Media and Human Rights
Agnieszka Sieminski
Faculty Advisor: Michael Stohl
ABSTRACT: Research on the extent of the media’s influence on public attitudes toward human rights has found conflicting results. On the one hand, a substantial amount of literature supports the contention that media has very limited, if any, influence on public attitudes toward human rights. On the other hand, another body of literature argues that the media is a very powerful determinant of public attitudes toward human rights. One possible explanation for this discrepancy in findings is that research needs to explore both the implications of the amount of coverage of a particular issue as well as the way the issue is framed. This study examines the potential of the print media to shape the public’s attitudes toward US human rights policy. The effects of three different news frames in the New York Times for a ten year period, from 1990-1999, were tested: articles that present the issue in terms of straight facts, articles that present the issue with detailed and/or personal descriptions of the atrocities committed, and editorials. The attitudes toward human rights policy of 120 adults were surveyed, including 90 adults who have been exposed to one of the three news frames and 30 adults who received no treatment and served as the control group. The analysis of the results revealed that the news frames did not affect public attitudes toward US human rights foreign policy.

From Depictions to Attitudes: The Relationship between Exposure to Television Images of the Law and Viewer Attitudes towards Law Enforcement and the Legal Arena
Devon Slattery
Faculty Advisor: Charles Mullin

Patronizing Elderly People: A Law Enforcement Context
Yardena Zwang-Weissman
Faculty Advisor: Howard Giles
ABSTRACT: Patronizing talk has been explored in a number of contexts that are both institutional and non-institutional. Never before, however, has this commonly negative form of communication been examined in a social setting with police officers, where an older recipient is
at fault for a potentially life threatening situation. Interactions between police and elderly citizens are laden with stereotypes, yet much less investigated than intergroup interactions between police and younger citizens. Discovering a way to ameliorate the divide that develops from patronizing exchange is imperative given that the legitimacy of the legislature-not to mention reduced crime rates- is jeopardized when police cannot effectively enforce laws due to hostility towards them based on stereotypic images. Drawing on intergroup communication theories, this Thesis examines two communicative cues- officer language strategies (neutral vs. patronizing vs. patronizing plus) and hairstyle (military vs. non-military) - which likely influence contact. Although confirming some hypotheses, unexpected findings were produced on other levels. This research takes extant theory into not only new empirical terrain (i.e., police-citizen interactions as well as degrees of patronizing language) but also attends to the attributional significance of a person perception cue surprisingly under-investigated (viz., hairstyle).