

**2017 Belmont University Research Symposium**

**Belmont Honors Program Research Track 2:  
Social Sciences, Management, and Business**

Moderator: Jonathan Thorndike

**April 20, 2017**

**7:00-8:15pm**

**IHSB 142**

7:00pm-7:15pm

**The Impact of Media Coverage of the 2016 United States Presidential Election on Portrayals of Domestic Poverty**

Meredith Parker

Faculty Advisor: Jennifer Crowell, MSSW, Ph.D.

United States presidential elections occur every four years and are accompanied by significant media coverage. Election coverage spans a variety of social issues such as civil rights, affordable housing, and poverty policy. While media coverage of poverty has been well documented in the literature, the intersection between this specific social issue and media coverage of presidential elections is an identified gap in the literature. Therefore, this research comprises a content analysis of twenty newspaper articles from the *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal*. Each article discussed both the 2016 U.S. presidential election and a poverty-related issue, such as tax policy or the minimum wage. Several themes emerged from the articles during this analysis, including a tendency to portray poverty in an overly bleak manner, racial bias when discussing poverty, and the promotion of systemic interventions to alleviate domestic poverty. The *New York Times*, a left-leaning newspaper, and Hillary Clinton, the Democratic candidate, were also found to more frequently promote systemic interventions than the *Wall Street Journal*, a right-leaning newspaper, and Donald Trump, the Republican candidate. The findings of this study are significant for social workers to see the bias in coverage that their clients experiencing poverty could view in the media during election seasons, which should inform practitioners' work with these individuals. Social workers should also be encouraged that a strong trend towards systemic interventions was discovered within these articles.

7:15pm-7:30pm

**Current Use of Digital Platforms By Recording Artists At Different Levels of Stardom**

Emily Bukowski

Faculty Advisor: David Schreiber, Ph.D.

The rise of social media has completely transformed how recording artists interact with their fans and potential new listeners. In addition to the music, it is now expected that artists have a presence on all mainstream social platforms, and keep a steady stream of quality content flowing daily. This study explores how recording artists' social media use differs depending on their level of stardom. Interviews with artists, label executives and marketing teams show how social

media strategy is currently being handled at various levels of stardom. It then applies Hollander's Model of idiosyncrasy credits to note patterns in strategy and explain why the different strategies may occur. The research shows that the underlying goal for recording artists at any level should be to build relationships with fans by posting genuine content on their digital platforms of choice. The types of platforms used and methods of using the platforms differ because artists at different status levels are held to different social expectations. While up-and-coming artists must conform to social norms in order to gain respect, established artists are expected to innovate and challenge boundaries in order to maintain the public's engagement. Recording artists and their teams must continually monitor their digital strategy in order to ensure the artist is always accumulating social credit.

7:30pm-7:45pm

## **An Analysis of the Applications of Servant Leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Ciara Hauber

Faulty Advisor: Cate Loes, Ph. D.

Modern research has recognized, now more than ever, that effective leadership is a key factor to building successful organizations. As generally understood, the corporate environment is plagued with unethical, toxin, and corrupt leadership practices, often leading to organizational problems. Russell and Stone (2002) believe that the characteristics and qualities of servant leadership could easily become the bridge between the need for good business leadership and ethical, socially-responsible organizations. Servant leadership is defined as a theory and set of practices that enriches the lives of individuals, builds better organizations, and ultimately creates a more just, caring world by seeking the needs of others, first. By studying the executive leadership and corporate behaviors of companies ranking on Fortune's Most Admired Companies and Fortune's Best Companies to Work For, through the lens of a servant leadership model proposed by Page and Wong (2000), this research sought to both identify if characteristics of servant leadership were being employed within successful companies, and to identify, if any, the correlations between varying aspects of organizational success and the practice of servant leadership. For companies analyzed from Fortune's Most Admired Companies, the average servant leadership index was 63.57%. For companies analyzed from Fortune's Best Companies to Work For, the average servant leadership index was 89.35%. This study not only shows that characteristics of servant leadership are being employed in top ranked companies, but also, in general, companies awarded and recognized as being a great workplace, are more likely to practice a larger amount of servant leadership characteristics.

7:45pm-8:00pm

## **Chinese Steel Subsidies and the Effect on Local Industry: A Gravity Model Approach**

Sean Logan

Faculty Advisor: Gray Sasser

During the heated political cycle of the previous year, one of the few topics that both Republican and Democratic presidential candidates were mutually in support of was the need to reassess trade deals to boost employment domestically – commonly manifested through calls to 'bring back' jobs in manufacturing sectors thought to be permanently lost to China or other emerging

economies. Employment in manufacturing sectors has been decreasing since the 1970s, so the initial question is to what extent production abroad is diminishing US industry. Performing an analysis with a gravity model of trade is one such method that attempts to explain bilateral trade flows, specifically for the global steel industry, to assess whether Chinese steel is a significant player in the decline of steel industry in the US. Using a benchmark for trade integration with China established by the European Central Bank, this study concludes that China has a statistically significant impact on the market for global steel exporting, while having no impact on global steel imports. Because gravity models successfully control for factors only relevant to steel trade, this paper creates a foundation for additional insights into how domestic trade policy should be shaped by Chinese steel exports.

8:00pm-8:15pm

### **The Self-Publishing Industry's Potential for Midlist Authors: Unpacking the Historical Stigma and Looking to the Future**

Krista Walsh

Faculty Advisor: Richard Sowienski

During the past decade, the self-publishing book industry has experienced explosive growth, due to certain technological innovations like e-books, print-on-demand, and the internet, which have made the process of publishing a book faster, cheaper, and most importantly, more accessible for the individual author. The self-publishing industry is continually adapting to improve upon the aspects of the traditional sector that are not ideal for many authors, such as an author's lack of control over their work or the pressure to conform to the perceived desires of an established market. One type of author stands to gain the most from choosing to self-publish: the midlist author. As large publishers shifted their business models to concentrate most resources on the few titles expected to sell the most, the other titles on their lists are left without strong support from the publisher. However, there remains a key disadvantage to self-publishing, namely, the stigma toward self-published books. To help eliminate stigma, self-publishing companies should restructure to service the individual needs of the author, rather than offering impersonal "bundles" of services. This paper explores the current scope of the self-publishing industry and finds that self-publishing is a viable alternative to traditional publishing—and for some authors, is the preferred publishing route.