

You Control the Media, You Control the Masses; The Implementation of a Ban on Isla Mujeres, Mexico: The Intersection of Norms, Law, and Economy

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For my senior capstone project, I continued my research from the year previous by investigating how social norms of a community influences how successful a law will be implemented and enforced to gain a better understanding of intersectionality of norms, law, and the economy. I interviewed 40 participants who included, government officials, restaurant owners, residents, environmental activists, and store managers. In addition to my interviews, I surveyed 195 people including tourists, restaurant owners, residents, and store managers as well as conducted observations on the use of Styrofoam. I conducted my research during summer and fall of 2019.

My senior thesis was a comparative study of the two supreme court confirmation hearings of Clarence Thomas and Brett Kavanaugh—which involved the testimony of Anita Hill and Christine Ford, respectively—through the analytical lens of mediatization to apprehend how the intersections of race, gender, law, and political economy shaped media representations of these events. I conducted during the Fall 2019 and Spring 2020. This study consisted of three parts. First, I analyzed and text mined media accounts of the hearings (newspaper and social media reports) in order, to identify themes that shaped how the hearings were represented. The second portion of my research examined both the footage and transcripts of both hearings through a linguistic anthropological lens, which focused on semiotics, rhetoric, and performance. Finally, I assessed how people reacted to and interpreted the transcripts and footage of portions of the hearings, by convening and surveying a focus group to both read and watch the hearings.

The library became an essential resource for both my senior capstone and my senior thesis. During the analysis phase, I took advantage of the library consultation and services by participating in the Senior Thesis Week during fall break. I was able to complete many of my goals for this week and was able to get ahead in my writing phase. Also, I learned how to use new softwares, such as *Zotero*, that I used for my senior thesis sources as well. Julie Vecchio, the assistant director for the Navari Family Center for Digital Scholarship, taught me how to use the transcript station in Hesburgh Library with the *Express Scribe* software to transcribe my transcripts for both projects. The transcript station as well as the sixth floor and reading room on the second floor were the primary spaces I occupied during both semesters for my research.

In addition to utilizing spaces of the library, I also utilized the softwares available. Julie Vecchio provided me with the book, *Using Software in Qualitative Research: A Step-by-Step Guide*, to help guide me through softwares I used and needed for my qualitative analysis, specifically *NVivo* and *Atlas.ti*. I scheduled a meeting with Mark Robinson, a specialized librarian, who provided me with a tutorial concerning the *Atlas.ti* software. The only computer that holds this software is located in the library as this was another space I frequently occupied to analyze my data.

Since I conducted my entire senior thesis throughout the school year, the library and its resources became invaluable in helping me complete my research. I took advantage of interlibrary loans to gain access to articles and books necessary for my theoretical background including: *How Race is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts*, “Black Reconstruction,” and *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness*. During my first two phases of text mining media accounts and examining the transcripts for both confirmation hearings, Julie Vecchio connected me with a librarian of the Law School library to gain access to the transcripts of the Brett Kavanaugh hearing. Mark Robinson introduced me to the online search tools such as the database, Proquest Congressional, which I utilized to access the transcripts of the Clarence Thomas and the media articles for my anthropological linguistic analysis. Also, Eric Morgan became an indispensable asset to my senior thesis research as he presented specialized technologies to my data collection. He assisted me in my text analysis phase as well as introduced me to softwares he created himself for student research, *Distant Reader* and *AntConc*. These softwares were essential in saving me time as I was able to study hundreds of files and documents in a timely manner that would have been impossible otherwise with my time constraint. *Distant Reader* takes a set of unstructured data or text as an input to create an output set of structured data for analysis. This output data comes in the form of two narrative reports, a set of plain text files, large sets of tab-delimited files, a set of images, and a relational database. In other words, the *Reader* provided me a platform to analyze word frequencies through files and images by allowing me to examine them through nouns, verbs, keywords, unigrams, and bigrams. *AntConc* enabled me to find all the occurrences of a word, illustrate where the word is located, list word collocations, and calculate a number of useful statistics concerning the word. I used both to conduct my linguistic analysis where I analyzed the frequency of words used or omitted within the media to gain a better understanding of how the media constructed the interpretation and perceptions of the hearings for the public. Similarly, he guided me through the database of Nexis Uni to collect multiple articles surrounding both hearings for specific newspapers.