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## Message from Nancy M. Giardina

Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs

We are proud to present the eleventh volume of the Grand Valley State University McNair Scholars Journal. It is the culmination of intensive research conducted by our student scholars and their faculty mentors through our Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program.

The Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program, now in its thirteenth year here at Grand Valley State University, provides an opportunity for students and faculty to apply much of what is learned within the classroom by engaging, outside the classroom, in research activities in a particular area of scholarly interest. These research activities provide a journey through the challenges and affirmations of scholarly work and better prepare students for graduate study and the pursuit of a doctoral degree.

Thank you to the faculty mentors who have worked so closely with our McNair Scholars to propel their research skills toward the next level of educational challenges.

Congratulations to the ten McNair Scholars whose research is presented here. Your journey and the challenges you have met during this scholarly activity speak to your talents and persistence in pursuing both your educational and life goals. Thank you for sharing your talents with the university community and continuing the spirit of this program.

Finally, thank you to all the people behind the scenes that work to sustain this program and produce this journal. Your work is valued as well.



Nancy M. Giardina, Ed.D.

Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs



GRAND VALLEY  
STATE UNIVERSITY

*“Before you can make a dream come true, you must first have one.” - Ronald E. McNair, Ph.D.*

Ronald Erwin McNair was born October 21, 1950, in Lake City, South Carolina, to Carl and Pearl McNair. He attended North Carolina A&T State University where he graduated Magna Cum Laude with a B.S. degree in physics in 1971. McNair then enrolled in the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 1976, at the age of 26, he earned his Ph.D. in physics.

McNair soon became a recognized expert in laser physics while working as a staff physicist with Hughes Research Laboratory. He was selected by NASA for the space shuttle program in 1978 and was a mission specialist aboard the 1984 flight of the USS Challenger space shuttle.

After his death in the USS Challenger space shuttle accident in January 1986, members of Congress provided funding for the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program. The goal is to encourage low-income, first generation students, as well as students who are traditionally under-represented in graduate schools, to expand their opportunities by pursuing graduate studies.



## Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program

### ***The Purpose***

The McNair Scholars Program is designed to prepare highly talented undergraduates to pursue doctoral degrees and to increase the number of individuals (from the target groups) on college and university faculties.

### ***Who are McNair Scholars?***

The McNair Scholars are highly talented undergraduate students who are from families with no previous college graduate, low-income background or groups under-represented at the graduate level for doctoral studies. The program accepts students from all disciplines.

### ***Program Services***

The McNair Scholars are matched with faculty research mentors. They receive academic counseling, mentoring, advising, and GRE preparation. In addition to the above services, the McNair Scholars have opportunities to attend research seminars, conduct research, and present their findings orally or written via poster presentations. In the first semester of their senior year, the scholars receive assistance with the graduate school application process.

### ***Funding***

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### About the TRiO Programs

Manuscripts can be found in their entirety at [www.gvsu.edu/mcnair](http://www.gvsu.edu/mcnair)

# Greek and Roman Perceptions of the Afterlife in Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and Virgil's *Aeneid*



**Jeff Adams**  
*McNair Scholar*



**Diane Rayor, Ph.D.**  
*Faculty Mentor*

This study is a literary analysis of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and Virgil's *Aeneid*. The depiction of the underworld in Virgil's *Aeneid* echoes Homer's in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and has obvious similarities in the portrayal of the afterlife. In order to understand how Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and Virgil's *Aeneid* affected the authors' respective societies, I examined the interactions of Achilles, Odysseus and Aeneas with dead friends and relatives, focusing on what each party, both living and the dead, wanted and the results of their interactions. This was accomplished by first reading passages from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in ancient Greek and the *Aeneid* in Latin and integrating these with historical evidence of beliefs in the mid-eighth century BC for the Greeks, and in the late first century BC for the Romans. While the Greeks and Romans had a variety of beliefs independent of the literature, there were certain elements that reflected literary references. The convictions that both the Greeks and Romans held concerning ritualistic behaviors surrounding death can be seen in the writings of both Homer and Virgil. A theme depicted in all three of these epics is the problem that arises when the dead lack proper burial, which influenced both societies to take drastic measures to ensure that this would not happen. The idea of the living and the dead conversing, while being unable to touch, was another major literary factor in the religious rituals of both societies. The widespread circulation of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* heavily influenced the religious beliefs of the contemporary Greeks, affecting their ideas of the psyche or the soul after death, their burial methods, the prevalence of hero cults, and even in some cases, their attempts to imitate the magnificence of heroic funerals. Although the Romans rejected the Homeric view of the afterlife, they held a similar idea of the spirits of the dead and how they could affect the living. Though their beliefs were not the same as in the *Aeneid*, the Romans had

a vast variety of ancestral rituals and festivals that embodied their spiritual enthusiasm concerning their beliefs about the dead. The different impacts that these epics had were reflected at varying levels of society – from deep spiritual movements to political manipulation. The major affect of the *Aeneid* on the Roman people can be seen not in the religious realm, but rather the political realm. Certain sections of the *Aeneid* served as propaganda for Caesar Augustus, who used the popularity of Virgil's epic to gather further support of his Empire. Both authors had their influences on their respective societies, but in differing respects. Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* significantly influenced the religious beliefs of the contemporary Greeks, affecting many different aspects of their religion. Virgil did not influence Roman religion in a similar manner as Homer, though the Romans had religious ideas that were represented in the *Aeneid*.

# Synthesis of a HDC-GFP Promoter-Gene Fusion as a Tool to Identify Histaminergic Cells and Examine HDC Regulation



**Erik R. Anderson**  
*McNair Scholar*



**Martin G. Burg, Ph.D.**  
*Faculty Mentor*

Histamine is a biogenic amine involved in local immune responses and acting as a neurotransmitter. Histamine is synthesized through the decarboxylation of the amino acid histidine, catalyzed by the enzyme histidine decarboxylase. In the fruitfly *Drosophila melanogaster*, histamine is utilized as a functional neurotransmitter for photoreceptor and mechanosensory cells, but has also been localized by immunocytochemistry to a few specific cells in the brain.

The *Hdc* gene, which codes for this enzyme, has been identified and studied in *Drosophila*, a model organism well-suited for genetic studies. Mutations in the *Hdc* gene have been isolated to that which disrupts function, indicating what the absence of histamine does to the organism. *Hdc* mutations cause flies to be functionally blind, additionally causing other sensory alterations. To further investigate the regulation of the *Hdc* gene and how expression may be altered throughout development, the *Hdc* promoter region was identified through a combination of sequence analysis, deletion mapping, and 5' RACE experiments. Through the analysis of deletions constructed in the *Hdc* promoter region, it was possible to separate the expression of *Hdc* in photoreceptors from expression in the brain. Recent experiments have identified novel 5' ends of the *Hdc* cDNA which do coincide with the deletion analysis results, suggesting that the transcriptional promoter for brain *Hdc* expression is unique from the identified photoreceptor *Hdc* promoter.

While deletions in a promoter region can identify regions necessary to guide expression in various tissue types, they cannot identify areas that are sufficient alone for *Hdc* expression. One method that has been used extensively in promoter analysis studies in *Drosophila* involves the use of the yeast UAS/GAL4 transcription activation system. Attempts at using this "reporter" system, using the *Hdc* promoter to test whether it is sufficient for normal *Hdc* expression,

have recently been completed.

A portion of the *Hdc* transcriptional promoter was used to direct expression of GAL4, which then caused expression of the reporter gene (in this case GFP) in cells that normally express *HDC*. Unfortunately, results obtained were inconsistent and indicated a potentially more widespread expression pattern of *Hdc* than expected. The presence of an inconsistent expression pattern in the pHdc-GAL4 experiment suggested that another approach, more resistant to positional effects of the transformation plasmid in the genome, was needed to clearly identify *HDC*-expressing cells.

The pGreenPelican vector system was chosen as it contains elements that block the influence of nearby genes which may alter or disrupt the expression pattern caused by the pHdc region. Additionally, the pGreenPelican vector allows for a direct fusion of pHDC to the reporter gene, an 'enhanced' Green Fluorescent Protein (eGFP), allowing pHDC to direct expression of eGFP as if it were the *HDC* protein. The pHdc-eGFP gene fusion has been created by inserting a 4.2 kb fragment containing the pHDC into the pGreenPelican vector using the restriction enzyme sites *Xba*I and *Nco*I. The newly constructed pGreenPelican-pHDC plasmid will ensure that any amount of expression due to the *Hdc* promoter region will be accurately reported through expression of eGFP.

# Effects of Endogenous Androgens on Pulmonary Microvascular Reactivity



**James D. Dells**  
*McNair Scholar*



**Francis A. Sylvester, Ph.D.**  
*Faculty Mentor*

Previous studies involving large isolated pulmonary arteries have suggested that the administration of high concentrations of natural androgen produces acute vasodilation. This study examines the acute effects of testosterone (T) and dihydrotestosterone (DHT), observed previously in large arteries, in small pulmonary arteries (SPA). Isolated segments of SPA taken from the lungs of *Sus domestica* ( $n = 4$ , mean outside diameter =  $313 \pm 26 \mu\text{m}$ ) were doubly cannulated and perfused with physiologic saline solution (PSS). The vessels were also simultaneously superfused in PSS and pressurized to 17mmHg. After a period of equilibration, the observed trend of the SPA to both T and DHT appeared to be that of a dose-dependent vasodilation. The concentrations of T and DHT necessary to induce vasodilation in the SPA may be lower than those needed to induce similar responses in large pulmonary arteries.

# The Critical Nexus: Deindustrialization, Racism and Urban Crisis in Post-1967 Detroit



**Danielle DeRuiter-Williams**  
*McNair Scholar*



**Daniel McClure, Ph.D.**  
*Faculty Mentor*

As one drives past the gutted homes and empty streets of Detroit, MI, the sounds of Motown, specifically Marvin Gaye's 1971 hit LP, *What's Going On*, can be evoked as a soundtrack to life in the city. With so much poverty, crime and an overall ambiance of abandonment it is easy to forget that Detroit is a city with a rich history. Today it is scarred with widespread urban decay. Abandoned buildings line the streets, gun shots are a common occurrence and high rates of underemployment and joblessness plague this once bustling center of the automobile industry.

Rewind 40 years to witness as the Detroit vice squad entered an illegal after-hours night club during the early morning hours of July 23, 1967.

What began as an almost routine raid initiated a five day riot that would leave 43 dead, 467 injured, 7,200 arrested and over 2,000 buildings scorched. The 12th Street Riots that began that night soon became the most violent civil incident in US history and left a permanent mark upon the city.

The causes of this outburst are varied; this research explored the impact of historical occurrences in building an environment where citizens felt frustrated, demoralized and helpless, and how history has shaped the presence of this city that suffers from perpetual urban crisis.

The objective of this research was three-fold; 1) identify and qualify the claim that at the nexus of deindustrialization and racism there is an initiator and accelerator of urban crisis; 2) examine the concept of racism as a result of scarcity of resources (i.e. jobs, housing, education, etc.) amongst unskilled laborers caused by heavy industrialization and later deindustrialization; 3) explore the impact of the 1967 race riot on race relations and Detroit's success or failure (economic and socially) since those riots.

These objectives were achieved by answering the following three research questions: 1) What historical factors have

most greatly influenced the deterioration of Detroit City since 1967? 2) How did industrialization (which caused cities to one, grow at a rate greatly exceeding their infrastructure, and two, created a great dependence within city economies on industry) and deindustrialization create a scarcity of social resources and how did that impact race relations amongst Detroit's working class? 3) Can it be inferred that the increase in racism and tensions between members of the working class due to post-WWII deindustrialization were a strong motivator for the 1967 race riots? The method through which conclusions were drawn was via extensive literature review of scholarly works and primary sources (i.e., oral histories).

Though not exhaustive this research offers extensive evidence to support the perspective that deindustrialization, racism and the 1967 riots certainly shaped the urban crisis of today and that those factors and more must be addressed if Detroit is to reclaim its place at the forefront of the American landscape.

# 16S rRNA DGGE Analysis of Gut and Hepatopancreas Microflora in the Isopod *Oniscus asellus*



**De'Vona Glover**  
*McNair Scholar*



**Patrick A. Thorpe, Ph.D.**  
*Faculty Mentor*

The microflora (microbes) of the gastrointestinal tract have been found to play an important role in the health of animals. Beneficial microbes have several positive effects on the health of the host. Microflora can improve metabolic functions by increasing the nutrients available to the host. They can provide protection from an invasion of pathogenic microbes by preventing their colonization of the host, and they can also modulate the immune system to make it more responsive to pathogenic microbes. These beneficial effects suggest that in addition to preventing colonization by pathogenic microbes, organisms should enhance the colonization of beneficial microbes.

While many microbes are available in the environment to colonize an individual, the most readily abundant source are other individuals, particularly the parents. Microbes can be passed between individuals in a variety of ways, including sexual transmission. However, the dynamics of the transmission and colonization of microflora between mates and between parents and offspring are still largely unknown. This transmission is thought to be a key aspect of understanding how microflora affect the health of the host.

An example of the key role sexual transmission plays can be seen in aphids. Aphids have three microbial endosymbionts of which at least one is needed for proper growth and development. There are major benefits to having these endosymbionts such as the ability to overcome infection by wasp parasitoids, resistance to pathogens, and tolerance to heat stress. Moran and Dunbar (2006) have shown that these required endosymbionts are transmitted from males to females and then from the mother to the offspring.

Isopods offer another system in which to investigate the transfer of microflora between male and female isopods. To evaluate their usefulness, the microflora profile of male and female isopods was determined using

DGGE (denaturing gradient gel electrophoresis). DNA from washed (5 females and 5 males) and unwashed gastrointestinal tracts (4 males and 4 females) and hepatopancreases (7 males and 7 females) were extracted using a DNeasy extraction kit, amplified with universal microbial 16S rRNA primers, and separated on gels using DGGE analysis. The banding patterns were analyzed using Gel2K software to produce binary files of the banding. A Jaccard similarity diagram was constructed of the binary files using a CLUSTER program.

The results indicate that there is considerable variation among isopods. As expected the unwashed guts produced a larger number of bands. There were no bands found to be in common in every sample, however many bands are shared between individuals. Also, there were no sex-specific grouping patterns found. Lastly, a prominent feature in the hepatopancreas results was a doublet of closely migrating bands. The extent of variation raises the possibility that combinations of microbes may have beneficial effects for the host. Identification of each microbe may allow the determination of their beneficial or pathogenic potential. Based on this identification, further work can examine the transmission of these species between mates and to offspring.

# Between Black and White: An Exploratory Investigation of Biracialism in the United States and South Africa



**Whitney Laster**  
*McNair Scholar*



**Jennifer Stewart, Ph.D.**  
*Faculty Mentor*

The United States and South Africa both endured periods of intense racism produced through rigid social hierarchies. While European populations controlled these institutions, black populations remained marginalized. These two countries allow for a significant comparative case study because of their similarities, and as noted by anthropologist Ruth Landes, “the fundamental feature of American race relationships... [is] matched only in South Africa.”

Critical race theory proposes that race is socially constructed rather than inherently biological. Critical Race Theory, in general, is extremely applicable when investigating biracialism because it contradicts and rejects the essentialist approach that a person’s physical or biological characteristics determine their personal and social characteristics. Although social construction of the white and black ethnicities formed similarly, the development of the mixing of white and black into biracial peoples developed uniquely in each country. Mixed race people of black and white ancestry, people who constitute a biracial identity, currently account for 2.9% of the U.S. and 8.9 % of the South African population. This study applies concepts from critical race theory to analyze similarities and differences within the constructions, highlighting the elements of colonization, slavery, and de facto segregation, and apartheid.

This present research also adds to the understanding of the societal effects of history on social identity by investigating the social identity of biracial people in the United States and “Coloureds”: the label of mixed-parentage people, in South Africa. Survey-interviews were given to self-identified biracial subjects to give a hermeneutic approach to the investigation of contemporary social identities.

Although the United States and South Africa shared similarities of foundational structures, the social construction of the biracial people differed. South Africa

accepted the mixed-race label of Coloured during its formation process, allowing the South African biracial people to constitute their own unique racial group to carry on throughout the segregation period of apartheid. Contrary to the more continuous racial categories of South Africa, the dichotomist nature of the United States, pushed by laws such as the one-drop rule, forced racial polarization.

Even though Coloureds have had their own racial group for some time, they still encounter feelings of ambiguity similarly to biracial people in the United States. The literary and subject-interview analyses give evidence to support that argument that socio-historical processes do have a strong effect on one’s identity. This study further suggests that black and white mixed-raced people, independent of particular social contexts, do encounter similar cognitive processes when forming racial identity. Objective racial categories differing from the subjective caused many subjects to battle out-group alienation feelings causing most to endure longer identity formation processes. Amidst these feelings, the ability to adapt to different racial situations evolved as a positive social characteristic of biracialism and added an intriguing and positive theme to the biracial social identity.

# Religion in the Trenches: Liberation Theology and Evangelical Protestantism as Tools of Social Control in the Guatemalan Civil War (1960-1996)



**Bryan Manewal**  
*McNair Scholar*



**David Stark, Ph.D.**  
*Faculty Mentor*

The relationship between the Catholic Church and the institutional state has always been precarious in Guatemala. As the colonial period ended and Guatemala became an independent state, religion became a key component in the ideological battle between Conservatives and Liberals over the fate of the new nation. While Conservatives wanted to maintain the traditional tenets of Catholicism, Liberals wanted to modernize the country. The presence of a large number of Indigenous people in Guatemala is important to understanding the decision by the Liberal regime to allow and actively promote Protestantism. The government believed that allowing the free exercise of religion would encourage European immigration to Guatemala, changing the demographic makeup of the country. Since Guatemalan independence the elites had used religion as a means to achieve social control. Whichever religious ideology the authorities could manipulate to ensure their hold on power while maintaining Indigenous complacency was the version they would officially espouse. While religion may have embodied the Word of God, it became the will of the Guatemalan government.

During the “ten years of spring” from 1944-1954, the Guatemalan government tried to move away from manipulation and cynicism towards an open and enlightened approach to governance. Juan José Arevalo’s (r. 1944-1951) administration promised the Guatemalan people a “square deal,” which meant avoiding the abuses and corruption of the past, including the use of religion as a tool of social control. His successor, Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán (r. 1951-1954), viewed as a communist sympathizer, incurred the wrath of Guatemala’s religious communities. It was the wrath of outside entities, namely the United States Central Intelligence Agency and the United Fruit Company that ended Guatemala’s fledgling attempt at democracy. While this U.S. orchestrated coup ended progressive government in Guatemala, it began one of

this hemisphere’s longest and most brutal civil wars.

During the early years of Guatemala’s civil war (1960-1996), which pitted the right-wing military regime against leftist revolutionaries, Liberation Theology became popular among some in the Latin American clergy. Liberation Theology stated that Catholics should be active and engaged in working towards a positive transformation of society and the world. Fearing that this new radical ideology would inspire Indigenous populations to join the rebels, the dictatorship looked to suppress the movement inside Guatemala. The dictatorship carried out this strategy by waging a military campaign against progressive Catholicism as well as again promoting Protestantism among the Indigenous populations. This time, however, this proselytizing was accompanied with the threat of violence.

This research looks at the rise of Protestantism in Guatemala and how the government used it first as a tool of modernization and then, during the civil war, as a tool of political subjugation. Also examined is Liberation Theology, its prominence within Guatemala during the civil war, and the military dictatorship’s use of the opposing tenets of Fundamentalist Protestantism to counter Liberation Theology’s mass appeal. While the Guatemalan authorities embraced different Christian doctrines over the years, their goals remained the same: to use religion to impose control over the nation’s Indigenous majority.

# The Latin American Consensus



**Amanda Miralrio**  
*McNair Scholar*



**Polly Diven, Ph.D.**  
*Faculty Mentor*

Anti-Americanism has reached an unsettling global high and has been manifested in everything from opinion polls to violent protests. Latin America is geopolitically important to the United States, while harboring anti-American sentiment. In this manuscript, the history of U.S.-Latin America relations and the most recent public opinion polls are analyzed to unearth the roots of regional anti-Americanism. Case studies include a country notorious for its anti-Americanism (Venezuela) and a country traditionally allied with the United States (Mexico). Despite different political and historical relations with the United States, Latin American countries have come to an anti-American consensus.

The three-tiered model created by Diven in *The Complex and Contradictory Nature of Anti-Americanism* (2007) is used as the theoretical framework for this study. The first “tier” is the most long-term and deeply rooted, based on historical grudges held in a nation’s collective memory as well as the current unipolar system structure. The second tier includes conflicts derived from cultural and value differences. The third tier describes anti-Americanism fueled by leadership and policy choices.

A current poll shows only 41 percent of Venezuelans approve of the U.S. This analysis of the causes of anti-Americanism in Venezuela reveals that much of it can be attributed to Tier I and Tier III causes. The U.S. has a history of supporting dictators in Venezuela, and of opposing popular leaders. Infringement on sovereignty is cause for resentment in Venezuela and every other Latin American nation. It is puzzling, however, that the U.S. has much higher approval ratings in Central America, a region where the United States was very involved in several civil wars. This may mean that Tier I anti-Americanism plays a greater role in Venezuela than it does in Central America. It also appears that

anti-Americanism in Venezuela comes from the Tier III causes (current U.S. leaders and policies).

Anti-Americanism in Mexico appears to come from more of a mixture of Tiers than Venezuela. Mexico has a 53 percent approval rating of the U.S. While Mexico has reason to harbor Tier I anti-Americanism and seems to be opposed to current U.S. leaders and policies, Tier II anti-Americanism has a greater role in Mexico than in Venezuela. Mexicans generally like American popular culture, but really dislike its diffusion into other areas. These conflicting opinions are an example of what scholars describe when they refer to Latin American ambivalence towards the U.S. The United States and Mexico are allies, but the current debate over immigration reform contributes to Tier III anti-Americanism.

A mixture of history, politics, economics, and culture makes Latin America’s view toward the U.S. complex. Mexico and Venezuela are just two countries in Latin America with very different ideologies and histories that are in consensus in their opposition toward the United States. A study of data and literature reveals that many countries in the region, regardless of their differences, come to an anti-American consensus.

## Interactive Media - The Next Literature?



**LaTricia Phillips**  
*McNair Scholar*



**Chris Haven, Ph.D.**  
*Faculty Mentor*

For most, the term “video game” carries some sort of negative preconception, such as that video games are a waste of time, that they increase aggressive behavior among children, or that they are a type of passive learning. However, video games (computer games/games played on consoles) have evolved invalidating these stereotypical viewpoints. By categorizing levels of interactivity based on James Paul Gee’s (author of *What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy*) four basic principles of probing, forming a hypothesis, reprobating, and rethinking the hypothesis, and by examining additional ways that they have educational value, my research demonstrates that video games can indeed stimulate active learning. In examining the cognitive aspect, observing the cognitive processes of children at a children’s museum, and studying serious games (including the United Nations World Food Programme’s *Food Force*, and Michigan State University’s *Life Preservers* and *Making History*), I’ve come to the conclusion that video games support cognition, enhance critical and problem solving skills, and promote active learning.

After showing that video games can be supplementary to textbooks within a classroom, I then established the relationship between video games and literature by drawing comparisons between the relationships of the author, reader, text and player. Because the current definition of literature is restricted to a written body of work, this might give one the impression that literature cannot be expressed in a different form of art. Perhaps the unifying thread in all literature is the idea of experience, which is most important when understanding the relationship between the reader and text. Literature allows the reader to experience different cultures, periods, and events, real or imagined. In addition, the process of reflection is an important characteristic of literature. The human experience does

not just involve the character within the novel, but the reader’s view of the character, situation, or environment. Literature can influence the reader to reflect on his or her own values, behavior, and life in general.

The four basic components of literature, particularly fiction, are the author, the narrator, the point-of-view character, and the reader. Within the video game setting, the components are analogous to that of literature, except for the technological advances: the author (game developer), the narrator (the voice over), the point-of-view character, and the reader (player). Video games have the ability to provide relationships to the reader (as player) that a book or written work does not have the technology to accomplish. Because the player can directly affect the text (video game), he or she becomes an author of the text (beyond the game developer).

My research further suggests that identity is essential to the player of a video game, as well as the author and reader of a piece of literature: it is apparent that whether it is the author, reader, or player of a video game, each person has placed himself out of reality and into the created world. I conclude that video games, already similar in dynamic to literature, can re-categorize for students, writers, readers, and players what is literature.

# The Rhetorical Implications of Clementia in Cicero's Caesarian Speeches



**Aaron Rozeboom**  
*McNair Scholar*



**Peter Anderson, Ph.D.**  
*Faculty Mentor*

Cicero's Caesarian speeches were delivered by Cicero in 46-45 B.C. to Gaius Julius Caesar after his victories in the Civil War and his acquisition of supreme constitutional and extra-constitutional powers. Caesar faced a number of critical issues as he dealt with the political and social aftermath of the wholesale slaughter that filled the years after 49 B.C., including what to do with the supporters of his enemies. Marcus Tullius Cicero was well placed to speak on behalf of several of these individuals as they sought clemency from Caesar, not only because he was the pre-eminent orator at Rome and a key political figure (even at this late stage in his life) but because he and Caesar had negotiated their own tenuous reconciliation.

The three speeches have a related goal: to secure pardon for the offending parties or offer thanks for having received it. They are also displays of intellectual, thematic, and literary brilliance-and rightfully so with Caesar himself being a masterful author and orator, in his own right. The speeches thus stand as a multi-layered communication between two of the most accomplished literary artists at the end of the Republic. The Roman concept of *clementia* (mercy) is, of course, a theme intrinsic to the speeches. *Clementia* impinges upon social, political, and linguistic spheres, however, and under Caesar's troubled rule becomes a nexus for anxieties and manipulation between the senatorial and plebian orders. This research compares and contrasts the understanding, presentation, and use of *clementia* in these speeches, in a discussion set within the social, political, and linguistic contexts that lend this word its powerful significance. In the end, it is clear that *clementia* becomes a point of negotiation of power for Caesar and Cicero alike, the one asserting his political dominance, the other speaking as the social conscience of Rome. By exploiting the zero-sum nature of *clementia*, Cicero uses the term and its related concepts to secure pardon for his friends while maintaining his own safety

in a dangerous and politically charged environment. In doing so, he retains his own political presence in Rome finding a delicate balance between risk and reward.

Research has entailed a close reading of the Latin texts, analysis of political trends and important figures in the period from Sulla to Caesar, lexicographical research using library electronic resources (especially the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*), and a thorough survey of relevant secondary source scholarship on both Caesar's political policies in the years between 49 and his death in 44 and Cicero's changing role in Roman politics under the dictator. Materials span the range of scholarly resources, from print materials to electronic databases and journals.





## About the TRiO Programs

To fight the war on poverty, our nation made a commitment to provide education for all Americans, regardless of background or economic circumstances. In support of this commitment, Congress established several programs in 1965 to help those from low-income backgrounds and families with no previous college graduates (first generation). The first three programs established were Talent Search, Upward Bound, and Student Support Services. Thus, they are known as the TRiO Programs.

Since then, other programs have been added, including Upward Bound Math and Science, Educational Opportunity Center, The Training Authority, and in 1989, The Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program. The goal of all of the programs is to provide educational opportunity for all.

The Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program is designed to prepare highly talented undergraduates to pursue doctoral degrees. In addition, the goal is to increase the number of students from low-income backgrounds, first generation college students, and under-represented minorities on college and university faculties.

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