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## Abstracts

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## Abstracts

### **Changing Attitudes towards Marriage, Family, and Commitment**

*Haley Ahlstrom*

This study examines the attitudes and values toward marriage, family, and commitment among four cohorts. Participants ranged in age from eighteen to ninety-one. It is a comparative study with the central focus on differences between the cohort's views on marriage, divorce, and commitment. The survey method was used to conduct this study. Although some differences between the cohorts were identified, there were also some similarities.

### **Societal Implications of Gender Roles in Door Holding Trends**

*Julia Caso*

This study examined the specific social interactions of people holding doors for each other and the connections of these behaviors to gender roles in society. Five observation sessions took place in which observational checklists were filled out according to subjects' door holding behavior. These sessions yielded essentially consistent patterns in all five places. A survey was also administered to 50 people through a snowball sampling method to better understand the ideologies behind why people behaved the way they did in door holding situations. The commonality of "chivalry" was investigated and whether this social practice is still applicable to today's society. Conservativeness of both men and women based on survey questions regarding gender roles was measured showing significant differences between the sexes. This particular topic was chosen because of an interest in gender dynamics and a curiosity as to the outcome of door holding trends.

### **Rural Connecticut: A Study of Western Connecticut's Changing Landscape**

*Tom Pundy*

This study examines western Connecticut's changing landscape and the current efforts of state and local land trust organizations to preserve this area's rural character. Using the Internet and e-mail communications, demographic and land use data was collected for the northern Fairfield/New Haven county and the northern Litchfield county areas. Data was then organized into tables and analyzed to determine the extent of both open space and farmland preservation and factors affecting the ability of a town to preserve land. The results show that both state and local organizations are actively pursuing land preservation and that town's land area, the population's education level, industrial zones, and development pressures all affect the ability of a town to preserve land.

### **Smoking: How Do People Break the Habit?**

*Michael Rabinoff*

This study examines the reasons why smokers have quit smoking cigarettes. As we all have been educated, smoking is one of the leading causes of death in America. This study consists of eighteen participants between the ages of thirty and eighty. A semi-structured interview was given to each of the participants. The findings were broken down into a quantified section and a qualified section. The study proved that health was the leading reason in these participants deciding to quit.

## **Understanding Underage College Drinking**

*Cassandra Russell*

In this research, the realities of underage college drinking from the view of Western Connecticut State University students were explored. Participants were asked to fill out the relevant parts of the surveys that applied to them. The students took these surveys voluntarily and they were also completely anonymous. Fifty students were surveyed in general education classes at WestConn and out of the fifty surveyed forty-three of the underage college students do currently drink.

## **Unbroken Chain: The Grateful Dead Subculture of the 2000s**

*Emily Kate Siciliano*

The purpose of this inductive fieldwork was to gain an epic perspective of the contemporary Grateful Dead community through in-depth interviewing. While functioning as part of a cultural continuum, as part of an Unbroken Chain, of deadheads since before the death of Jerry Garcia, deadheads continue to create a meaningful and symbolic world for themselves based on shared experience and love of the music of the Grateful Dead. This can be seen through their creation of an internal economy and language, as well as in the concept of "family."