September 2018

To: Second Term Seniors in Social Studies  
From: Anya Bassett, Director of Social Studies  
Re: Thesis Titles and Paragraphs Due October 5th

Please submit a working title and a five-sentence description of your project to Katie Greene (kgreene@fas.harvard.edu) by October 5th, 2018. This list will go out to potential readers. Titles should clearly indicate the subject of the essay, and descriptions should cover methodology and general approach. Please note your title may change for the final version of your thesis.

Below please find three sample titles and paragraphs:

**Tyler Logigian**  
Advisor: Jean Comaroff

*Socioeconomic Rights in South Africa: Identity Politics and the Limits of the Treatment Action Campaign*

This thesis explores the ways in which the Treatment Action Campaign’s activism has affected the fulfillment of socioeconomic rights issues in post-apartheid South Africa. Some assert that the TAC has created a political model that other social movements within South African can adopt in attempts to affect the fulfillment of socioeconomic rights beyond those related to HIV/AIDS. Many others assert that HIV-activism has thus far eclipsed these other socioeconomic rights issues, impeding their fulfillment. Using ethnographic and secondary-source based research, I argue that socioeconomic issues, with the exception of Tuberculosis, have thus far been eclipsed by the nation’s HIV/AIDS crisis. I assert that the TAC has demonstrated a unique capacity to employ identity politics that are intertwined with the particularities of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and I conclude by discussing the TAC’s current influence on Equal Education, a campaign that has potential to further education rights in the future.

**Nadine Rubinstein**  
Advisor: Kay Merseth

*I Do My Part as a Parent: Role Construction and School Interaction Among Charter-Seeking and Non-Charter-Seeking Parents*

This thesis explores how parents who seek out charter schools for their children compare to parents who do not seek charter schools in terms of their beliefs about the parental role in education and the ways that they interact with schools. In contemporary discussions of urban charter schools, many contend that those parents who choose to send their children to charter schools are distinct from those parents who do not seek charter school placements, but previous scholarship has only addressed this idea in terms of demographic data. I interviewed and surveyed parents at a turnaround charter school that is currently in the unique situation of serving families who selected this school before it was a charter school as well as families who chose it
after it became a charter school. I find first that there is no uniform difference between these two groups of parents in terms of their role constructions or their interactions with the school; some of the non-charter-seeking parents in my sample were indistinguishable from their charter-seeking counterparts. However, I also find that the non-charter-seeking parents are more diverse in terms of their ideas about parental involvement in education, suggesting that charter schools may exclude some parents with less-extensive constructions of the parental role.

Sarah Stein Lubrano  
Advisor: Bo-Mi Choi

The Co-Thinker: Lou Andreas-Salomé as Philosopher and Historical Subject

In this thesis, I will investigate historical interpretations of the life of Lou Andreas-Salomé, a turn-of-the-century German intellectual known for her relationships with Nietzsche, Rilke, and Freud. I will describe the way that a series of historians have framed her life in terms of her gender and sexuality, often suggesting that her sexuality made herself and others irrational. I will compare this historical approach to Andreas-Salomé’s own philosophical arguments about sexuality and rationality. Ultimately I will argue that many historians analyzed Lou Andreas-Salomé’s life without considering the way her own philosophy provided a counterpoint to their views. Finally, I will explore related larger issues about western philosophical conceptions of knowledge and rationality in relation to sexuality and gender.