

During the Spring Semester of 2016, I took the Building Design Problems FWIS. The main focus of the course was to analyze building disasters, but a major component was to make strong arguments about the ethical aspects of many of the cases. The final project for the class was an oral presentation analyzing the ethical and legal situation surrounding the collapse of a walkway in the Hyatt Regency Hotel in 1981. We could choose what aspect of the case study we wanted to present on. While studying the case study in class, it became obvious that the defense in this case was to blame and should be punished legally. Wanting to take an unconventional approach to this project I decided to present on a philosophical approach to defend the defense in the court case. This was a difficult task to accomplish that was made easier by resources provided by Fondren Library.

The primary inspiration behind my project came from the idea of Occam's Razor, which compares competing theories and chooses the one with the fewest assumptions as the most valid. This theory gave me the idea to look into other philosophical theories such as Hanlon's razor which I refer to specifically in the power point. I searched the Fondren Library website and looked at all the resources to find the one that would best fit my needs. Under the Articles section I found my most impactful source, an entry in the Salem Press Encyclopedia about Occam's Razor and how it has been used in science. This entry inspired me to apply Occam's Razor in situations outside of pure philosophical situations. I accessed the entry through EBSCO provided by Fondren Library. There are a multitude of articles about Occam's Razor throughout the internet, but this article was concise and credible for me to comfortably use in my final project for the course. I used the same method to find an important article about positive and negative rights. This was particularly useful since there is not a lot of publicly accessible, credible information on this topic.

Another way Fondren Library contributed to my research was through the numerous subscriptions that the library gives access all students access to. This is a severely underappreciated service that the library provides. It was particularly useful for me to have access to these digital sources due to the nature of my project. I needed to understand philosophical theories and apply them to the case study we discussed in class. Digital media allowed me to sift through dense material fairly quickly to find the theories I needed to justify my arguments. Physical books would be tedious to flip through and would have a low success rate of me finding what I need. Primary sources of these dense theories would lead me to misinterpret ideas since I have not been trained to read and properly interpret philosophical theories. The articles I found through Fondren led me to properly understand these theories and how to use them effectively.