

Editor's Note

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In April, 2013 the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Central Arkansas held its first annual Undergraduate Research Symposium. In conjunction with this symposium, undergraduate scholars were invited to continue working on their research under the supervision of their faculty mentor and submit their manuscripts to the newly created *CLA Journal*. The first year of this conference produced 30 undergraduate research presentations, one poster presentation, and eight published articles in the online journal. The second year of the symposium and journal publication brought similar results. Undergraduate scholars presented 30 research projects, and eight articles were published in the *CLA Journal*.

The April, 2015 conference brought about two big changes for the research symposium. First, planning and organization of the conference was passed on to the College's committee on Educating for Diversity and Global Engagement (EDGE) from the previous Committee for the Undergraduate Research Experience (CURE). Second, 2015 marked the unification of the Undergraduate Research Symposium with the long running Graduate Conference hosted by the Department of English. As such, the conference was renamed the Student Research Symposium as it no longer focused solely on undergraduate research. These changes significantly increased the size of the symposium. The 2015 conference produced 18 graduate student presentations and 41 undergraduate presentations.

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Unfortunately, somewhere in the midst of changing over the duties of conference planning, organization, and increasing the size of the conference the *CLA Journal* was forgotten. There was no “call for papers” or an assigned editor to pull the journal together. In order to ensure the continuation of the journal, sometime around late summer of 2015 I took on these responsibilities as the new editor of the *CLA Journal*. A “call for papers” was sent out early in the Fall Semester, but unfortunately many students whom had participated in the conference either were no longer at UCA, were tied up with new research projects, or had simply lost interest. As such, this current volume of the *CLA Journal* only contains seven articles despite the large increase in the total number of presentations at the symposium. Hopefully we will learn from our mistakes, and the growth of publications in the *CLA Journal* will mirror that of the conference.

Despite the relatively small number of submissions this year, I believe this is one of the strongest volumes. This year's journal has research from English, Political Science, and Sociology which covers a vast array of fascinating topics. Articles investigate female individuality during the late nineteenth century (Sells), the influence of peers and family on the sexual debut of incarcerated female adolescents (Knox), misogynistic themes in the 100 most popular pop and hip-hop/rap videos (Benton), racial manifestations of fear as portrayed by Poe in *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* (Denning), the success or failure in streamlining compensation by the Vaccination Injury Compensation Program (Knox), the adoption and implementation of business-like practices of the United States Post Office (Momand), and the motivation and melancholy of Shakespeare's Don John in “*Much Ado About Nothing*” (Beegle).

I thank the students who participated in the conference, and especially those who continued to work on their research and submit to the journal. I also thank the faculty mentors appearing in this volume for their continued work with these students and their promotion of, and dedication to, student research: Dr. Leavell, Dr. Marotte, Dr. Reynolds, Dr. Rich, and Dr. Staley. I also thank the hard work of the EDGE committee and the College of Liberal Arts for making both the symposium and journal a reality. Finally, I would like to give a special thank you to Dr. Fritz, previous editor of the *CLA Journal*. Without her help this volume may well never have happened.