

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, 1 poster presentation, and 8 published articles in the online journal. 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. The 2016 symposium set a new record for participation with 62 undergraduate and 7 graduate student research presentations. From the 62 undergraduate research papers, 12 appear in this published edition of *CLA Journal*.

This year's edition features research from Sociology, Religious Studies, English, History, Spanish, Public Administration, and Political Science. The included articles cover a vast array of fascinating topics including an analysis of the use of police force in major U.S. cities (Benton); the malleability of the Buddhist tradition and its ability to assimilate (Bowman); an analysis of the sentimental, convention challenging novel *Our Nig* (Coster); a historical analysis

CLA Journal
4 (2016)
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of the Great Depression spurring the evolution of pornography (Cullum); an exploration into the nature, causes, and symptoms of moral injury (Dove); an analysis of female individuality in the 19th century (Ellis); the exploration of the writings of Juana Inés de la Cruz as the first feminist Latina (Hengar); the hesitation to adopt school choice voucher programs (Herring); a look at Soviet moral during the Battle of Stalingrad (Liddil); the ecological implications of Nussbaum's capabilities approach (Momand); and the strategic symbolism in the *Rainbow Portrait* (Wilson).

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. Powers, Dr. Brasovan, Dr. Leavell, Dr. Fowler, Dr. Scribner, Dr. Deitrick, Dr. Marotte, Dr. Zambrano, Dr. Sullivan, Dr. Reynolds, and Dr. Staley. Finally, I thank the hard work of the EDGE committee and the College of Liberal Arts for making both the symposium and journal a reality over the last 4 years and hopefully for many more to come.