



Letter from the Editor

Allison M. Zhou, Biology*

Dear readers,

A good friend of mine recently learned how to ride a bike. As I watched her learn about the physical aspects of a bike, balance on the bike, and then finally attempt to take her first ride, I found myself thinking about research. In many ways, learning how to conduct research is like learning how to ride a bike. It is a daunting task at first, but once you know what you are doing it is a freeing experience and research, like a bike, can take you many places. I learned to practice patience, precision, and persistence through my time as a research assistant in the Learning Lab at UO and being involved in research was one of the best decisions I made as an undergraduate. I will take the skills I learned with me well beyond graduation.

As this academic year comes to a close, it is a time of reflection and celebration for many students. The OURJ editorial board will say goodbye to Grieta King, Doug Sam, and myself at the end of this term. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of my editors for their continued hard work and dedication to this research journal. I'd also like to personally wish Grieta and Doug the best of luck with their post-graduation lives. Finally, I'd like to give a very special thank you to our supervisor, Barbara Jenkins, of UO libraries. I greatly appreciate her unwavering support, kindness, and wisdom. My time as Editor-in-Chief is coming to a bittersweet end and I am happy to announce my successor, Joshua Pearman, who I know will work tirelessly for OURJ next year.

The present issue presents a range of undergraduate research spanning from abortion discourse to analyzing departures from heteronormativity in music and gender constructs through Chinese literature. I encourage readers to read this issue closely and take time to reflect on the theme of divergence from norms.

It has been my greatest pleasure to work as Editor-in-Chief of OURJ. Readers, thank you for your interest in and continued support of undergraduate research at the University of Oregon. The breadth and intellect of our student body never ceases to amaze me. I am always in awe of the incredible research that my peers are involved in and oftentimes spearhead. I know that research is a ride filled with wobbles and occasional crashes, but learning to steer, balance, and get back up is something all researchers do. I commend the authors featured in this issue for their perseverance and excellent work.

Now, without further ado, please enjoy the 13th issue of the *Oregon Undergraduate Research Journal*.

* Allison is a senior in the Clark Honors College who is graduating with a degree in Biology and a minor in Chemistry. She has been on the OURJ editorial board since winter 2016, and has served as Editor-in-Chief since June 2017. Allison also serves as Diversity Chair for the Clark Honors College Student Association and has worked part-time tutoring English for the American English Institute. This year she finished her honors thesis on infant attention to novel object distributions. After graduation, Allison will begin a year-long Fulbright grant in Taiwan. Please direct correspondence regarding this issue of OURJ to ourj@uoregon.edu. ii