

the midwest journal of undergraduate research



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Dear Reader,

Prepare for an interesting ride. The research reported here will take you new places, even if you've already been to Tanzania or Algiers, to Egypt or Palestine, to Milton's Paradise or the bottom of a beer mug.

As I drive across glacially-swept fields and river basins to visit the campuses of the 14 colleges of the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM)—which are sprinkled across the prairie from Lake Michigan to the edge of the Rockies—I often think about how place matters. Each campus has a distinctive narrative, a story that gives particular human meaning and understanding to its setting. Why does place matter? Because place is not only location but also memory, and meaning.

The place I grew up was a small Midwestern prairie town. The yards were laid out like postage stamps, interrupted only by a stream or one of the lakes that dot Minnesota. Beyond that were fields that stretched as far as my bike or imagination could carry me.

When I got to college and began to do research for the first time, I discovered the imprint of that childhood place was still in my mind. It gave me a blueprint for thinking about ideas and the world I was discovering. That Midwestern mental map allowed ample space for laying out questions, sorting through possible approaches to answers, and organizing evidence that was often as jumbled as it was intriguing. There was even room to run out a distance and look over everything to see what I'd found. When I was lucky, I could see meaning—but many times I had to return to work in the fields of evidence or theory before finding understanding or a coherent narrative.

Place shapes research in important ways. Specific places stimulate questions that might not be asked elsewhere—or were nascent but still hidden. Place effects access to the theories relevant to one's question and the hypotheses that one might test, as well as the nature, quantity, and scope of evidence a researcher can gather. Sometimes the kind of analysis one can do—from the close, guided reading of a text to a test by an electron spectrometer—also depends on place. Place even shapes the presentation of findings, whether in a paper, a poster, a conversation with friends, or a journal.

In the research papers of this Journal, the authors proceed from a shared experience of studying at colleges located in the Midwest, to take you places that are robust with stories, insight and understanding. Thank you for taking the time to read what they've found. Oh, the places you'll go ...

Christopher Welna
President
Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM)



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The editorial board of the *Midwest Journal of Undergraduate Research* would like to give special thanks to the faculty and deans of the ACM colleges for encouraging your students to submit to the third issue of our journal. We would also like to thank President Mauri Ditzler, Dean David Timmerman, the Monmouth College Board of Trustees, and our anonymous board of reviewers for providing the resources to make this journal possible. Finally, we would like to thank Monmouth College alumna Caitlin Mehta for designing our cover and logo.



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Call For Papers

The Midwest Journal of Undergraduate Research would like to invite undergraduate students from any ACM institution to submit manuscripts for our 2014 issue by **January 15th.***

Works may be submitted to:

mjursub@monmouthcollege.edu

Requirements:

- Submissions may be from any discipline as long as they are research-based.
- May use MLA, APA, or Chicago style.
- Alongside your submission you must provide the following information:
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*MJUR guarantees review for all submissions received by January 15th.

MJUR cannot guarantee review for submissions received between January 15th and 31st.

MJUR will not accept submissions beyond January 31st.

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Coe College, 2013

Kristine is a senior History and Religion Major at Coe College. She plans to take some time off after graduation before applying to graduate programs in Arabic language and Middle Eastern history. She would like to thank Dr. Bethany Keenan for reading her many drafts of this paper and pushing her to reach for a higher standard of writing. Additionally she would like to thank all of her professors at Coe (you know who you are) for helping her grow as a student and, more importantly, as a person during her four years there.

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Andrew is a junior History major focusing on non-Western studies. His primary interests lie in analyzing the ongoing effects of European colonialism throughout the world. On campus, Andrew is an active member of the Indiana Beta Chapter of the Alpha-Chi Honors Society. He also assists freshmen who struggle academically in their transition to college. Special thanks should be given to Professor T.O. Smith for encouraging Andrew's continued study in this area, to Professor Dwight Braudigam his primary advisor on this paper, and finally to Amy Anema for proofreading. Andrew's future plans include pursuing a master's degree in international relations.

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Michelle is a senior Communication major at Ripon College who loves learning and believes that no knowledge is ever wasted. She was recently accepted into Lambda Pi Eta, the honor society of the National Communication Association. In between her academic pursuits, she enjoys playing French horn and piano. She also loves running as a Redhawk on the cross country and track teams. She would like to thank her professors, Steve Martin, Jody Roy, and Deano Pape, for challenging her to expand her vision. Her endless gratitude also goes to the English Department at Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School, especially to Mr. Dave Deibert and Mr. Jim Haferman for setting high expectations and demanding excellence from their students. Their guidance continues to be a blessing.



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Sarah is a fourth-year Religious Studies and Sociology major at Grinnell College, in Iowa. When not studying, she is involved with kickboxing, feminist activism, and leading the much-loved Grinnell Monologues club. Although she plans on continuing in academia, she will be taking the next year to work with economically underprivileged rural communities in Indiana, through Americorps. She simply cannot express how grateful she is for the support of her advisor Caleb Elfenbein in this project, who has patiently listened, read, and edited along the way. She would also like to thank the kind and talented librarians of the Grinnell College library, who tolerated her constant presence and incessant sticky-noting, and without whom she could never have come this far.

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Lake Forest College , 2013

Amanda is a senior majoring in English at Lake Forest College. She tutors at the college Writing Center, and she is currently interning as an editorial assistant for East on Central, a yearly publication of local art, poetry and fiction. After graduating, she will pursue a career in editing and hopes to one day enter the field of literary criticism. Amanda would like to thank Professor Mengelkoch of the Lake Forest College English Department for his sponsorship of and investment in her research project. She also appreciates his brilliant advice, which has helped her become a better writer.

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