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Dear Readers,

You are reading a work of love. I might even venture to say that this fourteenth edition of the *Midwest Journal of Undergraduate Research* is erotic literature. And I'm not just talking about the little tryst that Howard, et al. have with Monsky's theorem herein. I mean to say that the learning, research, selection, and editing of this volume is a wonderful example for me of what bell hooks called the erotic in the pedagogical process.



Let me back up. It was “inert ideas” in education that worried Alfred North Whitehead. These are ideas that are just dumped into the minds of would-be learners without being engaged, utilized, or tested. Whitehead worried that these unused ideas quickly become useless. Paulo Freire argued further that a “banking model” of education, wherein the teacher makes deposits in the minds of students, is not only useless but binding, even oppressive. The teacher issues communiqués in which what is important or relevant is already determined and the students receive passively what they can get. Freire called for a liberation in education, a reconciliation in which students and teachers learn together and teachers help students to seek the ends that they want and need to pursue. In this is love. This is the erotic act. Students pursue their desires. Teachers nurture and draw students forward toward ends unknown. Students help students to create, to hone, to clarify, and to deepen the beauty of their creations. Are you feeling the love yet?

If not yet, I hope that you will feel it in these pages. Some of these articles have to do with beautiful problems in geometry, chemistry, and philosophy. Like so much good undergraduate research, other articles address topics with obvious import to the researcher and reader as they address body image and illness, decolonization and patriarchy, ethics and ecology. I am sure that you will be impressed with the scholarship. But I encourage you, too, to think back to the learning that led to this research. Think about the student editors who reviewed this work and shepherded it to publication. Ponder the wonder of the teaching and learning that these pages represent.

For my part, I've lost my proximity to the *Midwest Journal of Undergraduate Research*. I've moved to the Southeast and have joined the dark side as an administrator. I still engage with works of love, though: teaching and writing. I'm on the editorial board of an innovative publisher of books. My writing appears in print. I regularly act as a peer reviewer and publish review articles. AND I proudly list on my curriculum vitae, "Reviewer, *Midwest Journal of Undergraduate Research*," because, for me, I can think of no better scholarly endeavor than to bring forth students' labors of love.

Happy reading!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel J. Ott", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Daniel J. Ott
Dean, School of Theology, Humanities, and Performing Arts
Eastern Mennonite University

Editorial Office

Monmouth College
700 East Broadway Ave. Monmouth, Illinois 61462
mjur@monmouthcollege.edu

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Call for Papers

The editors of the *Midwest Journal of Undergraduate Research* invite undergraduate students at any college or university to submit manuscripts from any discipline to be considered for publication in our journal's fifteenth issue (2024).

Works may be submitted at:

<http://research.monm.edu/mjur/call-for-papers/#submission-form>

Requirements

- Abstract of no more than 200 words
- 5–35 pages in length
- 12pt Times New Roman or Calibri font, double spaced
- Name at front of manuscript only—no header
- Sequential page numbers required on all pages
- No track changes (mark-ups)
- Submit as a single Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) file unless the text of your manuscript requires a different format (such as extensive mathematical notation, tables, or figures)
- If your manuscript includes figures or images, include a list of figures and identify the file format (e.g., JPEG, TIFF, PDF) of any graphics and images submitted
- Submissions may be from any discipline as long as they are research based
- May use MLA, APA, or Chicago Style
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 - Name
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- Research involving human subjects requires documentation of Institutional Review Board approval or exemption

Deadlines

The submission deadline for the 2024 issue is January 15, 2024. Submissions received after this date will be reviewed for publication consideration in the 2025 issue.

Submission Policy

As a journal dedicated to undergraduate scholarship, the *Midwest Journal of Undergraduate Research* only accepts submissions from current or recent undergraduate students (see below for “authorship exceptions”). For recent graduates, your submission must be received within 8 months of conferral of your first undergraduate degree.

Manuscripts that have been published or have been accepted for publication elsewhere, or are under review with another publication, are not eligible for review or publication.

“Submission guidelines of all academic journals require that authors vouch for the originality of their work and that the manuscript is not currently under review by any other publication. While the lengthy review and publication cycle of an academic journal may be frustrating, offering a manuscript to one journal at a time is compulsory. Authors will also need to guarantee to the editor that the copyright for the material is held by no other entity.”—Henscheid, Jean and Jennifer Keup. *Crafting and Conducting Research on Student Transitions*. Columbia, SC: National Resource Center for The First Year Experience & Students in Transition, 2011 (96).

Authorship Exceptions

We understand that some faculty wish to include themselves as co-author on student projects, especially if the student’s independent work was generated from a larger project that originated with the faculty advisor. In disciplines where the practice of including the faculty advisor as co-author is customary, we will accept the faculty recognized as such. The author must provide written permission of acknowledgement from those faculty advisors being recognized as contributors or co-authors in the manuscript.

Acknowledgments

In instances where students wish to acknowledge a faculty advisor, they may do so by prominently recognizing the faculty advisor as a contributor at the bottom of the first page of the manuscript in both the online and hard copy published versions. Here, the faculty advisor’s contribution may be specified.

For questions you may contact us at:
mjur@monmouthcollege.edu

Special Thanks...

The editorial board of the *Midwest Journal of Undergraduate Research* extends a special thanks to the faculty and deans of the ACM colleges for encouraging students to submit to this issue of our journal. We would also like to thank President Clarence Wyatt, Dean Mark Willhardt, the Monmouth College Board of Trustees, and generous donors for providing the resources to make this journal possible. Additionally, we would like to thank Associate Vice President for Communications and Marketing Duane Bonifer for his unwavering advocacy. Finally, we would like to thank Monmouth College alumna Caitlin Mehta Dodge (2011) for designing our logo.

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About the Editors ...

Anna Brunner

Anna Brunner is from Mt. Zion, Illinois, and is in the class of 2025. She is majoring in public relations and English. In addition to serving her first year as a student editor for the *MJUR* team, Anna is a Scots Ambassador, writing tutor, first-year orientation leader, a member of the Alpha Lambda Delta honor society, and an editor for the Monmouth College literary magazine *COIL*. Her favorite memory at Monmouth was when she and her friends woke up at 3:00 AM to watch a lunar eclipse together in the middle of winter. After finishing her bachelor's degree, Anna intends to become a public relations specialist and work primarily with nonprofit organizations.

Addison Cox

Addison Cox is currently serving her second year as a student editor for *MJUR*. Originally from Morton, Illinois, Addison is now majoring in English, as well as philosophy and religious studies. Aside from her work with *MJUR*, Addison is a member of the Women's Track and Field team, a tutor at the Writing Center, the head resident of Fulton Hall, a member of the Stockdale Fellows Leadership program and Monmouth College's Sigma Tau Delta chapter, the president of Alpha Lambda Delta, and a first-generation peer mentor for the Champion Miller Center. She is a member of the class of 2023, and after graduating, she plans to pursue a PhD in English/literary studies, beginning in the Fall of 2023.

Shay Hafner

Shay Hafner is a political science and data science double major from Sterling, Illinois, and is a member of the class of 2023. Upon completion of his undergraduate degree, he plans to pursue a PhD in political science. This is Shay's fourth year with *MJUR*, having served as a student editor for three years and as the coordinating editor this year. Outside of his work for the journal, he is the political science tutor, the head resident of McMichael Residence Hall, the president of Monmouth College's Pi Sigma Alpha chapter, a James and Sybil Stockdale Fellow, and a member of other honor societies.

Madison Hieser

Madison Hieser is from Pekin, Illinois. She is majoring in educational studies and serving her first year as an associate editor on the *MJUR* team. Madison is also a James and Sybil Stockdale Fellow and Scots Cruisers Bicycle Mechanic. Her favorite experience at Monmouth College was when she and her closest friends went stargazing on the football field during the Perseid meteor shower. She is a member of the class of 2026.

Tyler Houck

Tyler Houck, from Park Ridge, Illinois, is majoring in business administration and accounting at Monmouth College. Tyler has been on the *MJUR* staff for three years as a student editor. He is also a member of the Monmouth College baseball team; president of the Business, Economics, Accounting, and Marketing Club; and a James and Sybil Stockdale Fellow. Outside of his studies, Tyler enjoys spending time with friends and family, being engaged in the community, and keeping up with his favorite sports teams. He is a member of the class of 2024.

Talia Long

Talia Long hails from Troy, Missouri, and is in the class of 2023. In addition to serving four years as a student editor on the *MJUR* team, Talia is the co-president of Monmouth College American Chemical Society; a member of the Alpha Xi Delta sorority and the Alpha Lambda Delta honors society; and a James and Sybil Stockdale Fellow. Her favorite experience at Monmouth College was getting to go to San Diego to present her research at the National American Chemical Society meeting. After graduating from Monmouth, she intends to pursue her PhD in Physical Chemistry at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign.

Larissa Pothoven

Larissa Pothoven hails from Rock Island, Illinois. She is majoring in English and history and is a member of the class of 2024. Her favorite college experience was playing flute in the pit for Monmouth College's 2021 Spring musical, *Little Women*. In addition to serving two years as a student editor on the *MJUR* team, Larissa is the co-Head Editor of *COIL*; a James and Sybil Stockdale Fellow; a member of the Sigma Tau Delta English honor society, the Alpha Lambda Delta honor society, and the Mortar Board honor society; and a flutist in the Fighting Scots Marching Band, Wind Ensemble, and pit orchestra. She plans to pursue a master's degree and work as an author/editor and a museum curator.

Ilese Rodeffer

Ilese Rodeffer hails from Bushnell, Illinois. She is majoring in neuroscience, and she is a member of the class of 2025. She has been a student editor on the *MJUR* team for one year, and she is also an English tutor and a James and Sybil Stockdale Fellow. Her favorite college experience was interviewing residents of the Monmouth area for a summer research project called “‘Social’ Autopsy of COVID-19 in Rural Monmouth.”

Grace Simpson

Grace Simpson is from Metamora, Illinois, and is a member of the class of 2023. She is majoring in environmental studies and sustainability and minoring in both biology and global food security. Grace has been a student editor for the *MJUR* team for four years, and she is serving her last year as the operations editor. She is a member of the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority, the Alpha Lambda Delta honor society, the Mortar Board honor society, and the Order of Omega Greek life honor society. She is also the lead fellow in the James and Sybil Stockdale Fellows program. At Monmouth College, she has worked as a writing tutor, speech assistant, and an intern for the Center for Academic and Career Excellence. After she graduates, Grace intends to pursue a master’s degree in environmental sustainability.