

## LETTER FROM DEPARTMENT HEAD

It is a special pleasure to welcome you to the 2018 issue of *Re:Search: The Undergraduate Literary Criticism Journal at the University of Illinois*. This year's journal is the biggest yet, with seven strong articles. Each issue is the outcome of collaboration between students who carefully select, edit, and publish the essays. Faculty members serve as mentors for individual authors as well as providing general guidance for research and writing. Professor Lori Newcomb, the journal's faculty advisor, supports the executive board and authors throughout the year. As Professor Newcomb can attest, this year's co-editors-in-chief, Hannah Downing and Zoe Stein, were "fantastic" and "tough-minded." In addition, this spring (as he has done in past years), graduate advisor Brandon Jones has helped to guide the publication to completion.

*Re:Search* is a key part of a departmental and campus-wide effort to promote research by undergraduates. Students who contribute to the journal can serve as authors, editor, peer reviewers, copy editors, or members of the executive board. Many earn credit toward the Undergraduate Research Certificate offered by the Office of Undergraduate Research. Papers published in the journal have also been presented at the Undergraduate Research Symposium.

The students who contribute so much time and effort to the process of publishing research essays are curious, creative, and dedicated to accuracy and fluency. They take the undergraduate major in English to the next level, in which scholars, editors, and colleagues work together to present significant, polished work to a wider audience. This year, I had the privilege to be a faculty mentor for one of the essays, which was an added pleasure. Overall, I am delighted to introduce this volume, which gives ample evidence of the high quality of undergraduate research being conducted on our campus.

**Vicki Mahaffey**

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