

LETTER FROM FACULTY ADVISOR

This is the fifth annual issue of *Re:Search*, a landmark in the life of any publication and the perfect occasion to take stock of all that our undergraduates have accomplished with this journal. From the start, it has been an undergraduate initiative. A group of ambitious English majors sought a venue for their critical writing beyond the classroom just when the department, the Office of Undergraduate Research, and the University Library's Scholarly Commons all were eager to create a platform for undergraduate work. The intellectual design of the journal, however, was the students' through and through. Rather than accepting static submissions, they wanted student authors to develop their proposals into articles over months, drawing on feedback from peers and faculty mentors. To prevent a closed shop, they agreed that executive board members would not propose articles. We devised a triple-blind proposal system so that even the editors did not have proposers' names. Finally, they built in chances for other students to make meaningful smaller commitments to the publication process, as peer reviewers and copy and format editors. The result is a journal where literary interpretation and entrepreneurship develop hand-in-hand, and students and instructors share expertise outside the grading system.

When I agreed to serve as the journal's faculty advisor, I did not anticipate the job becoming the most inspiring experience of my teaching career. The editors and authors are so motivated to excel that they have done their own shepherding. My role is to help editors and authors communicate the excitement of disparate literatures, genres, and phenomena that they, much less our readers, may never have encountered or imagined analyzing. Browse this issue and past issues: you'll see revenge tragedy, street fashion, liner notes, silent film, dance, and contemporary theater, analyzed in their social and historical contexts using a range of theoretical lenses. Most of all, I've loved seeing how students turn interpretive skills into broader values: research models not just individual conviction but inquisitiveness, tolerance, and collaboration. The care with which the students treat their peers and their work is remarkable, and it has been an honor to work with them.

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