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Forematter

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Letter from the Managing Editor

The sixth volume of *Papers & Publications* continues to demonstrate the exceptional undergraduate research being undertaken by students across the southeast region. Yet, this year's volume departs from previous editions in the number and range of articles that either tangentially or directly address issues currently debated at a national level. From the several essays that engage the complexity of gender roles to an essay exploring health disparities in underserved communities, to an investigation of the evolving role of religion among university students, our authors in this volume reflect the changing social and political tides of the American public. Far from isolating themselves in the ivory tower or labs of academia, the student authors here demonstrate how undergraduate research can intervene in national discussions.

Papers & Publications is proud to represent such a vast array of student work. We invite you to enjoy the volume in its entirety, pass it on to friends, and encourage others to submit to maintain the exceptional level of academic discourse we have come to expect from *Papers & Publications*.

Anastasia Lin, PhD
University of North Georgia



Anastasia Lin, PhD
Managing Editor
Assistant Vice President – Research and Engagement
Assistant Dean of Student Research and Scholarship
Associate Professor of English

Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

Leigh G. Dillard, PhD
University of North Georgia

In the past year, I have given a lot of thought to undergraduate research and how it manifests in my interactions with students and colleagues. While approaches to this practice are widely varied, my own ideas are grounded in two simple points of emphasis: encourage questions and pursue answers. In their broadest sense, these ideas should allow us to think creatively about undergraduate research across disciplines, seeing the viability in issues of public health just as in the humanities and in visual arts as in political science.

This sixth volume of *Papers & Publications* embodies these concepts in the variety of contributions its authors have provided. Along with a selection of works from the sciences, mathematics, education, and the humanities, I am pleased to include three visual arts pieces in this volume—the cover art design winner along with two finalists. Each piece, constructed in a different medium, was submitted in reaction to the phrase “The Scientific Method.” We are most impressed with the results of this initial effort to attract visual responses on a specific theme.

As Editor, it has been my pleasure to work with the student authors throughout this process, particularly in the fine-tuning stages of production when traded pdfs and emails served as a figurative conduit between us. In some ways, this exchange and the act of revision itself are very much a part of their training in undergraduate research and scholarly publishing. I am indebted in this process to the members of the editorial board, who have taken time from their already busy schedules as teaching faculty and full-time university staff to make this kind of volume possible.

On behalf of the editorial board, I happily present this volume. I hope you experience its contents with the same enthusiasm we do.



Leigh G. Dillard, PhD
Editor-in-Chief
Associate Professor of English