



Letter from the Editor

Starla Chambrose*, Biology and History

Dear Readers,

I know I'm not the only one who is more than a little glad that 2020 is finally behind us. Yet while I was reflecting on all the tumult of the last year, I wondered if I should be so quick to try and wipe it all from my mind; perhaps that would be throwing out the baby with the bathwater, so to speak. 2020 brought us wildfires, (publicized) racial injustice, arguably the most contentious presidential election in living memory, and, of course, a pandemic that has claimed countless lives around the world. However, the year was also filled with acts of kindness, heroism, and inspiration. When one of the many fires in the Willamette Valley last summer burned down a friend's home while she was away, in a sick twist of irony, fighting fires elsewhere in Oregon, donations came pouring in to help her land back on her feet. Across the country, people participated in peaceful protests in support of the Black Lives Matter movement, proving that there is still hope for systemic change. More people than ever voted in the U.S. presidential election. Finally, companies developed vaccines for COVID-19 at unprecedented speeds, an incredible feat and a major win for scientific research. It was a rewarding year for research at the UO as well. I am proud to present five articles from undergraduates who, despite the challenges of the previous year, adapted and found ways to continue their research remotely. Alexis Garcia argues for a new perspective on an ancient grave stele (p. 1), Dimitra Fellman analyzes the relationship between the nuclear family and Oregon's fight in the early 20th century against venereal disease (p. 13), and Jacob Evarts and Mikala Capage find compelling evidence in yeast that sometimes, the presence of misfolded proteins can actually be beneficial (p. 26). This issue also presents two full-length theses that won the UO Libraries Undergraduate Research Award: "*You Shall Not Oppress a Resident Alien*": *The Conception of Immigration in the Hebrew Bible* by Miriam Thielman (p. 35) and *Understanding Native Hawaiian Land Relations Through Kānaka Maoli Literature* by Jordan Kalani Harden (p. 94). When it comes to progress in the pursuit of knowledge, it seems there were some bright spots in 2020 after all.

As always, this edition of *OURJ* would not have been possible without the many people working behind the scenes. This year we welcomed three new editors to our board; although I have not had the opportunity to meet Noa, Taylor, or Micah in person, they have been invaluable additions to the *OURJ* team. My deepest thanks to them for their hard work and dedication. Shuxi and Jay, our only returning editors from last year, are due thanks as well. The board is lucky to have their experience and editing prowess. And to Barbara Jenkins, Coordinator of Outreach and Special Programs at the UO Libraries (just one of the many hats she wears), my most sincere gratitude for making the publication of this journal possible. Finally, I'd like to recognize the authors and artists who have contributed to this publication; may their work inspire fellow undergraduate students to pursue and share their own research and creative works.

On behalf of the editorial board, please enjoy this 18th issue of the *Oregon Undergraduate Research Journal*.

*Starla Chambrose is a senior in the Clark Honors College majoring in biology and history. In addition to serving on the *OURJ* editorial board, she is a member of the university's Rotaract club, works as a tutor for Biology 214, and volunteers as a crisis counselor. She conducts research in the Cresko Laboratory and under Professor Valiani in the history department. In her free time, Starla enjoys watching football, cooking, and playing the piano.