

Dear readers,

As the COVID-19 pandemic surpassed its one-year-anniversary, many researchers have found themselves on unfamiliar ground in their pursuit of complex questions. Traditional research methods and conditions have been placed in jeopardy, but nevertheless researchers have proved resilient and determined in their work. As such, the Columbia Undergraduate Research Journal (CURJ) is honored to celebrate the research contained in this issue, and are very grateful for the time, care, and rigor that researchers have put into these articles.

It is my pleasure to introduce the Spring 2021 issue of CURJ, an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary publication that shares thoughtful research from undergraduates in all fields of study. We present this issue as another step in CURJ's revitalization process. With the support of Columbia University Libraries, we hope to bring together a variety of disciplines through an academically rigorous online space. This spring, our editorial board has grown substantially, and we remain excited for continued cultivation of an undergraduate research community in semesters to come.

This edition of CURJ includes a wealth of subjects that range from queer visual activism to political science to scientific analyses. These five papers reflect the diversity of thought for which an interdisciplinary journal strives.

This issue was made possible by the dedicated work of CURJ's editorial board during this challenging winter and spring. Thank you immensely to Olivia Vella, Francesco Volpin, Jeannie Ren, Arman Al-bin Sakir Husein, Euni Lee, Holly Qu, Adrian Gonzalez, Harrison Wang, Hannah Prensky, Jeffrey Xiong, and Annie Xu for their diligence, creativity, and insight. Finally, I would like to thank Columbia University Libraries and Michelle Wilson for their support of CURJ during its revitalization process. We look forward to further cultivating a community that will fulfill CURJ's commitment to celebrating innovative undergraduate thought.

Helen Ruger
Editor-in-Chief