



University of Missouri

ARTIFACTS

A Journal of Undergraduate Writing

Editor's Introduction

Issue 3

All Mizzou students have one important thing in common: they are writers. Thanks to the writing intensive courses across the University, students have the opportunity to experience different writing situations in every discipline. Mizzou students learn that different writing contexts demand different sets of strategies. Not only does the content change, but the way research and arguments are presented also change. The essays featured in Artifacts Issue 3 reflect the variety of writing that Mizzou students create every day. From technical reports to historical research to literary analysis, these essays are all snapshots of the Mizzou writer at work.

In *The Right to Life, Liberty, and Poetry*, Steven Hsieh examines two memorable inauguration poems: Robert Frost's *Dedication* and Maya Angelou's *On the Pulse of Morning*. While both poems meditate upon historical national symbols, they arrive at different versions of our nation's history. Hsieh's essay won the 2008-2009 Mayhan Award for best essay in English 1000.

Becky Sorensen considers the links between fast food and the growing obesity problem in the United States. Her essay, *Obesity in America and its Children: Affecting the Lives of Millions*, is a good example of how students can incorporate research into argumentative writing. Sorensen wrote her essay for Dr. Marty Townsends English 2010.

Aaron Chambers' essay, *That's-a-spicy-meatball! The effects of capsaicin on blood pressure and other processes in the human body*, explains how capsaicin, a chemical found in peppers, affects blood pressure. Chambers wrote the formal report for the Animal Physiology Lab (Bio 3700 Lab), which required each lab group to design and conduct a research project. Dr. Rachel Ruhlen remarks, "I particularly enjoyed Aaron's paper which described the experiment and their results in an entertaining way. Chambers shows that being a good technical writer does not mean you have to give up your sense of humor."

Discovering the District: A Look at the History of Downtown Columbia is a textual documentary written as part of the capstone course for English seniors. The three authors—Julie Miller, Megan Rau, and Colleen Kelly—used archival research in order to write the histories of several historic downtown buildings in Columbia. Miller, Rau, and Kelly spent hours in the Western Historical Manuscripts archives, where they worked closely with archivists in order to research the stories behind each building. Their final project shows a strong ability to make research both informative and lively, all at the same time.

Sam Urkov provides an in-depth look at the tenants of engaged Buddhism, including the philosophy behind this practice, in his essay *Engaging the Western World: Engaged Buddhism in America*. His project is a good

example of how writers can explain difficult and abstract concepts in writing.

Dylan Raithels essay, *Environment, Maize and the Human Genome*, reports on the outcome of Raithels field research on the relationships between external environmental conditions and corn production. Raithel, a student in Environmental Science, manages to explain the relevance of such work for the non-scientists among us. At the conclusion of his report, Raithel explains: I have a sense now of something greater going on in the realm of science than any one particular person or research project, because it all focuses on understanding how things work, where we come from and how to improve the lives of people and the rest of the living world.

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About *Artifacts*

Artifacts is a refereed journal of undergraduate work in writing at The University of Missouri. The journal celebrates writing in all its forms by inviting student authors to submit projects composed across different genres and media.

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