



2009 Student Research and Creative Activities Award

Proceedings of Abstracts

The following is a collection of abstracts that West Chester University Students submitted to be considered for the 2009 Student Research and Creative Activities award.

WCU Research Day
4/14/2009

April 14, 2009

Dear Student:

On behalf of Dr. Greg Weisenstein, President; Dr. Linda Lamwers, Provost & Vice President of Academic Affairs, and Dr. Matthew Bricketto, Vice President of Student Affairs, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to each of you for taking the time out of your busy schedules to submit a complete application for the 2009 Student Research & Creative Awards at West Chester University of Pennsylvania. Please note that your continuing investments in scholarly work will continue to enhance the quality of your educational experiences here and beyond.

As your review the 23 abstracts contained in this publication, it is very clear that each of you is making us very proud. Please note that whether your individual and/or group application was one of the eleven selected for presentation on Research Day 2009 and receipt of cash award of five hundred dollars or not, you are one of the shining stars at WCU. I want you to know that research findings tell us that undergraduates who participate in serious scholarly and related activities, within and/or outside their university campuses, reported significant gains in independence, possess higher intrinsic motivation to learn, are very active participants and successful in subsequent courses taken after their initial engagement in research experiences, and develop strong desire and tremendous determination to pursue advanced degree programs (Kardash, 2000; Lopatto, 2004, & Russell, et al., 2007).

We wish you and your faculty mentors the very best in your scholarly growth.

Always the best that you can imagine and positively actualize.

M. Ehi Ayewoh, Ph.D., CALD
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Reference:

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Title: Passage through Vertebrate Gap Junctions of Molecules as Large as 18 kDa is Primarily Dependent upon Molecular Configuration**Author:** Anne M. Cieniewicz **Department:** Biology**AWARDEE****Name of Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Richard I. Woodruff

Gap junctions are channels in between neighboring cells, and serve as a means of communication for cells. In fish, amphibian and mammals, gap junctions of some cells allow passage of long, thin molecules as large as 18 kDa, while excluding smaller, wider molecules. These molecules are about 6 times larger than the previously size thought to transit gap junctions. Fluorescently labeled Calmodulin, weighing 17 kDa, and fluorescently labeled Troponin-C, with a weight of 18 kDa, when microinjected into the developing egg cells of *Danio rerio* (fish), *Xenopus laevis* (frog) or *Mus domestica* (mouse), were able to pass through the gap junctions between these developing egg cells, known as oocytes, and the epithelial cells which surrounded them. When co-micro are injected with these Ca^{2+} -binding proteins, fluorescently labeled dextran, which served as a negative control, remained behind in the microinjected cell. Osteocalcin is also a Ca^{2+} -binding protein, but has a wide "V" shape and proved unable to pass through these gap junctions despite its much smaller weight of 6 kDa. Calmodulin, but not Troponin-C, was able to transit gap junctions of WB (rat kidney) cells in culture. We show evidence those molecules as large as 18 kDa can pass through some vertebrate gap junctions, and that it is primarily molecular configuration which governs gap junctional permeability.

Title: The Conceptualization of Family: Gay Women's Hopes, Dreams, and Aspirations**Authors:** Nikki DiGregorio**Department:** Psychology**Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Jasmin Tahmaseb McConatha

The conception of family is constantly fluctuating. A considerable amount of social science research has explained family life; however, studies pertaining to lesbian family life are relatively scarce. As the population of the United States becomes more aware of gay lifestyles, it is important for researchers to gain a broader understanding of the plans, goals, and life expectations of gay women; especially as these plans pertain to important relationships such as marriage and family. A limited amount of research has explained that relationship issues, such as the transition to parenthood, tend to be more complex for gays than heterosexuals (Hequembourg & Farrell, 1999). This study attempts to expand on the paucity of knowledge in this area.

Title: EFFECTS OF ANTI-TUMOR NECROSIS FACTOR ON BODY CELL MASS IN PATIENTS WITH RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS**Author:** Caroline Baran**AWARDEE****Department:** Chemistry**Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Melissa Cichowicz

Background: Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a chronic, autoimmune disease of unknown etiology that results in the destruction of joint cartilage and bone. It is estimated that patients with severe RA die 10-15 years earlier than expected due to infections and related complications.

Objective: In patients with RA, body cell mass (BCM), the total amount of muscle in the body, declines with the progression of the disease. This study will investigate the efficacy of anti-TNF- α (anti-tumor necrosis α) treatment, either alone or in combination with DMARDs (disease modifying antirheumatic drugs), on body cell mass.

Methods: Patients with long standing RA (n=61) were recruited from three separate private rheumatology clinics in the Philadelphia area and were followed for four years. Patients were divided into three categories based on their respective medical treatment: Anti-TNF- α treatment only (n=17), Anti-TNF- α plus DMARD treatment (n=11), and DMARD only treatment (n=33).

Results: Overall, it was found that anti-TNF- α treatment increases BCM levels by an average of 1.36 \pm 0.6 kg (p<0.05). It was found that DMARD treatment was ineffective in both maintaining and preventing BCM loss. BCM levels decreased in the DMARD group by an average of 1.162 \pm kg.

Conclusion: Although the patients in the anti-TNF- α only regimen group had significantly increased BCM levels (p=0.019), patients in combined therapy group had a better response (p=0.001), thus patients with long standing RA should be treated with a combined therapy regimen.

Title: The Microwave-Assisted Oxidation of Benzylic Carbons Using Aqueous Sodium Perborate**Author:** Daniel Bamper**Department:** Chemistry**Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Melissa Cichowicz

One of the most crucial processes in organic synthesis is oxidation. Practically any combination of solvents and reagents can be used to oxidize functional groups, carbon chains, and aromatic rings. The search for newer, cleaner, and more cost-effective methods is endless, and there is currently a larger demand for these combinations. A very cost-effective and environmentally harmless oxidizing agent is hydrogen peroxide. Hydrogen peroxide, however, is very dangerous to transport in large quantities. The use of persalts is an effective way to safely generate hydrogen peroxide in large quantities in situ. With the use of a microwave, sodium perborate can be successfully used to generate enough hydrogen peroxide to oxidize the benzylic carbons on aromatic substrates within relatively low reaction times and high yields.

Title: The Philadelphia Flyers: From the Broad Street Bullies to the Orange Crush**Authors:** Katharine Figorski**Department:** Communication Studies**Faculty Mentor:** Richard Scholl

This work examines the history, success, and entertaining qualities of the Philadelphia Flyers. The introduction of this composition discusses the founding of the team, construction of the spectrum, the success of opening seasons and the legend of Kate Smith. Following the start of the flyers franchise, this paper introduces the Broad Street Bullies most skillful players, and proceeds to explain the Flyers victory over the dreaded Red Army team of the former Soviet Union. This work then discusses key captains of the Philadelphia Flyers, and then goes into the Flyers great winning streak of the 1980's. To conclude, the paper presents numerous facts about the Wachovia Center, and recent accomplishments of the Flyers.

Title: A Game Theoretic Approach to Maximize Network Lifetime in Wireless Sensor Networks using Node Cooperation**Author:** Dippy Aggarwal**Department:** Computer Science**Faculty Mentor:** Dr.Afrand Agah

This project will conduct research in the area of wireless communication and sensor networking, in particular, minimum battery discharge in such networks. The goal of this project is to maximize the lifetime of battery-powered wireless sensors. Once wireless sensor networks are deployed, they are expected to run autonomously and with minimum human attendance. In this project we investigate how various interactions in a wireless sensor network can be modeled as a game theory framework in order to define a utility function that motivates wireless sensor nodes with new incentive that yields to equilibrium for all sensor nodes. We construct a utility function and analyze various ways that it can reach a equilibrium state. We expect that equilibrium for our utility function will guarantee the minimum battery discharge for the whole network, which yields to a longer battery lifetime for wireless sensor networks that provides a suitable approach toward green technology.

Title: Quantum Cryptography: The Missing Link in Security**Authors:** Benjamin J. Kapp**Department:** Computer Science**Faculty Mentor:** Dr. James D. Fabrey

A method for ensuring the integrity of data in transmission, by exploiting the properties of photons, is discussed. This paper assumes the reader to be new to this topic. Current methods for generating and detecting single photons are discussed. The intrinsic properties of photons are discussed as well as how these properties can be used for data transmission. The only provably secure form of encryption, the one time pad (OTP), is discussed and proved. The case is made that single photon transmission in conjunction with an OTP solves the problem of ensuring the integrity of data in transmission.

Title: Religion and Morality in Eighteenth-Century Society, Print, and Henry Fielding's *Joseph Andrews***Authors:** Carol O'Brian**Department:** English**Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Eleanor Shevlin

My research paper, entitled "Religion and Morality in Eighteenth-Century Society, Print, and Henry Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*," examines the relationships among religion in daily life, in the print marketplace, and most specifically in its representation in *Joseph Andrews* as demonstrative of its author's beliefs and the larger cultural and social ideologies of his day. The paper explores the religious context and the popularity and abundance of religious writings in the eighteenth century, eventually reconciling both issues with Fielding's attitudes toward religion through the use of textual examples taken directly out of the novel. The overarching purpose of the paper involves situating Fielding's novel within its context and the print marketplace, while simultaneously illustrating how it goes beyond that context through its subversive commentary on the traditional morality of the century. In addition, the paper explores a subject area little examined in the academic community, and through extensive research and interweaving of ideas, it connects several eighteenth-century literary issues into an interrelated framework that highlights the significant relationship between literature and its context.

Title: "War of a Completely Unconventional Kind": Hanif Kureishi and the Battle Against Polarization**Authors:** Adam Wassel**AWARDEE****Department:** English**Faculty Mentor:** Dr. John Ward

The purpose of this essay is to highlight the ways in which a careful examination of contemporary fiction can provide insight into contemporary political issues. By analyzing the characters and themes in three fictional works by Hanif Kureishi through a framework devised by Post-Colonial critic Edward Said, the essay works towards revealing complications in the polarizing rhetoric employed in reference to the current conflict between the United States, Great Britain, and extremist groups such as Al-Qaeda.

Exploring the psycho-social effects of a diasporas experience, Kureishi's fiction—namely *The Buddha of Suburbia*, *The Black Album*, and "My Son the Fanatic"—reveals the inadequacy of such widely circulated terms as "Fundamentalist Islam," for, contrary to popular belief, the phenomenon to which this label is commonly attached does not refer to a return to older "fundamentals" of Islam; rather, it refers to a new and radical reinterpretation of Islam borne out of imperialism (both cultural and material) and diasporas (which refers to displaced persons living in a country other than their native home). Therefore, to consider the current conflict in the polarized terms of "The West" vs. "The East" is to grossly oversimplify the nuanced nature of this global dilemma. Kureishi, a man of Pakistani origin born in Great Britain, is exceptionally well-suited to treat such issues in fiction, having lived a diasporas

Title: An Examination of Eliza Haywood's Use of Fashion**Authors:** Meaghan McCafferty**AWARDEE****Department:** English**Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Eleanor Shevlin

On the surface there may seem to be no correlation between women's fashion and eighteenth-century novel writing. Yet when we look at the fictional work produced by Eliza Haywood, an eighteenth-century novelist, we can discern not only illuminating associations between feminine clothing and Haywood's themes but also the ways these associations map social changes occurring at the time. This essay results from my extensive research to understand the connections found in Haywood's works among these three subjects. Based on this research, the paper uses fashion to support and clarify the argument that through descriptions of her principle female characters and their clothing, the use of narrators' commentary, and stylistic elements of her prose, Eliza Haywood depicts shifts in a woman's place in this world. To illustrate the conditions under which Haywood wrote, this paper opens by examining women authors in the eighteenth-century literary marketplace. These conditions may have well influenced Haywood's turn to clothing and fashion as vehicles for offering larger social commentary. The body of the paper examines several of her fictional works to show how they

Title: XX**Authors:** Vito Gulla**Department:** English**Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Paul Maltby

This creative work demonstrates the author's familiarity with a variety of literary techniques (i.e. symbolism, irony, foreshadowing, etc.) and their application in the use of narrative. It is a short story that intermingles with ideas found in modernist, transgressive, and post-modern literature. The story takes on the "mythic method" (from the modernist tradition of Joyce), the re-telling of Greek myths as a strategy to show a parallel between the contemporaneous and antiquity, while pertaining to taboo topics such as rape (seen in the transgressive fiction of Bret Easton Ellis). The story also uses fantastic elements wedged into seemingly realistic events (much like the work of Gabriel Garcia Marquez) along with a heavy dose of intertextuality. The plot follows a young man named Otto who wakes up a woman. He spends his day trying to fit into his new role as a woman by playing with his hair. He decides to take his new persona to the streets and stops at a bar. There he meets an old friend (who doesn't recognize him) and four men who look like old film stars. After his old friend leaves, the four men take Otto in the bar's bathroom to rape him. Otto finds humor in the situation and laughs. Out of shock, the four men beat him until he passes out and leave him.

Title: We Are One**Authors:** Stephanie Eckman**Department:** Spanish**Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Robert Mejia

As Americans, we tend to ignore and downplay the importance of learning a foreign language because millions of people around the world can speak English. Part of this is that it's incredibly difficult for many Americans to remember that English is not the first language of many of its speakers. It is true that millions find a link in English as a means of communication, but its native speakers tend to forget - or not realize, I'm not sure which - that merely having a means of basic communication is not enough. The ability to communicate is a beautiful thing, but it cannot serve all of language's jobs on its own. This brief video addresses the issue of the importance of language learning. Though they may be able to communicate, even fluent second-language speakers cannot express themselves fully in their adopted tongue. To communicate in a single language is not to connect, to understand, or to accept. To do that, we must understand each other's heritage and cultural backgrounds, a large part of which is language. To understand each other in the deepest and purest sense, we must understand the speech of those with whom we speak. Without the ability to connect and accept, we will lose not only the opportunity to forge important ties, but also the chance to stand united as one nation, one world, one humanity

Title: The Female Author, Or *The Female Quixote* as an Example of Charlotte Lennox's Utilization of Common Authorial Moves and Techniques in Order to Promote both Her Novel and Her Career in the Eighteenth Century**Authors:** Kip Migdalias**AWARDEE****Department:** English**Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Eleanor F. Shevlin

This piece addresses ongoing critical commentary on the female author in eighteenth-century England. More specifically, this paper focuses on Charlotte Lennox, an author utilizing not only the conventions available to female authors but also the ones practiced by male writers of her time. Such conventions include capitalizing on the prominence of her contemporaries (public figures, other authors, etc.); burlesquing and satirizing popular genres; and imitating coveted literary works by renowned authors (either contemporary or classical).

Lennox's *The Female Quixote*, teeming with indicators of such conventions, serves as an ideal work for demonstrating the female author's ability to balance being a woman and being a professional author. Her utilization of the conventions within this work stands out in her dedication to an earl and later appraisals of famous author and printer Samuel Richardson and author and critic Samuel Johnson (capitalizing on the prominence of her contemporaries); her burlesquing of the French Romances (burlesquing and satirizing popular genres); and her imitation of various stylistic and organizational devices of Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (imitating coveted literary works by renowned authors).

Title: Let the 'Experts', the Residents of New Orleans, Teach Us All about Survival and Rebuilding Post-Katrina**Author:** Lisa Cerullo, MHS**AWARDEE****Department:** Graduate Social Work**Faculty Mentor:** Nadine M. Bean, MSSA, Ph.D., LSW

The purpose of this study was to explore and evaluate the post Hurricane Katrina experiences of the residents of New Orleans who had or were in the process of rebuilding their homes and communities. The main question of this study was, "What can other individuals, organizations, and communities learn from the information shared by the people of New Orleans, who have had their homes rebuilt to help in the recovery from future disasters?" The transformative model for community organization practice formed the theoretical framework of this study. Several major themes emerged from the eight participants' narratives consisting of displacement, distrust of government and contractors, place attachment, and different methods of coping. Recommendation was made from the results of the findings for the transformative model to be implemented in a post disaster situation. This would initiate the process of the "expert", the resident of the community to make suggestions and help with planning a disaster recovery plan

Title: Politics and the Media: An Analytical Look at the Hostile Media Effect**Authors:** Nathanael Portner**Department:** Political Science**Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Joshua Weikert

Since 1985, experts in the fields of psychology, communication, and political science have been perplexed by the causes behind perceived media bias. There has been a vast compilation of literature on this issue since the mid eighties. Some researchers have hypothesized that this perception is due to source evaluations on the part of the viewer, whereas others have argued that it is, in fact, a result of what they call the "hostile media phenomenon". Fundamental to the understanding of perceived media bias under the hostile media phenomenon is the assumption that partisan and ideological sentiments have a profound and unparalleled influence on one's perception of the media. However, as we will find, this assumption by hostile media phenomenon theorists has never been challenged in a meaningful way. Thus, the focus of this literature review shall be to explore the boundaries of hostile media theories so as to better understand the complexities behind perceived media bias.

Title: Exploring the link between Crime and Immigration in the City of Hazleton, Pennsylvania

Authors: Stephen R. Tucker

AWARDEE

Department: Political Science

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Linda Stevenson

This research paper will focus on exploring and examining policy decisions based on the claim that Latino immigration has contributed causally to increases in crime rates in the City of Hazleton, Pennsylvania. After conducting research and either substantiating or refuting this claim of causality between immigration and crime rates, I will then explore popular opinion on this issue and whether there is widespread belief that race can be an accurate predictor of an individual's criminality. This paper will be structured so as to address the unique policy proposal set forth by Mayor Lou Barletta of Hazleton, Pennsylvania and so as to include original research done on this topic.

Title: Elderly Women and Poverty

Authors: Leah Zellers and Kendra Nickens

AWARDEE

Department: Undergraduate Social Work

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Claire L. Dente, Ph.D, LCSW

The researchers chose to explore the extent of knowledge that West Chester University social work students versus non-social work students have about elderly women and the contributing factors of poverty. The researchers tested three hypotheses: first, social work students, compared to non-social work students, will be more likely to acknowledge that being widowed can increase the likelihood of becoming impoverished in elderly women; second, social work students, compared to non-social work students, will be more likely to attribute poverty in elderly women due to isolation which hinders their ability to seek out resources; and third, social work students, compared to non-social work students, will be more likely to attribute that the level of education can affect elderly women's chance of poverty. The researchers tested their hypothesis by distributing a survey via e-mail. The results of the study conclude that West Chester University's Social Work Department is providing their students with adequate learning

Title: Poverty and Domestic Violence Among Women**Authors:** Natashja Rinaldo, Georgia Smith, and Lisette Realbuto**AWARDEE****Department:** Undergraduate Social Work**Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Claire L. Dente, Ph.D, LCSW

This report takes a look at what West Chester University of Pennsylvania students know about the topic of poverty and its correlation with domestic violence. A survey was distributed to the students of West Chester University of Pennsylvania to discover if social work majors were more knowledgeable on this topic than students of different majors. The purpose of our research, a literature review, and methodology section has all been included. In supplementation of the report, the appendix includes the research instrument and several graphs which illustrate the results of this study are incorporated.

Title: Identifying Changed Personal Perspectives of Undergraduate Pre-service Teachers as the result of an Urban Immersion Experience**Authors:** Shannon E. Holly & Jeanne K. Wysocki**Department:** Early Childhood and Special Education**Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Claire Verden

A research study was conducted that looked at student journals and perspectives of pre-service teachers, from West Chester University of Pennsylvania before and after a two-week urban immersion experience. Participants lived and worked in an urban setting for a two-week period during which time they taught in neighborhood schools and completed a community service project for these neighborhoods. Through the mode of qualitative research design these researchers' analyzed journals written by participants that expressed candid natural feelings, emotions, and doubts about teaching in urban communities. These journals were analyzed to find common themes across participants; these participants identified fear, concern, safety, and classroom management as the common threads. At the end of the urban immersion program these same participants showed common themes of change as a result of this experience that included realizing that 'kids are kids, no matter where they live', and a willingness to return to an urban environment to both student teach and to job search after graduation.

These findings support the value of an urban immersion experience to both allay fears and stereotypes of urban education, and as a recruitment tool for urban schools.

Title: Comparison of Formant Frequencies for Belting and Opera Singing Styles**Authors:** Karen Perta**Department:** Communicative Disorder**Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Elizabeth Grillo

Musical theater (MT) and classical singing styles, two dominant styles in the field of vocal music, vary considerably in both vocal quality (timbre) and technique. The purpose of this study is to compare formant frequencies of the vowels /a/, /i/, /u/, and /æ/ across “belting” (a sub-style of MT) and opera (a sub-style of classical) singing styles. Changes in vowel formant frequencies across these singing styles may explain voice timbre differences and provide insight into the techniques used when producing these styles (Sundberg, 1993; Björkner, 2006; Stone, 2003). This study will include two adult participants, one male and one female, with formal singing training in both belting and opera. First, participants will sustain each of the four point vowels /a/, /i/, /u/, and /æ/ on the pitches A3 (220 Hz), A4 (440 Hz), and E5 (660 Hz) for the female participant and A2 (110 Hz), A3 (220 Hz), and E4 (330 Hz) for the male participant. The second task will involve singing the first phase of the National Anthem on each of the four vowels. Tasks will be performed in both belting and opera singing styles. Data collection is planned for March 2009 after receiving approval in an expedited review from West Chester University’s Institutional Review Board. Results will be analyzed and written up for publication in April 2009.

Title: Perceptions of Nurse Caring, Skills, and Knowledge Based on Appearance**Author:** Briana Ellis, B. Jean Linton, Abigail Ehret, Sarah and Colon Shoop**Department:** Nursing**Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Christine Thomas

Nurses interact with patients on a daily basis. Within those first few moments an impression is made. One’s appearance is a way of communicating within this interaction. A study was conducted to determine the impact of appearance on perceptions of nurse caring, skill, and knowledge. The researchers wanted to determine if there was a significant difference among nurses, nursing students, nursing faculty, and patient’s perceptions of caring, knowledge, and skill. A survey booklet was used that consisted of nine varying pictures and included a demographic section. In the pictures, three different scrub uniforms were used as well as three different levels of body art. A total of 213 participants were surveyed. Preliminary results are showing significant differences between the groups.

Title: A Retrospective Study of the Effects of Poverty on Clean Drinking Water in Sub-Saharan Africa

Authors: Jessica R. Duffy

AWARDEE

Department: Public Health: Environmental

Type of Presentation: Dr. Charles Shorten

In many developing countries, governments use subsidies for water to benefit only the wealthier in society. On average, poorer populations that are lucky enough to be able to attain clean drink water, pay five to ten times as much for that water than the more affluent populace. Clean drinking water and improved sanitation facilities create a healthier environment for people; they reduce the amount of disease and deaths from dysentery as well as other bacterial maladies. To investigate the correlation between poverty levels and the amount of clean drinking water in certain African countries, I will use data collected by the World Resources Institute which is published on earthtrends.org. Data that will be examined includes population earning less than \$1 a day, population earning less than \$2 a day, access to an improved water source, and access to improved sanitation, life expectancy, population density and human development index. Using statistical analysis – Pearson correlation matrix – I will determine which data are significantly correlated. These analyses show the direct link between poverty and human rights issues that pertain to water quality. However, a population's access to clean water is not correlated with access to sanitation facilities.

Title: Assassins: A Dramaturgy Study in Collaboration with the Department of Theater & Dance and University Theatre's production of Assassins

Authors: Andrew Lowy

AWARDEE

Department: Theater and Dance

Type of Presentation: Leonard Kelly, Assistant Professor of Acting and Voice

The following portfolio chronicles the dramaturgical work performed by Andrew Lowy from February 2008 to November 5, 2008 for the WCU production of the musical Assassins. A recent winner of the LMDA/KCACTF National Student Dramaturgy Award, Lowy takes you through his full dramaturgical process. From initial research, to table work, to rehearsals, to opening night, we see how his research provided an overall context for the production. Some of the research topics within include the nature of political and presidential assassination, the context in which each assassination occurred, and a history of the production. In response to his research, he created many different ways for the cast, crew, and the university community to engage with the subject matter and themes of the musical. A few examples include the Something Just Broke Project, an image wall, an extensive study guide, and display in the Francis Harvey Green Library. The portfolio is supplemented by a CD-R that contains all of the information that is briefly discussed in the writing.