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Welcome to the fall 2001 issue of the MIT Undergraduate Research Journal (*MURJ*). In this fifth issue of our institute-wide interdisciplinary journal, you'll find our selection of the latest undergraduate research on the theory and applications of new and exciting work being conducted in fields as diverse as genomics, material sciences, and public policy. In addition to these selected submissions from the student body, we have compiled for you a series of feature articles, which discuss recent debates and issues taking place in both the academic and public realms.

As always, the research displayed in this journal is written without jargon and in a manner that maximizes each report's accessibility to all members of the MIT community. We feel that *MURJ* is a unique opportunity for members of this community to examine research and engage in the discussion of issues within fields that cross boundaries between individual specialties. We hope not only to increase awareness of research in various disciplines (and between disciplines) through our unique style of presentation, but also to provide a forum where ideas can be exchanged and disseminated, and through which public policy and ethics issues can be debated. In our feature articles, we address aspects of both applied and theoretical sciences in subjects ranging from alternative sources of energy to debates on Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

Our goals for *MURJ* remain the same as when this journal was founded three years ago: to promote a discussion of the implications of scientific discourse in our community and to provide a medium through which this discussion can occur. We would like to thank all the people who help us pursue this mission: Dean Perelman, our advisor, for his thoughtful advice and assistance; the professors who contribute valuable time and effort to reviewing our work; and The Tech, for its continued support. If you would like to contribute to future issues of *MURJ*, we invite you to join us or to submit your reports for our Spring 2002 issue. All submissions for the next issue will be due at the beginning of February. Please email murj-public@mit.edu or visit our Web site, web.mit.edu/murj/www, if you have further questions or comments.

Sincerely,

The editors of *MURJ*