

Vanderbilt Undergraduate Research Journal

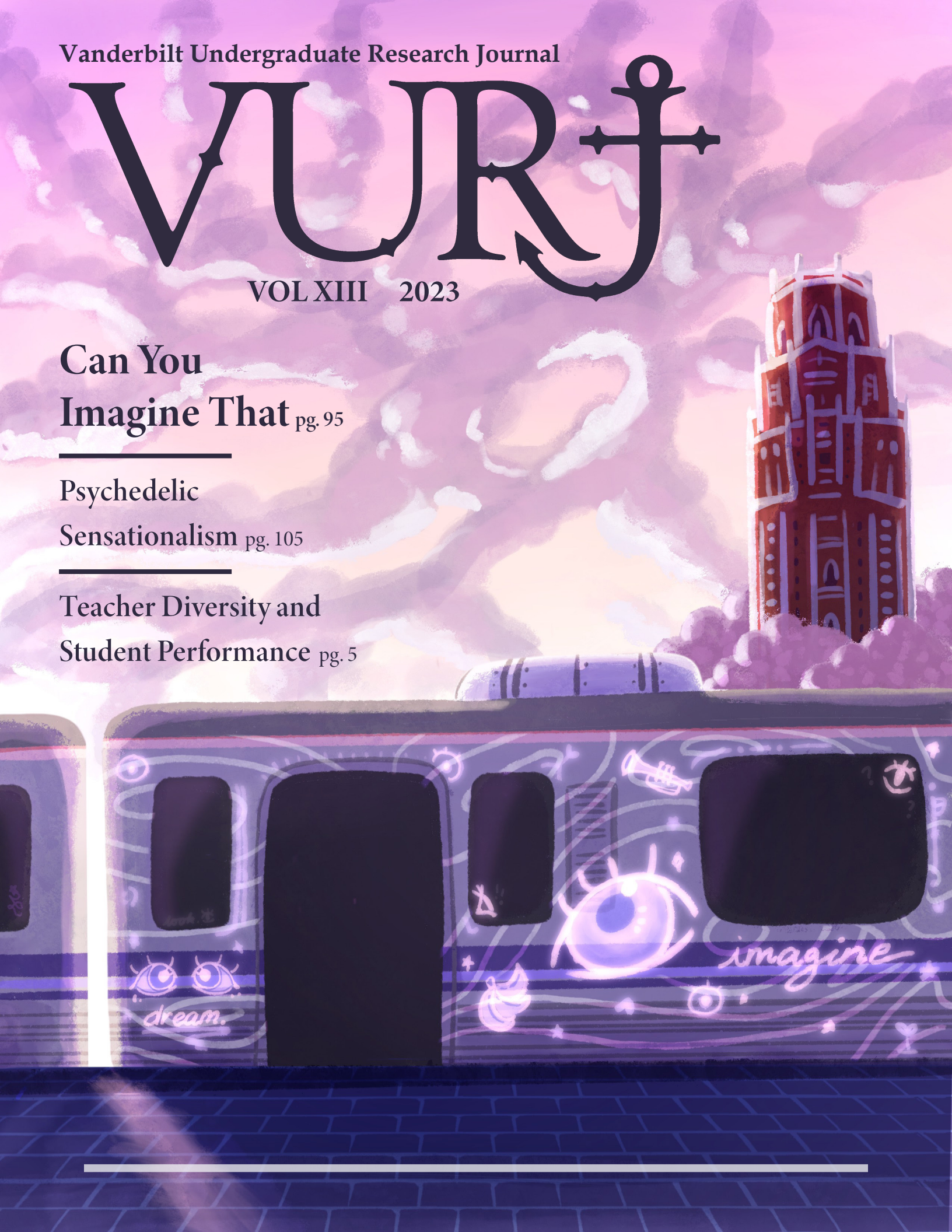
VURj

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Can You Imagine That pg. 95

Psychedelic
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A LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Vanderbilt Community,

It is with great pleasure that we announce the publication of the 13th volume of the Vanderbilt Undergraduate Research Journal (VURJ). The VURJ is an undergraduate student-run journal that publishes annually in the spring. The journal accepts manuscripts in seven disciplines: Education and Human Development, Engineering, Humanities, Math and Physics, Natural Science, Political Science and Economics, and Social Sciences. We hope to make both sides of the publication process, submission and review, more accessible to undergraduate students at Vanderbilt University while also providing an opportunity for Vanderbilt undergraduate students to showcase their research.

Since the VURJ's founding in 2004, the journal has sought to showcase the incredible research conducted by Vanderbilt undergraduate students in all disciplines. This year's collection of manuscripts demonstrates the steadfast determination of Vanderbilt students to advance their field of study and engage in intellectual exploration beyond the classroom. We believe that undergraduate research is a cornerstone of the Vanderbilt experience that enables deeper exploration beyond typical coursework and encourage everyone to become involved in undergraduate research at some point in your Vanderbilt journey. This year, we received many incredible submissions to our Editorial Review Board for consideration for publication. Of these submissions, we are proud to publish 10 articles that span topics from methods for assessing children's complex syntax usage to relating social network size to brain structure and activity. These articles were all written by undergraduate students and reviewed, and edited by students in respective disciplines of the Editorial Review Board.

This year also served as the inaugural year for the Vanderbilt Undergraduate Research Journal Manuscript Competition, which was judged by our faculty mentors. The first-place winner received a \$250 prize and two runner-up prizes received \$150 each. The winners of the Manuscript Competition were announced by Chancellor Daniel Diermeier at the Spring Undergraduate Research Fair, hosted by the Office of Experiential Learning and Immersion Vanderbilt.

Our favorite part of this year has been watching the growth of the journal. We have served as central members of the National Undergraduate Consortium on Scientific Journalism, helping other undergraduate journals build the foundation for organizing and managing a successful publication. We also helped lead and host an international conference of over 480 attendees from around the world, which featured a Nobel Prize nominee, a Pulitzer Prize winner, a YouTuber with over millions of subscribers, and many more accomplished panelists. The growth of our journal includes partnerships such as these with the Columbia Undergraduate Science Journal, the Aggie Transcript (University of California, Davis), and the Oregon Undergraduate Research Journal. We have also gained international exposure, with students at the University of Oxford and the University of Warwick meeting with us to collaborate on various new projects. We believe that undergraduate research embodies the spirit of collaboration and we hope our journal exemplifies these ideals with our work on Vanderbilt's campus, throughout the nation, and around the world.

Our journal has received a tremendous amount of support that has helped shape its success. We

would like to take the time to recognize the following individuals for their support.

We would like to thank Carolyn Floyd, J.D., Senior Director of the Office of Experiential Learning and Immersion Vanderbilt, due to her unwavering support of our journal and its constant new endeavors. She has been an incredibly enthusiastic supporter of our journal and has always been eager to help advance our efforts.

We would also like to thank Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education Tiffany Tung, Ph.D., for her commitment to advancing undergraduate research and her extensive support of our journal's mission with her guidance and administrative support.

John Bradley, Ph.D., Director of the Writing Studio and Tutoring Services, provided us with his expertise and support in helping conduct the Editorial Review Board and copy editor training session. The Jean and Alexander Heard Libraries, Andy Wesolek, and Tao Yu delivered logistical support, managed our website on the Open Journal System, and helped us assign digital object identifiers to our published articles.

Our faculty and graduate student mentors helped ensure that our manuscript competition proceeded smoothly and that our Editorial Review Board was well-equipped to review manuscripts.

We would like to recognize the foundational work that Skanda Sastry (BS'21), Catherine Rast (BA'22), and Jong Eun Jung (BS'22) undertook as previous Editors-in-Chief and President of the Vanderbilt Undergraduate Research Journal. We are also thankful for the groundwork of Sachin Sanam (BS'20), who helped build the framework for the VURJ.

We are also immensely thankful for our incredible Executive Board who have helped carry out our new initiatives; the amazing Managing Editors who screened all manuscripts and helped ensure all manuscripts were reviewed in a diligent and timely manner; the Editorial Review Board for providing insightful feedback to our authors; the copy editors who worked to ensure a well-formatted journal; and the committee members who helped spread awareness of our journal and helped us achieve a record high number of submissions this year.

To our graduating members, we wish you all the best in your future endeavors. If you would like to learn more about joining the Vanderbilt Undergraduate Research Journal as a member of the Editorial Review Board, author, copy editor, or committee member, please email us at vurj@vanderbilt.edu.

Happy Reading and Best Wishes,

Rohan Nigam (BA'24)
Editor-in-Chief

Shamel Basaria (BA'24)
Editor-in-Chief

Sally CHOI

About The Artist

Major: Cognitive Studies

Class: 2026

Hometown: Nashville, TN



Meet me at the Train of Thought (Digital, April 2023) takes place in the brain. Dreamy pinks and purple decorated by neuron clouds set a nostalgic, intriguing atmosphere. The Zeppos tower and cherry blossoms are an all too familiar symbol of Vanderbilt as a blossoming hub of information and research. The painting happens at sunrise, a time that renders everyone speechless and sentimental, just like new discoveries.

Between the lines of time and space, the Train of Thought flows from station to station, picking up information and people to tell its story. With no signs present, viewers can imagine where the train was, is, and will be. The graffiti is inspired by the winning manuscript: Brilliantly shimmering eyes ask viewers to visualize, “imagine,” and “dream” with them.

As you read through, each article in its own

fashion will say, “Meet me at my train of thought.” No matter the train, the doors will open to invite you inside and take you on an unforgettable intellectual journey.

Seohyun “Sally” Choi is from Seoul, South Korea, but she spent her middle and high school years in Nashville, TN. She is an illustrator inspired by various art styles from Renaissance paintings to modern-day animation. As an artist, she is currently interested in learning about graphic design and typography. As a student, Sally is interested in all-things-human, and she would love to research about the intersection of culture, cognition, and behavior.

When she is not (re-)searching for art inspiration, you can find her playing music, filming videos, visiting museums, and going on fun adventures!