

In a Banner Year, the Iwanter Prize Recognizes Excellence in Undergraduate Humanities Scholarship

MADISON, Wis. (July 12, 2021) – Recent graduate **Noah Mapes** (B.A.'21, Art History) has received the 2021 Iwanter Prize for Undergraduate Research, an annual award administered by the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Center for the Humanities. The \$2,000 prize is given to a graduating senior who, through a senior thesis and general academic distinction, demonstrates outstanding humanities-based scholarship of a broad and interdisciplinary nature.

It was a competitive year for the Iwanter Prize with many compelling entries; the Center received the highest number of applications to date. Two recent graduates also garnered the \$500 Honorable Mention prize for their senior theses: **Alyssa Hamrick** (B.A.'21, History) and **Taylor Leigh Scofield** (B.A.'21, Art History, Political Science).

The prize was established in 2000 by alumnus Sidney E. Iwanter (B.A.'71, History), who said, "In this academic year featuring a landscape of such chaos and uncertainty, it is uplifting to witness such a continuing form of scholarship from these seniors."

Noah Mapes won the Iwanter Prize for his thesis, "Supermarket Activism: Locating Identity and Red Power Rhetoric in Peter B. Jones' *Indian Brand Series*." Mapes writes, "In 1968, Onondaga artist Peter B. Jones produced the *Indian Brand Series*, three sculptures that represent commercial goods branded with a seemingly Indigenous mascot. By contextualizing each sculpture within contemporaneous events, American popular media, and Indigenous activism, my thesis demonstrates how the *Indian Brand Series* appropriates the conventions of Pop art as a means of asserting Indigenous self-determination."

In his thesis, Mapes highlights how the *Indian Brand Series* reflects a greater need to reconsider Indigenous representation; he also argues for a new category, Native Pop, which represents a unique branch of Pop art that supports Indigenous issues and empowerment. Mapes' interest in the topic was spurred by his interdisciplinary experiences in Indigenous and material culture studies at UW-Madison.



Recent graduate Noah Mapes (B.A.'21, Art History) received the 2021 Iwanter Prize for Undergraduate Research



An image from Mapes' thesis. Peter B. Jones, *Joy Bottle*, 1968. Glazed ceramic and paint, 53 x 18 x 16 cm. National Museum of the American Indian.

Early on, Mapes took courses offered by the American Indian Studies Program to both support his art historical interests and to better understand himself as a scholar of mixed Ojibwe and European descents. “These courses ranged in topics from cultural histories, information studies, languages, and environmental studies—each contributing to my thesis research and methodology,” Mapes writes.

Mapes will continue studying and working with Indigenous arts this summer when he joins the Peabody Essex Museum’s curatorial staff as a member of their Native American Summer Fellowship program. In fall 2021, Mapes will join Cornell University’s History of Art Ph.D. program to continue his research of Indigenous arts under the guidance of Dr. Jolene Rickard.

Anna Andrzejewski, Bradshaw Knight Professor of the Environmental Humanities at UW-Madison and the Director of the Center for Culture, History, and Environment, directed Mapes’ work on his thesis. Andrzejewski writes, “It has been a delight to work with Noah for the past two years, and I am thrilled with the thesis he produced. . . . In the end, what Noah produced is a well written and well argued piece of interdisciplinary scholarship as well as work that could be extended into a scholarly

publication. . . . Noah hopes to become a curator, though I believe this thesis shows his potential to work in the academy as well. . . . He’s an exceptional student, deeply committed to research and the expansion of scholarly knowledge; Cornell will be so fortunate to have him.”

Iwanter Prize Honorable Mention: Alyssa Hamrick

Alyssa Hamrick garnered the \$500 Iwanter Prize Honorable Mention for her thesis, “From Katyn to ‘Katynism’: The U.S. Congressional Investigation of the Katyn Massacre, 1951-52.” Hamrick’s thesis is an exploration of the terminology and language the Congressional Committee used to discuss the Katyn Massacre, which provides a window into a potential first attempt at expanding the newly codified ideas of crimes against humanity and genocide. Hamrick argues that an exploration of the U.S. congressional investigation into the massacre allows us to understand what was at stake when politicians mobilized the language of atrocity during the early Cold War.

Hamrick writes, “To draw truly meaningful conclusions from the Committee’s investigation, I needed to think beyond [the] discipline of history. I need to utilize the skills I learned in my earlier undergraduate career. I needed to think like a journalist and an archaeologist, and not just a historian. My interdisciplinary identity is represented not only in



Recent graduate Alyssa Hamrick (B.A.’21, History) received the 2021 Iwanter Prize Honorable Mention

the content of this thesis, but in its creation. It is the culmination of my Era of Exploration at UW-Madison and a sum of my differing, but related, interests.”

For her thesis, Hamrick worked under the guidance of Kathryn Ciancia, Associate Professor of History at UW-Madison. Ciancia writes, “[Hamrick’s] diligently researched, brilliantly conceptualized, and beautifully written thesis is a model of interdisciplinary humanistic scholarship. . . . Her enthusiasm and love of learning are a joy to behold, and her excellent senior thesis is the culmination of her hard work, persistence, and passion for humanistic study.”



Iwanter Prize Honorable Mention: Taylor Leigh Scofield

In her thesis, “The Gentrification of Public Art: Oakland Street Art and Graffiti Post-Tech Boom,” Scofield argues that the spatial, racial, and political gentrification of Oakland, California, post-Silicon Valley technology boom displaces public artists and depoliticizes the work that they create. She highlights the Chicano Movement, the Black Arts Movement, and the Black Panther Party as aesthetic and political inspirations for street artists, muralists, and graffiti writers.

Recent graduate Talor Leigh Scofield (B.A.’21, Art History, Political Science) received the 2021 Iwanter Prize Honorable Mention

Scofield’s research concludes with interviews of two influential figures in the Oakland public art scene. She also outlines current policy proposals advocating for public art

through an equity lens and presents a case study of two striking murals in Oakland’s Afrikatown.

During her four years at UW-Madison, Scofield completed two majors, two certificates, and seven jobs and internships while participating on the Women’s Club Water Polo team and Pi Beta Phi fraternity for women.

Scofield worked under the direction of Daniel Spaulding, Assistant Professor in the Department of Art History at UW-Madison. Spaulding writes: “Through her enthusiastic and insightful contributions to our discussions, as well as in our regular meetings to discuss progress on her thesis, it quickly became evident that Taylor was a truly exceptional student. . . . This thesis is a highly original synthesis of historical contextualization, theory, and—perhaps most strikingly—interviews and photographic documentation conducted as fieldwork onsite in Oakland. . . . Taylor’s thesis is an exemplary instance of socially conscious scholarship.”



Iwanter in the 1967 Madison
Central High School Yearbook

The Iwanter Prize itself is about legacy and the passing of intellectual curiosity from one generation to another. The prize was established in 2000 by alumnus Sidney E. Iwanter (B.A.'71, History), a native of the Greenbush neighborhood in Madison. While an undergraduate, Iwanter's own curiosity and will to document the knowledge of the previous generation led him to secretly record the lectures of Professor of History and political activist Harvey Goldberg. In 2004, Iwanter generously donated these "bootlegs" to UW-Madison (the lectures are available from the Harvey Goldberg Center: goldberg.history.wisc.edu).

Iwanter, who now lives in Los Angeles, continues to support the undergraduate humanities and the love of learning at UW-Madison, stemming from his belief that, "a well-rounded humanities education is the keystone to an informed electorate and a healthy society."

More information about the Iwanter Prize and past winners can be found at:

<https://humanities.wisc.edu/research/iwanter-prize>