

For my research project ANTS!: *William Morton Wheeler and the Social Construction of Insects* the University of Maryland library was instrumental for my sources and ease of finding research. As for my topic, I began my interest in this topic initially when I was about 10 years old. I used to collect and classify bugs found in my backyard. I always found the social nature of ants fascinating. In college I have translated this fascination into studies of the history of science and technology. So, when I took the class History of Modern Biology taught by Erika Milam and had a chance to do a historical research project on any subject of my choosing I choose to study the historical impact of ants on society. I thought this was a perfect way to fit my early interest in insects into historiographical context and relate it to my studies here at Maryland.

The University of Maryland library card catalog as well as many online databases we students are given access to through the Maryland system were the main way in which I found my sources. Initially I knew my main research character was going to be William Morton Wheeler so I used the University of Maryland online catalog to find works published by him, and about him. I immediately found the book *Six Legs Better* by Charlotte Sleight, which is a historical account of ants and scientists views on them and their uses throughout history. This book, as well as the Lustig article I used for my research were recommended to me by Professor Milam and were great starting points and background knowledge for my research. I then used the bibliography of this book to find similar sources related to my topic.

My main second approach to research was through the University of Maryland databases like JSTOR and History of Science, Technology and Medicine databases. I knew that my primary sources were going to come from the papers of Auguste Forel and William M. Wheeler so I used

JSTOR to search for their published articles online. For Wheeler they were relatively easy to find, and the hard part actually ended being narrowing down which ones to use. For Forel, I had a much harder time probably because he wrote a lot of papers in German and French, but with the help of the bibliography from *Six Legs Better* by Charlotte Sleigh I was able to find a good book, translated into English, by Forel. Both the Maryland library system catalog and online resources were very useful, but I also went outside of the library resources for research. I even used Google book's archive of *Popular Mechanics Magazine* to find information on the perception of social insect in the mid-twentieth century.

After my initial research, I had a plethora of resources not all directly related to one another. I had articles by early twentieth century myrmecologists all the way up to some accounts of myrmecologists from the twenty-first century. To narrow down my research I chose to concentrate on early myrmecology and decided to concentrate mostly on Auguste Forel and William Morton Wheeler and their contribution to the perception of the ant in scientific and mainstream culture. I knew that I would use a lot of the work of Wheeler, so I narrowed down his articles to those that directly spoke about his ideas of biology and links between ants and humans. For example, one paper that I was sure from the beginning that I would definitely use was William Morton Wheeler's "The Dry Rot of Our Academic Biology" where he talks about his ideas about the new laboratory science and belief that it will negatively impact biology. After reading these articles, I decided if they were directly about ant study or about the personal values and ideologies of each scientist and if they were not in either of these categories I got rid of them.

I plan to pursue higher education and a career in museum studies and this research aided by the University of Maryland Library system resources and Professor Milam developed my confidence as a successful researcher. With the useful research tactics like looking to footnotes for more sources and knowing how to search for exactly what I am looking for I will be a much more

successful researcher in the future. Another thing that I learned about the research process is that sometimes I have to let it take you where it will take me. Professor Milam also taught me that there is no use in trying to push my research to what I want it to be, I just have to review the evidence and make an argument with what I have.