

## Undergraduate Research Symposium 2012

### HARRIET L. WILKES HONORS COLLEGE

#### **“Employing Cultural Landscapes in Community Preservation: The Case of Druid Hills, Atlanta”**

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Druid Hills is a historic suburb of Atlanta, Georgia, that was initially designed by landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted in 1893. As one of Atlanta's first suburbs, Druid Hills has faced the consequences of sprawl, particularly in the 1980s when the Georgia Department of Transportation proposed construction of the Presidential Parkway, an expressway that would have cut through the middle of the neighborhood. In opposition to the expressway, members of the surrounding communities organized Citizens Against Unnecessary Thoroughfares in Older Neighborhoods (CAUTION). The strategic rhetoric of CAUTION's campaign emphasized Druid Hills' significance as "Olmsted's Vision of Atlanta," yet their use of this iconic figure did not capture the complete cultural landscape of Druid Hills. Although Olmsted designed the initial layout of the suburb, the suburb's form departed from his design during its development. I argue that preserving the community requires a comprehensive portrait of its varied history.