



2007

Letter from the Editor

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Class of 2007

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Bowman, Kevin (2007) "Letter from the Editor," *The Gettysburg Historical Journal*: Vol. 6 , Article 2.
Available at: <https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/ghj/vol6/iss1/2>

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Letter from the Editor

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Readers,

Each year the *Gettysburg Historical Journal* of Gettysburg College summons the best of the best student compositions of history for publication. Resultantly, each year the editorial board for the *Journal* is swamped with student submissions featuring a wide array of topics from the categories of history, art history and historic fiction. Since many of the submissions are deserving of publication, the selection process is extraordinarily competitive, as well as difficult for the staff of the *Journal*. Out of the many submissions submitted for this year's edition, presented here are the best of the best:

In *Currents of Liberty, Seas of Change*, Skye Montgomery finds that the Atlantic Ocean, while presenting an insurmountable barrier between enslaved blacks and their homelands, also provided a rare opportunity for equality. Black seaman frequently found a degree of liberty in the rigorous discipline of shipboard life and became inspiring models of empowerment to their own people, undermining the efforts of slaveholders to create a docile labor force.

Next, we turn to Brett Jackson who focuses on the jurisprudential treatment of women in the Puritan era. It is commonly assumed that the legal status of American women has been a linear progression from total repression to modern day equity. In this narrative of sequentially gained status, Puritan law has stood as the exemplar of America's most oppressive treatment of women under law. As Jackson demonstrates in *Revealing Zion's Daughters*, it is simply not true.

Brian Matthew Jordan proffers a brief history of the Eighth Ohio Volunteer Infantry in '*The Regiment Bore a Most Conspicuous Part.*' Following the regiment through the Civil War using the letters of participants and contemporary accounts and newspapers, Jordan periscopes inward to find in these Ohioans – and in their apogee at Gettysburg – the larger meanings of the nation's fiery trial.

Subsequently, Joseph D. Gasparro returns us to Pontiac's Rebellion in *The Desired Effect*. After the French and Indian War, the ink on the 1763 Treaty of Paris was barely dry when the victorious British had to deal with this multi-tribe insurgence. Upset over Britain's new policies, the Native Americans took ten forts, pushing the British to desperate measures including the distribution of blankets infected with smallpox to the Indians.

Finally, Daniel Scotto examines the possibility of Soviet involvement in the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II. He suggests in his Greninger Prize winning *Pope John Paul II, the Assassination Attempt, and the Soviet Union* that there is substantial evidence of Soviet complicity.

As will be seen, Gettysburg College students strive above and beyond expectations of undergraduate level historic writing. The high levels of integrity seen in the following compositions can derive only from a student's devotion and willpower supported by the prominent professors and mentors that Gettysburg College provides. What makes the *Gettysburg Historical Journal* stand out among others is the fact that from conception, submissions, selection and collation, the *Journal* is processed solely through the hands of students. Both the authors of the essays and the *Journal's* editorial board devote vast amounts of time and energy making the *Gettysburg Historical Journal* a success. It is my pleasure to present here a true testament to the hard work and dedication of the students of Gettysburg College.

Kevin Bowman
General Editor

