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Letter from the Editors

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Abstract

In the midst of social unrest and a global pandemic, we, the editors of the Gettysburg Historical Journal, could not forget our duty to publish undergraduate academic scholarship. Although this task may seem trivial considering greater issues, historical discourse deserves its place.

Letter from the Editors

In the midst of social unrest and a global pandemic, we, the editors of the Gettysburg Historical Journal, could not forget our duty to publish undergraduate academic scholarship. Although this task may seem trivial considering greater issues, historical discourse deserves its place. French historian, Marc Bloch, of the Annales school, spoke of the risk crises posed to historical research:

Without doubt, too, civilizations may change. It is not in itself inconceivable that ours may, one day, turn away from history, and historians would do well to reflect upon this possibility. If they do not take care, there is danger that badly understood history could involve good history in its disrepute. But should we come to this, it would be at the cost of a serious rupture with our most unvarying intellectual traditions.¹

What is important is not that history be understood in a single “correct” way. What matters, and what our journal seeks to promote, is the articulation of differing voices on a variety of topics. The “badly understood history” could be the “single story” of history which Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie references in her writings. A single story is the dominance of a shallow and incomplete narrative that overshadows the depth of a culture or, in

¹ Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1953), 5.

this case, a historical record. Currently, we risk the politicization of the past with movements and parties utilizing sources and events that suit their narrative. We face the delegitimization of scholars and specialists who counter the status quo. Although not every scholarly paper challenges an established fact, scholarship should be free. A single voice cannot prevail just as much as a single source type cannot prevail. Literary material can be augmented by material culture, archaeological and anthropological research, and artistic interpretation. Future historians must continually search for new sources of information and new ways to interpret the past to gain a nuanced perspective of the past.

With the assistance of the Cupola, Gettysburg College's online research repository, and the distinguished college faculty, our authors' work has received both serious scholarly attention and national accolades. Past authors have gone on to publish follow-up work in refereed journals, and to present their work at undergraduate and professional conferences. The Gettysburg Historical Journal is primarily a student-run organization, and as such, it provides undergraduate students with a unique opportunity to gain valuable experience reviewing, editing, and organizing academic articles for publication. In all cases, authors and editors have also had the opportunity to apply these skills to their future careers, or their work as graduate students.

Each of the following works selected for this nineteenth edition of the Gettysburg College Historical Journal exemplifies

the varied interests of undergraduate history students. Max Bouchard's essay, "Carrying the Nation on Fragile Shoulders: Female Textile Workers in a Modernizing Japan," explores the treatment of the predominantly female workforce in the Japanese textile industry in the Meiji Period. He notes how gendered beliefs prevailed in shaping the relationship between textile employers and their female employees. Rachel Chenault's essay, "The Celtic Queen Boudica as a Historiographical Narrative," evaluates Boudica as a usable character in the past, and what that meant for modern historiographical study through the lens of ancient historiography, gender in history and post-colonialism.

Christopher Lough's paper, "‘Immortal until his work is done’: Northern Methodists and the Klan in Reconstruction Alabama," argues that the Ku Klux Klan's persecution of Arad Simon Lakin, a Northern Methodist preacher who ministered in Alabama following the Civil War, and other Northern Methodists fits into its broader efforts to hasten the coming of God's judgment, which ultimately found success with Redemption. Cameron Sauers's essay, "Some Corner Forever: The Imperial War Graves Commission and the Meaning of the Great War," analyzes the lasting impact of the burial sites administered by the Imperial War Graves Commission on the British public's mourning and understanding of the Great War. Finally, Lillian Shea's essay, "An Augustan Accident: The Paradox of Augustan Sex and Marriage Laws and Augustan Ideology," assesses the practicality and

implementation of Augustus's laws on marriage and sexuality in the first century through the analysis of literature, art, poetry, and Roman histories.

This edition of the Gettysburg Historical Journal also includes a feature piece written by Professor Scott Hancock that addresses the impact of the Corona Virus Pandemic on his experience as a professor and scholar.

The General Editors,

Brandon Katzung Hokanson

Lillian Shea