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## Front Matter

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## Front Matter

### Abstract

Front Matter of the Gettysburg Historical Journal 2021

*The Gettysburg Historical Journal*  
Volume XX | Spring 2021

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## Letter from the Editors

Even amid the Covid-19 pandemic, *The Gettysburg Historical Journal* has not forgotten its commitment to publishing the best of undergraduate research. We are heartened to witness students' continued dedication to excellent work in an array of historical topics. Despite the difficulties we still face—mental and emotional exhaustion, shuttered archives, limited in-person research opportunities—we received a particularly high volume of submissions this year. We are proud to present work from our peers at Gettysburg and around the world in this twentieth edition of our journal. Through the stories we encounter in the past, we gain insight into the human experience in a variety of contexts and receive the tools to work towards a better present and future.

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 twentieth edition of *The Gettysburg Historical Journal* exemplifies the varied interests of undergraduate historians and their dedication to broadening the scope of historical analysis:

Chinaza K. Asiegbu's essay, "From Uneven Bars to Uneven Barriers: The Marginalization of Black Women in Gymnastics," uses the sport of gymnastics as a case study to demonstrate the ways in which black women have historically been excluded from what are regarded as "feminine sports." She argues that black female gymnasts have been historically marginalized from mainstream gymnastics on the basis of finances and white conceptions of femininity, both of which are crucial to success in the realm of gymnastics.

Vamika Jain's essay, "Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia: An Extraordinary Success or an Ordinary Failure?" examines the expanded role of international tribunals in the prosecution of the Khmer Rouge regime, suggests that justice can exist outside a court's verdict, and critiques the perception that the Extraordinary Chambers completely failed to deliver justice to Pol Pot's victims.

Bridget B. Kennedy's paper, "From Georgian England to the Arctic: Gender and Cultural Transformation in the Samuel Hearne Expeditions (1769-1772)," suggests that English explorer Samuel Hearne underwent a cultural change over the course of his three trips to the Arctic, and by the end of his journey no longer viewed himself superior to the region's Athabaskan natives because of his European origins. He returned to Europe with a more balanced view of indigenous culture and continues to be studied for his unique cultural perspective.

Hannah Labovitz's essay, "The Complex Relationship between Jews and African Americans in the Civil Rights Movement," argues that the African American and Jewish communities were bonded by a similar exclusion from mainstream American society and a historic empathetic connection that would carry on into the mid-twentieth century; however, beginning in the late 1960s, the partnership between the groups eventually faced challenges and began to dissolve, only to resurface again in the twenty-first century.

Joy Zanghi's essay, "Hans Staden's *Warhaftige Historia*: Protestant Identity in a Tale of Brazilian Captivity," assesses the German Protestant Hans Staden's experience as a captive of the Brazilian Tupinambá in the 1550s. *Warhaftige Historia*, a highly political and propagandistic piece, served the purpose of affirming

Staden's loyalty to Hessian Prince Philipp and the Protestant faith after spending many years outside of his native land.

This edition of *The Gettysburg Historical Journal* also includes two feature pieces written by Prof. Michael Birkner and Prof. Ian Isherwood on the challenges of teaching and researching virtually amid the pandemic.

The General Editors,

Lillian D. Shea

Christopher T. Lough

## **Acknowledgements**

The staff of *The Gettysburg Historical Journal* would like to thank all the professors of the History Department for encouraging our majors to produce excellent work. In particular, we would like to thank Professor Timothy J. Shannon for providing guidance to the journal staff's as our faculty advisor. We also express our gratitude towards Mary Elmquist, Scholarly Communications Librarian at Musselman Librarian, and Kari Greenwalt, Administrative Assistant of the History Department, for helping the staff prepare this year's edition for publication. Finally, we would like to thank Erick Cabrera '21, a double major in Philosophy and Cinema and Media Studies, for providing the journal's cover image.

## Featured Pieces

This year's feature pieces were written by Michael J. Birkner and Ian A. Isherwood, both professors in the History Department. Prof. Birkner's research focuses on nineteenth- and twentieth-century America, especially the life and career of Dwight Eisenhower, as well as on the history of Gettysburg College. Prof. Isherwood specializes in memory studies and the history of World War I, and directs a digital history project on First World War letters.

### *Prof. Michael Birkner*

Before the pandemic set in and the College administration said we'd be teaching remotely the second half of spring semester 2020, I had never heard of Zoom. As someone who has relished teaching at liberal arts colleges precisely because of the classroom vibe and the spate of extra-curricular enrichment on campus, this news was not welcome.

I quickly realized that Zooming was not all that difficult, and equally quickly determined that I would be happier without trying to add more complications like chat rooms and Moodle exams. I sought normalcy within the world of Zoom. By and large, it has worked out OK.

What has impressed me the most over the past year is the willingness of students to meet their instructor—me—at least half-way. I haven't diluted the academic requirements in my courses, though clearly have had to make adjustments, particularly on assignments. One foundation of my syllabus is assigning papers where students draw on Musselman Library's physical resources, whether in the stacks or in Special Collections.

In spring 2020 that wasn't possible. This past academic year it has been a mixed picture, with many students on campus (more so spring term), but many also studying remotely. As a result, I had to restructure my assignments to suit students in both categories. I've been fortunate working with librarians who have found ways to even the playing field by making materials available online, whether archival materials or journals like *LIFE* magazine, above and beyond the readily accessible scholarly journals accessible through JSTOR.

Contrary to conventional wisdom about college students today, history students like print. I have not heard from students struggling to obtain the works needed for class discussions, whether paperback books or article length assignments on Moodle. Their class participation has been remarkably vibrant, making my job easier.

To be sure, there are quirks involved teaching on Zoom. The classroom dynamic is not the same as it would be in person. There is less opportunity to move about the room, no opportunity (in my case) to use the blackboard or point to a map, fewer handouts, and less casual conversation before and after class about a person's status in the course or their current activities.

On Zoom, students sometimes surprise me. I've had students attend class while driving a car, eating lunch, and even flossing their teeth! Some students are uncomfortable with being on screen or have technical issues along those lines. One can never be sure how engaged they are when their faces are not visible.

The biggest impact of the pandemic on my academic life, aside from the loss of opportunities for exchanges with students, is the absence of shop talk with colleagues that made life at Gettysburg more functional, meaningful, and enjoyable.

The pandemic has hindered my scholarly work because archives I most frequently visit have closed and remain closed, up to and including presidential libraries and the Library of Congress. I was able to spend a month in Melbourne, Australia, over winter break 2019-2020, and used that time to complete research for an article I subsequently published in the *Victorian Historical Journal*. By and large most of what I have worked on has related

to essays and book reviews. I cannot wait to get back reading, in person, dead people's mail.

***Prof. Ian Isherwood***

I suppose the way to start is with how it started. The last weekend of February 2020, a week or so before things started to fall apart, I was speaking at my mother's memorial service in Florida. The church was packed and everyone was hugging and shaking hands. The day after returning to Gettysburg from her service, I was in a College van heading to NYC for a donor event that featured our digital history project—[www.jackpeirs.org](http://www.jackpeirs.org). It was another crowded event with a few hundred people all eating canapés and glad-handing. A few days after that, I jumped on a plane for London to do some research over spring break. It was unmasked on the London Underground that I got my first wave of Covid anxiety as I became nervously aware and hyper-focused on every cough and sneeze around me. Organizing my research notes over a pint in a pub later, I watched as the worldwide news went into full-blown pandemic panic. I cut the trip short out of fear of a border closing and came back to a fourteen-day self-quarantine and a flurry of emails indicating that the College had moved to remote learning.

Quarantine and remote learning. How easily we say these words now, but how odd those words were then, as we were trying to understand how our world would change. Reflecting back, it is hard for me to see through the shadow of exhaustion and make clear what has been a hazy year that has utterly pushed many of us to the limits of our emotional endurance. Still, there are three things that I think define the year for me both personally and professionally (the year has blurred the lines between these two categories as our family home has become both office and elementary school). The first is grief. For me this began at the start of the pandemic with the loss of my mother to cancer. More generally, though, that personal grief extended into a sense of general loss over this year. The second aspect is a sense that all of our worlds have gotten smaller as we have been homebound, remote working and learning, and measuring aspects of risk for all of our activities, great and small. There have been good things about this, but it has also compounded the anxiety that all of us have felt and the sadness over our lost experiences. The third theme is more positive: adaptability and resilience. At the end of it all, I can say that I did my duty this year. I have never been as busy and have never worked longer days. I don't know whether I am a better historian or not (probably not), but I do know that I learned a lot about teaching this year and have tried to help my students stick

this thing out. We are approaching the end of the most difficult year in higher education in modern memory. Many of us are landing this plane with three engines out of four lost, but the runway is in sight. It hasn't been pretty and most of us want to put the journey behind us, but we stepped up to the moment and finished the mission. And to do so in such a miserable year deserves the ultimate credit one can bestow upon the exhausted—a break.