Welcome to the 8th volume of The Forum!

We are pleased to present this issue and hope that you enjoy reading the final product. This year, we felt it would be best to stress diversity: both in subject matter and class level. At Cal Poly, we are lucky enough to have faculty with a wide variety of specialties. We wanted to make sure that this volume reflected the spectrum of classes that the history department has to offer. We also wanted to showcase both the talented undergraduate and graduate class of future historians. This volume contains papers written by freshmen alongside upperclassmen and graduate students. We believe that it is important to give everyone a chance to "learn by doing" and have their work published.

We are extremely proud to announce that we experienced a record number of submissions and found it difficult to narrow down our choices this year. To elaborate on the review process, each paper was evaluated by a panel of editors using a double-blind review system. We gave authors feedback and the option to revise and resubmit their paper if it received a high enough score on our rubric system. All second draft submissions went through a similar process until we settled on our finalists. We contacted finalists for approval on a round of copy edits that reflected house style.

This volume would not be possible without a number of people. First, we would like to thank the faculty in the history department for providing students the skills to write such amazing papers and for giving us the resources and confidence to run such an amazing, unique journal. Second, we would like to thank our small staff of editors for taking time out of their busy work and school schedules to make this journal possible. Without such a diligent, hard-working staff, it would have been impossible to get papers back in a timely manner. Third, we would like to thank all authors who submitted their papers for publication. We learned so much from you and this volume would not exist without your research. We encourage everyone to submit their original work for all future volumes.

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