LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

My first experience with the academic journal was purchasing Volume 5 as a freshman history major. When I look back, as a young, aspiring historian, the works within the journal established a realistic standard for academic excellence in my mind. Publishing a work in *The MSU Undergraduate Historian* was from then on a goal of my collegiate career. The journal, unfortunately, did not continue after the publication of Volume 5 in Spring 2010. And while I may never have had the opportunity to join the ranks of the great undergraduate academics that have authored works in these journals, I believe the spirit of that dream has been realized. It is with sincere pride that I present Volume 6 of the *Michigan State Journal of History*.

Volume 6 represents a restoration of the department’s academic journal, and by extension the tradition of recognizing excellent undergraduate scholarship at the university. It is our good fortune to have seven exceptional works to help reestablish the journal’s reputation in the academic community. The showcased research touches on a variety of subjects and geographic areas, from religion and sexuality, to the United States and the Soviet Union. Without question, it is the creativity of these authors that has made serving on the editorial board an experience worthwhile.

As a resurrection volume without editors with previous experience, the learning curve for the editorial board has been steep. In addition to the classes, research, work and other responsibilities that these remarkable individuals undertake as undergraduates at our university, their sacrifice in reading, editing and evaluating the myriad of works submitted to them is worthy of admiration. I can say with confidence that there is no position more demanding, nor more rewarding, than the one they hold. To Renee Brewster, Kevin Cunningham, Trevor Mattis and Nathan Medd, I can say nothing more than thank you. Without you, this project never would have left the drawing board.

Another group that was indispensable to the restoration and completion of this academic journal is the faculty of the Department of History. From offering advice on academic professionalism, to providing feedback on the proposed working of our editing process, to reviewing submissions, our gratitude goes out to Dr. Vanessa Holden, Dr. Emily Tabuteau, Dr. Karrin Hanshew and Dr. Peter Knupfer. Although space will not permit us to mention by name all the faculty and graduate students that assisted in reviewing essays in their area of expertise, as well as those that taught and mentored the selected authors, we owe you our gratitude. Without you, the academic quality of the journal would not be where it is today.

Last, but by no means least, a special thanks to department secretary Elyse Hansen and undergraduate Kolt Ewing. Their help and patience in technologically related affairs was essential to the completion of an electronic journal.

For the editorial board, our work is not finished. The next few months will be spent expanding our web presence, creating a constitution and critically assessing every step taken this year to ensure future editors can learn from our mistakes. For my part, I am excited to see what Volume 7 will bring.

Mikhail Filipovitch
Editor-in-Chief
*Michigan State Journal of History*

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1 Now the *Michigan State Journal of History*. 